

grain necessary for human life, besides inexhaustible pits of coal, which did it enjoy the advantage of water-carriage, as Newcastle, &c. does, this county would also vie with it in plenty of that product. By the Severn side are rich, large meadows, that yield abundance of grass and hay for the cattle, which are chiefly fed on the upland pastures; and the hilly country, on the borders of Wales, is excellent sheep-pasture. Here are also mines of copper, lead, iron-stone, and lime-stone. Over most of the coal-pits there lies a stratum of a blackish, hard, but very porous substance, containing great quantities of bitumen, which being ground to powder in the horse-mills, such as are used in grinding flints to make glass, and well boiled in coppers of water, the earthy and gritty parts sink to the bottom, but on the surface swims the bituminous matter, which, by evaporation, is brought to the consistency of pitch; or by the help of an oil distilled from the same stone, and mixed with it, may be thinned to a sort of tar; and both substances serve particularly for caulking of ships as well as pitch or tar, if not better; for they do not crack as the common pitch or tar, but always keep black and soft; and might, as it is imagined, be very serviceable against the worm, so mischievous to ships.

Thus we surveyed the air, soil, product, and manufactures of the south part of this plentiful and rich island. Hence forward we laid aside all anxious speculations, and resolved with easy journeys to set out for London, if possible to be there against the king's birth-day. But as the manufactures and trade are chiefly confined to particular towns in these counties, I shall now retrospect, and supply what has been only occasionally or superficially mentioned on that head, by giving some account of those places in England, which are most noted either for making or selling goods.