son, however, in such cases was entitled to the capital messuage, making compensation to the others therefor. The rule in favour of an equal division between all the sons seems rapidly to have been supplanted in favour of the right of the eldest son, so that by the time of King John even socage lands (except in Kent) were held to be descendible to the eldest son only, unless the contrary were proved. There was also a difference as to when the heir of a knight and a soc man became of age; the former not being of full age until he had completed his twenty-first year, while the latter was esteemed of full age when he had completed his fifteenth year.

Another curious feature of the law in Glanville's time was the penalty attached to the offence of usury. Usury, it appears, was committed whenever a person entrusted to another any such thing as consists in number, or weight, or measure, and received back more than he lent. So also, it was considered to be a species of usury if a man received lands in pledge for a sum of money, and entered into the enjoyment thereof upon an agreement that the rents were not to be applied in reduction of the debt. This was not prohibited by the law, yet if any one died having such a pledge, his property was disposed of as the effects of an usurer. Now the punishment of usurers was rather curious, for it was not the custom to proceed against any one for this offence in his lifetime. So long as he lived apparently he had a *locus penitentiæ*, but upon it being proved on the oaths of twelve lawful men of the neighbourhood that he had died in the offence, all the chattels of the deceased usurer were seized to the King's use, and his heir for the same reason was deprived of his inheritance, which thereupon reverted to the lord.

Glanville not only discourses on civil proceedings, but he also devotes the concluding book of his treatise to a discussion of the criminal law. For the offence of mayhem, which signified the breaking of a bone, or injuring the head either by wounding or abrasion, the accused was obliged to purge himself by the ordeal, *i.e.*, by the hot iron if a free man, and by water if he were a rustic. The trial by ordeal was a very ancient mode of trial, and seems to have been in existence in England so early as the reign of Ina; and we may conclude these somewhat discursive remarks by stating briefly how the trial by ordeal was conducted according to the laws of Ina. The trial took place in a temple or church. A piece of iron weighing not more than three pounds was placed upon a fire, the fire being watched by two men, who placed themselves on either side of the iron, and who were to determine upon the degree of heat it ought to possess. As soon as they were agreed, two other men were introduced who placed themselves at either extremity of the iron. All these witnesses passed the night fasting.

At daybreak the priest who presided, after sprinkling them with holy water and making them drink, presented them with the gospels to kiss, and then crossed them. The service of the mass was then begun, and from that moment the fire was no more increased, but the iron was left on the embers until the last collect. That finished, the iron was raised, and prayers were addressed to the Deity to manifest the truth. Thereupon the accused took the iron in his hand and carried it the distance of nine feet; his hand was then bound up and the bandage sealed, and after three days it was examined to ascertain whether or not it was *impure;* it being accounted impure, and therefore the accused to be guilty, if it should turn out to have suppurated; if, on the other hand, the sore was found to be healthy, the accused was adjudged to be innocent.

The ordeal by water consisted in the