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THE DEVELOPMENT OF INDUSTRY AND COMMERCE IN WALES DURING THE MIDDLE AGES.

By E. A. LEWIS

Read April 23rd, 1903.

THE development of industry and commerce in Wales during the Middle Ages may be regarded from two points of view. On the one hand we are concerned with the gradual decay of the commerce carried on by the inhabitants of the western regions of tribal Britain, and on the other hand with the development of the national commerce of the modern Principality.

The departure of the Romans, and the incursions of the Anglo-Saxon settlers, mark a definite point in the breaking up of the commerce of Old Britain. Its external trade with the Continent suddenly ceased. The advance of the English and the subsequent withdrawal of the British tribes ultimately confined a number of these tribes, particularly the Silures and the Ordovices, to the Welsh district. It is with the commercial system of this Welsh remnant that our examination of the subject must begin.

The political history of Wales explains the story of Welsh commerce. Down to the Union it is the history of a country undergoing a gradual conquest. Racial antipathy frequently checks its economic progress,¹ and often influences the character of its commercial legislation.² The physical structure of the country and the economic condition of the people explain its especial features.

¹ See below, p. 137.

² See below, pp. 131, 162.

Covering an area of less than 7,500 square miles, Wales, in modern geographical parlance, is usually classed as one of the British uplands, possessing an extensive maritime border, with several navigable rivers, and remarkable for its pastures and mineral wealth.

Now these commercial assets had been sampled by the Briton and the Roman before the making of Wales.¹

The Roman, coming later, excelled the Briton. He civilised the wild Silurian who used no coins.² Internal traffic was improved by the making of good roads,³ and mining, not considerable in Wales during the British period,⁴ assumed larger proportions under the Roman sway. Almost every county in Wales bears the trace of Roman mining operations.⁵ The county historian of Monmouth claims a

¹ The history of Wales as a distinct principality begins with the battle of Chester, about 613.

² Traill's *Social England*, p. 21. Only two ancient British coins have been found in Wales (*The Coins of the Ancient Britons* (Evans), Supplement, pp. 433, 437). On the question of Welsh coinage, see below, p. 134, note 6.

³ See Mr. F. Haverfield's map of Roman Britain (*Hist. Atlas*, ed. R. L. Poole, i. no. xv.). Cf. *Arch. Camb.* 3rd series, vi. 186.

⁴ *Social England*, p. 86, and *British Mining* (J. Hunt), p. 20.

⁵ Proofs of the successful working of Welsh copper mines by the Romans are found in the cakes of copper found 'impressed with a Roman stamp' in the celebrated Paris mines of Anglesea (*Arch. Camb.* 4th series, iii. 180), and in the elaborate Roman coins and mining tools found in and near the old Roman levels at Llanymynech, on the eastern border of Montgomery (*Powysland Club Collections*, xi. 186). Cinder-beds, accompanied with Roman coins, evince the early origin of iron furnaces at Miskin in Glamorgan (Hunt, *op. cit.* p. 44), as also at Caerleon (*The South Wales Coal Trade and its Allied Industries* (by C. Wilkins), p. 5), Monmouth, Hadnock (*Hist. of Monmouth* (Williams, D.), p. 67), and particularly in the Forest of Dean, the chief centre of the industry (Hunt, *op. cit.* p. 28). Cinder-heaps, the supposed refuse of old Roman bloomeries, have been found at Marteg, on the left bank of the Upper Wye, in Radnorshire (*Hist. of Agriculture &c. in S. Wales* (Davies, W.), ii. 452), and at Crickhowell and Llanfrynach in Breconshire (Jones's *Hist. of Breconshire*, pp. 538-9). Evidences of Roman lead-mining are chiefly confined to the North Welsh counties, especially to the district of the Decangi or Cangi tribe, corresponding to a parcel of the modern Flintshire (*Arch. Camb.* 3rd series, ii. 309). Curious hammers and tools as well as the massive hilt of a Roman sword testify to the ancient working of the Abergele mines in Denbigh (Hunt, *op. cit.* p. 39), as do the old vestiges of imperial mining at Llandudno and Caerhun (*Conovium*) in Carnarvonshire (*ib.* p. 29). A Roman and even a British genesis is claimed for the lucrative mines of Cardiganshire, but upon doubtful evidence (*Hist. of Agri-*

Roman origin for the Welsh fishing industry; 'the Roman,' he says, 'first drew the attention of the Briton to the trout and salmon of the Usk.'¹ Several of our Welsh towns, such as Carnarvon, Carmarthen, and Neath, flourish on or near the sites of old Roman towns. This is their only claim to Romanic origin. Town life had no attraction for the Cymric tribes. They were chiefly a pastoral and military people, whose social system was little affected by the Roman occupation.²

The scanty evidence to be gathered from the extant chronicles makes it quite clear that during the period following the Roman occupation warfare was the chiefest industry of the Cymric tribes, whilst they apparently employed the old Roman towns as military strongholds.³

culture &c. in S. Wales (Davies, W.), ii. 320, and Hunt, *op. cit.* p. 20). The same may be said of the Montgomeryshire mines, save that a pick, undoubtedly Roman, has been discovered in the mines near Machynlleth (Hunt, *op. cit.* p. 40). Scoræ of ancient smelting hearths have also been found at Llanfyllin (*Powysland Club Collections*, iii. 59), Llanwyddyn (*ib.* vii. 68), and at Newtown Park, near the traditional mining-town of Caersws (Hunt, *op. cit.* pp. 28-9). The 'Ogofau' gold mines, with their wide Roman levels, near Llanpumpsaint, co. Carmarthen, are unique of their kind (*Arch. Journal*, vii. 173; Hunt, *op. cit.* p. 43). It is a matter of doubt whether the Romans knew of the golden treasure embedded in the Merionethshire hills, and the minerals of Pembrokeshire were apparently untouched. Evidences in many places of the use of coal in Roman times have been found in the Forest of Dean (*Archæologia* (1900), p. 316).

The above references throw little light upon the extent of Roman mining in Wales. With the departure of the Romans the industry would be limited rather than suspended. The mines would no longer be worked for the purposes of a transmarine trade on imperial profit, but would be worked, as far as the disturbed state of the country allowed, to meet local requirements. Comparatively little has been written on mining in Wales from the departure of the Romans until the arrival of the German miners in the sixteenth century. See below, p. 142.

¹ *Hist. of Monmouth* (Williams, D.), p. 62.

² Gomme (G. L.), *Village Community*, pp. 60-1.

³ See Nennius (E.H.S. ed. Stevenson), p. 62, and Kemble, *Saxons in England*, ii. 169. The disappearance of Roman towns in Wales is attributed by Wright to the devastating policy of the Welsh (comparing the case of the Saxon in England): *The Celt, the Roman, and the Saxon*, pp. 453-4. More in harmony with the testimony of Giraldus of the abundant Roman remains at Caerleon (*Itin. Camb.* (Rolls Series), p. 58) and Carmarthen (*ib.* p. 80) is the view of Kemble (*op. cit. ut supra*, p. 291), who attributes the decay of Roman towns to (1) time, (2) natural causes, (3) neglect. It should be remembered

Economic development was hardly possible during the brief intervals of peace that occurred from the seventh to the tenth century. During this period Wales was continually disturbed by the gradual advance of the English on the East and the occasional incursions of the Danes to the West, as well as by the internecine warfare between rival Welsh chieftains for supremacy amongst themselves.

After the formation of Offa's Dyke, we find no marked advance in the English conquest until the eve of the Norman conquest, when the frontier towns of Rhuddlan and Radnor originated the colonisation of Wales by English and Norman settlers. Hitherto the English policy had been mainly one of defence, and consequently caused no drastic changes in the economic condition of the Welsh.

With better relations existing between the Welsh Church and the See of Canterbury on the Easter controversy, and the frequent rendering of tribute by the Welsh princes to English sovereigns, the little commercial transactions that took place between English and Welsh were facilitated. We have faint indications of a trade with Chester¹ and Bristol. Salt was probably imported to Wales from the Cheshire district at an early date.² Bristol exchanged its corn for Welsh butter and cheese. Tradition has it that the Welsh slave trade came to an abrupt ending in the seventh century, when St. Patrick excommunicated a Cardigan prince for selling slaves to the pagan Saxons.³ But we have evidence of this later.⁴

One of the early relations between Wales and Ireland is to be seen in the reciprocal intercourse of Welsh and Irish

that the Welsh were unable to repair with stone material (Clark's (G. T.) *Medieval Architecture*, i. 12-13), and the art of brickmaking was long since lost (G. L. Gomme, *op. cit. supra*, p. 47).

¹ The men of Edeyrnion buy their necessities at Chester (*Myvyrian Archaeology* (Denbigh edition), p. 728; *The Welsh People* (Prof. Rhys and Brynmôr Jones), p. 168).

² Lysons's *Mag. Brit.* ii. pt. 2, 409-10.

³ Cf. *ib.* p. 606, and *Social England*, p. 87.

⁴ See *Wales Past and Present* (C. Wilkins), pp. 240-1.

ecclesiasts for purposes of religious instruction.¹ Some of our ports bear a pious nomenclature,² but historic attention is first drawn to them by the Danish and Norse incursions of the ninth and following centuries. The character generally given to the Dane or Northman—the Pagan or Black Gentile of the Welsh Bruts and *Annales*—is that of a destroyer. It is, however, probable, as some exceptional entries in the Bruts suggest,³ that some kind of Norse colonies were founded. ‘The Northmen seemed to have known Wales well . . . and called it “Bretland.”’⁴ This is to some extent evident from the nomenclature of some of the maritime towns and districts of South and North-west Wales, as well as from the Scandinavian descent of several South-Welsh townsmen during the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries. The presence of the latter, moreover, is often attributed to the settlement of Norwegian merchants in towns of Norman or English foundation, as at Cardiff, Cardigan, and Carmarthen. The ports of Swansea and Haverfordwest, from the nomenclature of places and persons, are said to be of Norse origin.⁵ Whatever colonies there may have been, they were apparently small. We have no trace of their influence upon the mysterious coinage of Wales, as is found to be the case in Ireland. The Danish populace of the South Welsh coast undoubtedly favoured commercial intercourse with Ireland and other transmarine countries and thus laid the foundation of Welsh seafaring trade. The Welsh were indifferent seamen ; when they required ships they always turned to Ireland.⁶

¹ *Eccles. Hist. of Ireland* (Killen, W. D.), i. 26, 159 ; *History of the Welsh Church* (Newell, E. J.), p. 173.

² E.g. see *Iolo MSS.* (pub. 1848 by the Welsh MSS. Soc.), p. 636.

³ See *Brut y Tywysogion* (Rolls Series), s.a. 991 and 1087, where the ‘Pagans’ are employed as mercenaries by the Welsh.

⁴ *An Account of the Danes in England, &c.* (Worsaae, J. J. A.), p. 7.

⁵ *Norse Settlements round the Bristol Channel* (by Dr. Alexander Bugge), pp. 1–11 ; *Videnskabselskabets Skrifter II. Historisk-filosofisk Klasse*, 1900, no. 6. Cf. Worsaae, *op. cit.* pp. 8, 23 ; *Land of Morgan* (G. T. Clark), p. 16 ; *Concise Hist. of Glamorgan* (J. R. Phillips), p. 26 ; *Arch. Camb.* 4th series, ii. 247–8 ; *Engl. Hist. Review* (note by Mr. W. H. Stevenson), xvi. 551.

⁶ *Transactions of the Cymmrodorion Soc.*, Session 1899–1900, *The Coming of the Normans* (by Prof. J. E. Lloyd), p. 137.

Welsh princes were too much absorbed with their internal disputes to trouble themselves with the development of a maritime trade, whilst the home-made coracle best served the purposes of inland navigation.

A noble attempt was made to ameliorate the national condition by Howel the Good. The Codes associated with his name cast an interesting sidelight on the domestic and economic condition of the Welsh at this time.

They evidently depict the condition of a people who are often engaged in war. Several members of the royal household have their annual stipend from the booty obtained from a border country.¹

Agriculture was not extensively practised. Disputes often arose between co-tillers as to the ploughing of 'bushy land.'² The economy of the pasture and the forest predominated. Sheep-farming and cattle-rearing were the chief agricultural pursuits. Bees were commonly kept, for their wax to make candles and for their honey to sweeten the metheglin, the characteristic British drink.

The forest supplied timber for the construction of their buildings. It also furnished fuel for the homestead and the furnace.

The chief artisans were the smith and the carpenter, who made the weapons of war and the implements of husbandry.

Articles of clothing and other domestic effects were manufactured from the wool of the sheep and the skin of the ox. Flax (in addition to cabbages and leeks)³ was grown in a garden near the homestead, and was used in the manufacture of a rough kind of cloth.⁴

These industries were mostly of a domestic character. The chief groom made his own halters,⁵ as did the huntsman his own leashes.⁶ We find no specialised skill, excepting perhaps the smith and the carpenter. The ploughman

¹ *Ancient Laws and Institutes of Wales* (Rec. Com.), p. 16.

² *Ib.* p. 155. ³ *Ib.* p. 158. Cf. pp. 163, 275.

⁴ *Ib.* p. 127 ('weaving women'). Cf. p. 155 below. ⁵ *Ib.* p. 14.

⁶ *Ancient Laws and Institutes of Wales* (Rec. Com.), p. 17.

knew how to construct his plough and repair the broken trappings.

We have no indications of an urban economy. The Welsh were primarily a pastoral people—a nation of dairy-farmers grouped together in self-sufficing hamlets. Salt is the chief foreign product noted in the Codes.

Trading with the tribesman was not a question of where, but of what and how much. That is to say, it was no matter where the bargain was made so long as the quality and price of the chattel bought and sold gave equal satisfaction. Thus the Codes set forth the 'teithi' or essential features of a sound animal and its legal worth.¹ Commercial activity, therefore, was not confined as elsewhere to a town, but was diffused throughout the land.

The nearest approach in the old Cymric economy to the modern idea of a town will perhaps be found in the *tref* or village surrounding the palace of a Welsh prince,² or that which flourished near a local church or Celtic monastery.³ To such peaceful centres traffic must have been led for purposes of luxury or religion.

The point to be noticed is this: We cannot find the trace of anything like a market jurisdiction. The two references to markets made in the collection of Old Welsh laws supplementary to the Codes are probably the results of Norman or English influence. We should hardly expect to be told by the Welsh economist of the tenth century that there ought not to be any privileged markets but in *the legitimate corporate cities*.⁴ However, the second reference is more tolerable. It reads thus: 'Whoever from the country (or *wlat*) shall buy in a market, let him be of the same privilege as a market man. If a market man buy in the country, let him be of the

¹ E.g., *ib.* p. 135: 'The teithi of a sheep: to give milk and to bear lambs; to be warranted against the rot until the calends of May, when she shall have satiated herself three times with the new herbage.'

² Cf. *The Welsh People*, p. 248.

³ E.g. Llanbadarn, Llandaff, &c.

⁴ *Ancient Laws and Institutes of Wales* (Rec. Com.), p. 651.

same privilege with a country man as to his barter.'¹ Without pretending to define the exact significance and bearing of this entry, we have here a compromise between the trade of the tribe and that of the townsman. The trade of the *patria*, with the growing importance of the middleman, is gradually drawn to the *forum*.

Trading activity, with its fixed centres and market privileges, was not known to the Wales of the tenth century. Giraldus Cambrensis confirms this view two centuries later. 'The Welsh,' he says, 'have no towns, villages, or castles. They pay no attention to commerce, shipping, or manufactures. They anxiously study the defence of their country.'² It would appear from this that no great changes occurred in the Cymric economy from the tenth to the twelfth century.

It is in the Norman aspect of the English conquest that we perceive drastic changes taking place.

In passing from the economy of the Welsh to that of the Norman, with due respect to the artistic ability of the early Welsh sculptor, it is very true to say that we are passing from the economy of timber to the economy of stone.

The building of castles, the erection of monasteries, and the walling of towns—all this, done by the Norman, marks a new stage in the development of the mineral resources of Wales.³ The early 'history of our stone, lime, and slate quarries, as well as of our coal and lead mines, may be gleaned from the extant accounts we possess of building operations, be they of the mill, town, church, or castle. Few of these accounts exist prior to the reign of Edward I.⁴

The Welsh soon learnt the art of masonry. The native

¹ *Ancient Laws and Institutes of Wales* (Rec. Com.), p. 416.

² *Descr. Kamb.* (Rolls Series), pp. 179–180.

³ See below, p. 142.

⁴ The *Expensa* (Q. R. Accts., Miscellaneous, Works), the *Liberate* and Pipe Rolls, together with the *Ministers' Accounts* (General Series) from this point onwards, exhibit in a precise way the industrial economy of the time, the rate of wages, the prices of materials, the cost and means of transit, &c. For example, see *Archaeologia*, xxviii. 221; copy and translation of a Roll of Expenses of King Edward I. at Rhuddlan, 1281–2, and *Arch. Journal*, vii. 237 *et seq.*; *Carnarvon Castle* (by C. H. Hartshorne); also pp. 142–7 below.

chroniclers, with an air of surprise, announce in 1171 that the Lord Rhys of Dinevaio rebuilt the castle of Cardigan with stone and mortar.¹ Castle Maud or Pain's Castle in the Elvael district, formerly built of wood, was reconstructed *de lapide et cemento* in 1231.²

Equally true is it to say that in passing from the economy of the Welsh to that of the Norman, we are passing from the economy of no-towns to the economy of towns. There are no towns of purely Cymric origin. The growth of towns in Wales may be assigned to English or Norman influence.

The expansion of commercial privileges in Wales is co-extensive with the progress of the English conquest. In the Marches it is the work of the Norman lord; in the Principality, the accomplishment of the English king.

From 1081 to 1282 the Marcher lordships, with their respective groups of towns, were formed. Those on the English border, and along the lowland sill of Glamorgan towards the Pembrokeshire coast, came first into prominence. One peculiar feature of these burghal settlements was the modelling of their privileges upon the Hereford type.³ During this period they were little more than garrison towns inhabited and visited by Norse,⁴ Fleming, French, and English merchants with an occasional Jew.⁵ They were thus foreign or nominally English towns in a Welsh land,⁶ and often became

¹ *Brut y Tywysogion* (Rolls Series), *s.a. cit.*

² Matt. Paris, *Hist. Angl.* (Rolls Series), ii. 332.

³ Gross, *Gild Merchant*, p. 261. See 'The Laws of Breteuil' (by Miss Mary Bateson), *Engl. Hist. Review*, vols. xv. & xvi., invaluable to students of the Welsh boroughs.

⁴ Cf. p. 125, note 5, above.

⁵ There were not many Jews in Wales beyond those radiating from the Jewries of Hereford and Bristol in the Marcher towns. The typical charter of the North Welsh boroughs includes the clause prohibiting the residence of Jews within their liberties. Jewish merchants and artisans hailing from South Wales are to be found among the free citizens of Dublin early in the thirteenth century. We find Solomon of Cardiff, Abram the son of Bernard of Cardigan, Adam of Newport, and Adam of South Wales (*Hist. and Municip. Documents, Ireland, 1172-1230* (ed. Gilbert), p. 2 *et seq.*, and p. 136).

⁶ See note 1 on next page. Cf. Freeman's *English Towns and Districts*, p. 16.

the objects of devastation by the Welsh.¹ There was not the requisite security to ensure unchecked progress in municipal and commercial life ; bailiffs are careful to note that their returns were proportionate to the stability of peace in the neighbourhood.² The towns enjoyed a practical monopoly of trade within their respective lordships.³ Their merchants were engaged in such shipping as concerned the garnishment of the castle,⁴ and an inconsiderable trade was being carried on with Ireland.⁵

Loyal Welshmen of the inland or strictly Welsh districts were permitted to trade in these Marcher towns, particularly the religious, whose fidelity aroused less suspicion.⁶ The burgesses of Shrewsbury were accustomed to receive toll from Welshmen, bringing their merchandise to the town over the Welsh bridge, before 1205 ;⁷ and later in the century Welshmen find a place among the foreign members of the town guild.⁸ The trade people of the Mid-Welsh district generally brought their merchandise to Hereford, Leominster,⁹ and Shrewsbury, and occasionally attended some of

¹ *Annales Cambrie* (Rolls Series), pp. 36, 58, 59, 63, 71, 74, 78, 92, 93, 98 ; and *Brut y Tywysogion* (Rolls Series), pp. 250-1, 318, 320.

² I. P. M. 4 Ed. I. No. 84 (*s.n.* Kidwelly) ; *History of Neath Abbey* (W. de Gray Birch, F.S.A.), p. 235.

³ *Cardiff Records* (ed. John Hobson Matthews), i. 26, and Dillwyn's (L. W.) *Contributions to the History of Swansea*, p. 5.

⁴ *Præstita* Roll 1211 (Rec. Com.), p. 245 (four ships bring corn to Wales), and Pipe Roll, 3 H. II. (Pipe Roll Soc.), p. 108, for a ship hired to take provisions from Winchester to Pembroke.

⁵ *Calendar of Documents, Ireland* (1171-1251), Nos. 2108 and 2733 ; also Pipe Roll, 18 H. II. (Pipe Roll Soc.), p. 119.

⁶ *E.g.* Patent Roll, 26 H. III. m. 8. The bishop of St. Asaph to be free from all toll in the towns of Salop, to buy whatsoever for his own use and that of his family. A like concession to David the son of Llewelyn 'as long as he faithfully serves us.' On the same membrane the king expresses his wish that 'our land of England and our land of Wales' should be common to English and Welsh merchants for purposes of trade. Notification to this effect is sent to J. Extraneus, the Justiciar of Chester, and J. de Monmouth, the constable of Carmarthen and Cardigan. Cf. note 8 on next page.

⁷ Owen and Blakeway's *Hist. of Shrewsbury*, i. 87.

⁸ *Ib.* p. 103.

⁹ *Royal and Hist. Letters* (ed. Shirley), ii. 156-7. The merchants of Builth, Elvael, Warthrinion, and Cardigan, attending the fairs of Leominster, complain of the tyranny of Mortimer's servants ; cf. *Ancient Correspondence* (P.R.O.),

the large English fairs.¹ Merlins² (mountain ponies), sheep,³ wool,⁴ arrows,⁵ spears,⁶ and pastoral produce were usually exchanged for corn, salt, wine, and other articles of small merchandise.⁷

The enjoyment of commercial privileges by the men of a Welsh district was conditional on the loyalty of their prince.⁸ An act of disloyalty on the part of a prince resulted in the disfranchisement of his men.⁹ We find a reluctance on the part of English sovereigns to permit the enjoyment of market and fair privileges in districts subject to a Welsh prince.¹⁰ It was part of their policy of conquest

vol. xxiii. No. 1891, where Llewelyn ap Grufudd complains of the harm done to his people whilst attending the fairs at Montgomery und Leominster.

¹ Letters of safe-conduct to the men of Carmarthen (1220) in going, staying, and returning to the fair of St. Egidius at Winchester (*Cal. Pat. Rolls*, 1216-25, p. 252; *Munimenta Gildhallæ Londoniensis* (Rolls Series), ii. 2, 655). Welshmen among others permitted (5 Ric. I.) to go to Boston, Lincoln, and Winchester fairs. Cf. *Cal. Pat. Rolls* (1317-21), p. 21. Tin and steel bought in the markets of Boston and elsewhere for the works and munition of the king's castles in North Wales.

² The Pipe Roll of the Bishopric of Winchester, 1208-1209, Introd. xviii. Cf. *ib.* p. 23.

³ Welsh mountain sheep were sometimes bought in the Marcher districts of the low-lying English pastures (*Roll of the Household Expenses of Bp. Swinfield* (Camden Soc.), i. 188-9).

⁴ The merchants of St. Omer (*de Sancto Homero*) dealt in Welsh wool as early as 1205 (*Cal. Rot. Lit. Claus.* (Rec. Com.), p. 55), and the men of Carmarthen brought their wools to Bristol before 1218 (*ib.* p. 353).

⁵ For Welsh arrows see *Publications of the Selden Soc.* xiii. 80, 96, 101, 152.

⁶ Spears (*hastæ*) were brought from Wales to Taunton (co. Somerset) as early as 1209 (note 2 above).

⁷ *Descr. Kamb.* (Rolls Series), pp. 218-9. 'Interim autem cuncta mercimonia ferri, panni, salis, et bladi, quibus ab Anglicana copia sustentare solent, arctius eis inhibeantur.' Cf. Pipe Roll, 13 H. II. (Pipe Roll. Soc.), p. 77; *ib.* 16 H. II. p. 154 (*re* corn), and *Cal. Pat. Rolls* (1225-1232), p. 203; also Pipe Roll, 18 H. II. p. 119 (*re* salt).

⁸ Close Roll, 16 H. III. Grant (dated August 8) to the men of Llewelyn, Prince of Aberfraw, Lord of Snowdon, to trade freely in all the markets and fairs held in the bailiwicks of Salop, Stafford, Hereford, and Worcester, until Michaelmas next following and as long as the friendly relations which now exist between the Lord King and Llewelyn should last.

⁹ *Cal. Pat. Rolls* (1216-25), p. 386, *re* men of Maelgwyn, son of Rhys, &c., in South Wales.

¹⁰ *Cal. Close Rolls* (1272-79), p. 51. Inhibition of Llewelyn ap Grufudd erecting a castle and market at Abermule, near Montgomery.

to keep them dependent upon the border towns, so that in case of revolt supplies could be more readily cut off. This was the usual procedure when war broke out, the markets of the Marcher towns being temporarily suspended,¹ and all commercial transactions with the Welsh being rigidly prohibited.² This starvation policy was preached by Giraldus in the twelfth century,³ and was to some extent carried out by Henry III. and Edward I. in their final conquest of Wales.⁴

The English conquest of Wales had both a political and an economic effect. The political aspect of the conquest comes to a close with the fall of Llewelyn ap Gruffudd in 1282. The Principality was annexed to the English Crown. This changed condition in the relation of the Crown to the Principality marks the commencement of a new period in the history of Wales. Before the conquest the English sovereign and the Marcher lord were united in their attempts to overthrow the Welsh prince, after the conquest it is the contest of the English sovereign and Norman lord. The extinction of the old royal line of Welsh princes at the close of the thirteenth century, and the absorption of the Marcher lordships during the first half of the sixteenth century, made Wales a parcel of the English realm.

The medium in both instances was the shire system. Edward consolidated his hold on the Principality by founding the castle, the town, and the shire. The Norman lord, in the earlier period, consolidated his hold by founding the castle, the town, and the lordship. Both systems centralised the trading activity of the tribal Celt. But, compared with that of the Norman lord, Edward's policy was broad. We change the isolation of the lordship for the aspirations of the kingdom. The centralisation of the Marcher lord was local

¹ Frontier towns like Shrewsbury (*Royal and Hist. Letters* (Rolls), ii. 310-11), and Hereford (Pipe Roll, 14 H. II. p. 117; 15 H. II. p. 28; 18 H. II. p. 3) suffered from depression of trade during a Welsh war. For temporary suspension of markets see *Cal. Pat. Rolls* (1225-32), pp. 81-2, 584.

² *Cal. Close Rolls* (1227-31), pp. 537, 588; also *Cal. of Documents, Ireland*, .a. 1231, no. 1930; s.a. 1233, no. 2073.

³ See note 7 on the preceding page. ⁴ *Cal. Close Rolls* (1272-79), p. 410.

and irregular, that of the English Crown was general and uniform.

Sufficient evidence has survived to give us a fairly detailed sketch of Edward I.'s policy in the Principality. We have no such early records for the Marcher lordships. A consideration of these affords a glimpse of the means by which the tribal Welsh were accustomed to a more fixed and at the same time more civilised mode of living.

Both castle and town were connected with the neighbouring districts. The *castellaria* or castle district corresponded to the market district. Bondmen of the castle district were responsible for a part of the castle foods,¹ and all inhabitants of the market district had to bring their merchandise to the town.² The constable of the castle was mayor of the town.

The Edwardian towns in the Principality were thus made dependent on the surrounding districts. The growth of these towns will explain the development of a reciprocal dependence on the part of the country. Additional interest is added to the story, from the fact that these towns, like the towns of the Marches, were English towns in a Welsh country. Racial antipathy colours the growth of the municipal element in Wales. As with the frontier towns on the English border of the Welsh March,³ it is by no means an unusual circumstance for towns placed in the heart of Wales to receive grants of murage, to support the reparation of the town walls against what the burgesses sometimes express as 'the menacing attitude' of the surrounding Welsh.⁴

¹ *Transactions of the Cymmrodorion Society*, Session 1902-3.

² *Rec. of Carn.* p. 132. 'Item ordinatum fuit per conquestorem [*i.e.* Edw. I.] quod nulli Wallenses facerent aliquas mercandizas extra villas mercatorias nec brasearent ad vendendum sub forisfactura mercandizarum et imprisonmenti ac redempcionis faciendi.' *Ib.* p. 223 (Beaumaris market district). *Cal. Pat. Rolls* (1476-85), p. 504 (Denbigh).

³ *E.g.* Shrewsbury, in consideration of its nearness to Wales, and of its consequent need to be very well fortified, received a grant of murage in 1423 (*Cal. Pat. Rolls*, 1422-29, p. 140).

⁴ *Ancient Petitions* (P.R.O.), No. 2683. The men of Carmarthen pray for a grant of murage to repair the town walls, 'pur les Galeies que lour manacent de jour en autre de prendre la dite ville.'

It was, no doubt, with a certain amount of misgiving that the simple Welshman ventured with his scanty produce to the English markets. He went, at first, armed, as if for battle.¹ Fairs, or at least markets, were indeed new to the Welshman.² He was ignorant of the regulations, and often, to his own cost, commenced business before the statutory hour.³ With rank patriotism he suspected the new-fangled measures in use,⁴ and the new coinage, although hailed as the fulfilment of Merlin's prophecy,⁵ was often the cause of heated controversies.⁶

¹ Cf. *Rec. of Carn.* p. 131. 'Item Wallenses non portabunt aliqua arma invasiva nec defensiva ad villas mercatorias, nundinas, ecclesias, seu congregaciones, sub pena amissionis huiusmodi armaturæ et imprisonmenti per unum annum.'

² *Ib.* p. 213. 'Ad communem petitionem factam quod non distringantur ad solvendum tolnetum nisi eodem modo quo fieri consueverunt temporibus regis et principis, videlicet in nundinis tamen. Præceptum est quod tolnetum capiatur nundinis et mercatis secundum quod hactenus est alibi a burgis villis mercatoriis.'

³ *Court Rolls* (P.R.O.), Portf. 215, No. 53, m. 2 (dorse).

⁴ *Rec. of Carn.* p. 213.

⁵ *Brut y Tywysagion* (Rolls Series), s.a. 1279. *Annals of the Coinage* (Ruding, R.), i. 195.

⁶ Powell's (D.) *Hist. of Wales* (1812 edition), App. p. 358. One Cadvan Ddu was fined 6s. 4d. because he refused to take the old money for the new (*sic*). No coins which can be supposed to have been issued by Welsh princes are at this time known to exist. A vague account has been given of some triangular silver coins with a hole in the centre and a circular inscription found in Cardiganshire and Carmarthen, and conjectured to have been the money of some Welsh prince (*Annals of the Coinage* (Ruding, R.), i. 195). The right of coining, we know, was included among the prerogative powers of the Welsh prince (*Ancient Laws and Institutes of Wales* (Rec. Com.), p. 573), and fines imposed in the laws are sometimes rated in money alone (*ib.* p. 141), and sometimes in cattle and money jointly (*ib.* p. 252). King Athelstan imposed on the Welsh an annual tribute in money and kind (*Register of Malmesbury*, Rolls Series, i. 53; cf. *Notes and Queries* (Series I.), ii. 231, 346; *The Cambrian and Caledonian Quarterly Magazine*, v. (1883) 251-255). It has been suggested that the Welsh made use of Saxon and Norman pennies during the tenth, eleventh, and twelfth centuries (*Arch. Camb.* 3rd series, v. 151-2). Mints were established at Chester, Hereford, and Shrewsbury in Athelstan's reign, and at Ludlow and Bristol soon after (Ruding, *op. cit. sup.* ii. 157, 175, 176, 209, 212). Rhuddlan mint is referred to in Domesday (*ib.* p. 240) and coins were struck at Cardiff by Stephen, Henry II., and Henry III. The privilege of a 'mint (bathoriaiyth) at Llandaff' is included among the old privileges of Teilo (*Book of Llandav* (ed. Rhys and Evans), p. 120). Flemish coins (brass pieces) have been found near Caerphilly Castle, which bear the trace of the Flemish artisan (*Archæologia*, ii. 12). In the Pipe Roll of 31 H. I. (Rec. Com.) p. 136, a moneyer (*monetarius*) appears in Pembroke.

The Welshman found that the market and fair narrowed that tribal latitude to which he had been accustomed. Hitherto he had made his bargains in the country (*in patria*): now he had to present his flock in the neighbouring market,¹ and expose himself to the dangers that then accompanied the going and the coming, even though the king had ordered the woods to be cut down to facilitate this traffic.² Again, he could not any longer brew at home for commercial profit, if within a prescribed area of a borough,³ and even when beyond the radius he was subject to the Assize of Beer.

The Welshman of the Principality in the fourteenth century found himself surrounded with a body of rules the fixedness of which he had not dreamt of before, though his neighbours in the Marches had already felt these restraining influences as tenants of a Norman lordship.

This process of centralising the commercial transactions of the tribal community, or the growth of commercial privileges, must form the chief feature in the story of Trade and Industry in Wales during the twelfth and thirteenth centuries. The records available allow of no other general treatment.

¹ *Rec. of Carn.* p. 212. 'Ad communem petitionem factam quod singuli possint emere et vendere victualia, equos, boves, et vaccas pro sustentatione sua quilibet vicinus de alio in patria extra mercata et nundinas. Ita quod pro huius empcionibus vel vendicionibus non occasionentur seu amercientur et similiter.' Concurrent with this there was a general outcry against the obvious inconvenience occasioned by the ordinance that one from each house should attend the market once a week, whether he had business or not, the express object being to add to the number of people in the market (*ad multiplicandum populum in foro*). The reply to both these petitions was in the form of a compromise; those having no business to transact were not forced to attend, and in the case of travellers and those far removed from markets, necessities of life, as milk, butter, and cheese, could be sold *in patria*.

² See below, p. 139.

³ See *Royal Charters and Hist. Documents of Carmarthen* (1878), by J. R. Daniel-Tyssen, p. 24; *Rec. of Carn.* p. 139; and *Min. Acc.* 1219-13 (date 1322), where John ap Saer and four others are fined because they brewed beer and mead within five miles (*leuca*) of the town of Carmarthen. In North Wales brewing for purposes of sale was forbidden in districts within eight miles (*leuca*) of a borough (Additional MS. 33372, f. 8). Cf. Dugdale's *Monasticon*, vi. pt. 2 p. 1898.

The extant evidence for the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries throws more light upon the character of Welsh trade and industry. We are enabled to supplement the general evidence of the charter by the minuter details of the account.

For the sake of clearness we treat of Industry and Commerce in Wales during the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries under two sections :—(1) Internal ; (2) External.

The internal section is subdivided into five minor sections—the first two dealing with the activity of the country under the general headings of (1) Agriculture and (2) The Forest ; the next two deal with the activity of the country and of the town, *i.e.* with (3) The Fisheries, and (4) The Wool Trade and the Cloth Industry. The last (5) section deals with the town as a factor in the Internal Trade. The External Trade is wholly concerned with the activity of the Welsh ports.

Tabulated they appear thus :

Industry and Commerce in Wales during the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries	{	Internal I	1. Agriculture . . .	}	Activity of the Country
			2. The Forest . . .		
			3. The Fisheries . . .	}	Activity of the Country and of the Town
			4. The Wool Trade and the Cloth Industry .		
			5. The Towns . . .		
	{	External II	{ Exports Imports }	The Ports .	Activity of the Towns

I. INTERNAL TRADE

1. *Agriculture*

The general improvement which is perceptible in the state of Welsh agriculture after the Norman conquest may doubtless be attributed to the clearing of forest lands as well as to the influence of the feudal system as a factor in economic development.¹

The clearing of the forest was essential to the successful advance of English arms,² and was, too, the result of the pious

¹ See Owen's *Pembrokeshire* (Cymmrodorion, Record Series, No. I., ed. Dr. Henry Owen), p. 61, for a suggested influence of the laws of primogeniture and gavelkind upon agricultural economy.

² P. 139 below.

exercise of the energetic monks.¹ This good work was still going on. The monks of Basingwerk received a grant of the wood of Getly in Flintshire, in 1278, on condition that within three years they cause the wood to be rooted up.² The national abbey of Ystrad Flur was rebuilt in 1300 upon the understanding that all woods and ways around it should be cut down,³ and the moors of Monmouthshire, to the south-east, still bear indelible traces of the monk as the pioneer of agriculture.⁴

But in spite of the new impetus given to agriculture by the clearing of forest lands, and the gradual disappearance of the tribal economy, Wales was not a great corn-producing country during the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries.

'Wales,' according to William of Newborough (Newburgh) in the twelfth century, 'possesses excellent pastures for the feeding of cattle, but few fields, and those bearing little wheat; it does not provide its own people with sufficient nourishment without the importation of supplies from the neighbouring English provinces.'⁵ This is equally true of Wales in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries. Owing to the influx of English inhabitants, there was an increased demand for corn, the normal production of which was checked at this time by special causes.

The petty revolts of the fourteenth century, and the national rising of Owen Glyndwr in the fifteenth, had marked effects in this direction. Grinding mills were levelled to the ground, and the inhabitants, from sheer terror, refrained from sowing their seed.⁶ Some of the more timid left their lands,

¹ See *History of Margam Abbey* (Birch), pp. 14, 46, 60, 180, *230.

² *Cal. Pat. Rolls* (1272-81), p. 256.

³ *Ib.* (1292-1301), p. 499.

⁴ Williams's *Hist. of Monmouthshire*, p. 357. For the influence of the monk on the moor- and marsh-lands of Glamorgan, see note 1 above.

⁵ *Chronicles of the Reigns of Stephen, Henry II., and Richard I.* (Rolls Series), i. 107.

⁶ See *Min. Acc.* 1170-4-5 as to the revolt of Madoc ap Llewelyn in the North, 1294; for the similar influence of the rising of Llewelyn Bren in the South (1316) see *Min. Acc.* 1202-6-9. Copious extracts of the latter accounts are given in the *Cardiff Records*, i. 107-49. The widespread influence of the national rebellion under Glyndwr may be gathered in great part from the *Ministers Accounts* (P.R.O. General Series) relating to Wales from 1400 to 1420.

and it was common for the bond-tenants of the royal manors to flee to the marshes.¹

With the Black Death began, we know, the tendency for the conversion of arable land into pasture.² Apart from this there was a general scarcity of corn in Wales during the period.

On the Close Roll of 1331, we find permission given to two merchants, named David le Palmer and Hugh le Mareys, to take 500 quarters of corn to Wales from the neighbourhood of Bridgwater, notwithstanding the previous proclamation to the contrary, the king, we are told, compassionating the estate of the Welsh people, where there is a great scarcity of corn.³ In one of the earliest manorial accounts we possess for Wales, giving particulars of the grange in the manors of the lordship of Glamorgan in 1263, the majority of the seed (including wheat, rye, and oats) for sowing purposes was acquired by purchase. The document is particularly interesting and valuable in so far as it illustrates the quantity sown per Welsh acre, and the amount paid per quarter.⁴ The native diet of meat and milk found no favour with the foreign element of the Welsh populace.⁵ The burgesses of Haverford brought a thousand quarters of English corn into Wales in 1331,⁶ as did the merchants of Dublin, less 200 quarters, about forty years later.⁷ The English garrisons that were placed in the North Welsh castles made their bread from corn purchased at Chester and elsewhere.⁸

The chief wealth of the country during this epoch lay in

¹ *Acts of the Privy Council*, 1417, p. 231. Petition from the bond-tenants of Merioneth, Carnarvon, and Anglesey who fled to the Marches in the time of war, that they may return and inhabit the seignory where they were born. Cf. *Min. Acc.* 1305-8.

² *Transactions of the Cymmrodorion Society*, 1902-3.

³ *Cal. Close Rolls* (1330-33), p. 284.

⁴ *Min. Acc.* Bundle 1202-1. *Comptus* Roll of the 'Lands of Richard de Clare in Glamorgan' in the custody of Humphrey de Bohun.

⁵ Cf. *Hist. Essays* (Owens College, 1902), p. 117.

⁶ *Cal. Pat. Rolls* (1330-34), p. 80.

⁷ *Ib.* (1377-1381), p. 237.

⁸ E.g. *Min. Acc.* 1305-17, and other Chamberlain accounts of North Wales.

its extensive pastures, its herds of cattle, and in its large flocks of sheep. It is in mountainous Radnor, with its pinfolds for the marking of cattle and the catching of sheep, rather than in fertile Anglesea, with its mills for grinding corn, that we recognise the prevailing tendencies of Welsh industry and commerce during the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries.

This fact explains the items contained in the market and murage accounts of the local towns—the organs of internal trade. It also colours the custom accounts of the ports—the dépôts of external trade, where wool, woollens, cloth, and hides are generally to be found. It will further illustrate the bent of the native industries. Welsh industry, at this time, finds its chief scope in the fulling-mill rather than in the coal-pit. Sheep-farming, dairy-keeping, and cloth-weaving were the staple branches of industry in medieval Wales.

2. *The Forest*

An item of considerable importance in the industry and commerce of medieval Wales is the many-sided activity connected with its forests.

The cutting down of woods in Wales forms one of the permanent features of English policy during the Middle Ages. What Henry II. did in the woods of Ceiriog for military purposes in 1164,¹ Henry III. does for commercial objects in the Forest of Towy in 1223.² Edward I. in 1278 orders the woods in the Montgomery district to be cut for the common weal of his subjects.³ This policy improved the conditions both of trade and agriculture.

Fuel and divers materials for building operations were supplied from the forests, each district drawing its requirements from the local forest.

The de Braoses, in their early charters to the burgesses of Swansea, allowed them free access to the forests of Gowerland,

¹ *Brut y Tywysogion* (Rolls Series), p. 201.

² *Cal. Pat. Rolls* (1216–25), p. 414.

³ *Ib.* (1272–81), p. 270. Cf. *ib.* (1216–25), p. 424.

where they got deadwood and turf for purposes of fuel, and oak for building and repairing their houses, and the ships and boats that were at last a-building.¹ The Earls of Pembroke, too, preserved their principal forest of Coedtraeth for the supply of timber for the use of the castle as well as for the repairs of the mill.²

Wales was famous for its timber. We find that the monks of Abingdon received timber from the Welsh districts to repair their house early in the twelfth century. Wagons with twelve oxen attached to each performed the carriage, and the journey to and fro occupied seven weeks.³

Cilgerran forest in Pembroke,⁴ and Dolvorwyn forest in Montgomery,⁵ were noted for their oaks, and it was with Welsh oaks from the forest of Hay that the citizens of Hereford sometimes repaired their six gates and five bridges.⁶

Sufficient timber and stone for building and repairing purposes were supplied by the native forests, the labour being chiefly performed by Welshmen. Welsh carpenters were frequently engaged in the cutting and squaring of wood, in the construction of mill wheels, or the making of joists &c.⁷ Welsh carriers were commonly employed to convey materials from the forest to the castle, or other place where building operations were being carried on. For example, one Madoc Cragh with his sixty-four companions, all with their pack-horses, conveyed timber and tiles (*cindulas*) from Beddgelert to the town of Carnarvon for the roofing of the royal granary there. Each horseman received threepence as wages.⁸ Water

¹ L. Dillwyn's *Contrib. to the Hist. of Swansea*, pp. 4-5.

² Fenton's *Hist. Tour through Pembrokeshire*, p. 465.

³ *Chronicon Monast. de Abingdon* (Rolls Series), ii. 122.

⁴ See next page.

⁵ *Cal. Close Rolls* (1272-79), p. 434.

⁶ *Ib.* (1330-33), p. 223. For similar instances see *Roll of the Household Expenses of Bp. Swinfield* (Camden Soc.), i. 153; also Hereford MSS. (Rep. of Hist. MSS. Com.), p. 286.

⁷ E.g. *Min. Acc.* 1227-7, 1223-8, 1224-6; Exchequer Q. R. Acc. 486-9, 487-1.

⁸ Exchequer Q. R. Acc. (Bundle 486-9), circa 23-29 Ed. I.

carriage was utilised when feasible. Oaks were brought from Cilgerran¹ to Cardigan in the king's barges² on the river Teify, as were oaks from the forest of Snowdon despatched to various districts in North Wales from the little towns of Llanrwst and Trefriw by the passage of the Conway.³ The small Egrin stream was employed to convey stone from a free quarry of that name to the castle works of Harlech,⁴ as was the Towy, on a larger scale to Carmarthen, from a quarry near by called 'La Black.'⁵

There is no evidence to indicate an extensive export trade in timber. Native demand apparently regulated the trade. Scaffold poles were sometimes imported from Ireland,⁶ as were planking boards in small quantities from the same place, as well as from England.⁷ The port of Cardiff was early a *dépôt* for the sale of timber.⁸

Under the issues of the forest (*exitus forestæ*)⁹ or the profits of the manor (*exitus manerii*)¹⁰ we find sparse reference to medieval mining in Wales. Where operations had assumed an importance worthy of distinction, a separate item *exitus mineræ*,¹¹ finds place in the manorial account. Mining, however, in medieval Wales has none of the distinctiveness assigned to it by the skill of the Roman miner in ancient times, and by the speculation and individual enterprise of the

¹ Exchequer Q. R. Acc. 487-19; *Min. Acc.* 1223-6, 1306-7.

² Royal boats were commonly kept at Carmarthen, Carnarvon, and other castle towns to facilitate the victualling, &c. Like those in use on the important ferries, they were frequently farmed at an annual rent. Private boats engaged in the coasting trade between the Welsh ports were sometimes hired for this purpose.

³ Exchequer Q. R. Acc. 485-30, 487-1, 3, 8.

⁴ *Ib.* 485-26.

⁵ *Ib.* 487-9.

⁶ Jones and Freeman, *Hist. of St. Davids*. 'Liber Communis of St. Davids,' App. IV. p. 320. This 'book' throws goodly light upon the many wants of the Cathedral Church of St. Davids, and the manner in which they were supplied (pp. 369-89).

⁷ *Min. Acc.* 1305-17. Three thousand boards bought at Chester and Lancashire, and conveyed to Beaumaris in a Liverpool ship, 1399.

⁸ *Cardiff Records* (ed. Matthews), i. 106, 137 (tolls of timber sold there in 1314, 2s. 5d.), 162.

⁹ See p. 147, note 1, below.

¹⁰ *History of Neath Abbey* (Birch), p. 237.

¹¹ *E.g.* p. 146, note 4, below.

modern age. It could never be far developed in a manorial or self-sufficing economy, the horizon of demand was too narrow to encourage production far beyond the adequate supply of local needs.

From the time of the Romans to the period of the Norman Conquest we have little authentic evidence of mining in Wales, save what may be inferred from the prominence of the smith in the Old Welsh Codes, and from the particular skill of the Welsh in the manufacture of weapons of war. Welsh arrows and spears, as we have already seen, formed part of their external trade in the thirteenth century.

The next authentic glimpse we have is the development of the mineral resources of the country upon manorial lines. Gilbert de Clare, we are told, found silver, lead, and iron mines in his land of Glamorgan in the year 1227,¹ and the monks of Margam about the same time were imprivileged by the local lords of Aberafon and Cornely to dig for coal, lead, and iron in their respective districts.² Later in the century, new life was given to mining operations in the Principality,³ under royal patronage, in connection with the building of castles and the maintenance of town walls. The Crown, as a rule, jealously preserved its mining rights,⁴ but during the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries exhibits a growing tendency to farm its privileges at a money rent.⁵ This cleared the way for the private adventure and the individual enterprise of the Elizabethan era, whence the modern (albeit the golden) period of Welsh mining takes its origin.

The workings during the Middle Ages were small, the development being hampered by both political and social circumstances. Colliers, charcoal-burners, lead-miners, and others engaged in mining operations often left the forest

¹ *Monastic Annals* (Rolls Series, ed. Luard), i. 70.

² *History of Margam Abbey* (Birch), pp. 197, 257, 274.

³ See pp. 144–5 below.

⁴ E.g. *Cal. Pat. Rolls* (1476–85), p. 60. Reservation of mining rights in Warthrinion, Cwmtaiddwr, and other Marcher districts granted by Edward IV. to his eldest son, the Prince of Wales.

⁵ See pp. 146–7 below.

through dread of a local or national revolt, and their numbers were often lessened in the venture.¹ Labourers, particularly skilled labourers,² were scarce at best.³ The position was the more embarrassing from the fact of the immobility of labour. The prior and convent of Goldcliff in 1424 (seventy-five years after the undoings of the Black Death), anxious to repair the damage done to the walls of their convent by the sudden inundations of the sea, inform the king of their sorry plight, requesting the aid of stone-cutters and other labourers, 'since there are such customs in the said county of Wales that no labourers will leave the lordships wherein they dwell to do any work outside such lordships, so that there is a general dearth of labourers.'⁴

Incidental notices like the above throw interesting light upon the conditions of labour in Wales during the Middle Ages. Generally speaking, labour was scarce, immobile,⁵ and subject to occasional interruption. The demand for mineral goods, as we have suggested above, was hardly a commercial one, though with the rise of towns and the development of a maritime trade it was gradually becoming more so. Here we have part explanation of the fact that the mineral resources

¹ *Min. Acc.* 1202-7. Account of Bartholomew de Badelesmere of the lands of G. de Clare, 1316. . . . 'Exitus forestæ [of Senghenydd]:—Idem respondet de iiij l. xvij s. de diversis carpentariis operantibus in bosco hoc anno. Et de xix s. receptis de diversis cariagiis mortui bosci hoc anno. Et non plus quia operadores in puteis carbonum recesserunt de foresta in guerra Hawysæ. . . .

' . . . Exitus forestæ [of 'Maghay']. Et de xx l. xv s. iiij d. ob. de Dccc et xxx. duodenis et lx. summagiis carbonum factis et venditis in bosco hoc anno pro duodena vj d. Et sciendum quod minus respondetur de exitu eiusdem forestæ hoc anno quia plures homines qui solebant exercere dictam forestam destruebantur tempore guerræ.' See also *Rot. Parl.* i. 62.

² *Cal. Close Rolls* (1313-23), p. 127. Order to the keeper of the forest of Dene to deliver to Hugh le Despenser, the younger, lord of Glamorgan, in Wales, twelve of the king's iron-miners in his bailiwick fit for the work of iron-mines in Glamorgan at Hugh's expense. The like to the sheriffs of Somerset and Devon for twelve lead-miners each.

³ Cf. p. 145, note 2, below.

⁴ *Cal. Pat. Rolls* (1422-29), p. 265.

⁵ The application of the above-quoted instance of this to Wales in general is modified by the fact that the lords of the West and Marcher districts, as compared with those of other districts, are said to have kept a firmer grip upon their bondmen.

of Wales were not sufficiently developed during the Middle Ages to cope adequately with the native demand.

The local quarries, moreover, yielded sufficient stone and limestone.¹ North Wales was remarkable for its slate-stones; they were farmed in 1444 at 6*l.* 13*s.* 4*d.* by Hugo Huls and Meredith ap Thomas,² and in 1509 at 7*l.* 6*s.* 8*d.* by one Ieuan ap Tudor ap Dycus.³ Anglesea, notably the commote of Twrcelyn,⁴ was the chief *dépôt* for millstones in North Wales.⁵ Millstones met with in the South Wales accounts come generally from the Forest of Dean, Tintern, and the Trillek quarries in Monmouthshire.⁶ The districts of Wormsley, Kingsland, and Ludlow in the county of Hereford,⁷ Norton near Presteign,⁸ and Corndon forest in Montgomery⁹ supplied the Mid-Wales and border districts. Hand-grindstones and millstones of Wales appear among the items of the murage custumals of Dublin about the middle of the fourteenth century,¹⁰ which seems to show that they formed part of the exchange trade between Wales and Ireland.

Lead was produced on a small scale, mainly in Flintshire.

¹ Exchequer Q. R. Acc. (P.R.O.) *re* works of Welsh castles, *e.g.* Bundle 486-29—stone acquired for the building of Carnarvon Castle and the repairing of the town quay from six local quarries, three of which were situated in Anglesea; and Bundle 485-23—limestone brought from Talgarth to Builth. The castle of Drussellan in South Wales was built from stone found in a quarry near by (*ib.* 487-9). The Abbey of Llanthony was constructed from the freestone of the surrounding mountains (*Itin. Kamb.* (Rolls Series), p. 45).

² *Min. Acc.* 1226-5.

³ *Ib.* 23-24 H. VII., No. 1621.

⁴ *Rot. Parl.* iv. 184a. The 'querrera molarium' in the commote in 1422 was worth 7*l.* yearly.

⁵ A pair of millstones from the quarry of Mathavarn was conveyed in 1338 by sea to the port of Barmouth and thence by land to the mill of Llanegryn (*Min. Acc.* 1232-10). Anglesea millstones were brought to the mill of Carreghova, in Denbigh 1505 (*Min. Acc.* 20, H. VII., No. 1659).

⁶ *Min. Acc.* 1202-7—millstones brought from St. Briavel to Newport (Mon.); cf. *Cal. Close Rolls* (1227-31), p. 373. *Cardiff Records* (ed. Matthews), i. 106—for millstones bought at Tintern for the mill of Rhymney; Thorold Rogers, *Hist. of Agric. Prices*, i. 511, *re* Trillek quarries; cf. *Min. Acc.* 1208-5 for millstones sent to Pembroke from Chepstow.

⁷ *Min. Acc.* 1209-6.

⁸ *Ib.* 24 H. VII. No. 1684.

⁹ *Ib.* No. 1685.

¹⁰ *Calendar of Ancient Records of Dublin* (ed. Gilbert), i. 16, 246.

Edward I. allowed his miners of Englefield to take sufficient timber from the royal woods for the founding of lead and other metals.¹ A year later, 1284, a like privilege was given to the burgesses of Flint.² After a diligent search, good lead-mines were discovered in the commote of Geneur Glyn, near Aberystwyth.³ These, however, were not extensively worked owing to the insufficiency of labourers, there being only four 'operators' in 1312.⁴ Lead was largely used in the castle works, and also met the small requirements of the fishing-net. The chief sources of supply for the Mid-Wales district were found in the minor workings of the Plinlimmon hills (Morrug) and in the low-lying districts of Montgomery and Shropshire.⁵ An inconsiderable amount was imported

¹ *Cal. Pat. Rolls*, 1281-92, p. 69. For this privilege the miners of Englefield pay an annual fine of 20s., and in return for the wood employed in smelting the Crown took a sixth part of the profit made. The chief mines were at Holywell and Vaynol, the annual profits before the pestilence being about 5*l*. Only 4s. is returned for the year following the pestilence, and no more because the greater part of the miners were dead, and those that survived were unwilling to work (*Min. Acc.* 1186-4). The Crown profits (29-31 Edw. III.) amounted to 13*l*. 13s. 7d. (*Min. Acc.* 1186-13). In the reign of Richard II. no lead was sold, the lead smelted being reserved for the garnishment of the castles and manors of Chester, Flint, and North Wales (*Min. Acc.* 1488-8, 1489-5). Similarly lead was smelted with fuel from the royal woods at Ewloe and Baghegre (*Min. Acc.* 1186-13). One John Hokes farmed the lead-mines of the entire county in 1423 at 3*l*. 18s. 9d. (*Min. Acc.* 1191-11). The mines of Holywell and Vaynol yielded no profit in 1509, because no one wished to arrent them (*Min. Acc.* 24 H. VII. No. 1590).

² *Cal. Pat. Rolls* (1281-92), p. 133.

³ *Min. Acc.* 1218-1. Among the necessary expenses of the Chamberlain appears the following entry: 'Et in conductione diversorum operariorum fodientium et aliis necessariis expensis appositis mense Junii anno præsentis [1301] circa mineram plumbi scrutandam et demum inventam in comoto de Geneurglyn iuxta Lampadarvaur—xiiij s. iiij d.'

⁴ *Min. Acc.* 1218-9. The following note follows a detailed account of the lead-mine near Llanbadarn: 'Memorandum quod per totum prædictum tempus [referring to a period of five years] non fuerunt nisi quatuor operarii quia plures inveniri non potuerunt. Et cum minera est bona si invenirentur operarii sufficientes.' It is rather disappointing to find no early references to other Cardigan-shire lead-mines. These apparently began to be developed at a later date. Lead from the district of Strata Florida was used in repairing the castle of Cardigan in 1451 (*Min. Acc.* 1224-4). See also *Black Book of St. Davids* (ed. J. W. Willis-Bund), p. lxx.

⁵ Exchequer Q. R. Acc. 485-20.

from England, Chester¹ and Bristol² being the chief ports of supply.

Another commodity, produced in small quantities and occasionally imported, was sea-coal. It was used not so much for the purposes of fuel as in the burning of limestone and the manufacture of iron and other necessities, such as hinges, nails, locks, &c.³

The importance of the scanty references to coal-mining in Wales prior to the reign of Henry VIII. lies not in the extent of the industry which they represent (which was comparatively small), but in the fact that in these little beginnings we have the origin of what is to-day a great factor in British commerce, namely the South Wales coal-field.

We have evidence of collieries at Ewloe,⁴ Hopedale, and Mostyn⁵ in Flintshire, at Brymbo⁶ in Denbigh, and at 'Eskeiviok'⁷ in Anglesea. But more especially in South Wales from the forest of Coedtraeth in Pembroke⁸ to the

¹ Exchequer Q. R. Acc. 485-21, 486-6; *Min. Acc.* 1212-1. Cf. *Cal. Rot. Pat.* (1281-92), p. 358. Safe-conduct for Thomas le Lou of Newark, Robert his son, Ralph de Byrtune, and other tenants of the county of Chester and the March of Wales, trading to the Isle of Man for lead (*minera*) for the works of the castles in Wales. The lead produced in the Flintshire mines was sometimes specially reserved for this purpose (*Min. Acc.* 1186-13, and 1188-8). Cf. note 1 on the preceding page.

² *Arch. Journal*, vii. 239. Lead brought from Bristol to Criccieth and Carnarvon.

³ *Min. Acc.* 1305-18.

⁴ Coal was raised mostly in the demesne lands there, and in the freehold lands of one Blethin ap Ithel Ammel. The mines were farmed in 1349 at 5*l.* 6*s.* 8*d.* (*Min. Acc.* 1186-4), rising in 1358 to 6*l.* 13*s.* 4*d.* (*Min. Acc.* 1186-13). A similar rent was returned in 1382 (*Min. Acc.* 1188-8), which was increased in 1393 to 9*l.* 13*s.* 4*d.* (*Min. Acc.* 1189-9). At a later date the coal profits were included in the general farm of the manors, thereby rendering the coal returns indistinct (*Min. Acc.* 1-2 H. VII. No. 1565).

⁵ The coal-mines of the Hopedale district were arrented at 3*l.* in 1393 as in 1359 (*Min. Acc.* 1189-9); those of Mostyn in 1423 at 3*l.* 6*s.* 8*d.* (*Min. Acc.* 1191-1).

⁶ *Min. Acc.* 16-17 H. VII. No. 1654. Farm of the sea-coal there let to John Puleston at 3*s.* 4*d.*

⁷ *Min. Acc.* 1153-6, s. n. 'Meney.'

⁸ Coal and limestone, of local production, were brought by sea from Pembroke to Cardigan in 1418 (*Min. Acc.* 1222-14). The coal profits at Coedtraeth

forests of Senghenydd, Glynhoddna, Glyntaf, and Rhymney in Monmouth.¹ It was in the forest of Kilvey in Gower that the industry flourished most at this time, the clear profits in 1400 amounting to about 90*l.* per annum. The bailiff's account for this particular year is most minute, and is undoubtedly one of the most important documents we possess relating to the early history of coal-mining in Wales. It sets forth in detail both the method and cost of production.²

Sea-coal was imported in small quantities almost invariably for the works of the castle.³

Iron was manufactured in various districts,⁴ but the

n 1454 (*Rot. Parl.* v. 260) were worth (beyond reprisals) 2*l.* 3*s.* 4*d.*, which were farmed thirty-eight years later (1492) at 2*l.* 13*s.* 4*d.* by R. Robyn and Jankyn More. Similar mines were worked at Roch and Pulle, the annual rent in 1478 being 3*l.* 6*s.* 8*d.* (*Min. Acc.* 1208-1). One D. Bowen farmed the same in 1492 at 13*s.* 4*d.* (*Min. Acc.* 16-17 H. VII. No. 1650). Interesting and valuable notices of the coal industry in Pembrokeshire will be found in Owen's *Pembrokeshire* (Cymmrodorion Record Series, No. 1, ed. Dr. Henry Owen).

¹ *Min. Acc.* 1202-7. The fact that the South Wales coal field lay so much within the Marcher districts explains the sparse references we have of its early development. The few glimpses we have occur during the minority of an heir, or upon the permanent reversion of a lordship by forfeiture or otherwise into the hands of the Crown. From an inquisition taken upon the death of Gilbert de Clare, it will be seen that the mines at Cevenkarnau were farmed at 20*s.* a year in 1307 (*Cardiff Records*, i. 262). The coal-pits of Llannedu, in the district of Senghenydd, let at 5*s.* in 1314, produced the increased rent of 26*s.* 8*d.* in 1316 (*Min. Acc.* 1202-7). 3*s.* 4*d.* was the total rent of the lower Neath mines in 1492 (*Cardiff Records*, i. 173). Coal was more successfully worked at Wendraeth Vawr, in the lordship of Kidwelly, before 1533, the normal rent of 53*s.* 4*d.* falling to 28*s.* during the year (*Min. Acc.* 24 Hen. VIII. No. 755).

² *Min. Acc.* 1202-15. Cf. *Inq. post mortem*, 3 H. VI. No. 25.

³ Exchequer Q. R. Acc. 485-27, 486-1 (from Halston), 487-2 (from Tranmere). Cf. Galloway's *Hist. of Coal Mining*, p. 11, and the Chamberlain Accounts of North and South Wales, *passim*.

⁴ The native production of iron was sporadic. See Jones's *Hist. of Breconshire*, p. 538, as to its domestic character. The ironworks of Rhuddlan are first mentioned in Domesday (Ellis's *Introduction to Domesday*, i. 138). Local furnaces are occasionally referred to in connection with the profits of the forest. The royal forges at Dolpenmaen and Penmaghno in Nantconway were farmed by one John Lylie during the reign of Richard II. (*Min. Acc.* 1215-1). The forge of Ardudwy (co. Merioneth) was successfully worked during the years 1418-20 (*Min. Acc.* 1203-10-11). Two Welshmen farmed the iron 'minera' of Ewglysegle (parish of Ruabon, co. Denbigh) at a yearly rent of 3*s.* 4*d.* before 1492 (*Min. Acc.* 17 Hen. VII. No. 1654), and iron ore was extracted from the district of

industry was apparently not very extensive. Spanish iron was frequently imported,¹ in the supply of which as well as of English iron the merchants of Chester played a prominent part.²

Before leaving the subject of mining in medieval Wales we may note the want of evidence to illustrate the early working of the Cardiganshire silver-mines. There were two inspectors of silver at Cardigan in 1340,³ and operations, we are told, were being carried on under improved conditions in the silver-mines of Cwmsymlog in North Cardiganshire about 1587.⁴ Less is known of the silver-mines noticed by Giraldus in the district of Flintshire⁵ than of those founded by the Earl of Gloucester in Glamorgan.⁶

Other profits issuing from the forest, in addition to pannage and other customary dues, were those received from the commodities of birds and bees. Honey and wax were produced and sold in small quantities. The profits were insignificant, the local markets being well supplied with honey and wax from England, France, and Spain. The royal huntsmen, too, frequently searched the Welsh forests for nests of young falcons, and the well-stocked deer parks were carefully preserved.

This brief outline of the many-sided activity of the forest will perhaps serve to indicate its import in the industrial economy of medieval Wales. It supplied ample fuel for ordinary wants. It yielded sufficient timber and stone for building and repairing purposes; its mining, though developing, fell short of the native demand. All this, tending to the gradual decay of the forest, led to improvement in the general conditions of agriculture and in the means of commercial traffic.

South Irvon (co. Brecon) before, but not during, the year 1509 (*Min. Acc.* 24 H. VII. No. 1607).

¹ Exchequer Q. R. Acc. 486-I, 16-27.

² *Ib.* 485-27, 16-27; *Min. Acc.* 1215-5 (iron from the Forest of Dean).

³ *Cal. Close Rolls* (1339-41), p. 396.

⁴ *Landsd. Coll.* (British Museum), 55, pp. 81-82.

⁵ *Itin. Kamb.* (Rolls Series), p. 137.

⁶ See p. 142 above.

3. Fisheries.

We have already referred to the Roman genesis of the fishing industry in Wales.¹ Saving the account of the fisheries of the Wye and the Severn in Domesday Book,² little is known of the early fisheries of Wales beyond the fact that early chroniclers include 'fish' in their general lists of the natural products of the country.³ To this Giraldus Cambrensis adds some curious information of his own.⁴

For new light upon the development of Welsh fisheries we must turn to the story of the town and the monastery. Monastic charters generally empower the monks to erect weirs or take fish in the neighbouring streams. Strata Florida had its weir in the Ystwyth,⁵ and the house of Margam took fish in the Avon, the Ely, and the Taff.⁶ The Welsh bard, who was not always on friendly terms with the monks, did a little fishing in the smaller streams. A brief description of the net he employed is preserved in one of the Welsh lyrics. Two staves were roughly fastened to a hempen or tow-twined net, with small pieces of lead hanging at the base to keep it down. The bard suggests that such an article was of great advantage in Lent, and incidentally refers to the crowds that flocked around him each Thursday night looking for their Friday's provision.⁷

Fishing assumes a more industrial aspect in the vicinity of a town, where the local market supplied facilities for sale.

¹ P. 123 above.

² Ellis, *Introduction to Domesday*, i. 142.

³ *Chronicles of the Reigns of Stephen, Henry II., and Richard I.* (Rolls Series), iii. 11; *William of Malmesbury* (Rolls Series), p. 308, '[Wallia] . . . piscium ferax'; *Eulog. Hist.* (Rolls Series), ii. 123, '[Wallia] terra fecunda . . . piscibus.'

⁴ *Itin. Kamb.* (Rolls Series), pp. 33, 114, 136, 171.

⁵ *Cal. Pat. Rolls* (1422-29), p. 295. *Inspeximus* of a charter (circa 1184) including a grant of this privilege.

⁶ *History of Margam Abbey* (Birch), pp. 14, 123, 317-8.

⁷ Iolo MSS. (Welsh MSS. Soc.), p. 700. A poem to Ivor of Llanufydd requesting a fishing net, by Meredydd ap Rhys, an eminent poet and clergyman who lived at Ruabon in Denbighshire about 1440 (Williams's *Eminent Welshmen*, s. n.)

The townsmen of Cardigan, with their home-made coracles, made good money out of the salmon of the Teify; for this privilege they gave four of their best fish to the royal bailiff every year. A few fishermen were similarly employed at a place near by, called Llechryd.¹ The Cilgerran fishery in North Pembroke was one of the most profitable in Wales. The weirs here were destroyed by Edward I, owing to their hindrance to river traffic. They were, however, rebuilt in the next reign on the understanding that sufficient passage be left for ships and boats.²

Other towns busily occupied with river fisheries were Conway, Carnarvon, Carmarthen, Cardiff, and Haverford.

The sea-fisheries were inconsiderable. But an abundance of herrings, says the *Brut*, appeared at Aberystwyth in 1206. Twenty-three fishing-boats were engaged there in 1348,³ and the herring prise (*prisa allecium*) for the following year amounted to thirty shillings.⁴ Beaumaris, Barmouth, and Aberdaron were the chief herring ports on the North Wales coast, with Pembroke, Haverford, and notably Tenby on the south coast line.

Merchants of the border towns bringing their merchandise into Wales exchanged their goods, *inter alia*, for fish. Haverford merchants sometimes took their fish⁵ to border markets like Abergavenny.⁶

Herrings, white and red, were usually imported from Ireland. Boats from the South Welsh ports did much of the carrying trade between Bristol and Ireland, taking with them the salt and wine deposited at the native ports by alien or native ships, and returning with herrings, hake, salmon, skins, Irish cloth, &c.⁷

¹ *Min. Acc.* 1218-1.

² *Cal. Pat. Rolls* (1313-17), p. 99.

³ *Min. Acc.* 1221-7.

⁴ *Ib.* 1221-8. Ten years previous to this the '*prisa allecium*' was only 13s., 12d. being charged on each *meise* (*meisa*).

⁵ Hereford MSS. (Rep. of Hist. MSS. Com.), p. 287.

⁶ *Min. Acc.* 1208-1-5.

⁷ See p. 169, below.

4. *The Wool Trade and the Cloth Industry.*

The history of the wool trade in Wales, after 1284, so far as general legislation is concerned, is similar to that of England. Statutes, ordinances, &c., of a general character relating to wool extend to the 'land of Wales,' which term is meant to include the Principality and the Marches.

Customs were leviable on all Welsh wools exported. Cardigan¹ and Haverford² were the chief outports for the passage of wools during the reigns of Edward I. and Edward II. Early in the reign of Edward III.³ the staples for Wales were fixed at Shrewsbury, Carmarthen, and Cardiff. Customs accounts for Wales before the reign of Henry VIII. are unfortunately very rare. Only five fragmentary accounts have survived, all belonging to the reign of Edward II., and relating solely to the port of Haverford.⁴ The account for 1320⁵ is seemingly complete, and shows that 119½ sacks were exported during the year. Cardiff, being the capital of a Marcher lordship, ceased to be a staple town in 1332, when staples were ordered to be held in the king's towns only.⁶ Shrewsbury was still the chief wool market for Mid-Wales, as was Carmarthen for the South. No customs were levied in the North Welsh district until 1339,⁷ when the port of Carnarvon was made subsidiary to the Rhuddlan staple, but we have little evidence of its administration.⁸

¹ *History of the Customs Revenue* (Hubert Hall), ii. 17.

² Haverford is the only Welsh staple town mentioned in the list of staples for 1326, from which wool, woolfells, &c., could be taken to parts beyond sea, *Cal. Close Rolls* (1323-27), p. 585. Shrewsbury and Carmarthen were Welsh staple towns six years later, *ib.* (1330-33), p. 525.

³ *Cal. Pat. Rolls* (1327-30), p. 98.

⁴ *Customs Acc.* (P.R.O.), Bundle 48-1-5.

⁵ *ib.* No. 2.

⁶ *Cal. Pat. Rolls* (1330-33), p. 362.

⁷ *Cal. Close Rolls* (1337-39), p. 199. Thomas de Upton was the first controller of the customs there, appointed September 30, 1339, during pleasure, with such wages as the controllers in the ports of England had used to receive, on condition that he write his rolls with his own hand, stay there continually, and execute the office himself (*Cal. Pat. Rolls* (1338-40), p. 321).

⁸ There are no 'coket' returns for Carnarvon before the time of Henry VII.;

There is reason to believe that the amount of Welsh wool exported was at no time considerable. The Welsh sheep were small, and, excepting those of Radnor,¹ they were of the worst staple. The wools in the parts of Wales are described in 1341 as being 'coarse and of little value, so that for their poorness they are not numbered among wools of any sort of the realm of England.'² They were seldom included in the grants of wools made to the Crown by Parliament. Foreign merchants rarely visited Wales, and, excepting the Welsh wools consigned to Flemish markets by some of the Welsh monastic houses,³ comparatively little was exported, particularly during the late fourteenth and fifteenth centuries.

The Statute Staple of 1353 made Carmarthen the sole staple for Wales. This adoption of a common centre, no doubt, was more convenient for foreign traders, but the policy was not a success. Welshmen found a difficulty in disposing of their surplus wools at the central staple, owing to the paucity of buyers. Welsh merchants who purchased their wools of the country-folk in local fairs were therefore allowed to bring their wools to English staples, but they had first to be sealed (or cocketed) at the Carmarthen staple.⁴ This department of the Carmarthen staple is generally termed the 'staple over the mountains to England,' in contradistinction to the ordinary 'staple by sea.' The inconvenience of this arrangement will be obvious if, for instance, a merchant of North Wales were compelled to go to Carmarthen before passing with his goods to an English

the necessary apparatus (balance and weights) had not been received in 1341 (*Min. Acc.* 1213-14). A few returns exist for the staple at Rhuddlan showing the export of small quantities of Flintshire wools in 1394, 1396, 1397, 1398, 1400 (*Min. Acc.* 1215-5-9). Wools were exported from Beaumaris, subject to the regulations of the Rhuddlan staple, in 1451 (*Min. Acc.* 1216-18), 1466 (1217-4), and 1468 (1217-5).

¹ *Cambrian Quarterly Mag.* iv. 401.

² *Cal. Pat. Rolls* (1341-43), p. 272. Cf. Chetham Soc. Publ. xlvii. 973.

³ *The Growth of English Industry and Commerce* (Dr. Cunningham), vol. i. App. D; *Hist. of Margam Abbey* (Birch), p. 257.

⁴ *Statutes of the Realm* (Rec. Com.), i. 340.

staple. It also often led to unjust exactions. The restriction was ultimately repealed by the Black Prince, who allowed his loyal Welshmen free access to the English staples.¹

A few returns for the Carmarthen staple are preserved amongst the Public Records.

In 1356 the customs² on wool, woolfells, hides, &c., amounted to 156*l.* 18*s.* 10½*d.*; 1357, 147*l.* 4*s.* 0¼*d.*; in 1359 we have the highest total, 215*l.* 12*s.* 0¾*d.*; 1316, 189*l.* 2*s.* 0¼*d.*; 1362, 117*l.* 3*s.* 6*d.*³ At some date subsequent to these returns, and before the year 1379, the 'staple over the mountains' was abolished.⁴ The returns for this and the succeeding years were for the 'sea staple' only, and are as follows:—1379, 31*l.* 5*s.* 4½*d.*; ⁴ 1380, 30*l.* 10*s.* 9½*d.*; ⁵ 1381, 13*l.* 2*s.* 9*d.*; ⁶ 1382, *nil*; ⁷ 1383, 15*l.* 15*s.* 6¼*d.*; ⁸ 1385, 3*l.* 0*s.* 8¼*d.*; 1386, 15*l.* 10*s.* 7*d.*; ⁹ 1387, 12*l.* 4*s.* 2*d.*; ¹⁰ 1390, 17*l.* 3*s.* 5*d.*; ¹¹ 1391, 14*l.* 10*s.* 3*d.*; 1395, 16*l.* 16*s.* 8*d.*; 1397, 27*l.* 11*s.* 6*d.*; 1401, 10*l.* 17*s.* 9*d.*¹²

No returns exist for the period covered by the insurrection of Owen Glyndwr. After this revolt the Carmarthen staple seems to lose its distinctiveness, and accounts for its customs as an ordinary port. It is nominally termed a staple in 1423.¹³

¹ *Min. Acc.* 1306-2.

² The issues of the 'coket' at Carmarthen were farmed by one Nicholas Legge in 1349 and 1350 at 6*l.* 13*s.* 4*d.*; in 1351 and 1352 by Robert de Cheddre and Reginald le Ffrenssh at 40*l.* a year, this presumably including both departments of the staple (*Min. Acc.* 1306-1). This account (23-24 Edward III.) purports to be 'of the year next after the pestilence,' thus placing the date of the pestilence in South Wales at 1349-50. The customs of the Carmarthen staple tally with those of the English staple towns; for each sack of wool 6*s.* 8*d.*, for every 300 woolfells 6*s.* 8*d.*, for each 'diker' (including 10 *corii*) of hides 8*d.* (*Min. Acc.* 1222-9), for each last of hides 13*s.* 4*d.* (*Min. Acc.* 1223-10).

³ *Min. Acc.* 1221-9-13 respectively.

⁴ *Min. Acc.* 1306-2. A note to this effect is included in the Chamberlain's account for this year. Some time before its dissolution the profits of this branch of the staple were farmed at 5*l.* 6*s.* 8*d.* per annum.

⁵ 1306-3.

⁶ 1221-14.

⁷ 1306-6.

⁸ 1306-4.

⁹ 1221-15, 16.

¹⁰ 1222-1.

¹¹ 1306-5. Cf. 1222-3.

¹² 1222-5, 6, 7-8, 9.

¹³ *Cal. Pat. Rolls* (1422-29), p. 181. Licence to John Langley, a merchant of Bristol, to ship wools bought in Wales from the staple of Carmarthen to Bristol and thence across the sea to Calais. In 1432 John Langley transported 61 sacks

During the reigns of Henry VI. and Edward IV. very little export trade was done in Welsh wools.¹

The explanation (apart from circumstances attending the wars of the Roses and other political disturbances) lies, perhaps in the fact that the Welsh wools were mostly utilised by the native fulling mills. These reach the climax of their activity during the later Middle Ages.

The great falling off in the export duties on wools would seem to be hardly compatible with the tendency to convert arable into pasture land at this time,² were it not for the evidence of the growth of a considerable cloth industry in Wales.

Cloth-weaving was one of the domestic arts of the early Welsh. The story of its development reveals one common trait in the development of industry and commerce in Wales, namely, the gradual expulsion of family notions from Welsh economy. In the domain of agriculture we may perceive this in the ordinary circumstance of grinding corn. The hand-mill or quern of the homestead is gradually superseded by the hamlet or district mill.³ In trade it is evident from the centralisation of the commercial transactions of the

of wool in divers ships from the port of Chepstow, together with 41 dikers of 'salted hides' from the port of Carmarthen (*Min. Acc.* 1223-6).

¹ *Min. Acc.* 1223-5 (2 H. VI.), 8-9 (13 H. VI.), 10 (15 H. VI.); * 1224-1 (27 H. VI.), * 2-3 (36 H. VI.), * 5 (1 Edw. IV.), * 6 (2 Edw. IV.), * 7 (3 Edw. IV.), * 9 (6 Edw. IV.), * 1225-1 (7 Edw. IV.), * 2 (8 Edw. IV.), * 3 (13 Edw. IV.), * 4 (14 Edw. IV.); * 5 (15 Edw. IV.), * 6 (16 Edw. IV.), 7 (19 Edw. IV.), 8 (21 Edw. IV.). All the enumerated accounts are those of the Chamberlains of South Wales, which usually include the customs received in ports on the maritime coast between Aberystwyth and Carmarthen. During these particular years the 'custom' on wool, woolfells, and hides was 'nothing' (*nulla*), with the exception that three lasts of hides were customed (*custumata*) at Carmarthen in 1437; as were two sacks of wool and four dikers of hides at the port of Haverford in 1467 (*Min. Acc.* 1224-8). In the accounts marked with an asterisk no prisage of wine was taken.

² P. 138, note 2, above.

³ See *Court Rolls* (P.R.O.), Portf. 215-49, mm. 5 and 9; *ib.* Portf. 215-6, m. 4 (dorse), for instances of tenants fined for holding hand-mills (*mola manualis*), year 1322. Hand-mill stones were hard to find in Wales in 1301 (*Min. Acc.* 1218-1). See *Ancient Laws and Institutes of Wales* (Rec. Com.), p. 31, where every house had its quern or hand-mill.

homestead to the towns. What the town did for trade, the fulling mills, and later the factory, did for the weaving industry.

The *de-domestication* of Welsh economy was the inevitable result of the extension of feudal ideas into Wales. The idea of the manor gradually supplanted that of the tribe in agriculture, industry, and trade. The environment of feudal economy was more fixed, and its organisation more central, and therefore more conducive to economic and commercial development.

The consideration of the weaving industry in Wales may be divided into three periods, according as its place of operation was the homestead, the fulling mill, and the factory.

During the early period weaving was one of the many activities of the homestead. Instruction to all members of the kin in this domestic art formed one of the important functions which the headman of the kindred had to fulfil. The industry during this period, we may take it, was promiscuously scattered over the inhabited parts of tribal Wales, where the wools and flax of local growth were wrought by the native looms into articles of clothing and other necessities of domestic use. Members of the royal households received their woollen garments from the king and their linen garments from the queen.¹ The early Welsh were also adepts at making a rough kind of cloth or blanket called *brychan*. But they were no manufacturers: Giraldus makes a special point of this.² There was apparently little or no production of cloth for purposes of gain. In fact, English cloth was one of the necessities imported into Wales at this time.³

Circumstances attending the Norman conquest imparted new vigour to the industry. The introduction of the new monasteries, with their improved conditions of farming, led to a more successful growth of wool, and the superior skill of the monk artisan is said to have improved the native art of weaving.⁴ The plantation of the Flemish colony of artisans

¹ *Ancient Laws and Institutes* (Rec. Com.), pp. 3, 145, 147, 180, 651.

² *Descr. Kamb.* (Rolls Series), p. 184, and p. 128, note 2, above.

³ *Ib.* pp. 218-19.

⁴ *Hist. of Neath Abbey* (Birch), p. 29.

in Pembrokeshire had a like effect, notwithstanding the racial antipathy that must have thwarted their early efforts. Giraldus particularly commends the industrial energy and the commercial instinct of these people.¹ We find that Welsh cloth (called 'keyneth') was bought for the everyday use of Bishop Swinfield's household at Hereford in 1290.²

With the appearance of fulling mills in the fourteenth and following centuries, Welsh cloth came to be manufactured upon a scale that soon made it the most considerable and at the same time the most important article of Welsh trade.

Fulling mills appear in Wales early in the reign of Edward II., just at the time when fulling mills were being introduced into Lancashire.³

These first appear in the South Welsh districts in the track of the Flemings between Bristol and Pembroke. By the close of the century mills were fairly well distributed throughout the whole of Wales—particularly in the Marcher districts of Gwent,⁴ Morganwg,⁵ Gower,⁶ Pembroke,⁷ Brecon

¹ *Itin. Camb.* (Rolls Series), p. 83 and note 2.

² *Roll of the Household Expenses of Bishop Swinfield*, 1289-90 (Camden Soc.), i. 111. 'In iiij pannis de keyneth, quorum unus erat pro domino, xix li. vj s. viij d.' Keyneth, a sort of coarse Welsh cloth, a strong cloth for ordinary wear (*ib.* vol. ii. Glossary, *q.v.*).

³ *Chetham Society Publications*, xliii. 637. Cf. the Pipe Roll of the Bishopric of Winchester, 1208-9. Introd. xxvii, as to the earliest recorded fulling mills in England.

⁴ There were fulling mills at Usk and Caerleon-on-Usk in 1314 (*Min. Acc.* 1202-6); the former was rebuilt after a prolonged decay in 1517, in which year the latter mill was farmed at 13s. 4d. (*Min. Acc.* 7 H. VII. No. 87). Mills appear at Maghay (Magor) and Deffren Ebor in 1316 (*Min. Acc.* 1202-7), and at Rhymney about 1458 (*Min. Acc.* 14 H. VII. No. 1662).

⁵ The fulling mill in the manor of Cardiff was not built in 1314, being probably the one referred to in the next account, 1316 (*Min. Acc.* 1202-7), as not yet built in the manor of Roath (*Cardiff Records*, i. 108). Mills were established at Miskin and Llanblethian before 1314, and were successfully farmed in 1316, Miskin at 53s. 4d., Llanblethian at 50s. In this same year the fulling mill of Caerphilly realised a rent of 53s. 4d. For other instances of early fulling mills in Glamorgan, see *History of Margam Abbey* (Birch), pp. 304, 305.

⁶ The mill of 'Landymore' in West Gower was rented at 30s. in 1400 (*Hist. of West Gower*, J. D. Davies, ii. 143), that of Swansea at the same date yielding sixpence less (*Min. Acc.* 1202-15).

⁷ Excepting the mill at Lawhaden in 1326 (*Black Book of St. Davids*, ed. J. W. Willis-Bund, p. 137), no early references to the Pembrokeshire fulling

and Radnor,¹ Denbigh,² and Powysland.³ Early fulling mills were established near Carmarthen,⁴ and in the district of Newcastle Emlyn.⁵ Cardiganshire had early representatives in the weavers (*textores*) of its county town,⁶ in fulling mills at Lanienyth,⁷ and at a place near the town of Lampeter.⁸ Clothmen appear in the vicinity of Llanrhystyd in 1344.⁹

mills survive. That of Cameros was in decay in 1393 (*Min. Acc.* 1305-10), and those of Coedtraeth were farmed at 20s. long before 1505 (*Min. Acc.* 16-17 H. VII. No. 1650). A new fulling mill was constructed at Haverford in 1478 (*Min. Acc.* 1208-1).

¹ We have evidence of fulling mills at Knighton and Norton in 1340 (*Min. Acc.* 1208-9), the annual farm of the mill at Knighton being 13s. 4d. In 1474 it was let to one Philip ap Meredith, his heirs and assigns, for ninety years at a yearly rent of 3s. 4d. The mills of Kington and Hengoed, usually farmed at 13s. 4d. each, were in decay in 1495, as was that of 'English Hay,' a mill profitably worked during the later half of the fifteenth century (*Min. Acc.* 10 H. VII. No. 1652); it probably remained in this state for a considerable time, as in 1517 the same mill is accounted for as being in decay for many years (*Min. Acc.* 8 H. VIII. No. 51). Abergavenny mill was rented at 4s. in 1509 (*Min. Acc.* 24 H. VII. No. 1666). During this year a fulling mill appears near Pain's Castle in Elvael (*Min. Acc.* 24 H. VII. No. 1662).

² Clothmen sometimes appear among the suitors mentioned in the famous series of Ruthin Court Rolls. In 1335 Welsh weavers got leave to erect a fulling mill at 'Wenhannok Canon' (Seebohm's *Tribal System in Wales*, App. Bb. p. 56). A fulling mill at Hope was arrented at 2l. per annum in 1372 (*Min. Acc.* 1188-8), and there were private fulling mills at 'Doleth' and Kenvanvas in the vill of Ecclesham about 1436 (*Min. Acc.* 7 H. VIII. No. 5). The site of a new fulling mill in Mersforde and Allington was let at 6s. 8d. to one David ap Eden Bannor in 1502 (*Min. Acc.* 17 H. VII. No. 1654). Much of the wools of Flintshire was no doubt woven in the fulling mills on the Dee. These were farmed in 1529 at 11l. a year (*Min. Acc.* 19-20 H. VIII. No. 43).

³ A fulling mill is mentioned at Newtown about 1337 (*Min. Acc.* 1209-1). Its annual farm before 1498 was 10s., after which date it remained in decay for at least thirteen years (*Min. Acc.* 2 H. VIII. No. 22). The fulling mills at Kedewain and Ralltissa in Tregynon were also in a decayed state at this date (1498). In the latter district the descendants of one John Bannor paid a small sum for the privilege of erecting their fulling mill. The corn and fulling mills of Manafon with the demesne lands there were held by Cadwalader and Maurice, the sons of Owen, at 21s. There were in addition two fulling mills in decay in the rhingildry of 'Eginlle,' but, for one lately built on the bank of the Miwl (*Moylle*), one John ap Ieuan Bannor paid a rent of 13s. 4d. (*Min. Acc.* 12-13 H. VII. No. 1686).

⁴ *Min. Acc.* 1219-11 (date 1321).

⁵ *Ib.* 1219-8 (date 1319).

⁶ *Court Rolls* (P.R.O.), Portf. 215-20 (date 1303).

⁷ *Black Book of St. Davids*, as above, p. 261 (date 1326).

⁸ *Min. Acc.* 1160-5 (date 1417).

⁹ *Court Rolls* (P.R.O.), Portf. 215-25.

There were not many in the three counties of North Wales. The industry in these districts seems to have retained its purely domestic character to a later date. We find occasional reference, in the Court of Rolls of this district, to women amerced for selling cloth outside the market.¹ An Anglesea weaver, Ieuan Whith, joined the revolt of Glyndwr. The value of his weaving implement (*instrumentum texendi*), that was forfeited in consequence, was two pence.² However, we read of a fulling mill at Castell Math, near Nevin, in 1422,³ and of another in a decayed state through want of repairs at Trefriw in 1469,⁴ its normal rent being about 5s. per annum. A comparatively profitable mill called 'Pandy Kwryryon,' yielding a yearly rent of 26s. 8d., appears in the commote of Ughaph in 1524.⁵

The mills, it would appear, were somewhat evenly distributed between town and country, though they exhibit little partiality for the free boroughs. The majority were manorial or district mills. Thus, not to mention several instances already quoted, we find a fulling mill in the district of Cwmtaiddwr,⁶ but not in the town of Rhayader. The mill in the rural district of Manafon was in a flourishing condition in 1498, when the old mill of Newtown was in utter decay.⁷ The forest of Pennant harboured a fulling mill at 'Ken-vynvas' as did the forest of Glyncothy at 'Melyn Cludagh,'⁸ and there were two mills near by, not in the town of Carmarthen.⁹ It is somewhat remarkable that no fulling mills are to be found in the North Welsh boroughs. They appear commonly in little village and Marcher towns, as Berriew,¹⁰ Chirk,¹¹ Knighton, Llanblethian, &c.

¹ *Court Rolls* (P.R.O.), Portf. 215-49, s.n. 'Uwchgwyrvai' and 'Gafflogion.'

² *Min. Acc.* 1233-1. See the account of Richard de Wode, the escheator of Anglesea.

³ *Min. Acc.* 1177-2.

⁴ *Ib.* 1181-1.

⁵ *Ib.* 24-5 H. VIII. No. 14.

⁶ The mill yielded no profit in 1502 (*Min. Acc.* 16-17 H. VII. No. 1650).

⁷ *Min. Acc.* 12-13 H. VII. No. 1686.

⁸ *Ib.* 1-2 H. VII. No. 1627.

⁹ *Min. Acc.* 7 H. VIII. No. 17.

¹⁰ In decay 1510 (*Min. Acc.* 1-2 H. VIII. No. 22).

¹¹ *Min. Acc.* 6-7 H. VIII. No. 56. No profits this year because the mill had fallen to the ground. The mill of Glynvychan, near Llangollen, was held by the tenants of that district at a farm of 11s. 8d.

The chief markets for Welsh cloth, excepting Llanerchymedd¹ in Anglesea, and Ruthin² in Denbigh, were in the English borders of Oswestry, Shrewsbury, Hereford, Ludlow, and Bristol in particular. It would appear from the ulnage accounts of the counties in which these towns are placed, as well as from the custom accounts of Bristol, that the Welsh cloth trade reached its zenith during the fifteenth century.

Oswestry and Shrewsbury drew largely from the district of Powys and Merioneth, thus receiving the cloths manufactured from the wools produced in the vales of the Vyrnwy, Severn, and the Dovey. Welshpool was often the common meeting-place of Shrewsbury merchants and Welsh clothiers from the mountain districts of Arwystli (Llanidloes) and Cyveiliog (Machynlleth).³

The drapers of Elvael carried their blankets to the Hereford market.⁴ The farmer of the Bouthall there made the best part of his annual rent from the packs of cloth brought thither by the 'frisemen' of Wales.⁵ The Ludlow markets were generally patronised by the Knighton clothiers.⁶

Welsh merchants occasionally carried their cloths to the English counties adjoining the Marches. The ulnage returns of the counties of Stafford,⁷ Leicester,⁸ Warwick,⁹ Wilts,¹⁰ Bucks,¹¹ Worcester,¹² and Northampton,¹³ all yield glimpses of the Welsh cloth trade. Some of the more enterprising clothiers brought their Welsh russets to the well-known Fair of St. Bartholomew in London.¹⁴

¹ *Min. Acc.* 1229-8.

² *Ruthin Court Rolls* (P.R.O.), Porti. 221-4, m. 24. Reference in 1399 to a grant of the tolls of Ruthin to one Llewelyn Gogh and two copartners, excepting the toll arising from cloths exposed at the fairs ('excepto tolneto de panno infra lez seldes ad nundinas').

³ *Powysland Club Collections*, xxiv. 185.

⁴ Exchequer Q. R. Acc. 339-14 (date 1423), 15 (date 1418).

⁵ *Hereford MSS.* (Rep. of Hist. MSS. Com.), p. 327.

⁶ Exchequer Q. R. Acc. 344-18 (date 1430).

⁷ *Ib.* 344-18.

⁸ *Ib.* 339-22 (date 1422, 1427).

⁹ *Ib.* 344-25 (date 1398).

¹⁰ *Ib.* 345-4 (H. IV.).

¹¹ *Ib.* 338-1 (date 1368).

¹² *Ib.* 345-11.

¹³ *Ib.* 343-19.

¹⁴ Exchequer Q. R. Acc. 341-3 (date 1419, 1424), 341-18 (date 1444-46), 342-3 (date 1522).

But Bristol was the chief emporium for Welsh cloth. Almost all the cloths manufactured in the South Welsh district were brought hither,¹ together with some from the Marcher and Mid-Wales districts by the Marcher merchants.² The export trade in Welsh cloth was almost entirely confined to Bristol. Small quantities were sometimes exported from Carnarvon and Beaumaris.³ From the time of Edward III., the Bristol customs accounts contain valuable information on this subject. The largest amount exported thence in one year is perhaps found in the returns of 1494, when the total value of Welsh cloth was £815 17s. 6d.⁴ The trade extended to such foreign countries as Flanders,⁵ Brittany,⁶ Gascony,⁷ and other parts of France, Spain,⁸ and Iceland,⁹ with or without a due regard for the monopoly of the Staple of Calais.

The returns during the reign of Henry VIII. fall off considerably. After this, the chief interest of the trade is transferred to the North and Marcher districts. George Owen, the celebrated historian of Pembrokeshire, deploras the decay of the industry in his native county, the wools of the lower districts being then (1602) transported to Bristol, whilst those of the upper districts were sold at the fairs of Cardigan to the North Wales men, who wrought cloth thereof for the Shrewsbury merchants.¹⁰ An interesting struggle took place a little later between Shrewsbury and Oswestry for

¹ Exchequer Q. R. Acc. 339-11, 12.

² *Ib.* 339-14; *Customs Acc.* (Bristol), 19-14.

³ See the Chamberlain's Accounts of North Wales from the time of Henry VII. onwards, e.g. *Min. Acc.* 7 H. VII. No. 1592.

⁴ *Customs Acc.* (Bristol), 20-9.

⁵ *Ib.* 17-6 (1404), 19-3 (1466), 20-5 (1486), 21-1 (1517).

⁶ *Ib.* 19-14 (1487).

⁷ *Ib.* 16-10 (1382), 16-14 (1384); Bayonne, *ib.* 16-5 (1380), 17-6 (1404), 17-10 (1406); Bordeaux, *ib.* 17-6, 17-10, 18-28 (1431), 19-2 (1461), 19-3 (1466), 19-14 (1487), 20-5 (1486).

⁸ *Ib.* 16-26 (1396), 16-30 (1397), 17-10, 19-2, 19-4 (1466), 19-13, 19-14, 20-1 (1483), 20-5, 20-7 (1488). These accounts include several consignments of Welsh cloth to Portugal.

⁹ *Ib.* 19-13 (1487).

¹⁰ Owen's *Pembrokeshire* (as above), p. 57.

the monopoly of the Welsh cloth market.¹ Both were handicapped by the growing activity of the North Welsh ports.²

Whilst the cloth industry was successfully carried on in the Mid- and North-Wales districts, great strides were being made in the development of the South Wales coalfield. Medieval Wales gave cloth and received coal. The movement had now begun by which this was to be reversed. Modern Wales gives coal and receives cloth. The factory system, through the agency of coal in one instance, has all but replaced the native fulling mill.

It may be noted that during this period English,³ Flemish,⁴ and Irish cloths⁵ were imported into Wales in small quantities, as also was canvas or a rough kind of cloth from Brittany.⁶

5. *The Towns.*

We may look at the medieval towns of Wales from three points of view : economic, political, and commercial.

(a) *Economic Aspect.*

All the towns were more or less engaged in agricultural and pastoral pursuits. They derived their especial importance from the relation in which they stood to the administration, industry, and trade of the country.

¹ For a concise account of this, see *Influence and Development of English Gilds* (F. A. Hibbert), pp. 89-97. Cf. *Shropshire Arch. Soc. Trans.* iii. (1880), 132 *et seq.*

² *Ib.* p. 135.

³ *Min. Acc.* 1222-7-8. Every 'entire' English cloth brought to the port of Carnarvon was liable to a duty of 2s. 6d.; the corresponding custom on Welsh cloth was 2s. (*Min. Acc.* 7 H. VII. No. 1592).

⁴ *Min. Acc.* 1223-9.

⁵ Irish cloth, through the medium of Bristol, was probably imported into Wales at a comparatively early date. It is included in the long and interesting list of articles upon which the townsmen of Crickhowell were empowered to levy a murage toll in 1281 (*Cal. Pat. Rolls*, (1281-1292), p. 2). Welsh cloth, on the other hand, finds a place in the murage customs of Dublin towards the middle of the fourteenth century. See *Calendar of Ancient Records of Dublin* (ed. Gilbert), i. 15, 243.

⁶ *Min. Acc.* 10-11 H. VIII. No. 115.

Some were dignified with a castle, or even with a chancery and exchequer, and played a part in the administration of the country. Several were marked by the industrial activity of a fulling mill or of a local tannery. Others, from their favourable situation on the sea-coast, were especially adapted for commerce, their ports being the national avenues for the export and import of merchandise. Carnarvon derived its chief importance from the place it held in the administration of the Principality. To this Carmarthen could add a decided precedence in matters of trade, whereas Haverford could go one further, and add its industrial activity, though at the same time falling below Carnarvon and Carmarthen in administrative pomp. Cardiff, Swansea, and other capital towns of Marcher lordships played an important rôle in one or more of these three spheres in their respective districts.

(b) *Political Aspect.*

From the political point of view the history of several of the Welsh towns has an especial interest which is not without its bearing on the national commerce.

Some of the towns, in addition to being the local centres of administration (a condition in itself favourable to trade,¹ were garrison towns, dependent to a great extent upon foreign marts.² These were the English boroughs, like Carnarvon, Beaumaris, and Carmarthen, &c., in which no Welshmen were supposed to reside.³ Loyal Welshmen, however, were seldom refused admission to the privileges of the English boroughs until the revolt of Glyndwr occasioned the promulgation of a series of statutes by Henry IV. forbidding Welshmen, *inter alia*, to become burgesses of an English

¹ E.g. the English burgesses of Cardigan complain that the men of the county do not do suit there (*Ancient Petitions*, P.R.O., No. 4187), a circumstance which affected their trade; much of their merchandise being sold to suitors at the 'court English' held there monthly (*ib.* No. 4886). Cf. *Cal. Pat. Rolls* (1385-1389), p. 114.

² See below, pp. 166-7.

³ Cf. *Rec. of Carn.* p. 137.

borough in Wales.¹ Henry VI. in a similar manner further disfranchised the North Welsh for their disloyalty in 1444.²

This continual identification of the enjoyment of commercial privileges with racial distinction placed the conditions of internal trade upon an unequal footing. One of the weak links in the medieval trade of Wales was the disparity of privileges. Under the Tudors the two races were placed on an equal footing in this respect.

(c) *Commercial Aspect.*

The following consideration of the town in its commercial aspect is purposely a confined one. It treats briefly of the towns and industry (a), and the towns in their relation to internal (b) and external (c) trade respectively.

(a) *The Towns and Industry.* The towns in their relation to the fisheries as well as to the wool trade and the cloth industry have been already touched upon. Tanning, with its allied industries, formed the next important branch of town industry. In this the Welsh towns were favoured by the native supply of bark and skins. Tanners, glovers, shoemakers, saddlers, clothiers, and tuckers casually occur in the scattered notices that remain of Welsh townsmen in the Middle Ages, but there is little or no evidence to indicate that these individuals were members of any particular craft guilds. Town industries were apparently in the hands of individual burgesses, who found sufficient facility for trading by the fact that they were members of the merchant guild of the borough. In this connection it must be remembered that the Welsh boroughs were small, and the merchant guilds may well have been co-extensive with them. Trade disputes in

¹ Loyal Welshmen were still allowed, by special licence, to reside or hold lands in English cities and English towns in Wales. See *Cal. Pat. Rolls* (1422-29), p. 476.

² *Rot. Parl.* v. 138-9. All grants of franchises, markets, fairs, and other freedoms to buy or sell or bake or brew to sell within the towns of North Wales, made to any Welshman before this time, made void and of no value.

Wales are due more to the conflict of town *v.* country¹ than gild *v.* gild, and there seems to be no great risk of omitting much by postponing the history of craft gilds in Wales to the late sixteenth and following centuries. It is at the same time true that Edward II. founded gilds of cordwainers and glovers at Cardiff in 1323, but the extant evidence of their actual working is of a much later date.² The same may be said of the craft gilds of Brecon.³

(b) *The Towns and Internal Trade.* The continued growth of commercial privileges in Wales is an outstanding feature of the fourteenth century. Market and fair privileges were freely bestowed upon the village towns,⁴ and the gild merchant was nominally established in the Welsh free boroughs.⁵ Occasional conflicts enlivened the process. The burgesses of the old royal town of Montgomery looked askance at the rise of the mesne marts of Oswestry, Welshpool, and Newtown, which gave a lasting blow to their monopoly of trade in low-lying districts of Powysland. The Crown came to their aid in putting down the proposed market at Abermule, and the illegally set-up market at Chirbury.⁶ The privileges granted to the burgesses of the new town of Carmarthen led to an interesting conflict with the Prior and Convent there.⁷

The extant evidence of the gild merchant during this period illustrates little besides the fact of its expansion. Markets and fairs were of course the chief organs of internal trade. The toll returns that have survived are of local rather than general interest, and in those cases where they have

¹ See below, p. 165; also *Cal. Pat. Rolls* (1313-17), pp. 322, 325; *ib.* (1330-34), p. 298.

² *Cardiff Records*, iii. 336-404.

³ Jones's *Hist. of Brecon*, pp. 181-3.

⁴ See Palmer's *List and Indexes*, No. 93.

⁵ Gross, *Gild Merchant*, i. 244-53. Cf. *Influence and Development of English Gilds* (F. A. Hibbert), pp. 25-28, a list of merchant gilds in Wales down to 1485.

⁶ *Powysland Club Collections*, i. 44; *Record of Carm.* p. 222; *Cal. Pat. Rolls* (1225-32), p. 121; *ib.* (1313-17), p. 318, and p. 131, note 10, above.

⁷ *Ancient Petitions* (P.R.O.), Nos. 5908, 5909, 5910.

escaped the indistinctness of a fee-farm or yearly rent, yield valuable evidence of the comparative activity of local towns at this time. They seldom throw much light upon the character of trade. In this respect, murage accounts, when given in detail, are particularly good.¹ Incidental light is thrown on the internal trading of West Wales by a series of petitions in connection with the dispute between the Prior and Burgesses of Carmarthen,² as also by an instructive petition from the burgesses of Aberystwyth, touching their conflict with the men of the surrounding country who persisted in contracting their bargains at home.³ The occasional amercements for illicit trading *in patria* or outside of the markets and fairs noted in the local Court Rolls add to the information.

Horses, cattle, sheep, pigs, wool, cheese and butter form the common articles of sale, with wheat, oats, and leather in scarcer quantities. From the side of the country it was chiefly articles of pastoral produce, the exchange of which for articles of small merchandise and other necessities of life and of occasional luxury was the chiefest function of the medieval townsmen.

Provincial trade, moreover, was not entirely in the hands of the burgher or townsman. There were the chensers (*censarii*), a commercial class that often resided in the provincial hamlets, paying a yearly tax for the faculty of buying and selling in the commotes or hundreds in which their hamlets were situated. These were particularly common in the district of Cardiganshire and North Carmarthen,⁴ but their status in the former county was threatened by the

¹ E.g. *Cal. Pat. Rolls* (1272-81), p. 248 (Montgomery); *ib.* (1281-92), p. 2 *et seq.* (Crickhowell).

² See note 7 on preceding page.

³ *Ancient Petitions* (P.R.O.), No. 11883.

⁴ There were chensers at Castell Gwallter (in Geneurglyn): [Llanvihangel y Creuddyn (in Creuddyn)]; Llanrhystyd (in Hanniniog): Llanilar (Mevenydd); Melindref and Llanybyther (Mabwynnion) and Llanarth (Gwynionnyth), all in Cardiganshire. Also at Cynwil and Mabelwern, in the *patria* of Cantrefmawr. They were generally few in number (*Min. Acc.* 1218-1).

municipal policy of Edward I.¹ Chensers attended the fairs of Pembroke,² Tenby,² and Newport³ (Mon.) in large numbers, and frequently augment the tolls of small market towns like Rhayader⁴ and Pain's Castle.⁵ There was also apparently a class of town chensers, hardly distinguishable from the burgess *de vento et vico*, whose status is not at all clear.

In addition to the local burgesses and chensers there appears in the lordship of Builth towards the close of the fifteenth century a class of strange or travelling chapmen called 'portmen' (*portmaniyent*), who pay a small toll for trading in the *patria* or lordship of Builth.⁶

(c) *The Towns and External Trade.* The towns in their relation to external trade are dealt with in the following section.

II. EXTERNAL TRADE.

Welsh exports consisted chiefly of wool, woolfells, cloth, hides, skins, butter, cheese, and herbs (*cimil'?*).⁷

Welsh imports in a general sense comprised:—

(1) Commodities produced at home, but not in sufficient quantities to cope with the native demand, namely iron, lead, coal, corn, wax, and honey.⁸

¹ Chensers were prohibited to sell in the hamlet of Llanvihangel y Creuddyn because it was within the liberties of the borough of Llampadarn (*Min. Acc.* 1158-1). There were no chenser profits at Llanilar in 1329 and 1334 because there was nobody in that hamlet, who bought, sold, or kept a tavern, for a long time (*Min. Acc.* 1220-5, 7).

² *Min. Acc.* 1208-5.

³ *Min. Acc.* 19-20 H. VII. No. 1665.

⁴ *Min. Acc.* 16-17 H. VII. No. 1681 ('et de ijd. de novo redditu Gr ap Atha ap Hoell Lloargh chenc[arius] pro licencia mercandizandum infra libertates villæ de Raidour quamdiu sibi placuerit').

⁵ *Min. Acc.* 23-24 H. VII. No. 1662.

⁶ *Min. Acc.* 23-24 H. VII. No. 1667. The reference is interesting for the light which it throws upon the meaning of the term 'tolnetum patriæ' (*Arch. Camb.* 3rd Series, ii. 27) as being the toll paid by strangers trading within a lordship or *patria* (? tribal district).

⁷ 12 lbs. of 'cimil' [cumila = herb] exported from Carmarthen by Peter de Haundescote, a Flemish merchant, in 1357, customed at 3d. per lb., the usual rate for merchandise imported or exported by aliens (*Min. Acc.* 1221-10).

⁸ From England and Spain.

(2) Commodities that were not produced at home, viz. salt,¹ wine,² oil,³ pitch,³ rosin. French goods (including combs, looking-glasses, and other toilet requisites),⁴ together with Spanish fruits and Eastern spices.⁵

(3) Commodities required for administrative purposes,⁵ *i. e.* to supply the wants of the castle and the requirements of the local chanceries and exchequers.

In connection with the last of these divisions it should be noted that the castle was an important item in the medieval trade of Wales. Here artillery was received from Spain, and sulphur and saltpetre from London.⁶ The pantry was supplied with salt and honey, and the buttery with wine, from Spain and France. The larder was filled with beef, mutton, and pork from the local stock, supplemented by red herring from Ireland. Corn and peas for the granary were imported from Dublin and Bristol.⁷

The victualling of the castle furnished the chief occupation of many a Welsh merchant,⁸ and was often the motive for the maintenance of local quays.⁹ English burgesses in Wales, when seeking the grant of a coveted privilege, usually emphasise and sometimes exaggerate the part they played in provisioning the castle garrison. English sovereigns almost invariably lend a favourable ear to such requests. The castle was the safeguard of the country from foreign invasion, and equally served to hold it in subjection.¹⁰ The

¹ Gascony, Poitou, St. Gérard en Brittany, St. Gremery de Lile de Bas Pays, Portugal.

² Gascony, Rochelle, Romney, Brittany, Spain, Portugal. Cf. *Gweithian Iolo Goch* (Cymmrodorion Soc., ed. Charles Ashton), p. 37, where most of these places are referred to in a poem by the contemporary bard Lewis Glyn Cothi.

³ Portugal.

⁴ See *Customs Acc.* (Carnarvon) No. 4.

⁵ *Min. Acc.* 21-22 H. VIII. (North Wales) No. 156.

⁶ *Min. Acc.* 1305-17; *ib.* 7 H. VII. No. 1592.

⁷ Exchequer Q. R. Acc. 232-21, 233-4.

⁸ *Cal. Pat. Rolls* (1292-1301), p. 138; *ib.* (1313-17), p. 439.

⁹ E.g. *Cal. Close Rolls* (1318-22), pp. 449, 661.

¹⁰ The unsettled state of Wales during this period is occasionally referred to in the Patent and Close Rolls. In 1337-8 Wales was feared to have been an accomplice of the Scottish rebels, dangers arising from their invasion in this direction, the Isle of Anglesea being a suitable vantage-ground (*Cal. Close*

author of 'The Libell of English Policye' in 1436 lays stress on the safe-keeping of Wales :

Beware of Wales, Christ Jhesus mutte it keep
That it make not our childes child to wepe
. sith that many a day
Men have ben ferde of her rebelloun.

The trading activity of the Welsh ports had much to do with this safeguarding of Wales, importing the necessities for the castle garrison as well as the requisites of the local chanceries and exchequers. The latter, *inter alia*, included parchment,¹ paper,¹ register books,¹ canvas, cord, and candles,² together with iron-bound coffer for the custody of records.

Knowing the general character of the export and import trade during the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, let us consider the chief agents engaged in the trade.

The merchants of Chester and Bristol practically enjoyed a monopoly of Welsh trade before the thirteenth century. But the rise of towns during the twelfth and thirteenth centuries gave a new impulse to native merchants. The local ports were improved, the local shipping was developed, and the foreign trader was attracted.

Fixed customs were collected and prisage of wine was taken in the chief Welsh ports during the late thirteenth and following centuries.³ Customs officials were appointed, butlers appearing in the more important ports, and gaugers of wine allotted to the districts of North and South Wales.⁴

Rolls (1337-9), pp. 136, 542-3). Further trouble arose from what is termed 'the lightness of head of the Welsh' or their tendency to rebel; they were suspected of rebellion in 1343 (*Cal. Pat. Rolls*, (1343-45), pp. 66-7), and their condition was inquired into in 1381 (*Cal. Pat. Rolls*, (1381-5), p. 17). Reasonable costs for resisting the Welsh rebels were allowed in 1423 (*Cal. Pat. Rolls*, (1422-9), p. 51), and the 'riots of Wales' was a matter for the Privy Council in 1442 (*Acts of the Privy Council*, a.c. p. 211).

¹ London, Bristol, Coventry, and occasionally from merchants at the local fairs.

² Paris.

³ See p. 151 above; *Cal. Close Rolls* (1279-1288), p. 101.

⁴ The office of gauger of wines throughout the whole of Wales was committed to Bernard Pee de Fer in 1308 (*Cal. Pat. Rolls* (1307-1313), p. 71). Deputy

The Chester and Bristol merchants continued to take a prominent part in the trade with France, Spain, and Portugal in salt, wine, and iron.¹ Moreover, alien ships frequently visited the Welsh ports during the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries.² This gave a new turn to the activity of the Welsh merchants. Foreign products now entered freely into their articles of exchange. The South-Welsh merchants of Haverford, Milford, Tenby, and Carmarthen carried on an active trade in wine, salt, iron, and other foreign merchandise with Bristol and Ireland. Beaumaris and Carnarvon were the favourite ports of call in the North, the former becoming noted later as a *dépôt* for the exchange of Manchester cottons and Irish cloths.³

Native shipping was mostly confined to the small trade with Ireland, and to the coasting trade between the several Welsh ports and the centres of supply, Bristol and Chester. Boats of the South-Welsh ports often occur in the custom accounts of Bristol during the fifteenth century in connection with the trade between that town and Ireland.⁴

Some Welsh ships transported products from foreign countries in the late thirteenth century. Instances of this

butlers were appointed in North and South Wales (*ib.* p. 146; (1313-1317), p. 553).

¹ A Bristol ship brought wine to Beaumaris in 1380, and a ship from the same place as well as a ship of Fowey left wine at the port of Pwllheli in the same year (*Min. Acc.* 1305-8). Cf. *Cal. Pat. Rolls* (1377-1381), p. 323. Chester ships called periodically in the parts of North Wales (e.g. *Min. Acc.* 1215-10); they seldom called at the South-Welsh ports. We, however, find a Chester ship at Milford in 1389 (*Min. Acc.* 1226-11).

² Alien ships appear in the South-Welsh ports early in the fourteenth century. (*Customs Acc.*, Bristol and Carmarthen, 15-1). Ships from Bayonne bring wine to Milford in 1389 and 1404 (*Min. Acc.* 1226-11-12), as do Spanish and Breton ships to Carmarthen in 1416 (*Min. Acc.* 1222-14). Towards the close of the fifteenth century alien ships increase, and appear commonly in the ports of North Wales (Chamberlain Acc. of North and South Wales *temp.* Hen. VII. *passim*).

³ *Min. Acc.* 12-13 H. VIII. No. 120 (N. Wales); 30-31 H. VIII. No. 239; 32-33 H. VIII. No. 128.

⁴ More particularly those of Chepstow, Tenby, Milford, and Carmarthen. Herrings, hake, salmon, salted fish, hides, Irish cloths, &c. were conveyed to Bristol, salt, iron, wine, English cloths, and other merchandise making up the return cargo to Ireland; e.g. *Customs Acc.*, Bristol, 17-6, 19-14; *Bristol Town Duties* (H. Bush), pp. 17-18, 21-22, 24.

become commoner in the following centuries, particularly in the cases of Milford and Haverford.¹ New encouragement was given to this policy by the Tudor system, when wine, among other things, was obliged to be imported in Welsh ships.²

The means of communication by which exports and imports were readjusted so as to satisfy local needs is an interesting subject. With the mention of the fact that pack-horses were commonly employed on the land routes,³ and that ready use was made of the local ferries and of all river transport possible,⁴ we may treat of it here in a general manner.

Bristol and Chester were the principal centres of exchange, each Welsh district having its local divisions and principal centre of supply. South Wales, made up of several lordships, had its local centres of supply. Gwent had its Chepstow, Glamorgan its Cardiff, and Gower its Swansea. West Wales was well served by Haverford and Carmarthen. Mid-Wales and the bordering Marcher districts had their principal Marcher towns, Hereford on the Wye, and Shrewsbury on the Severn. Beaumaris, Carnarvon, and Conway, with other minor ports of call, supplied the Principality of North Wales, as did Chester and Rhuddlan the old district of the Four Cantreds.

Two circumstances which often thwarted the successful development of this external trade were (1) the piracy of the Western sea,⁵ and (2) the lawlessness of the Marches.

¹ *Patent Rolls, s.a.* 1295, 1308 (Conway), 1304, 1315 (Haverford), 1314 (Chepstow). Ships from the following Welsh towns among others left Bristol for foreign parts at the dates mentioned: 1392, 1399 (Caerleon), 1381 (Chepstow), 1378 (Carmarthen), 1399 (Milford), 1481 (Tenby). *Customs Acc., Bristol, s.a.c.*

² *Rot. Parl.* vi. 331.

³ Fifty packhorses were employed to carry 25 qrs. of oats from diverse places in Anglesea to the Menai, whence it was conveyed in two boats to the port of Carnarvon, Exchequer Q. R. Acc. 4-2. Three packhorses were hired to convey 550*l.* from Carmarthen to London. The journey to and fro occupied eighteen days, the cost of transit amounting to about 8*d.* in the pound (*Min. Acc.* 1218-6).

⁴ *Cf.* pp. 140-141, above.

⁵ A ship called 'La James of Carnarvon' was plundered at Holyhead by the rebels of Scotland in 1315 (*Cal. Pat. Rolls*, (1313-17), p. 421). Somewhat later a ship of Haverford was taken in the high seas between Lampadarn and Cardigan

Attempts were made to improve the conditions of trade. An Admiralty Office was established at Beaumaris¹ to ward off the pirates of the Irish Sea, and the Court of the President of the Marches was instituted to deal with the lawless inhabitants of the Marches.

The establishment of a court such as this was a long-felt want, as a perusal of the Parliament Rolls for the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries will evince. From the complaints made therein by burgesses of the Marcher towns, it will be found that the lawlessness of the Marches was due to one or more of the following causes:—(1) Border raids by the Welsh, who were often said to have had secret accomplices among the Welsh inhabitants of the Marcher towns themselves.² (2) Arrest of merchants going to Wales with their goods and merchandise, often resulting in their unjust detention on the Welsh mountains or in the castle of a Marcher lord.³ (3) Indiscriminate distressing between country and country. This—the unjust distraint of Englishmen, when going into Wales, for debt or default for which they were in no manner responsible—was a very common complaint.⁴ To the Welshman, it was a man from the Marches that owed him money: he was not particularly scrupulous as to getting the actual person, so long as he had one bearing that general description. As a counterpart to this we find Richard II. granting like freedom to the men of Hereford in 1394. The charter granted to the mayor and citizens at this date made it lawful for them hereafter, when such arrests were made and no deliverance followed, to arrest in like manner any

by the 'enemies of Scotland.' In 1377 Rees ap Griffith, Kt., was appointed to keep the coasts of Milford and other coasts of South Wales against hostile invasion (*Cal. Pat. Rolls* (1377–81), p. 15).

¹ *Min. Acc.* 7–8 H. VIII. No. 21.

² *Rot. Parl.* ii. p. 352 (1376); iii. 81 (1376); iii. 81 (1380); iv. 52 (1414); vi. 160 (1473).

³ *Ib.* iii. 272 (1389), 474 (1401). For a notable instance of this see *Cal. Close Rolls* (1330–34), pp. 571–2: arrest of the burgesses of Shrewsbury, on their way to a fair at Welshpool, by the men of Richard, Earl of Arundel, and their confinement to Oswestry Castle. Cf. *Cal. Pat. Rolls* (1385–89), p. 19.

⁴ *Rot. Parl.* ii. 259, 358; iii. 45 (1378), 272 (1389), 474 (1401).

persons belonging to the lordship of Wales within the city and the liberties, until satisfaction be made for the losses sustained.¹

Trading activity in the Marches by persons in districts beyond the limits of their local lordship was insecure and unsafe; even within the lordship it was at best precarious. Local trading lacked the security of a county jurisdiction. Following the committal of thefts, murders, &c., in this lordship came the hasty withdrawal of the perpetrators into the next, where they remained unmolested. It was with the object of allaying this continual unrest that Edward IV. instituted the Court of the President of the Marches. This court exercised strong powers in putting down the lawlessness of the March, and from the fact that its jurisdiction was concurrent with many of the adjoining counties, a thief, that before escaped scot-free, was often doubly punished, thus giving rise to a new form of complaint. So effective was the work of the court under the presidency of Roland Lee that all the thieves in Wales were said to quake for fear. There can be no doubt but that the court did much to promote trading security between Wales and the border counties,² and the holding of the court itself, causing the meeting of a large concourse of people, gave an impulse to trade. When courts were being held at Hereford, Welshmen were allowed, during two days in every week that the court sat, to bring their merchandise to the town.³

The character of the Welsh export and import trade is much the same during the early part of the sixteenth century. The changes that occur appear in the improvement of the conditions of trade.

We have seen how the Principality of Wales partook of the larger insularity of Britain in 1284 through the medium of the shire system. The fourteenth and fifteenth centuries

¹ *Hereford MSS.* (Rep. of Hist. MSS. Com.), p. 287.

² *Influence and Development of English Gilds* (F. A. Hibbert), pp. 3, 79; Owen and Blakeway's *Hist. of Shrewsbury*, i. 231.

³ *Hereford MSS.*, as above, p. 337.

were the period of transition in the story of the Marches. The local insularity of the lordship disappeared with the gradual increase in the power of the Crown. Several of the lordships came into the hands of the Crown by forfeiture and other means. These were usually termed the 'Counties of the Marches of Wales,' being under the control of royal bailiffs. The Act of Union in 1536 consummated this process. The 'land of Wales' became part of the English realm, and the people of Wales, irrespective of racial distinction, became subjects of the English king.

National commerce seems to demand the following among other conditions of success: namely, equality of privilege and a common judicature. These were the weak links in the trade of medieval Wales. The towns offered no equality of privilege, a fact which often proved detrimental to internal trade; and the chief evil of the Marches lay in the multiplicity of its jurisdictions—there was in reality no central judicature.

The Act of Union supplied these wants. It placed the inhabitants of Wales on an equality with the subjects of the English realm, and made the disaffected province of Wales a member of the realm of England.