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BATTLE OF BOSWORTH FIELD.

Harry ap Edmund ap Owen Tudor being crowned as Henry VII, King of England.

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FLAME-BEARERS OF WELSH HISTORY

BEING THE OUTLINE OF THE STORY OF
'THE SONS OF CUNEDDA'

BY

OWEN RHOSCOMYL

AUTHOR OF 'THE JEWEL OF YNYS GALON' 'BATTLEMENT AND TOWER'
'THE HOUSE OF THE TWISTED SAPLING' ETC.

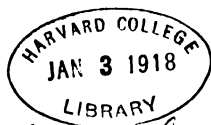
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P R E F A C E

No Welsh boy can well read the history of his ancestors—so stirring a record of so stubborn a race, such a good, grim, fighting race—without feeling that it is good to be a Cymro. And once he feels *that* he will go on to feel that it is good to be a Briton, too, claiming a share in the glory of that crown and kingdom which was first founded by Cunedda the Burner, who was founder, too, of the Cymric nation. No Welsh boy need ever again go to the history of other peoples for a record of stirring deeds and struggles. It would be hard to match in any history the long and splendid struggle of his own ancestors.

OWEN RHOSCOMYL.

ARTHUR, *May 24, 1905.*

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FLAME-BEARERS OF WELSH HISTORY

'That wild land that Welshmen love.'

Layamon's *Brut*.

I

OF THE NAME OF OUR LAND

Flame-bearers!—bearers of what flame? What flame but the flame of the unquenchable spirit of our ancestors, which, through centuries of savage slaughter, still burned on, till at last it reached its goal in victory?

It was about the year 460 when **Cunedda the Burner** first captured the Crown, at **Carlisle** in the centre of Britain. It was in 1485 that his descendant, **Harry Tudor**, recaptured that Crown, on **Anbian Hill** in the centre of England. And through all that thousand years the Sons¹ of Cunedda had never lost faith in their destiny.

The stranger should not rule for ever in this Isle of Britain, said they. The Crown that Cunedda had made would come again to his Sons—of that they were full sure. And when, on Anbian Hill, hard by **Bosworth**

¹ Sons, spelled with a capital S, meant descendants.

town, in the green heart of England, they placed that Crown on the head of their leader, they knew that their faith had been fulfilled. In that moment of victory, when the last king descended of the **Norman Strangers** lay dead beneath their blades, their hoarse shout of 'King Harry! O, King Harry!' was the last wild shout of a cause for which their race had died in countless heaps, on fields that God alone can number, through the long steel-gashed roll of five-and-thirty stubborn generations.

And who was Cunedda? When the Englishman speaks to you with reverence of the great name of **Alfred**, tell him that you, too, can listen well to the glory of that name, for Alfred also was a descendant in the straight line from Cunedda. It was **Ceretic**, son of Cunedda, who married that **Rowena**, whose son, **Elesa**, is the first indisputable name of Alfred's ancestors.

And if the Northumbrian speaks of **Edwin**, or the Mercian of **Offa**, it is still the same. They, too, were descendants of Cunedda.

But we have begun by saying—'Flame-bearers of Welsh History.' Yet Wales is not our own name for our own land, nor Welsh our own name for ourselves. Wales is but a Teutonic word, meaning the land of the Welsh. And by the **Welsh** the **Teutons** meant citizens of the Roman Empire. In Britain the **Saxons** of the south-east applied it to the Romanised **Brythons** who still held the middle of England till about the year 590. It was only afterwards, and gradually, that the word came to be used of our ancestors. The **Angles** of the North never made that mistake. They spoke of **Brit**, or

Cymro, but not of Welshman. And part of the old home of the **Cymry** in the north is still called by its old name of **Cumberland**, meaning the land of the **Cumras** or **Cymros**.

For **Cymru** once stretched from the mouth of the **Clyde** to the mouth of the **Severn**, and even, for four brief generations, well towards the mouth of the **Thames**, when the Sons of **Coel** came down from the north and joined the Kings of the Southern **Cymry**, in that great invasion which swept away the last semblance of independence from the survivors of Roman Britain, about the year 590.

You must remember that your ancestors, in the sixth century, were just as terrible foes to Roman Britain as the Angles and Saxons were. We, the **Cymry** of to-day, have just as little and just as much right to be considered the descendants of the Romanised **Brythons** as the English have. The true descendants, politically speaking, of the Romanised **Brythons** are still called by their own name. They are the **Bretons** of **Brittany**, whose ancestors emigrated from Britain to escape the attacks of the **Picts**, and **Scots** and **Saxons**. There is no certain proof yet that **Cunedda** himself was not a **Pict**.

Cymru, then, is the right name for our country, meaning the land of the **Cymro**. And **Cymro** means 'compatriot,' co-dweller in one land, brother in arms for the same land. Thus, while 'Welshman' means Roman, or **Latin-man**, **Cymro** means compatriot, defender of **Cymru**. **Cymro**, then, is the right name, and the proud name, for every honourable man of us to claim.

But if **Cymru** means only the land of the **Cymry**, and

4 FLAME-BEARERS OF WELSH HISTORY

if the Cymry came down from the north and conquered this land, what then was the name of it before our conquering ancestors first called it Cymru? Truth to tell, it never had a separate name, except, perhaps, just before the Romans left Britain. Then, from about A.D. 370, it was possibly a province under the name of **Valentia**, and placed under the rule of a Roman officer called the '*Comes Britanniarum*,' or **Count of Britain**.¹

The province, perhaps, included a belt of land east of the Severn, but of this we are not certain yet. It did not last long. The question of the name of the land, however, is so much a part of the question of the peoples of the land, that we had better take a fresh chapter for it.

II

THE PEOPLES OF OUR ISLANDS

IN the beginning these Isles of **Britain** and **Ireland** were all one dim, beautiful wilderness of mountain, and moor, and forest, of lake and river, of headland and of harbour, where dwelt a few sparse folk of a race that has been called the mound-dwellers. It was a folk with dark hair and eyes, short of stature, long of skull, and small of bone. It lived in caves, and where there were no caves it made little artificial ones in the ground, using great stones, and covering them over with mounds of earth on which the grass grew.

Where there was a lake, with a small island near its

See Note 1.

shores, there one of the little folk would perhaps build a dwelling of wattle and thatch, because the island was safe enough from wild beasts. And it was safety the little folk wanted; safety from the terrible wild beasts that roamed the land, hungry for something to eat.

These little people lived by hunting and fishing, and on the milk of their cattle, knowing nothing of bread, because they knew nothing of corn or ploughing. They were few, too, like the **Eskimo** of to-day, and if they had any religion at all, it was little more than a belief that, by certain charms and magic formulæ, they could guard against misfortunes and sickness.

They had, also, a belief that animals, birds, and fishes were only another sort of people, and that even the wind and the water, the trees and the earth, and the sky, were also a sort of people, who could think and act and plan revenge if they thought fit. All these different sorts of people had different shapes, that was all, thought the mound-dwellers.

They were not a warrior race of conquerors. They might fall out and fight, perhaps, just as wild animals do, but if they were injured in any way, they usually bided their time for a stealthy revenge. Their weapons were merely horn and bone and rough stone, so that, when the next race, the **Ivernians**, came over, the little people had to become slaves or else retire to the parts that were so rough and wild that the Ivernians did not care to settle there.

The Ivernian was very different from the mound-dwellers. Standing about the middle height, with blue or grey eyes, and brown or dark hair, he belonged to a

family of peoples which was spread all down the south-western edge of **Europe**, and over Northern **Africa**. It is thought that, at the other end of its territories, one branch of the family founded the mighty empire of **Old Egypt** on the **Nile**.

In one thing he was far in advance of those who came after him. For, like the **Egyptians**, he believed in the immortality of the soul. He had priests, who were called **Druids**, and the **Druids** seem to have caught a true echo of the noblest beliefs of the ancient civilisations of the East. They taught that the soul came from **God**, that it was a part of **God**, and that a man should so act and live that, after death, his soul would be fit to go back to **God** again. If, however, a man lived wickedly, then his soul would have to pass through some other body, that it might have another chance to purify itself and make itself fit to go to **God**. They probably thought that **God** lived in the sun, or that the sun was **God** Himself.

It was these **Ivernians** who raised the great stone circles of **Stonehenge** and the like. Astronomers tell us that **Stonehenge** was built between 1600 and 2000 B.C., and was intended as a sacred spot for holding the festival of **Midsummer**. If you go to **Stonehenge**, you will see that the builders must have been a determined people to raise such vast stones, having none of the appliances of modern engineering.

One of the things, however, which marked the **Ivernian** off from other races, was his habit of tattooing his body with shapes of birds, and beasts, and fishes, or other designs. It is probable that, like the signs which

the **Australian** blacks still paint on their bodies at certain times, and like the war-paint of the **American Indians**, all these designs had a special connection with religious or family ceremonies or beliefs. In any case the tattooing was so important that the Ivernian went without clothing on state occasions, such as when he went to battle, or when he had to meet important strangers. Then



STONEHENGE

he was extremely proud of his tattoo-marks and would not have them hidden, for they were meant to show who he was, and what great deeds he had done, most likely. And when he went to war, or at the time of the ceremonies, he painted his face blue.

For he was a warrior ; one of the most stubborn fighters ever known. But, because of certain strange ideas as to descent and relationship, he was not well

enough organised to drive out the **Goidels** who afterwards invaded the land. Moreover, his weapons were still only of stone, though finely shaped and polished, while the Goidel who came against him had weapons of bronze.

One of the weapons of the Ivernian was the sling, but it could not save his independence. Nay, though it is now believed that it was the Ivernian who first built the great stone fortresses, of which the finest specimens are those on **Yr Eivl**, in **Lleyn**, and on **Penmaen-mawr**, still even those were no use in the end. Yet it is important to learn as much as we can about the Ivernians, for it is admitted that many of the people of the British Islands are of Ivernian descent.

III

OF HOW THE GOIDEL CAME

To the Ivernians, then, came their exact opposites in the **Goidels** who invaded them. Tall and fair, and muscular, the Goidel belonged to the great **Aryan** race, which filled **Europe** with the foundations of its modern empires, and marched through **Western Asia** to fresh dominion over the wrecks of older empires there. And all the races that followed in the footsteps of the conquering Goidel have been **Aryan** too, and cousins of each other. This Goidel then, with his good weapons of bronze, at last conquered the Ivernian, with his clumsier weapons of stone.

But though the Goidel fought his way across the

land remorselessly, yet it must not be supposed that he slew all the Ivernians wherever he found them. On the contrary, that would have been wasting half the fruits of conquest. The Goidel was a conqueror, partly because he had to find room and a living for himself in the world, but still more so because he wanted to live like a lord. He wanted slaves to work for him, to grow his corn for him, and to tend the herds of cattle which were his chief wealth.

In the open land, then, where corn could be grown and cattle find fat pasture, the Goidel spared as many of the Ivernians as he needed to work for him. In the wilder mountains and the fens or swamps, good for neither corn nor cattle, the Ivernians could still live on, mingling with the mound-dwellers already there, provided they were ready to fight desperately enough if attacked. They would be left to themselves there, so long as they did not raid the lands of the conquerors.

Remember that the Goidel did not conquer the whole land at once, as armies conquer nowadays. He came in tribes, and as soon as a tribe had conquered a district there it settled: it had all it wanted.

As the young men began to grow up, however, the generations would find that district too small to support all their numbers. The extent of land which had been enough to keep the firstcomers in ease and plenty, was not nearly enough to keep the greater numbers born afterwards. As a hive of bees sends off its swarms, then, so these tribes sent off fresh swarms to conquer fresh slices of Ivernian land farther on, and to capture labourers and cattle for themselves.

But each succeeding generation would find the work of conquest harder. The Ivernians were as tenacious a people as ever lived. They began to learn the lessons of war and to furnish themselves with better weapons. They were grim foes on any battlefield. It would need the best and bravest of the Goidels to make headway against them.

The more vigorous and enterprising portions of the old tribes, then, were always moving on, leaving the original lands weakened, to become an easier prey to any fresh conquerors coming on behind them. And the movement was endless. As it was with the Goidel, so it proved again with the Brython when he came, and in like manner it was repeated with the Saxon who followed after.

The Goidel, then, when he was at the top of his dominion here, must have occupied the open and richer land, with the Ivernians either under him as bondmen, or lurking as defiant and ferocious foes in the rougher parts of the country and the waste corners of the coasts.

IV

OF THE COMING OF THE BRYTHON

THE **Brython**, when he came after the Goidel, had an altogether harder work. Instead of having to oust only the unorganised Ivernian, he had to face an enemy of his own Aryan race. Indeed, that enemy belonged to his own Celtic subdivision of the Aryan race, and was,

in fact, his first cousin. Moreover, that cousin was one accustomed to conquest and to be lord of others. The struggle must have been desperate, and perhaps the Brython only won because he could come in larger tribes and with still better weapons.

Not everywhere did he oust his cousin, however. The Goidel was no man to bow his neck as a slave. If he were not slain in fight he might have to retreat to fresh ground for battle. His wife and children might be captured and carried off, but he himself still continued the struggle. And when he came to places where the sea threatened to cut him off, or where fen or mountain gave him a little help in the unequal struggle, there he could be driven no more. As the Ivernian before him had kept a savage independence in those places, so now the Goidel made those districts his salvation too.

But because the Goidel was better organised than the Ivernian, so he kept his hold on greater territories. In that stubborn struggle, however, the independent Ivernian and the Goidel must have grown into one race, here in the west at least. From this time on, the Ivernian becomes a Goidel in our country, adding a more ferocious strain to the blood perhaps. Gradually he dropped his own language for Goidelic, but remained just as stubborn as before.

The Brython conquered the most open parts of the land. The cattle and the old bondmen which had served the Goidel remained to serve the new conqueror in turn, as they always did remain to every conqueror that came afterwards. But outside that open land it was war—war tooth and nail, war pitiless and merciless,

whenever the Brython attempted to conquer the rest of the island.

Thus things stood in what is now Cymru, when the tramp of the Roman legions behind him made the Brython turn to fight for what he had won. And, just as the Goidel had joined the Ivernian to face the Brython, so now did the Brython call in the Goidel to help him to face the might and majesty of the power that ruled the world of that day.

Before we speak of the doings of the Romans, however, a word should be said as to the Druids, who played a great part in the resistance of the west to the advance of the Roman. They were able to play that part, because, from being the priests of the Ivernians, they had extended their power over the Goidelic newcomers.

The Goidel, being an Aryan, brought with him all the many gods which were worshipped on the continent. But he also accepted the religion of the Ivernians he had conquered and mingled with. He put himself under the Druid just as the Ivernian did, yet he did not drop his own beliefs entirely. Rather his religion seemed to become a mixture, like himself, of Goidelic and Pictish elements, the noblest teachings of the Druids being revered side by side with the grosser beliefs and practices of Aryan superstition.

The Druid then, instead of losing power when the Picts fell under the rule of the Goidel, established his power over the stronger race which resulted from the fusion of the two. He was therefore greater than before. Such is the power of high ideas and noble beliefs.

As to the Brythons, perhaps the earliest of their tribes, which had fought their way to the sea on the west, between the **Mawddach** and the **Dyvi**, may have listened to the Druids. But, in what is now England, the **Belgæ**, the latest wave of the Celts to cross over from the mainland, had only the same gods as the **Gauls**. And **Julius Cæsar** tells us that those were much the same as the gods of Rome, only under other names. For the Celts and the **Latins** were cousins.

Now each and all of these peoples gave their own name to the land when they came to it. The Ivernians called it the **Pretanic Island**; the Goidel called it **Alban**; the Brython called it **Britannia**; the Roman, coming close on the heels of the Brython, used the name he first found, which was that of the **Brython**. And, as it was through the Romans that the great world of civilisation first heard of the island, so that is the name which was bound to remain.

Our own old name for it, **Ynys Prydein**, comes from the first form, Pretanic Island. It has now changed to **Ynys Prydain**, which means Isle of Britain. But it is all one; it is the same island, that island which our old bards meant when they translated 'Ynys Prydein' as meaning 'The Isle of the **Mighty**,' and which our latest scholars translate as meaning 'The Island of the Fine Fellows.'

And our part of it had no separate name yet.

V

OF CARADOC, OR CARATÂCOS

(whose name used to be written—wrongly—Caractacus).

It was the famous Julius Cæsar, greatest of the Romans, who first brought our island into the full light of history. He came twice, the first time with twelve thousand men, in 55 B.C. and the second time with forty thousand, the year after.

The world heard a deal of loud talk and sounding phrases about both attempts, but the truth remains that Cæsar went away but little the better for his labour. And never a Roman army came again till nearly a hundred years had passed. It was, in fact, the year 43 A.D. before the real adventure of the Romans in Britain began.

With this new coming of the Romans the darkness lifts at last from our own home here in the west. As the steel of the heavy-armed legions of Rome flashes across the Severn, there stands forth into the light of history the figure that must for ever head the roll of the leaders of our land. First of the **Flame-bearers** out steps **Caradoc**, royallest figure of the world of that moment. Son of the King of Southern Britain, his was the first sword that the Romans felt on their march, and the one they feared the longest.

During nine long years of desperate warfare the tale of his dauntless courage rang through the Latin lands.

And when at length, betrayed into captivity, he was led in chains through the hushed streets of Rome, all Italy thronged to see him, and his noble words of challenge to the Emperor roused such a generous pang for him in the breasts of his enemies, that he was reckoned greater in his misfortune than he had ever been in the brightest day of his power. His story has come down to us only as told by the Romans themselves, his enemies. But hear it.

If you look at the map of our country in the west, as it was then, you will see that the greater part of it was still held by the Goidels. The Brythons as yet had only conquered the open middle and eastern parts of the land. North-west of them the Goidels still defied them in Gwynedd. South of them the land was held by other Goidels—the Demetæ in the south-west and the Silures in the south-east—those parts that are now Glamorgan, Monmouthshire, Breconshire, and portions of Gloucester and Herefordshire. But Rome, that wielded the power and the wealth of all the great lands of the known world, was here to conquer Brython and Goidel together. Brython and Goidel together turned to face her, yet the rose¹ of the struggle went to the Goidel, in the person of the Silurian of the south-east.

Both peoples had been sending their young men to help Caradoc in his struggle to stem the Roman tide, east of the Severn. To them his face was as well known as his name. All the things that we would give so much to know were fireside themes with them. All the marchings and the fightings; all the enduring, and all

¹ See Note 2.

the endless labour of his work while he was the one hope and help of his countrymen, were cherished deep in their hearts. They did not write down for us all those little greatneses of word, and smile, and quiet unstudied action, that touch men into love of their leader. They left us no record of those daily signs, which showed him still unshakable through all the terrible years that were wearing thin the hearts of less great men. They thought the story surely never could be forgotten. It is from the Romans themselves we know the little we do know: out of their histories we see him.

Tireless in bravery, his were the words that heartened men to fresh efforts. Weighty of thought, his was the eloquence that brought fresh tribes into the field to replace the slain. Grand of spirit, his was the soul that never faltered. Ever he fought on. Ever he came anew to the onset. Two and thirty times he met the legions in battle, till the Romans wrote of him that, 'by many a doubtful and many a successful battle, he had raised himself head and shoulders above all the other generals of the Britons.' And with that name and with that fame he stood, at the head of the Silures, when the Roman eagles crossed the **Severn** to tame the race on which, as Rome has left on record, 'neither terror nor offers of mercy had the least effect.'

Hear the phrases of the Roman writer: 'The **Silures**, a people naturally fierce, and now full of confidence in the might of **Caratacos**.' Again: 'Conspicuous above all in stubborn resistance were the Silures.' And still again: 'This loss, too, had been inflicted on us by the Silures.' If Caradoc was a gallant leader, it was surely

a gallant people he led, and through the years a story has come echoing down to tell us how, when they heard that the Romans blamed the thick woods of Siluria for their ill-success, the Silures straightway burnt their forests to ashes. The Roman should have no excuse ; in fair and open field they would meet him and beat him. Gallant old Goidels, like fire in their pride !

This, then, was the people at whose head Caradoc was continuing the war in the year A.D. 52. That is the race from which our land can claim one of its most stirring memories.

VI

OF CARADOC'S LAST BATTLE

BRAVE as the Silures were, they were yet too few to scatter the great army that faced them in the lowlands of Gwent. Caradoc, out of his long experience, saw that if the war were fought out in that district only, it must result in one of two things. Either his people would be destroyed piecemeal in endless skirmishes, or dashed to sudden destruction in some unequal battle.

Two things he must do. One was to raise more troops ; the other was to draw the Romans into a long march from their base. If he could succeed in this, then he might find some opportunity to destroy the legions on their march, or await them in some well-chosen position, which would give him at least a chance of victory in a pitched battle.

He was a Brython. He shifted the war into the country of the **Ordovices**, who lived in what is now called **Powys**, for they were Brythons like himself. Fast the tribes flocked to him; warmly they welcomed him. By leading them he would have another chance to face the Romans in set field again.

Skilfully he chose a site for battle on some likely hills, which had a river running along their front; a river shallow enough in places to let the Romans cross, but deep enough to hinder them should they be defeated. On the sides of those hills, wherever any slope left a path for the foe to ascend, Caradoc built hasty walls of un-mortared stone to defend the spot. Whatever could be done to strengthen the position, that he did. One thing he could not do, however; he could not give his men breast-plates and helmets, to match the tempered armour of the glittering troops of Rome. Thus he drew up his countrymen. Thus he awaited the onset.

It is said that the place he made sacred by this stand was the well-known **Breidden Hills**, the outpost of Powys.

In all the hearts of the Brythons were tingling expectation and quick hope. From rank to rank strode the chieftains, exhorting and encouraging their men, making light of fears, spurring their hopes, rousing their pride, and stiffening their resolve. Here and there and everywhere was Caradoc himself, solemnly reminding them that in the coming battle lay the beginning of the recovery of their freedom, or of their everlasting bondage. In ringing tones he called upon them to think upon their forefathers, repeating, name by name, the roll of those heroes whose valour had driven the world-

conquering Cæsar back oversea again, a hundred years before. In grave passion he called upon them to follow the example of the men of old, by whose bravery they themselves had hitherto been free from Roman axe and tribute, and their wives and children safe. Loud rose the shouts that answered his burning words ; high glowed the hearts of his hearers.

Below and beyond the river the Roman general, **Ostorius**, shrank back in dread of such enthusiasm. The river in his front, the rampart above, the frowning hill-tops, and the marshalled ranks of the tribesmen ready to receive him—the whole made such a picture as daunted him for awhile. But his legions were Roman legions, those legions to which the wide world had yielded. Strong, too, they were, in their perfect arms and armour, in their perfect skill, and the perfect discipline of their ranks. Could they forget that ?

Above all, for advancing up a slope—for an uphill attack—they had the formation of the ‘ *testudo*,’ when, by raising their great shields over their heads, the edges interlapping, they could push their way upwards, well covered from the slings and darts of the enemy above. Were they, with all these advantages, to retreat from the face of men who were but half-armed and all unarmoured ? Nay, shame alone in itself would not let them retreat. They murmured to be led on. **Ostorius** caught courage from them. By examination he found the crossing-places of the river, and marked the way up the hill. The word was given. Loud blared the trumpets, sounding the onset.

Long and doubtful raged the conflict at the rude

rampart of stones. Fast fell the Romans there. But skill prevailed, the testudo did its work. Under its cover the stones were torn down, and all the weight of massed and disciplined men surged over, to bear the Brythons backward up the hill. A hail of missiles from the light-armed soldiers thinned Caradoc's ranks, closer and closer the heavy-armed soldiers struck in, and Caradoc's men, bare-breasted and bare-headed against full-armoured men, died too fast.

Then the auxiliaries surrounded them. Taken in rear, they still fought on. But when they turned upon the auxiliaries, the glaives and javelins of the legionaries stabbed them down behind. When they faced again upon the legionaries, the spears and swords of the auxiliaries slew them again from behind. There was no more help; the day was lost. Numbers, discipline, arms, and armour had won. The Romans stood victors of the first great battle in the west.

VII

CARADOC IN ROME

WHAT man could do in battle, that Caradoc had done. What no man could compel—the fate of battle—that had gone against him. Yet he would not give up. One battle was lost, one tribe of Brythons broken. But other tribes of Brythons still remained, who might fight other battles. The tribe of the **Brigantes** covered all the middle of the island, from the **Trent** to the **Tweed**. They had

never been broken yet. To them, then, he went, still hopeful, still undaunted.

There a woman betrayed him. **Cartismandua**, wife of the **King of the Brigantes**, a woman of infamous record, betrayed him. In chains he was delivered to his enemies.

All Italy ran together to see him led through the streets of Rome and then be flung to death. But he strode as proudly calm there as ever he had done in freedom at home. More, when he was brought before the Emperor, he so bore himself, and so spoke, that death passed him by that day. Harken to some of his words, as **Tacitus** has set them down: 'I might have entered this city as your friend rather than as your captive, and you would not have disdained to receive, under a treaty of peace and alliance, a king descended from illustrious ancestors, and ruler of many peoples. If Rome chooses to lord it over the world, does it follow that the world is to accept slavery? Had I yielded to you at once, where then would have been your fame?' And when, at last, he ended by bidding them save his life now, and he would remain for ever as one memorial of Roman generosity, a great pause must have fallen on all that heard him.

For that was a challenge to one of the oldest traditions of Rome. One of its dearest customs was that, after a captive king had been dragged through its streets at the chariot-wheels of his conqueror, he was delivered to death. Yet now this calm king from **Britain** challenged them to be noble enough to break that custom. It is seldom that a challenge to nobleness quite fails, when it is delivered to a great people. That challenge

won. For this one man, and for this one time, the custom was broken. **Caradoc** was pardoned.

Then, too, the Senate was assembled, and orations were delivered full of eulogy upon the capture of this man. It was as glorious, cried the orators, as the capture of any king ever brought in chains to furnish a spectacle for Rome. Triumphal distinctions were voted to Ostorius, the general who had captured him. It was a great day in the imperial city.

But Caradoc had been so truly great in his work, while free, that his name still caused disaster and defeat to Rome, even though he was a prisoner in her power. For his countrymen at home rushed to arms again to avenge him, so furiously that they nearly swept the legions from our land in quick collapse and ruin. The bravest of the Romans were slain, squadron upon squadron was utterly routed, cohort after cohort was cut off. The scornful **Silures**, ever in the van, flung gifts of spoil and captives to other tribes, to show them what might be won in the field if they did but draw the sword, and lift the shield, and come.

Ostorius, so lately in the height of his pride, was confounded. He, to whom but yesterday the Senate had voted triumphal distinctions, was now borne down by the rage of this fresh onslaught. His desperate struggle to stem the tide of disaster broke him. Utterly worn out, he died. If they had not slain him in a battle, boasted his fierce foes, they had at least killed him by a campaign: the campaign that avenged **Caradoc**.

Caradoc, then, remains for all time the first of our flame-bearers.

VIII

OF THE ROMANS HERE

MORE than a thousand years after the day of Caradoc, a shrewd adviser of kings set down a rule to be followed by anyone who would conquer our land. 'Continue the war,' he wrote, 'use paid troops, and be not chary of the lives of your soldiers; for though you lose many men, yet you can always replace them by hiring more. Whereas for the Welsh, every man you kill of them is one less for ever.'

But the rule had already been followed here, long before it was set down in writing. The Romans used it. Ostorius was dead. The implacable Silures followed up their blows by defeating the general who followed him, and far and wide they harried and drove the Romans. But fresh Romans came. Fresh governors and generals, fresh troops and fresh munitions were poured in. Every Roman slain was replaced by another hurried from over the sea. There seemed no end of the Romans.

Thirty tireless years the Silures kept the field. But a day was bound to come when only women and children would remain of such a breed. Yet it was a witness to all the world of their endless valour, that, in the end, a legion was stationed in their country, to hold them down.

Isca Silurum, too, the Romans called the city they built there; piling their towers and palaces, splendid

with gilded roof and chiselled architecture, to be their home and fortress in the land of the brave Silures for ever. The Roman and his city have passed into the dust of death together. The name of the city went with it. **Caerlleon**, the name by which our stubborn ancestors alluded to it, still lives on. But for that we might never have known, for certain, where the city had stood.

Eight years after Caradoc's death the legions reached **Mona**. For Mona was the sacred centre of the religion of the Druids, from the sunlit Mediterranean to the dark seas of the north. The Druids were for ever urging the tribes to battle against the invaders. If, then, the Druids could be exterminated, the tribes would be conquered at a blow. So thought the Romans. The legions were gathered: the blow was struck. The Druids were massacred and their sacred groves burnt.

But, as when Caradoc fell, so it was now. Behind the legions the whole land was in flame again. **Boudicca**, the widow of the King of the **Eceni** (whose name, anciently distorted into **Boadicea**, you see in a famous poem), roused the revolt. **Camulodunum** and **London**, two cities which the Romans had walled and peopled, were wiped out with fire and slaughter. The Romans were massacred in thousands. It needed a great battle, so bloody that we can hardly credit the numbers set down as slain, before the Brythons could be checked again.

So the struggle went on. Prince after prince, people after people, come to the front in the desperate struggle against Rome. But as the descendants of the people **Boudicca** roused are now part of the English people, their deeds do not come into this book in detail,



REMAINS OF ROMAN AND MEDIEVAL BUILDINGS, CARLETON.

Yet we must follow the course of the Roman advance northward in our island, because of its after-effect on our own land. For, just as the Goidel—and the Brython after him—had gone, conquering northward, so, by battle after battle, the Roman worked his way, till at last he had to come to a halt just where the land is narrowest. There where, from the **Firth of Forth** in the east to the **Firth of the Clyde** in the west, it is no more than five and thirty miles across, he built a line of forts to hold what he had won. There he paused.

Yet, in A.D. 120, that is, seventy-eight years after the landing in Britain, a significant thing happened. The toiling Romans had to build a solid wall across the island to keep what they could of it. But that wall was far south of the Firths. It was drawn across the middle of the country, from the **Solway Firth** in the west to the mouth of the **Tyne** in the east. South of that line the land was theirs. North of it they could only venture in legions, where the stubbornest of the Brigantes still fought on.

Nineteen years afterwards (A.D. 139) the legions fought their way to the Forth again. This time they built a wall of turf to take the place of the old line of fortresses of sixty years before.

But the old tale began again. Sixty-seven years afterwards (A.D. 208) another vast army had to fight its way through to the Forth again, and again rebuild the old wall. This means that the Brigantes beyond Tyne and Solway could always draw upon the untamed tribes north of the Forth for help in their struggle for freedom. And if you ask what those walls in the north have to do

with us here in the west, the answer is plain. It was along and between these walls that the names of **Cymro** and **Cymru** were first fashioned. It was there the nation began.

IX

WHAT THE ROMAN LEFT

THE Roman never subdued the land beyond the northern wall, neither did he cross to conquer **Ireland**. The Roman colonists who had settled in Britain paid for both mistakes in tears and blood and horrors that cannot be realised in these civilised times.

Of the tribes beyond the Forth some were Brythons, some Goidels, and the rest of them of that grim race the Ivernians. South of the Roman wall some sort of order was kept; some peace and quiet. And where peace and order are, there wealth increases and men grow soft.

But the Roman sentinel, pacing the northern wall, looked out over a dark wilderness where Brython and Goidel and Ivernian struggled in a tangle of murder and massacre, of pagan sacrifice and worse. **Picts** he called them all alike, because they still continued the old custom of painting and tattooing themselves, a custom that had died out south of the wall.

There was a good reason why the tribes beyond the northern wall were never enslaved. The mountain ranges of that northern land were too vast for easy marching through. The more part of the country was too barren to repay the expense of conquering and

holding it. Just as **Afghanistan** is free to-day, because its savage mountains will not support rich ease and soft luxury, so the wild waste north of the **Forth** remained outside the Roman border. We have need to be thankful for it.

For generations, however, these Picts had kept their eyes ever on the Roman wall, as on the gateway of a land of endless spoil of gold, and ornaments, and slaves and cattle. If by any strength they could force that gate, or by any craft get round it, down they rushed in multitudes. Nay, to accomplish their desire, they would even forego the daily pleasure of slaughtering each other, and would leave their own boundaries in peace, while they banded together for the greater pleasure of a raid into the plunder-land before their eyes.

One tribe of Ivernians, however, had lived between the walls from the beginning. Their home was in **Galloway**, where the sea is but twelve miles wide between it and Ireland. In Ireland the Ivernian was still so strong that **Ivernia** is the name for Ireland yet, in its Latinised form of **Hibernia**, as well as in the worn-down form of **Erin**.

Because of this nearness to Ireland, the Ivernians could still persist in Galloway. The Goidel or Brython might devastate his land, but help would always come from Ireland in time to save him from being utterly rooted out. Thus this Pict of Galloway, too, remained, and being a Pict, watched eagerly for any sign of the weakening of the Roman power. Whenever the other Picts of the north broke down through the wall, or stole round it, then this Pict called his kinsmen from Ireland

and, eagerest of all, guided them to share in the spoil and slaughter.

Here, in our land of the west, the case of the Pict of Galloway was repeated in the case of the Goidel of **Gwynedd** or **Dyved**. The Brython of Powys might make the best of the Roman yoke, seeing that all his kindred, as far as he saw them, were in the same subjection. But the Goidel of Gwynedd or Dyved, lifting his eyes to the sunset, could see beyond, dark and beautiful across the amethyst and amber of the gorgeous west, the hills of unconquered Ireland, where his kinsmen still were kings. He, too, bided his time. He, too, the moment the Roman grew weak, called to his kin across the wave : ' Come now to the spoil : the land lieth open.'

That kin across the wave came swiftly enough, horribly swift to the harvest of murder and massacre. But, to the Romanised Brythons of the south, this was an invasion from a totally new quarter. The invader from beyond the northern wall they had long known as the Pict. This invader from the island of the west was new, and so he must have a new name. Yet he also tattooed himself, and so they called him a **Scot**. Thus we get the two names of the terrible Picts and Scots, one from the north, the other from the west : names of doom to the weakened Latins of Britain.

Swiftly they came, these panthers, to the prey. Pict from the wilderness of the north, and Scot from the island of the west, fast they followed on the heels of the departing legions, closing in on the heart of Roman Britain to meet their fellow ravens, the Saxon from the sea of the south-east. All was massacre and horror.

Think on the proud city of Uriconium, whose walls still stand desolate under the shadow of the Wrekin. The Scots swept that bare with fire and sword. To think on the day they stormed it is a thing to shudder at, and it was only one of many.

Yet, though the Roman had gone, he left behind him something more permanent than himself, something that was to dominate the land for centuries, and leave its effects for all time. He had left his three military offices. One, that of the **Count of the Saxon shore**, was wont to deal with the Saxon pirates who threatened the south-east of the island. Another, that of **Count of Britain**, had to deal with the Scots from the west. The third, that of the **Duke or General of Britain**, to deal with the Pict in the north. It is with this last office we have to do ; the office of **Dux Britanniarum**, or, to use our own instead of the Latin word, the **Gwledig**, or Ruler, of Upper Britain.

For to that office is due the Cymru of our day.

X

GLOIU OR GLOIUDA, OF GLOUCESTER

BUT first we must say a word about the south. It was in 407 that the last Roman general went from the Isle of Britain and took his legions with him. The next date which emerges from the darkness is 425. What must have happened in the lurid eighteen years between those dates can be guessed from the pages of **Gildas**,

himself a descendant of those Latins and Romanised Brythons who suffered the awful horrors of that period.

The barbarians from the mountains drove them to the sea. The barbarians from the sea drove them back upon the mountains, till some in despair began to fight for their lives, and some to yield themselves as subjects to the invader. Then, in 425, came the end of 'the reign of **Guorthigern.**' And just below the manuscript calls him '**Vortigern.**'

The two words are the same, but the first is the later form of it, the second the earlier. It is possibly not a name, but a title, meaning Lord of Princes, or the like. And one rule about it as a title is that the name of the wearer is always dropped. You will hear more about it in the next chapter.

There are ways, however, of finding out the names of the men who held it, and the name of this particular Vortigern was **Gloiu** or **Gloiuda**. Centuries afterwards the Cymry wrote it **Gloyw Gwallt Hir**, meaning Gloyw of the Long Hair, and they wrote also that he built the town on the Severn which is called, after him, **Gloucester**.

Now whether he did rebuild some of the ruins of a Roman city there, or whether Gloiuda is but a name given him because he captured Gloucester first and then ruled there, cannot be settled yet. But his epithet of Long Hair seems to show that he was a Goidel, not a Romanised Brython.

Moreover when, about a hundred and thirty years afterwards, the Cymry came down from the north and drove out the princes who were his descendants, they

called them **Gwyddel Ffichti**. They may have meant the Picts descended from **Guitol**, the grandson of **Gloiu**, or they may have meant Picts from Ireland, to distinguish them from the Picts of the North, those other Picts which they knew so well. But the real point, however, is that they called them Picts, which is the same as if a southern Brython called them Scots.

It remains, then, that they were not Latins or Brythons. It is almost certain that they were from Erin, and the remains of a temple to the Irish sea god, **Lud** or **Nud**, are yet to be seen at **Lydney**, not far from Gloucester.

This **Guorthigern** or **Vortigern**, then, seized upon the office of Count of Britain in the West, while the office of Count of the Saxon Shore in the South East must have gone to the best man of the Latins. For in 436, 'twelve years from the reign of **Vortigern**,' his son **Guitolion**, the new **Vortigern**, had to fight with **Ambrosius**, a great leader of the Latins. And **Ambrosius** seems to have won, probably killing **Guitolion**. The manuscript, however, makes one most important statement about this second **Vortigern**. 'In the fourth year of his reign the Saxons came to Britain, 428.' This means South-eastern Britain, remember. You will find another date, in the reign of another **Vortigern**, for the first coming to the North.

Guitolion's grandson was the famous **Gwrtheyrn Gwrtheneu**, or **Vortigern of the Adverse Lips**. This **Vortigern**, as the tales tell, was full of all sin and wickedness, so that at last he was driven from the throne.

Then he fled to the land of **Gwnnws** and there, in a

wild deep valley, shut in by savage mountains, he built a castle for himself. But fire from Heaven came and burnt up both him and his castle, and all his wicked courtiers with him. So the legend runs.

Now there is a Gwnnws in the land of **Lleyn**, the name remaining yet on the slopes of the wild mountains of Yr Eivl. There, too, is the deep inaccessible valley called to this day **Nant Gwrtheyrn**, that is, **The Valley of Vortigern**. And there, too, you may still see what are reckoned to be the foundations of his castle, and the green mound under which his ashes are believed to be buried.

He left his descendants to rule in most of what is now Cymru. Whether it was his son Pasgen, or his son Categirn, or still another son, who succeeded him as Vortigern, we cannot be sure yet. But our ancestors were sure, for to them he was a prince whom they had to destroy in battle, as they came down to enlarge their boundaries.

It was during his time, however, either by him or by the successor of **Ambrosius**, that the Saxons of the South were beaten in battle, so great a battle that it took them generations to recover from it. That battle has been called **Mount Badon** and has been mixed up with another great defeat of the Saxons in the North.

But this one is given as happening in the year 493. It, however, belongs to the people of South Britain. There were no Cymry in it. There were no Cymry south of Chester at that time. And this brings us back to the story of Cunedda, the story of our own beginnings.

XI

CUNEDDA THE BURNER

IN the North, in the land between the Walls—that old meeting-place of races and swordland of warrior tribes—we are much longer in coming to sure ground. Even then, because it was so much wilder a land—because it was a land where every man's hand carried a weapon, while few carried a pen—it is not a date that we come to, but a man.

That man is Cunedda the First, or Cunedda the Great, for great he must have been. The oldest piece of literature we have is the poem in which his bard bewails his death, singing of his might and his conquest of Bernicia, when he captured the great Southern Wall, and so made himself King of Upper Britain. 'There is trembling in *Caer Weir*¹ and *Caer Liwelydd*, from fear of Cunedda the Burner,' sang the bard. 'The men of Bernicia became pale from fear of him, cold terror seizing them.' And hear how other phrases ring. 'A chief of lion aspect,' 'a fearless defender,' 'fierce, dauntless, irresistible.' Thus the bard sang of Cunedda the Burner.

As we have said, it is likely he was a Pict too. But it must be remembered that up there, between the Walls, a Pict might be either an Ivernian, or a Goidel,

¹ Wearmouth and Carlisle.

or a Brython, so far as race went. It only meant that he belonged to the free tribes from beyond the Northern Wall, some of which still practised tattooing. But, of whatsoever race his blood was, he showed that it was ruler's blood, king's blood. The land found it so.

The old province between the Walls had become alive with little states, homes of raiders and killers. The Picts of Galloway had marked themselves off from the rest. The Picts of **Manau** of the **Gododin** (meaning the Southern Shore of the Forth) were leaders of hordes from the wilderness behind them. The sea rovers had fortified the island of **Inchkeith** in the Forth. Which-ever way the Latin looked, with his face turned north or west from the watchtowers of **Carlisle**, there the gleam of weapons flashed across the land by day, and the glare of burnings reddened the clouds of night.

There is small doubt but that it was out of the gleam and the glare that Cunedda came to the throne as king, seizing the office of the old Duke of Britain. The greater the danger is, the greater the joy of shattering it. The more terrible the threatening of fate, the sweeter the pleasure of defeating it. It was by mastering all the ferocious hordes of the invaders that Cunedda could capture and keep the power. Doubtless he was come of the blood of their own ancient kings, either Brython or Goidel, but he seized the Roman office too, and thereby stepped into the history of the world.

He lived in the same time with that Vortigern of **Projecting Lips**, who was driven from his throne in the south. But while the one was losing his throne, the

other was settling himself so firmly in the land that his blood was never to be extinguished in it again.

In obedience to a plan, which was also followed by his descendants, he set his sons to rule over his frontiers and guard them. One son, **Ceretic** (probably the Northern form of the old hero-name **Caratoc**), he set to rule along the Northern wall and daunt the sea wolves of the Forth.

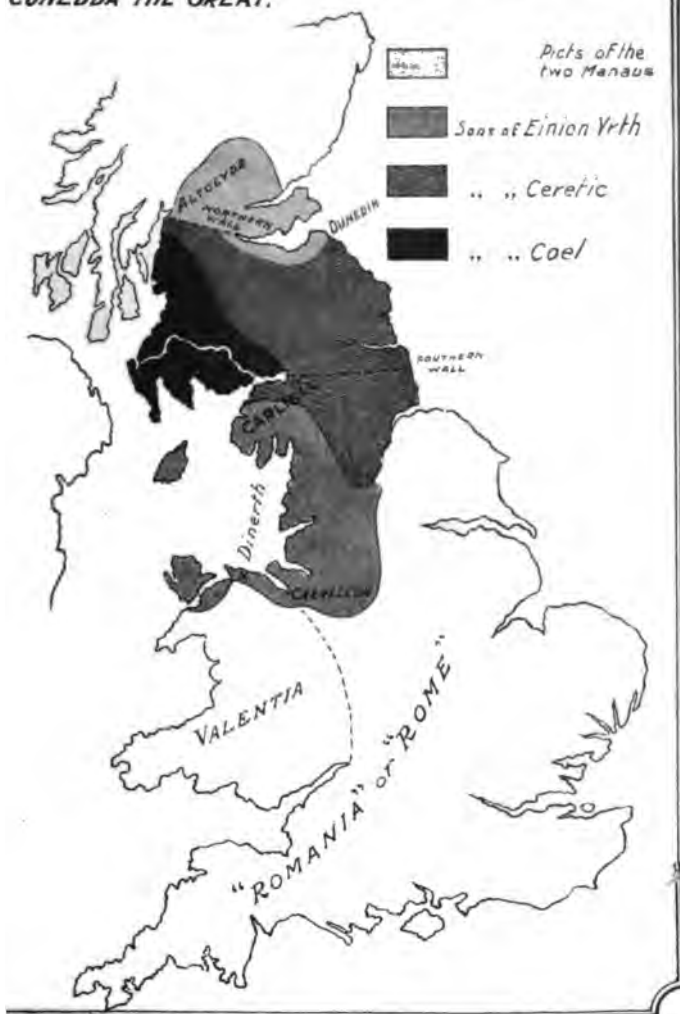


VIEW OF ROMAN CHESTER FROM THE DEE

Another son, **Coel**—named after an old war god of the Brythons—he placed to tame the Picts of Galloway and rule the Goidels of **Duvnonia**, now **Ayrshire**.

Then southward he pushed his power till he could set a third son, **Einion Yrth**, to keep his court in old **Caerlleon**, now Chester. Einion's work would be to rule over **Teyrnllwg**, now Lancashire; over **Corneu**, now part of Cheshire, and over a strip of the coast of **Gwynedd**, reaching to the peninsula of **Creuddyn**, where now **Llandudno** stands. It is possible that the little

CYMRU CIRCA 525, UNDER THE GREAT-GRANDSONS OF CUNEDDA THE GREAT.



four hundred years afterwards, the chronicler wished to say that a certain invader had conquered Môn for a moment, he simply stated that 'Igmunt . . . held Maes Osmelion.'

Two of his sons have left their names to portions of that sweet north-western isle, **Neigr** in **Rhos Neigr**, and **Meilir** in **Rhos Meilir**. Can any of you, reading this story in old Môn, tell us where the third one, **Cynyr**, has left his name, or where the name of Maes Osmelion still lingers?

Thus Cunedda seized the office of **Dux Britanniarum**, or Duke of Britain. Thus he kept it, having his royal court at Carlisle on the Southern Wall, and his sons keeping his frontiers. All the old splendour of the Ruler of Britain was seen again.

He wore the golden belt of the office, and had the old plume of feathers carried before him when he walked. The old retinue of nine hundred horse went with him when he rode, and the old red golden dragon was borne above him when he went to war, as the silver dragon went with the Count of Britain in the South. And when you see the Red Dragon Rampant, on a green ground, remember that an ancient poem, written a century after Cunedda's death, speaks of the green standard of his descendants.

Cunedda, then, was the second of the flame-bearers.

XII

CERETIC WLEDIG

WHEN Cunedda died, about the year 480, his son Ceretic became Gwledig after him. For, while the rest said **Vortigern** or **Vortipor**, the descendants of Cunedda always used their own word of Gwledig. It also meant Ruler, like the other two words, but it differed from them in that it was never used except with the name of the man who held the office. Thus Ceretic, while he was Gwledig to one portion of his people, was Vortigern to another part, and Vortipor to others. This must be remembered.

Ceretic had a hard fight to keep what his father had won. The dead Cunedda had tamed the tribes, but he had not exterminated them. The moment he was dead the tribes would rise again to see if his son were as mighty as he had been.

Remembering what happened so often in after days, it is quite likely that Ceretic may have had trouble with his own brothers. In those grim days the only brother to be depended on was the foster-brother, not the brother in blood. But, howsoever it happened, he did a fatal thing. He paid one set of invaders to help him against the others. He hired the sea wolves to help him against the land wolves; hired the Angles, that is, against the Picts.

It was not quite as if a man, fearing to be eaten by

wolves, should take another pack of wolves with him to guard him by the way. For the Saxons (or Angles, rather, as they called themselves) were pirates, who seemed to have no desire to settle on lands. Moreover, they were not nearly so many as the Picts. Therefore Ceretic called them in and paid them to join him.

Even then all might still have been well, but for one thing. The Chief of the Angles had a daughter, one so beautiful that Ceretic fell in love with her and married her. That daughter was Alis Ronwen, or **Rowena**, so famous in English story.

As it sometimes happens, love blinded Ceretic to his danger. Before long he had made room for his wife's people to settle on the land. He gave them the district of **Cein**, or of **Cynt**, close under the Northern Wall. That was the beginning of ruin for him.

The full force of the mistake, however, was not felt till after the crushing defeat of the Saxons in the South of Britain in 493. That blow was so heavy that it arrested for ever the increase of the Saxons in Britain. It is thought that numbers of them fled over sea and settled about **Bayeux** and **Boulogne** in France, just as the Brythons of the South had emigrated to **Brittany** before that. Henceforth it is the Angles of the North who land colonies along the eastern and southern coasts, and carve out modern England. England is rightly called England, and not Saxonland, as we shall see before we finish this book.

But of the Saxons who were driven oversea again not all went to France. Hordes of them sailed north and joined the Angles along the Forth. Then the paid

army of the Angles turned round, joined the Picts, and began to ravage the land for themselves. Ceretic left an evil name behind him when he died.

But he left more : he left a son whose name will be famous as long as the world endures, and brave men love a brave old story. In history we are not sure what that son was called. In story we have no trace of doubt, for there his name rings out for ever as **Arthur**.

XIII

ARTHUR

WHAT land outside Asia or Africa has not heard of **Arthur**? In what day shall the memory of him cease? What a world of old romance and strange, heart-stirring tales of high endeavour come up at the sound of his name! What a breath of all the sweet savour of noble lives, and of brave deaths, comes down to us across the years from the days when Arthur held his famous court, sometimes at old Caerlleon on the Dee (now Chester), sometimes at Carlisle on the Southern Wall. No other Western hero has ever been so long the ideal for Western men as Arthur.

In twelve great battles, fought between Chester and the northern boundary of his kingdom, he broke the power of the bloodthirsty Picts and Saxons completely. His crowning victory was the storming of **Mount Badonis**, where **Edinburgh** now stands. Three days

and three nights he fought before he won the crest, but he won at last. And because he was a Christian, and the champion of Christianity against the heathen sea rovers and their allies, the Pagan Picts, Arthur carried a cross upon his shield in that great fight, as men remembered ever afterwards.

Now the leader of the losers in that battle was **Octa**, or **Echta**. This Octa was his own half-brother, son of Ceretic and the beautiful heathen Rowena. In the pedigree of **Alfred the Great** the name is given in its English form of **Esla**. In the splendid tale called 'The Dream of Rhonabwy,' it is written in its earlier English form of **Osla**—the famous Osla of the Long Knife; **Osla Gyllell Vawr**.

On the site of that battle Arthur built a fort which was called Cadair Arthur. **Cadair** is one old form of the modern **Caer**, meaning a fort. But because this had been forgotten, men translated the name as **Arthur's Seat**, thinking that Cadair was that modern word which means a chair. And the folk of Edinburgh call it Arthur's Seat to this day. Proud they are of it.

Then for many years there was peace. Once, indeed, many years after, he had to come down to Gwynedd to fight with **Ritigern**, great-grandson of Vortigern of the Lips. And in **Eryri** men will still show you the great cairn where **Rhitta Gawr**, as tradition calls him, was buried, after Arthur slew him in battle.

But in the end, as Arthur grew old, treachery crept into the land again. His cousins, the Pagan sons of **Coel**, son of Cunedda, together with his nephew **Medrod**, son of **Osla**, came to battle against their great kinsman Arthur.

Surely you have all heard the story of what followed—**Gweith Camlan**, or the battle of Camlan, in 537. By the lone shore of some wide water in the grey north-west it was fought, near some bay that gave the spot its name. And out across the lake was some isle where was a nunnery, whose gentle inmates, daughters of princes, were skilled in nursing wounded warriors. Who shall tell us where that shore is ?

There befell the battle that was so grievous to Christian men. There Arthur slew Medrod, but while they fought Medrod wounded him so deeply in return that his time was come to die. His good chiefs carried him away out of the press of battle, and one, his nephew **Peredur Llaw Vawr**—who, because men had forgotten that **Pedyr** is the contraction for **Peredyr**, has been called **Sir Bedivere**—was bidden to take his sword, the bright calibur, and fling it far into the lake, perhaps as a charm to heal the wounded king, for men believed in charms in those days.

Lovingly the tale has grown since then, till now men say that, as the great blade flashed across the steel-grey water, a white hand of a maiden from beneath the surface—Oh ! so white a hand, upon so fair an arm—reached up and caught the hilt, and drew the sword beneath the wave. Then they brought the wounded king to the edge of the water, and out from the dim mists that shrouded the middle of the lonely lake there came a boat, slow-rowed by three maidens all in white. Slowly they came to land ; slowly they took Arthur into their boat, and slowly they rowed him away into the mists, chanting a haunting song that echoes round those

grey old shores still, if one can but find that lake by Camlan Field again.

You may believe it was the nuns who rowed him away to heal him if you will. In old time folk believed otherwise. Then men said that he was carried to the green healing place of **Ynys Avallau**, where there is neither storm nor sorrow. But even on the slopes of far **Ætna**, the burning mountain that lifts from the blue Mediterranean, folk will still tell you that Arthur is not dead, but waits to come again. And they will point straight to the mountain foot wherein he sits a-dreaming.

Here, in our own island of Britain, there is scarcely a district but has in it some green hill of which it is whispered that—

‘ There, where the gnome knows,
Sits Arthur sleeping ;
Round him his heroes,
Their twilight keeping ’

till Britain needs him again.

Thus great Arthur, though he passed into the mists of the grey water by Camlan, still lives in the tales of wise folk, because he fought ever for the right, ever for faith, for purity, and good government ; ever for the putting down of evil and the defending of poor folk from wrong. So shall the world ever honour whosoever fights for the right.

Arthur, then, is flame-bearer, not to us alone, but to all men soever, wherever men love right and nobleness.

XIV

CUNEDDA II

AFTER Arthur the next Gwledig was his nephew, **Cunedda II.**, son of his brother **Corun**, son of **Ceretic**. We have no poem to tell us what he was like, or what his warrings were. And yet he is a very famous figure in our annals, because of what happened to his sons, whose fate and wanderings have caused their father, this Cunedda II., to be mistaken for his ancestor, Cunedda the Burner.

Yet here is the proper place for the dry explanation of the terribly important law of succession amongst the sons of Cunedda. It has to be looked at and understood, however, before we go farther, for all Cymric history, from the days of Cunedda to the days of Llywelyn ap Gruffydd, is strung upon that law, and cannot be judged without it.

To find the core of that law we must turn to the law of the farmlands, the law which governed the holding of the soil which the tribesmen farmed, as we say in these days. That land was held, not by individuals, but by families. To put it another way, the law looked upon the family as the individual for land-holding, and would have nothing to do with any one member of it. This must never be forgotten in dealing with Cymric history.

But, with our ancestors, a family consisted of four generations. That is to say, it consisted of a man, his

sons, his grandsons, and his great-grandsons. The portion of land set apart for each family was called its *gwely* or bed, and so, in time, the family occupying the land came to be spoken of as a *gwely* also.

When the man died, the land was divided equally amongst his sons. But, when those sons died, their shares were not divided equally amongst their sons again. Instead, the whole of the holding was thrown together and re-shared, share and share alike to the whole of the grandsons of the founder of the *gwely*—to the sons of his sons remember, not to the sons of his daughters, for land descended in the male line.

When the last of these grandsons died, the holding was again thrown together and divided once more amongst the great-grandsons. But that was the last time. It would take too long to explain the reason for it, but when the land had been shared amongst these great-grandsons, each took his share and began a fresh *gwely*, which went through the same course of descent as before. This was called the law of *tir-gwelyog*, or *gwely-land*.

Now, the law was so particular about this because it looked upon the land as the source of the food of man; the source, in fact, of man's existence, since without food man must die. Therefore, as the land had belonged to the first owner, it must be divided share and share alike, following the blood of that first man, the head of the *gwely*, from generation to generation, so long as the blood could be traced in his descendants.

But, just as the land was the means of subsistence to the tribesmen, so was the kingship of the country to

the Sons of Cunedda. Cunedda had conquered a certain sweep of country. When he died, his sons divided his dominion over it amongst themselves. That was their means of subsistence; the means by which they lived. It was to them exactly what the gwely-land was to the tribesmen. The food and money due from the land to the ruler were to them what the produce of the soil was to the tribesmen. Therefore they applied the same law to it, the law of tir-gwelyog, and shared and re-shared the right to rule from generation to generation.

Moreover, they applied the law in its fulness. For, when the blood of the founder of a gwely of tribesmen broke up into fresh gwelys at the fourth generations, these gwelys were still reckoned to be members of one kindred or **cenedl**. Each kindred or **cenedl** had to have a head or chief, called a **Pen-cenedl**, and this chief had power over every member of the kindred, for reasons which it would take pages to explain. The law said that this chief must be the eldest man of the kindred, provided he was also the most efficient man. The **Kindred of Cunedda**, then, applied this law to themselves, and the eldest efficient one of them held rule as **Pen-cenedl** over the rest. And to be **Pen-cenedl** of Cunedda's **cenedl** was to be **Gwledig** of the whole country:

Thus, when it came to the great-grandsons of Cunedda, the law was still followed. The blood broke up into new gwelys. The office of **Gwledig**, however, could not be broken up. Some one of the new gwelys must take that office and continue it. The heads of the rest of the gwelys must be content to be lords of districts. And in this also they followed the tribesmen's law.

The princes then, Sons of Cunedda, must follow the law, and elect a chief. They did so. They elected Cunedda II., and he became the new Gwledig.

But a *kindred* had to have other officers beside a chief. It had to have an **Arddêlwr**, that is, an **Avoucher**. His duty was to say who did or who did not belong to the kindred, to say what the law was, and whether it was being followed or not. If you were to say that he was the equivalent of the modern Lord Chancellor you would be very near it. Now this office did not go to the same gwely as the chieftainship.

There was still a third officer needed by every cenedl. The third was the **Diâlwr**, that is, the **Avenger**. His duty was to see that the peace was kept within the kindred, to see that vengeance was taken for any injury done to the kindred, and to lead the kindred to battle. It is most probable that this office had to go to a different gwely to the other two.

Now these three officials, Chief, Avoucher, and Avenger, were not chosen by vote of every man of the blood. They were chosen by the **Seven Elders of the Cenedl**. These seven were the heads of different gwelys, chosen by the rest for their wisdom, and their duty was to elect the supreme officers, and to assist them as a council. Thus you see that, since the tribesmen elected their own heads of gwelys, and the heads of gwelys elected the supreme officers of the whole kindred, the old Cymry of those wild days were really a self-governing people, and not mere lawless savages.

In this manner then, the great-grandsons of Cunedda the Great met at Carlisle, and elected their three officers

to govern them, as a kindred, now that they were splitting into new gwelys. We know that they elected **Cunedda II.**, of the Sons of Ceretic, to be Pen-cenedl or Gwledig. And from the Laws of Cymru, in force for a thousand years after, we know that the one they elected as Arddelwr, or Avoucher, was **Dunwal**¹ **Moelmut**, called the first law-giver of the Cymry. He was the son of Garmonion, son of Coel, son of Cunedda the Burner, and it was his **Code of Laws** which was afterwards amended into the famous **Laws of Howel Dda**.

We are not so certain as to who was elected Dialwr or Avenger. But we hear nothing of the Sons of Gwron in this generation. They seem to have been killed down to a single man, as far as we can yet discover, in their wars with the Kings descended from Gloiuda, and the endless hordes of invaders from Ireland. Therefore we can only say that the office must have gone to the head of the third gwely, that of the Sons of Einion Yrth. And the head of that gwely was the famous **Maelgon**² **Gwynedd**. He, then, must have been the **Dialwr** of his day.

Thus were the Cymry furnished for rule and government in the day of the third generation below Cunedda the Great.

But you will easily see from all this how we get our name of Cymro. All these Princes of the Race of Cunedda, though forming one nation, were yet ruling over five different races at least. The Sons of Coel were ruling over Picts of **Galloway** and Goidels of **Duvnonia**.

¹ An older spelling of the name was Dvynwal.

² An earlier form is Maelgwn.

The Sons of Ceretic ruled over Picts of **Manau**, and possibly over Scots of **Dalriada** or **Argyle**, over Angles of the Coast of Forth, Brythons of **Bernicia**, and Latins of the cities along the Southern Wall. The Sons of Einion Yrth ruled over Brythons of **Teyrnllwg**, and Latins of all the cities from Lancaster to Chester. The Sons of Gwron fought amongst the intruding Scots of **Món**, ruling when they won and defying when they lost.

The men of Five Races, then, were gathered together under the Red Dragon, whenever it went to war. Some common name had to be found to which all alike could answer. A name was found, which would do as well for all the citizens of the British Empire to-day, as it did for the races which made up that seed of the British Empire then between the Roman Walls. That name was **Com-bro**, meaning co-dweller within the same border. **Comb**ro is the word which has, by the usual change of 'com' to 'cym,' become **Cymro**.

We claim it as a national name for ourselves. Our history has made it sacred to us. But, so far as its original meaning goes, there is no inhabitant of the British Empire to-day who could not use it with equal truth of himself at this moment.

It is, as we have said, the exact opposite of **Welsh**, which means foreigner.

XV

MEIRION MEIRIONYDD

AFTER the death of Cunedda II. there came trouble amongst the Sons of Ceretic. You will remember what the **Law of Dunwal Moelmut** said about the head of any gwely—namely, that he must be the eldest efficient man belonging to it. Note well that word ‘efficient.’ To that one word is due all the seemingly endless tangle of blood and murder which attended the history of all the House of Cunedda, whether English or Cymric. Here, on the very threshold of the story, we find a specimen of its results.

The election of Carlisle had confirmed the Chiefship to the Sons of Ceretic. But the Sons of Ceretic themselves had to decide which one of their gwely should fill the office. Accordingly, when Cunedda II. died, the gwely of Ceretic met to elect a new Gwledig.

Now one of Cunedda’s brothers had been named **Dunwal**, and was called **Hên**, or the **Aged**, to distinguish him from his cousin, Dunwal Moelmut, the Law-giver. Now this Dunwal the Aged had a son, who has come down to us, in the genealogies of the South, as **Gavran Vradoc—Gavran the Traitor**.

The sons of the dead Cunedda II. were eight in number, and the eldest of them was called **Tybion**. The **Genealogies of the Princes** tell us briefly that

Tybion was killed in the north, and that the rest of the sons of Cunedda [the Second] came south to what is now our own country.

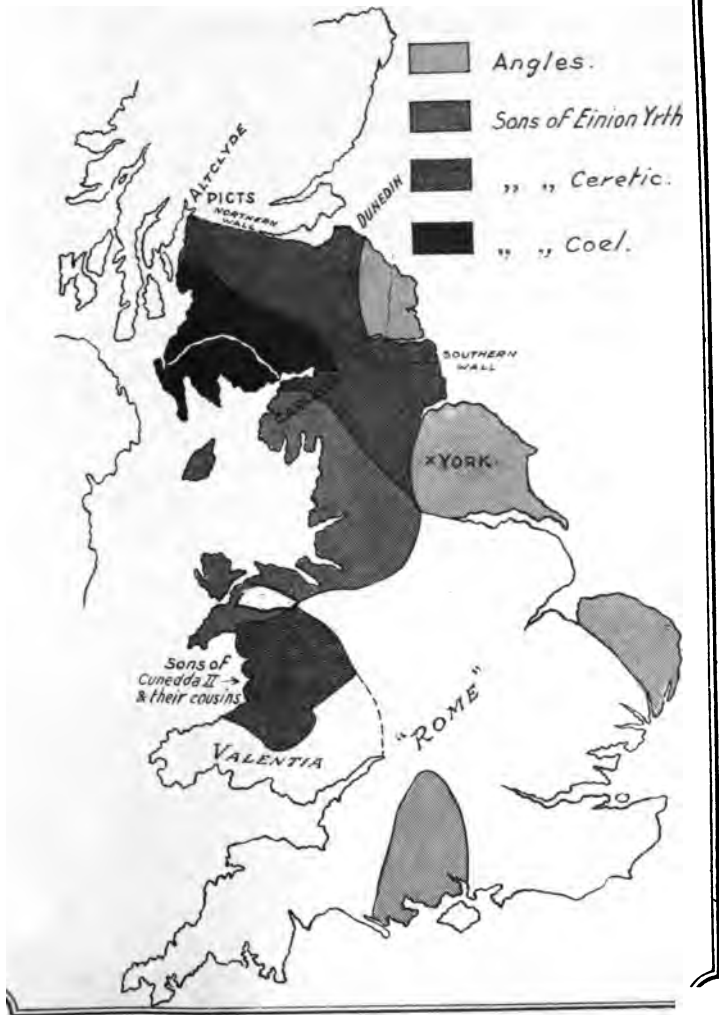
By that brief entry, and in the story of what happened later, we can guess what happened. The law said that the eldest 'efficient' man was to be elected. Gavran read that as meaning the man who could master the rest. By some treachery he killed Tybion and drove his brothers away, seizing the rule for himself.

That which was a loss to the North was a gain to the South. Here, in what is now our own home, was a swordland for warriors to win fresh homes in. Doubtless the **Sons of Gwron** were none too pleased to see their cousins come down from the north and cut the heart out of the kingdom of their old foes, the **Sons of Gloiuda**. There would be an end now of all the good old wars that furnished them with spoil and excitement. But the brothers of dead Tybion had need of a home, and with the steel they set to work to clear one.

South-westward from Chester they started, by the headwaters of the beautiful Clwyd, pouring down opposite Corwen into the valley of the sacred **Dee**, or **Aerven**, as it was sometimes called in those old days. Westward they fought their way, clearing the land of the Sons of Gloiuda, till from the head of **Llyn Tegid** they could see the wild pass of **Drws y Nant**, and follow its waters down to the glorious estuary of the **Mawddach**, till they reached the western sea.

Then northward they won **Ardudwy**, and southward they swept over **Cantrev Orddwys** and the billowy lands beyond the shining **Dyvi**, down, down, to where the

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Badonis, and it is from this Edin that it gets its name of Dunedin or Edinburgh. In the Genealogies of the Princes he is called **Edin Din** or **Edun Dun**.

Now Edin had a son called **Anlac**, whose name and title have caused the writers of the middle ages to weave a whole web of mistakes about the parentage of Brychan, his son. Because his full title was **Anlac, Guor Bre[nicia], A~werydd**, meaning Lord of Bernicia and the Shores of Forth, they have miscopied his titles and called him Anlac, Son of Coirbre, King of Ireland!

This Anlac, then, it seems, had married a daughter of Brychan of the north, and when their son was born they called him Brychan too, after his mother's father. There was a third Brychan after this, descended from this second Brychan's daughter, and many another Brychan beside. And it is partly because old monks, in after years, rolled the records of all these Brychans into one, giving him a family of fifty sons and daughters, that we take the space to speak of him here..

Now you all know where he settled, and where he left his name behind him to pleasant **Brecneshire**. But how did he come to get that country for his own? The answer is plain. He came down with his cousins, the brothers of Tybion. He shared in their war here, and so he shared in the spoil. But how did they share it? That, too, is plain. Let us look at the laws again.

The laws of Dunwal Moelmut say that, when land was to be shared, the youngest of the brothers should divide it, and the oldest should then have first choice

as to which of those shares he would take. After him the rest of the brothers were to choose in succession, from the oldest down to the next to the youngest. For the youngest had to take the share that was left, the one that none of the others would take.

This last clause was certain to make the youngest son share the land fairly, so that even the share that was left would be just as good as the best of the rest. This made sure of justice, and the one thing the Cymric laws insisted upon relentlessly was justice. Equal rights in equal degrees for all Cymry was their one object. Laws more just, as between man and man of themselves, have never been known on this earth.

Which, then, was the youngest son who did the dividing in this case? Here again, the passion for doing things justly came into play. Because the dead Tybion had been slain, fighting the battle of all his brothers, those brothers took his son **Meirion**, and set him to rank as their brother, in the place of his dead father. Thus he was a brother, and the youngest of the brothers—therefore he divided the conquered land, as history distinctly states.

But now which of them was to have first choice? The eldest, said the law. But what of Brychan Brycheinoc, who was cousin and not brother to the rest? They must have applied another law: the law that meted out the reward to any outsider who should fight for a man of the kindred in the hour of need. They must have set Brychan as their eldest brother and given him the first choice.

Such at least will always be the firm belief of every

man born in the fair land about the head waters of the beautiful Usk. Whoever had the first choice of all the lands which the sons of the second Cunedda had won must have chosen that land of the murmuring Usk, under the shadow of the beautiful **Cader Arthur**, now called **Pen-y-van**—so will say the Brecon man.

Then the rest chose. **Edeyrn** went back to the first part conquered, the part that is still called **Edeyrnion**. **Mael** took **Maelenydd**, **Arwystl**, **Arwystli**. **Dunod** took **Arduwly**, called after him **Dunodig**, and afterwards enlarged by his son **Eivion** to include **Eivionydd**. **Dogaer** took what is called after him, **Cyveiliog**; **Rhuvon** took **Rhuvonioc**; **Ceredig** took **Ceredigion**; and lastly, the last part left—the part that none of the rest would take—fell to **Meirion**.

That part was **Cantrev Orddwys**, the land of **Ystumanner**. You all know where it is, falling away from the league-long crest of **Cader**—**Cader Idris**—down to the glittering sea between the **Dyvi** and the **Mawddach**. And what man of **Meirionydd** will not say that it was better to be the youngest than the eldest that day, the day when the land was divided?

But why is it called **Meirionydd**? **Meirion Meirionydd** is **Meirion's** name in the genealogies. That means 'The Meirion from whom the Meirionydd are descended.' And Meirionydd means the Sons or descendants of Meirion. It is from them that **Cantrev Orddwys** came to be called **Cantrev Meirionydd**.

So it was with **Ceredig**, who is set down as **Ceredig Ceredigion**, and with **Mael** and **Edeyrn**. **Eivion**, too, son of **Dunod**, was in like manner called **Eivion Eivionydd**.

Yet in between the land that Brychan Brycheinioc took, and the land of Mael Maelenydd, there lie the districts of Builth and Gwrtheyrnion. Doubtless they were conquered at the same time, but there one branch of the Sons of Gwrtheyrn Gwrtheneu remained as sub-lords, a line that did not end till the death of **Fernmael** in the eighth century. Another branch—that of the famous **Cadell Deernlluc**, or **Cadell of the Black Hand**—remained to rule in one of the loveliest spots on earth, the far famous vale about **Llangollen**. You will hear of that line again.

This conquest happened about the years 550 to 560.

XVII

DEWI SANT = ST. DAVID, DIED 601

HERE is the proper place to say something of a very famous class of the old Cymry, namely, the Saints. Now saint with our ancestors meant just the same as it did in the case of the disciples of Jesus. It meant a man who gave up all else in the world to go and preach the Gospel, and to live a godly life and to help others to the way of salvation.

But whereas the disciples of Jesus were all poor men—working men—the saints of our ancestors were all, every one of them, princes of the blood royal. There is a plain reason for that, though it would take

too long to set it down here. And of all the saints who founded the Cymric Church none is so famous as **David**.

Before the sons of Cunedda II. came down from the north there may have been Christianity here amongst the Sons of Gloiuda, as the pages of Gildas prove, though the King of Dyved showed no marks of it. But one thing that marked the princes of that invasion was the number of them who turned saints, as you will see in the pedigrees at the end of the book, and every mother church in what is now Cymru was founded *after*¹ the coming of the sons of Cunedda the Second, and their cousin Brychan. The Church of Cymru was the church of the Sons of Cunedda, meaning the descendants of Cunedda the Great.

Now Dewi, or David, was the son of **Ceredig Ceredigion**, and he was born at **Hên Vynyw**, or **Old Mynyw**, close by **Aber-Aeron**. But his mother was **Nonn**, daughter of **Cynyr** of **Caer Gawch**, the prince of the Picts of **Dyved**.

Now, just as Ceredig Ceredigion had a son **David**, so his cousin Brychan had a son **Clydwyn**. This **Clydwyn** turned and conquered **Dyved**, killing its king, **Arthur**, cousin of **David**. **Dyved** in those days meant all the land between the **Teivy** and the **Towy**, and straightway **David** became the apostle of the **Goidels** of **Dyved**, his mother's people.

He seemed a fit man to stand before the heathen and compel them to listen. 'He was,' says the old history,

¹ See Note 3.



CONVERSION OF GOIDS TO CHRISTIANITY. (After the picture by Herbert.)

‘a man of eloquent speech, full of grace, of handsome countenance, of a commanding presence, and in stature six feet high.’ You may see that he quite looked the prince he was.

By his life and his work there in Dyved he fixed himself for ever in the memory of the men of that region. Nay, out of the romantic reverence of the men of Dyved for him, both then and since, especially in Norman days, there has grown a sort of halo round his name, as if he had converted all Cymru instead of only a part of it.

The story of his life and death, as we have it now, is only what was written in Norman times, when the monks could no longer understand all that was inscribed on the ancient manuscripts they had before them. Yet there must have been something beyond common about Dewi to cause men to hold his memory in such reverence. If we had no more to guide us than the story of his death, as it was written by the monks, we should be forced to believe him truly a saint. Hear the wailing splendour of it.

‘And on that Tuesday, the first day of March, Jesus Christ took the soul of St. David, with great victory, and joy, and honour, after hunger and thirst, and cold, and labour, and fasting, and charity, and affliction, and trouble, and temptations, and anxiety for the world. The angels took his soul to the place where there is light without end, and rest without labour, and joy without sorrow, and victory and brightness and beauty. The place where there is praise to the champions of Christ; the place where there is health without pain,

and youth without old age, and peace and music, and rewards without end.'

It speaks, too, of all the grief for David—Kings lamenting as for their brother, the aged lamenting as for their son, the young lamenting as for a father. Three days all the multitude tasted neither meat nor drink, fasting for very sorrow and praying all the while, the disciples crying 'Who will teach us now!' the ministers crying 'Who will assist us now!' the kings despairing, saying 'Who will pray for us to the Lord!' the poor and the sick kneeling in tears and complaining.

So the holy Dewi passed, going 'where the angels and archangels, and the King of Kings are, for ever and for ever. Amen.'

There were other names of men, kinsmen of St. David's, princes of the blood of Cunedda, who were as famous in their day for saintliness as David himself, but in other parts of Cymru. **St. Teilo**, brother of Brychan Brycheinioc, was of the generation before Dewi, being the first of the great saints of the South. Dewi's brother, **St. Avan**, was the apostle to the conquered clan of Gloiuda, in **Builth**. Others were **St. Cadoc** and **St. Dyvric**, sons of Brychan Brycheinioc, and so on—they are all to be found in their places in the table at the end of this book. But we have not room to speak of them separately and so will let David, the one who is most famous to-day, stand as the type of all the rest.

By that type, however, you will see clearly what manner of men the Sons of Cunedda were. Whatsoever they did, they did it with all their might. When they

were warriors they fought for the Red Dragon splendidly. When they were saints they fought for Christ as splendidly. And they were of your ancestors, remember.

XVIII

MORGAN MORGANNOG

WE saw, in the last chapter, that Clydwyn, son of Brychan, had conquered Dyved. That conquest, however, was only part of a wide movement of the Cymry, which conquered all the rest of what is now South Cymru, from the Severn westward to the Sea. Great things had happened in the North, things that centre round the name of the fierce battle of **Ardderyd** in 573.

That battle was a battle between the Sons of Coel and the Sons of Ceretic, in which the leader of the Sons of Coel was **Morgan Bule**, grandson of **Dunwal Moelmut**. The leader of the Sons of Ceretic was **Rhydderch**, grandson of **Dunwal the Aged**.

Some of the Sons of Coel seemed to have been Pagan still, and, as far as we can yet see, **Morgan Bule** may have been one of them. But the Angles had by that time got a footing in Bernicia, and in the wars against their king, **Theodric**, it was **Morgan Bule** who had distinguished himself most among the Cymry. It was he who had defeated and slain **Theodric**.

Perhaps it was that which made him aim at seizing the rule along the Northern Wall from the Sons of Ceretic. Whatever it was that caused it, he led the Sons

of Coel out to battle, and at **Ardderyd** the Sons of Ceretic, under **Rhydderch**, met him and defeated him, killing his cousin Gwenddoleu, and driving him and his kindred from the North for ever. Rhydderch, who won, had his capital at **Alclyde** (now **Dumbarton**) at the western end of the Northern Wall, just as the Gwledig had his capital at Carlisle, at the Western end of the Southern Wall, and as the Sons of Einion Yrth had theirs at Chester.

As the sons of Cunedda II., after their defeat by Gavran Vradoc, had to seek for a new home, so now the Sons of Coel had to gather their wives and their little ones, their cattle and their goods, and with the remnant of their fighting men to look for a new land to dwell in.

Which way could they turn? Northward lay the barren wilderness of the Pagan Picts. East and west spread the sea. Only in the south was there any room, and to the south they turned, to that part of the land which the Cymry still called 'Rome,' because in it still dwelt the Romanised Brythons. Remember this date; it is A.D. 578. To the Cymry those Brythons were 'Romans,' to the Saxons they were 'Welsh.'

But certain things had happened in the South, too, since the days of the great Saxon defeat of 498. Though the Saxons had ceased to spread, yet the Angles of the North had sent out colonies. In what is now **Yorkshire** they had taken possession of **Deira**, and the great city of **York** had received their princes as rulers. Southward still, along the east coast, another colony had settled in what is now **Norfolk** and **Suffolk**, and which from them was called **East Anglia**.

And round the foreland of **Kent** and westward of **Southampton Water**, had gone a colony under **Cerdic** (**Ceredic**) descendant of **Ceretic** and **Rowena**. These last called themselves **Angles** for centuries afterwards, though their country came to be known as **Wessex**, after the coming of **St. Augustine** from **Rome**, with his claims to rule the princes from the capital of the Saxons of **Kent**.

Outside these colonies, however, and outside the limits of the **Cymry** (see the map, page 52) the land of Southern Britain was still in the possession of what the **Cymry** called the **Men of Rome**; that is, the Romanised **Brythons**. The great cities of the land, such of them as had not been destroyed by the **Picts** and **Scots**, had doubtless lost their former greatness by decay. Cities live by commerce, and commerce must have almost ceased by this time in Britain.

Thus, many of the inhabitants of the cities would have been forced to emigrate, for the simple reason that there was no way of earning a living in the cities of Britain after commerce was gone. It was this emigration which peopled **Brittany**, and which left the cities weakened of their former strength.

Yet it must not be thought that all the cities lay wholly waste. Such places as **Lincoln** and **York**, **London** and **Dorchester**, can never have lain waste since the day the Romans first walled them. They have lain in decay doubtless, their inhabitants too few and too poor to keep up the proper repair of the walls. But never empty, never desolate, never without people enough to carry on old customs and follow old laws.

Moreover these cities had princes. We know how degenerate those princes were, as the pages of **Gildas** bear witness. He names five of them, and accuses them of vices that could never have been charged against either Angles or Cymry, with their strong virile habits. With such a people, under such princes, it is small wonder that they could not save themselves from the stern races of the north.

It was against these princes and these people then, that the Sons of Coel marched to carve out for themselves a new home. But we will leave all the rest for a moment and follow one, Morgan Bule.

It is possible that the defeat at Ardderyd had caused him to lose the leadership of the rest of his clan. At any rate, when they had come down south to Chester, and all 'Rome' lay before their eyes for them to choose their path in, he let the rest go to one side of the Severn, while he marched down the other to the conquest of what was left of 'Valentia' on the west of Severn and Wye.

Yet he did not come alone. One other splendid fighter of the Sons of Coel came with him. That one was **Urien ap Cynvarch**, famous as **Urien Rheged**. In the old days, before Morgan had slain **Theodric**, that **Theodric** had besieged **Urien Rheged** and his sons in their town too closely for escape. Morgan had marched and rescued him, defeating **Theodric**. So now, in the day of darkness, **Urien Rheged** remembered that other day. While the rest went their way on the one hand, he turned and marched with Morgan to the conquest of **Siluria**.

You know what happened. Morgan conquered the most part of **Siluria**, for it is from him that old **Morgannoc** got its name. **Clydwyn ap Brychan** had joined him, and when it was all over, and the lands divided, **Clydwyn** had **Dyved**, and **Morgan** had all east of that. And in due time **Cardiff** became the capital of the main line of the princes descended from **Morgan**.

Then out of his share **Morgan** set aside **Gower** and **Kidwelly**, **Carnwyllion**, **Iscennen**, and **Cantrev Bychan**, to be the portion of **Urien**. And it was from the heart of that region of **Rheged** that, thirty generations afterwards, **Urien's** descendant, **Rhys ap Thomas**, marched to **Bosworth Field** to help to re-win the Crown of **Cunedda** for another descendant of **Coel**, **Henry VII**.

XIX

THE CONQUEST OF THE MIDLANDS

WE have seen that only two of the Chiefs of the Sons of **Coel** came west of the **Severn**, when they had to conquer new homes. Let us now see what became of the rest, as they carved themselves kingdoms in the heart of 'Rome'—the Midlands of to-day.

It must have all happened between 573 and 576, a time so short as to show how little vigour was left in the **Brythons**. We do not know, as yet, the steps by which this great invasion was accomplished. The details of this flood of war, by which all remaining rule in **Britain** was swept away from the **Brythons** for ever, are hidden

from us now. But when it was all over, and the land divided up amongst the conquerors, we have some idea of where their princes held dominion.

Beginning from Chester and looking to the south, the first principality was that **Gwalloc ap Llaenoc**, who had driven out the descendants of **Gloiuda** from Gurawec, the country that lies round the **Wrekin**, in what is now **Shropshire**. This district in Roman times had once depended on the proud city of **Urecon** [**Uriconium**] before the Picts of Powys had blotted out that city with fire and slaughter.

Eastward of them, in what is now roughly represented by parts of **Derbyshire**, **Nottingham**, and **Stafford shires**, lay what was called **Lloegr**, where **Sawyl Penissel** ruled.

South of these two ruled **Amor** or **Ymor** [pronounced **Avor** or **Yvor**] **ap Brochwel**. Through him his land was called **Amoroc** or **Yvoroc**. It is still known as **Warwickshire** and **Worcestershire**. And east of this lay the land of **Llyr**, brother to **Yvor**, from whom it is called **Leicester**, while south of these again lay the domains of **Arthwys**, who kept his court at **Dunstable**. within reach of **London** itself.

Thus the defeat of the Sons of **Coel** at **Ardderyd**, in the north, resulted in the fall of the Sons of **Gloiuda**, in the south of Britain. But while **London** may have been the object of their march, **Gloucester**, the old capital of **Valentia**, and the earliest seat of the power of **Gloiuda**, lay still untouched. Weakened, however, as it was by the tremendous disaster that had swept the rest of the land away, **Gloucester** had no strength to stand longer. It fell to another enemy.

You will remember that, two generations before, Cerdic had led a colony of Angles from the north, and carved a home for them in what is now **Hampshire**. Slowly, under **Cynric**, son of Cerdic, this little colony had been extending its boundaries amongst the Brythons. Yet they could make no startling headway; the Brythons being too strong for them yet, till this tremendous conquest of the exiled Sons of Coel broke up the power of the Roman state. At once **Ceawlin (Cuelyn)** rose, and in a battle at **Deorham**, in 577, he defeated the Brythons of that neighbourhood, killing what must have been the three princes of **Bath, Cirencester, and Gloucester**, for those towns immediately fell into his hands.

After that, however, he tried to go further. He must have reached what were now the frontiers of the Cymry. It was a favourable moment, for the most of the Cymry were busy holding what they had newly conquered in other directions. But here comes up another name that has been a pitfall for students—the name of **Beli Mawr**.

We had better take another chapter for him, though.

XX

BELI MAWR

BELI MAWR was grandson of that **Maelgon Gwynedd** of whom the early bards told so many tales, and who ruled from Deganwy. The evidence as to **Beli's claim to be**

called **Mawr**, or Great, is only just coming to light, so that we must tell only what has been tested so far.

In some copies of the **Laws of Howel Dda** there is a famous story which is told of Beli's father, **Rhun Hir**. But that is a manifest mistake, as the tale itself makes clear, in the light of the **GENEALOGIES**. Here is the tale.

After the victory of Ardderyd, one of the Sons of Ceretic, the victors in that fight, came down to what is written **Aber Mewydus**, in **Arvon**—perhaps **Aber Menai** is meant. His name was **Elidr Mwynvawr**, or **Elidr the Courteous**. We do not know for certain what his errand was, but he was slain, there in Arvon.

Then the victors of Ardderyd marched down to avenge their kinsman, and they carried fire and sword through Arvon.

This was in 581, when the Sons of Coel were still busy settling themselves in their new homes. Then the men of Arvon, sons of Gwron, brought their cry to Beli, prince of Gwynedd, and away went all the host of that coast, to burn and slay in the land by the Northern Wall.

Two years Beli stayed in the North, taming the victors of Ardderyd, and driving out their allies, the Scots from Ireland. Then, in 584, when he had cleared the borders of Cymru in the north, he found reason to cross into the land of **Eubonia**—that is, the land of the Picts of **Manau** beyond the Forth, not Manau of the Gododin, which was this side of the Forth. As the ancient manuscript says, '584, war against Eubonia.'

But here a dispute arose. For the men of Arvon,

the proud Sons of Gwron, claimed the right to lead the way into the enemy's country. The blood of **Osmael Gwron** claimed the right to go in front of all the Cymry into danger, and to be the first upon the foe, as it had been in old Môn of the Druids, generations before.

Other clans claimed the right against them, and then Beli, to settle the dispute, sent back to Gwynedd. There **Idno the Aged**, of Lleyrn, adjudged it to 'The Men of the **Black Headed Spears.**' Now **Idno the Aged** (son of Meirchion, son of Einion) was **Arddelwr** of the Sons of Einion Yrth. The men of the Black Headed Lances were the men of Arvon, Sons of Gwron.

So the Sons of Gwron under their chief, '**Rhûn, the Reddener of Armies,**' joyfully led the van through the Ford of Forth, and covered themselves with honour in the fighting in Manau, as **Taliessin** sang of them, fourteen hundred years ago.

After thus having made the borders of the North safe, it was time for Beli to think of the South, where **Ceawlin**, the West Angle, was pushing his way from Gloucester.

Down came Beli and broke **Ceawlin** in a bloody defeat at **Fethanley**, towards the frontiers of **Brycheinioc**, driving him back to his own land again. And we find afterwards a line of Beli's descendants living as lords in the district out of which **Ceawlin** was driven. That district was called **Fferlys**. But there is also a son of his of whom we should say a few words.

That son was **Lludd**, and old tales in England called him **King Lud**, and said that **Ludgate** in **London** was named after him. But we have a tale of our own about

him which will stand testing. It is that old tale of **Lludd** and **Llevelys** in one of our most ancient poems.

When **Lludd** ruled in Gwynedd he had to fight with **Llevelys** (son of **Gradd**, son of **Ivedel**), prince of that tribe of the Sons of **Gloiuda** which still held **Eryri**.

You will remember that **Gloiuda**, as 'Comes Britanniarum,' had the White or Silver Dragon for his battle standard, just as **Cunedda**, 'Dux' of the North, had the Red or Golden one. **Llevelys** of **Eryri**, then, came out to battle under the old White Dragon, to meet **Lludd** and the **Cymry** under the Red Dragon. At **Dinas Emrys** (or **Dinas Ffaraon**) they fought, and there the Red Dragon conquered, as the old poem tells to this day.

But though the White Dragon disappeared then from **Cymru**, it still remained elsewhere. The West Angles must have seized it at the capture of Gloucester. At any rate it became their standard, and it was beneath the White Dragon that **Harold**, the last English king, fell at **Hastings**, under the arrows of the Normans, in 1066.

Always remember, then, that both White Dragon and Red Dragon are relics of the days when Rome ruled in our island. They are no mere things of yesterday. They are twice as old as the Norman lion.

XXI

CHESTER AND BANGOR ORCHARD

You will remember **Gavran Vradoc**, who killed Tybion and drove his brothers out of the north. That Gavran had a son called **Aeddán**. After **Rhydderch**, victor of Ardderyd, it was this Aeddán who led the Northern Cymry to war. The bards have sung of him in their fiercest strain. 'Aeddán of the Blood Stained Steeds of Manan Fight,' one bard calls him. But after all his victories there came a day when he, too, was beaten, at the battle called, by some, **Aeddán's Stone**, and, by others, **Degsastan**. For when the sons of Cunedda II., and the Sons of Coel, had been driven out of the north, there were so many the less to defend it against the growing power of the Angles of Bernicia.

Those Angles were led to victory at Degsastan by one of their greatest kings, **Ethelfrith**. Wise and crafty, he watched for every weakness of his neighbours. Very early he found his chance against the English of Deira, and conquered them, driving out their princes and joining Deira to Bernicia. But **Edwin**, the little heir of Deira, was carried for safety to the Court of **Guidgan**, son of **Sawyl Penissel**, one of the Sons of Coel, who ruled in part of what is now the Midlands of England. A day was to come when Ethelfrith was to meet Edwin again.

But in the meantime Ethelfrith found a fresh chance, this time against the Sons of Einion Yrth. For, in 615, Lludd, son of **Beli Mawr**, died, and at once there was war amongst all his kindred as to who should succeed him as Gwledig. **Iago**, brother to Lludd, claimed the crown, but Cadavael, son to Lludd, took the field against him, and the Triads tell us that Iago was killed by a blow from the battle-axe of his nephew, **Cadavael the Wild**.

But Cadavael could only rule the country east of the Conwy, while Iago's son, **Cadvan**, could hold all Gwynedd—that is, the land west of the Conwy—against him. Ethelfrith saw how weak this left Cadavael, and he came down from York to capture Chester before the new Gwledig could strengthen himself.

But if Cadavael could not get all the princes of his kinsmen to fight for him, he could bring all the priests of the great monastery of **Bangor-is-y-Coed** to pray for him, against the heathen Ethelfrith. They came, clothed all in white, twelve hundred of them, and in the sight of both armies began their chant. With a Pagan's hatred of Christianity Ethelfrith fell upon them and massacred them, scarcely fifty of them escaping. As the battle had begun, so it ended. Selyv ap Cynan, one of Cadavael's leaders, was killed and the army defeated.

But though Cadavael could not bring all the Cymry of the west against Ethelfrith, the massacre of the monks did so. Swiftly they came, even **Meredydd** of Dyved coming in time with the rest, and at Bangor-is-y-Coed, in the Orchard of the Monastery which Ethelfrith had

burnt, they fell upon the heathen and avenged the defeat of Chester. Ethelfrith himself was wounded, and his host driven from the field. That was in 616.

And Ethelfrith's good days were done. Young Edwin of Deira had grown to manhood at the Court of Guidgan, or of his kinsman, Selyv of Amoroc, and it was time to think of winning back his father's kingdom. Guidgan had died a few years before the battle of Chester, and been succeeded by his son **Cadwallon**, with whom Edwin had been nurtured. Now therefore Edwin went to **Redwald**, King of the East Angles, to see if that King, being English himself, would give him the help he needed.

Ethelfrith heard of it, and, after his defeat at Bangor Orchard, he sent messages to Redwald, offering him great gifts if he would murder Edwin. But Redwald refused.

Then Ethelfrith sent threats of war, but that helped him none. At last he came with an army to do the work himself. Redwald and Edwin waited for him on the banks of the river **Idle**, in **Nottinghamshire**, so that they must have had the help of Cadwallon also.

Stern was the fight, and an old, old, battle chant in English still tells us that—'foul ran Idle with the blood of Englishmen.' And there the steel reached Ethelfrith. Death got him. Over his corpse Edwin stepped to the thrones of Deira and Bernicia.

So died Ethelfrith, who had never prospered after the massacre of the monks.

XXII

CADWALLON LEW—THAT IS, CADWALLON
THE LION

WHEN Edwin left the court of Guidgan to seek for help to win his kingdom, he must have shaken hands gently with young Cadwallon, the son of Guidgan, the last man he was to see when his own hour came to die.

For Cadwallon and he had grown up together, as we have seen. They had shared each other's sports, and listened to the same tales and songs of bards and harpers in the royal hall. One of the tales they must have known by heart would be the tale of the conquest of the Midlands, two generations before. One of the songs must have been that called 'The Monarchy of Britain,' the song that was sung before the hosts of the Cymry on the morning of battle.

When he went Edwin had taken away the echo of both in his heart, as he showed before long, when he, that had been exile, had become king. But king alone would not content him now. He would be king of kings. In his exile he had grown up into the knowledge of all that the name and office of the Gwledig meant to the rest of the people of the land he lived in. He had grown up watching the keeping of the festivals and ceremonies belonging to the office. His mind had absorbed all the legends of the ancient glories of the title. The tune that was played before

the hosts, 'The Monarchy of Britain,' rang in his heart. The symbols of the office meant as much to him now as to any Cymro. First amongst the kings of the Angles he set himself to win and use those symbols.

Far and wide he tried to bring the kings of the land under him. Angle or Saxon, Pict or Cymro, he dreamed of bringing them all down under his heel. Like a true statesman and general he struck at the heart of what he wanted; he attacked the new Gwledig.

From what we read in old chronicles, English and Cymric, all the nations of the Angles as well as the Picts must have acknowledged the overlordship of the Gwledig as monarch of the whole island. The crown of the successor of Cunedda seems to have been acknowledged as the Crown of Britain by all his descendants, English or Cymric. Certainly when, in 626, Edwin defeated and drove out the Gwledig, he is held by the English chroniclers to have thereby become lord of all the kings of the island.

From that day, too, Edwin took on all the symbols of the office of Gwledig—Bretwalda, as the Angles translated it. Bede, their first historian, tells us of the tuft of feathers carried before him when he walked, and the standard that was borne above him when he rode. He had won them. He used them.

But the Gwledig whom he defeated and drove out—the Vortigern whose title he had taken—who was he? That Gwledig was none other than Cadwallon, the comrade of his childhood, the son of the king who had protected him in his helpless infancy. Such deeds must ambition do.

Edwin was still a Pagan when he did this thing. But now, when he stood as emperor beside the ashes of the hearth that had nurtured him, he seemed to think of softer things. Most of the Sons of Coel had become Christian by this time, with the exception of one or two nearest the heathen Angles. Cadwallon himself had been one, and possibly his father before him. Edwin seemed ready to take on the religion, together with the office and title he had won from Cadwallon. In 627 he was baptized by **Rhun ap Urien**.

So he stood at last, with all his dreams fulfilled. Surely they must have eaten deep into his heart during the years of his exile. But now another dream was eating deep into another heart—that dream a dream of vengeance, and that heart Cadwallon's.

XXIII

THE VENGEANCE OF CADWALLON

SEVEN years, it is written, Cadwallon bore his exile. Then, woe to Edwin, he came back.

Far he sent the war cry amongst the princes. Fast they gathered to him, Christian and heathen alike. For one of them was young **Peada**, or **Penda**, and he was a heathen still. You will hear more of him.

Northward Cadwallon rolled the war. Edwin summoned all his strength to stem the tide. He, that claimed by conquest to be *Dux Britanniarum*, dubbing

himself **Bretwalda**, called all his men to him to keep what he had won. Thick they clustered.

Against him then came the one that claimed by long descent the title of **Gwledig**, gathering the remnant of the power that had been his before. On each side the Red Dragon rampant flamed over the hosts. On each side the harps rang out the strains of 'The Monarchy of Britain.' On each side glowed the fierce passion born of generations of war. And on each side, in the breasts of the two leaders, burnt the remembrance of their boyhood spent together, and of all the evil that one of them had wrought in return for what he owed to the help and kindness of the father of the other. Grim promised the strife that should come of that onset, as the wind whistled through the silk of the banners, and daybreak flashed on the points of spears that stood as thick as corn and as grey as winter's sea.

Grim it fell. So iron-set was **Cadwallon's** rage ; so crushing his onset ; so absolute the valour of the spears that crowded after him, that nothing could withstand them. They swept over the host of **Edwin** like the roaring front of the breakers, when winter gales bring up the rage of the foaming south-west tide. **Edwin** fell. His sons soon followed him to death.

As the old chronicler wrote, **Edwin's** line was blotted out for ever by that terrible battle of **Meiceren**. No one of his descendants ever reigned after him in the land that he had bowed to his heel.

Then from that red field **Cadwallon** turned as if he would wipe out the nation of the Angles from **Deira** for ever. Prince on prince he cut them off ; right and

left he slew. Far and wide he carried steel and flame. So bitterly did he bend to the work that the English chroniclers agreed with one consent to blot out, from their annals, that awful time when Cadwallon took such vengeance for what he had suffered.

For one while it seemed as if Cadwallon would fulfil his resolve. He seemed to have set up for his model all the merciless ravages of two centuries before. Once he held a feast in York, which had been Edwin's capital, and there, when the Angles beset him, he sallied out and slew them. **Osríc**, their new King, fell with the rest.

Despair helped the fleeing Angles. **Oswald**, son to that **Ethelfrith** who had won the battles of **Aeddan's Stone** and **Chester**, came back from the exile into which Edwin had driven him aforetime. In that exile he had married a Pictish Princess, and there, in after days their son succeeded to the throne of that people. Now, in this hour of darkest need, the Angles hung all their hopes of salvation on Oswald and the Picts he could bring with him to help them.

Oswald came. Fast flocked his people to his standard, and fast, too, came Cadwallon north to root him out of the land. The Angles wasted no chance. They chose a spot to the north of **Hexham**, along the Roman Wall, and there they pitched a camp with all their art. There they waited.

Flushed and eager came Cadwallon to the contest, pitching his camp in sight of his enemy, eager for the battle of to-morrow. Red from his victories further south, he had little doubt of the morrow, as he laid him down to sleep.

Fatal security! Oswald waited till Cadwallon's host was fast asleep, and then fell upon it with his desperate army. Cadwallon's men woke under the strokes of the steel that was killing them, and in the wild surprise they melted away in flight.

All Cadwallon's efforts were in vain. All that a desperate leader could do to stem the tide of ruin, that we may be sure he did. All that the few that never fear could do to back him, that we may be sure they did. But it was all in vain, and in the track of the roaring flight the steel at last found Cadwallon.

There under the shadow of the Roman Wall, where Cunedda had first seized the crown of Britain, Cadwallon fell. The genealogies, passionless recorders of passionate men, give no other sign of all he had done and won and lost, than that of adding to his name the one word 'Lion.'

And with that one word for his epitaph we leave him, dead in the dawn by the banks of the **Deniseburn**.

XXIV

PENDA

By his defeat of Cadwallon, Oswald became Gwledig or Bretwalda in his place, and there is no need to doubt that for years the Cymry gave him just as much, and just as little, homage as they had given to any other Gwledig or Vortigern of their own race. So did the English of Deira, East Anglia and West Anglia—as the later Wessex should still be called. So likewise did the

Picts and Scots of the north. Then Oswald's day came to lose it.

We have said that some of the princes were still heathen, though some of the Sons of Coel had turned abbots and founded famous colleges and monasteries. The greatest of the princes still heathen was **Peada** or **Penda**.

He had been a commander under **Cadwallon the Lion**, as we saw, and now, after his death, it was Penda who took the lead in challenging Oswald for the crown of Britain. In 642, at a field fought between the Severn and the Dee, he slew Oswald and stepped into his place. You know where the fight was fought, for the place is called **Croes-Oswallt** to this day; in English, **Oswestry**.

Oswy, brother to the dead Oswald, became king of Bernicia after him, and when he tried to be Gwledig, too, Penda turned and dealt with him. Northward went Penda, the host of his princes with him, and at **Dunedin**, or Edinburgh, Oswy was forced to yield up all the great treasures which his brother had collected there in the day of his power.

It was an old custom of the Celts that a king could keep no spoils of ornaments or costly things, but must give them to his princes. So now Penda divided all the treasures won from Oswy amongst his princes; and they remembered it long as the 'Restitution of Judeu,' as **Nennius**, the historian, tells us.

But, just as Cadwallon had fallen by the southern wall, so there came a day when Penda drew to battle at **Gai's Field**, beside the Northern Wall. He had great hosts

with him, thirty princes, each with his three hundred men. Like Cadwallon, too, he lay down in confidence to sleep on the night before the battle, dreaming of victory on the morrow.

Like Cadwallon, too, he fell by a night attack, all his host broken and driven off by waking to find the steel in their midst. It was the old tale, that has told the secret of so many disasters to the British army, before and since—over-confidence, and holding the enemy too cheaply. That gives a desperate enemy just the chance he needs.

Thus died Penda in 654, beside the Northern Wall, the last one to wear the Crown of Britain for the Cymry till the roll of the centuries brought round the **Field of Anbian Hill**. And with his fall fell the conquests of the Cymry in what had been ‘Rome.’

XXV

CADAVAEI CADOMMED AND THE LOSING OF ‘ROME.’

Oswy had won the crown of Britain, and no other prince of the Cymry could challenge his wearing of it. For the Cymry themselves had split into two parties in the south. The night when Penda fell, one prince is said to have failed him. That prince was **Cadvael** or **Cadavael**, king of Gwynedd. He was chief of the Sons of **Einion Yrth**, and great-grandson of **Beli Mawr**.

The Sons of Coel, in what became—from **that night**

of Penda's defeat—Mid-England, accused him of having marched away in the night, before the attack, with all his men. And Nennius, their historian, tells us that in their scorn they dubbed him **Cadavael Cadommed**. Now Cadommed means 'one who refuses battle.'

But in the genealogies of his descendants, here in the west, he is called **Cadvael Wledig**. It is quite likely that he may have quarrelled with Penda that night, and that he did draw off his forces there and then, to go back to Gwynedd in anger. Such a thing would certainly be reported to Oswy by his scouts and spies, and Oswy would then at once have an opening to attack Penda's camp, on the side that had been thus left open. On the whole we must believe that he did draw off, and so cause the defeat of Penda.

If he looked to profit by Penda's death, however, he found himself mistaken. Gwledig of what is now Cymru he may have become. But the Sons of Coel east of Severn would have none of him as Gwledig over them. They would rather accept Oswy as their overlord. Our old historian wrote bitterly of them that they did so, and turned English.

And English they have remained. Cadwaladr, son of Cadwallon the Lion, ruler of **Amoroc** under the English Oswy, in place of the **House of Yvor**, died there of the plague in 664. His son again, another Cadwallon, died in Rome in 682, and was afterwards set down as Ceadwalla of Wessex, when the southern part of Amoroc had fallen to Wessex.

Ivor, his son again, takes with him into English history the **Laws of Dunwal Moelmud**, and many fine

passages have been written in praise of them under their new title of the **Laws of Ine**. And if we want to know what the Laws of Dunwal were really like, we shall have to take those Laws of Ine and study them just as closely as we do the **Laws of Howel Dda**.

Thus with the death of Penda, at Gai's Field by the Northern Wall in 654, the conquests of the Cymry in 'Rome' pass out of our history.

One result of this passing of the Midlands must, however, be mentioned. Most of the princes of the House of Yvor of Amoroc refused to become English. It was a second Yvor, or Amor, who was their head under Cadwallon. His grandsons and their cousins refused the new order of things.

Dropping the sword and sceptre of earthly rule, they took up the Cross of Christ, and so we get that cluster of saints who figure so largely as the **Sons of Ymyr Llydaw** and their kinsmen. Very famous they are in the history of the old Cymric Church, because of the great colleges and churches which they founded.

And it is a sign of how completely the history of the Midlands had passed out of knowledge, five centuries afterwards, that the brilliant writers of **Morgannoc**, gathered round **Robert, Lord of Glamorgan**, set down all these saints as having come from Brittany. For by that day the only Amoroc men could guess of was **Armorica**, that is, Brittany. It is in the same way they wrote of the **Princes of Groec** or **Gurawec** as **kings of Greece!** They never dreamed that these were all **Sons of Cunedda**.

XXVI

THE DESCENDANTS OF GWYAR.
RHODRI MAWR

ONE of the princes who were with Penda must have been **Gwyar**, of the Sons of Coel, whose descendants were Princes in Ynys Manau—the Isle of Man. But for four generations after him his descendants had little to do with the mainland. Then came the days of **Conan Tindaethwy** and a disputed succession again.

Much that is confused and yet interesting had happened in Cymru in the meantime, but we have not room for it here. Therefore we come to the year 798, and the generation of **Conan**.

Conan and his rival were both of the Sons of Einion Yrth, and since the days of **Cadavael Wletic** the office of Gwledig had always remained with them. They now no longer called it by that name. The word they used now was **Brenin**=king.

Conan's rival, **Howel ap Caradoc**, was descended from that **Cadavael the Wild** who had killed Iago in the old days, and so brought on the Battle of Chester. **Howel's** father, **Caradoc**, had just been killed in battle with the Mercians, and **Howel** thought he should succeed him. **Conan**, however, was elected, and that election has been famous ever since by reason of the story told of it.

That story has been set back to the days of **Maelgon Gwynedd** by mistake, perhaps because the election itself

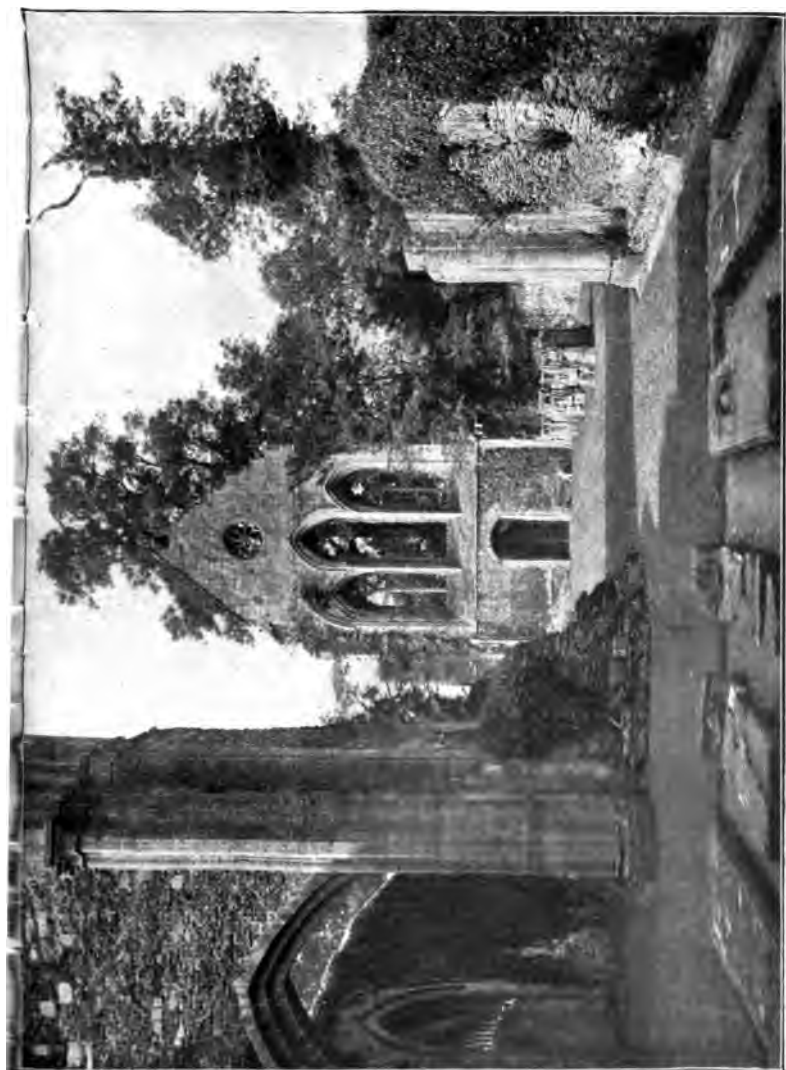
took place at a spot called **Maelgon's Strand**.¹ It is at **Aberdovey**, where folk still think they may hear the sound of the bells of the drowned churches of the **Plains of Gwyddno**, covered by **Cardigan Bay**.

Now to that election came all the princes of Cymru, and all their Avouchers with them, that they might know the law and see it kept. The Chronicle simply says that Conan was elected King of All Cymru, by all the Princes of the land. But the tale in the old manuscript is fuller; and it tells how Conan had for his wise man the lord of **Moel Esgidion** in **Meirionydd**, one of the foothills of Cader Idris above beautiful Dolgelley. **Maeldav the Elder**, or Councillor, he is called, and perhaps he knew all the white sands of the wide aber of the **Dyvi** better than the rest. At any rate, as the tale is written, he prepared a holy chair of the waxed wings of the white sea-birds, and he set Conan in it. Then, when the tide rose, swiftly and snakily as it runs along the sands of Maelgon's Strand, the rest of the claimants were all drowned or fled, while the chair upheld Conan. Thus was Conan elected king.

There is an old poem, however, about the **Gweith**, or **Battle**, of **Cors Vochno**, the marsh that runs beside Maelgon's Strand. We shall be nearer the facts perhaps if we believe that the election was settled by the sword, and that Maeldav's thorough knowledge of where the swift-winged tide would come, enabled him to entangle the other side in some spot where the dark wave would do the rest.

Now Maeldav, as you will see by his pedigree, was

¹ See Note 4.



descended from those princes of the Sons of Coel who refused to become English. Perhaps it was he also who advised Conan to let another descendant of Coel marry his only daughter **Etthil**, or **Essylt**. That descendant was **Guriat**, or **Uriet**, King of the Isle of Man. And it was Guriat's son, **Mervyn Vrych**, or the **Freckled**, who in good time put in his sword for the rule of Cymry, and got it.

Doubtless he had to fight for it, and fight hard. We have a record of one fight he must have won in the fact that he married **Nest**, daughter of **Cadell**, a chief of that branch of the Sons of the Gloiuda which continued to rule a little spot in the valley of the Dee, where now Llangollen stands. Their fortress was the famous **Dinas Bran**, and the holy spot for burials was where the **Abbey of Valle Crucis**, **Llan Egwestl**, stood afterwards. They must have fought bitterly to keep the little principality; it is beautiful enough to be worth fighting for, there is no doubt of that.

It seems to have been a custom of the old princes from the first, that, whenever one of them conquered the old king of any piece of country, he married the daughter, or sister, or wife of the king displaced. It was a piece of politics, and politics is the art of doing the best you can in any given set of existing circumstances. The beaten people could approach their new king through his wife of their own blood. And he could keep a watch on them through her.

Now the son of Mervyn Vrych and Nest was **Rhodri Mawr**, the second most important figure in our history. For just as Cunedda, by seizing the crown of **Britain** in the north, set on foot that kingdom of **Britain** which

was never again quite lost sight of in this island, so Rhodri, by seizing the crown of Cymru here in the west, may be said to have set on foot that definite kingdom of Cymru of which we still think to-day when the word Cymru is mentioned.

Before his day the crown of the west seems to have belonged to the Sons of **Einion Yrth**, and it is not certain how far its power was acknowledged in Dyved or Morgannoc. After his day it belonged to his descendants, and in spite of the earlier struggles and claims of the line of Morgan Bule, in Morgannoc, no man of any other house was ever acknowledged as **Brenin Cymru Oll**, King of All Wales.

It did not bring peace to the land that he should have seized the crown for his sons after him. Far indeed from it. Such a tangle of blood and murder, of battle and ravage, as followed for the next six generations would be hard to match in any history. But the idea of Cymru as a compact country seems to have first gained a permanent footing after his day.

And so for that we have to be thankful to the line of Coel, to the House of Gwyar, and to its scion, Rhodri Mawr.

XXVII

RHODRI'S THREE PROVINCES

WE must stop to say something of Rhodri's power and work. His father must have already secured full authority over Gwynedd—that is to say, over the Sons of

Einion Yrth and the Sons of Gwron. As to the latter Rhodri appointed one clan of them as his champions and guard. They therefore must have been the truest of his people.

Rhodri himself must have completely broken all the tribes of the Sons of Cunedda the Second, for he married **Yngharad**, daughter of **Meuric**, their chief, and his sons ruled there after him. All their territories north of the Dovey he added to Gwynedd, over which he set his son **Anarod**. South of that their lands were made into a separate territory and called **Deheubarth**, the south part.

It was a swift fall for the Sons of Cunedda the Second. Only two generations before—that is, in the days of **Sesyll**, father of **Meuric**, it had seemed for awhile as if this kindred was to conquer all the rest of Cymru. Northward the **Chief of Meirionydd** was ruling in **Nant Conwy**, while southward **Sesyll** had conquered to the mouth of the Towy, and set up his conquest as the country of **Sesylloc**.¹

And now Rhodri was master of that also, and he set his son **Cadell** to rule in the palace of **Dinevor**, as the beginner of that kingdom of **Deheubarth** which was to play so great a part in the subsequent history of the land.

To the east he made a province which he called **Powys**, using what may have been an old name taken from the Sons of **Gloiuda** at **Dinas Bran**. This province lay along the valleys of the **Dee** and **Severn**, as far east as where the **Dee** turns north, and the **Severn** south, to

¹ **Sesylloc** consisted of the four Cantreys of **Ceredigion** and the three of **Ystrad Towy**.

reach the sea. There he set his son Mervyn to rule, with his court at **Mathraval**.

Two other sons he had, by another wife. One was **Tudwal**, called **Gloff**, or the **Lame**, because of a wound in the knee, received in the battle of Conwy. The other was **Elisse**. To Tudwal he gave the lands of **Alaeth**, prince of the north-west part of Dyved, giving him also Alaeth's daughter to be his wife. Elisse he set on his eastern border, towards Chester. It is from this Elisse that the finest of our kings descended, as we shall shortly see.

But it must be remembered that the old province of **Morgannoc**, though now sub-divided into lesser districts (of which one was **Glamorgan**), was still under the rule of its own line of princes, descended from **Morgan Bule**. Those princes yielded certain homage from time to time as they were forced to do. But at other times, whenever they thought that the Kings of **Wessex** were strong enough to protect them, they would rather transfer their homage to those kings. For that cost them less than the real overlordship of the Sons of **Rhodri** would have cost them.

There was a piece of country also called **Fferlys**, which lay between the **Wye** and **Severn**, south of **Powys** and north-east of old **Morgannoc**. Here the descendants of **Beli Mawr** ruled, a line of princes best known through one called **Elystan Glodrydd**. The **Princes of Brycheinioc** undoubtedly submitted to the Kings of **Dinevor**, but those of **Fferlys** no doubt did as **Morgannoc** did, and submitted only when there was no King of **Wessex** strong enough to save them.

It will be seen that, outside the territories where the Sons of Rhodri held the palaces of ancient princes, there was nothing that could be called Cymric patriotism. How could there be? The Cymry knew from their history that there was one imperial Crown in the island—the Crown of Britain, the Crown of Cunedda.

Even in the old days, when a Cymro had worn that crown, the various princes of the different districts had never yielded more than certain dues, and certain degrees of homage and duty. All those degrees had been set down in the law, and were rigidly kept on both sides. Whether it were an Angle or a Cymro who wore the Crown, was of less importance than that the wearer of it should duly respect the laws which governed the dignity in its relation with the under-princes.

It is very important to remember this in reading our history. The Crown of Britain was a very living and actual fact to our ancestors.

This, then, is the state of our land when the new epoch begins—that of the Sons of Rhodri Mawr.

XXVIII

THE LAWS OF HOWEL DDA

HOWEL DDA, or **Howel the Good**, was the son of **Cadell**, the first King of Deheubarth. Wars he made, like the rest of kings, but not so many, and he is best known by his new settlement of the **Laws of Dunwal Moelmut**.

From his day to this those laws have been called by his name—the **Laws of Howel Dda**.

For awhile he ruled all Cymru from Dinevor. And as he had some years of peace he took in hand the revising of the laws of the land—sure sign of a great king. He called to him all the judges and all the wise men of the land, and they met at **Ty Gwyn ar Dav**, in the house of '**Gwyn the Maer**, the man who was the owner of **Glantavwyn**, and to whom the house belonged in which the law was made.' This, as far as we can make out, was in 942, or 943. Ty Gwyn ar Dav is called **Whitland** in English.

It is only of late years that these laws are coming to be studied as they deserve. And the more they are studied, the more grandly simple and logical they are seen to be, the more nobly right their aim. 'Equal rights in logical degrees' is seen to have been the one motto of our ancestors, when they wrote down the laws.

One emphatic law laid down that every Cymro had the right to certain means of existence, and to a training to fit him for living. As soon as a boy came to his fourteenth birthday his father took him to the **Pen-cenedl**, or Chief of the clan, to be trained for life.

The Chief then took comb and scissors and cut the boy's hair about his brows, as a sign that he was kin to him. Then he gave the boy a '**cyvarwys**,' or gift of certain things in return.¹ That is to say, he set apart cattle enough, out of the special herd kept by the tribe for this purpose, and rights enough in the common ploughlands of the tribe, to support the boy from that time forth.

¹ See Note 5.

Then for seven years, like the seven years of apprenticeship, the boy was taught all that a man should know, to make him a worthy member of the tribe and nation. He learnt to plough, and to sow, and reap and thrash the grain, to shear and to weave, and to do all those hundred-and-one things that go to make a good farmer. But first and last and all the time he was taught and trained to fight for his land and people.

Sword and spear, and bow and quiver full of arrows were given to him, and he was daily practised in the use of them. He was taught to be hardy, and fearless, and stubborn of endurance. He was inured to long swift marches and night watching, in rain and storm and frost and all bad weathers. No danger was to daunt him, no hardship to wear him out.

He had only one regular meal a day, and that was to be in the evening, at the end of a march. But in the morning, when he rose up to go, he could have a thin piece of bread, with an *enllyn*, or thumb-piece, of cheese or meat, just what he could carry in his hand and eat, as he marched forward from the bivouac, where he had slept or watched through the wild night. Splendidly hardy were the youths of those days, and every boy was taught to look forward to dying in battle for his people and for the right, as the only honourable and manly death for a true Cymro. It was accounted a disgrace to die in any other way than in battle.

Thus, when the seven years of training were ended at the age of twenty-one, the youth was in every way complete and fit to go back into the tribe and take his place as a man. Thoroughly skilled in the way to make



PROCLAIMING THE LAWS OF HOWEL DDA.

Gruffydd's father, Llewelyn, had been a good King and a strong King. His dominion, says the old chronicler, was from the sea in the north to the sea in the south, complete in abundance of wealth and inhabitants. Neither poor nor destitute were to be found in all his land. Yet he was slain in the hour of a great victory over his enemies at **Abergwili**, defending his throne from two claimants. And in spite of his victory his young son could not succeed him.

Other princes ruled after Llewelyn ap Sesyll, and then this Gruffydd, his son, rose to power, perhaps the greatest man of the Cymric Sons of Cunedda since the day The Lion had fallen, far off by the Roman Wall. Two great Gruffydds, three great Llywelyns, and two great Owens have ruled in Cymru. This is Gruffydd the First, son to Llewelyn the First; that is, to Llewelyn ap Sesyll.

Thus speaks one ancient chronicle of Gruffydd: 'He set himself to work goodness to his country and people. He defended them from the foe without, and from the pillage and anarchy of lawlessness within. And laws he made, fair and just, to save them from wrong.'

And hear another of the chronicles, speaking of him: 'He, from beginning to end, pursued the Saxons and the other nations, and overcame them in a multitude of battles.'

One would think that, with such a King on the throne, no other claimant would have any chance of pulling him down. But, as a matter of fact, he stood between the Gwely of Gwynedd and its chance of the

throne. He stood also between the Gwely of Deheubarth and its chance of the throne. Again, to be King of All Cymru he must make the proud princes of **Morgan-noc**, the Sons of Morgan Bule, obey him. The three Gwelys, therefore, were certain to combine against him, so as to clear the ground for a contest against each other for the crown to which they believed themselves more nearly entitled than he was.

For he himself was descended from that son of **Rhodri Mawr**, named **Elisse**, who had been planted on the eastern border of Gwynedd, to keep back the foe. And it was on that eastern border, too, that the greatest triumphs of Gruffydd himself were won.

He did more than merely kill or drive out the other princes of the land to secure the throne for himself. He remembered the work of his ancestor, **Conan ap Elisse**, when he was Warden of the Border. Mercia was still eating away that eastern border, whenever she could, and now in his hour of power Gruffydd resolved to put an end to that for ever. Fiercely he struck, and at the great battle of **Rhyd-y-Groes**—the Ford of the Cross—on the **Severn**, near **Buttington**, he did his work thoroughly. In that victory he slew the Mercian leader, **Edwin**, brother to the Mercian earl, as well as other nobles. For many a year there was the peace of a desert on that border.

But that did not give Gruffydd peace at home. **Howel ab Edwin**, the prince of Deheubarth, whom he had already defeated at **Llanbadarn Vawr**, came back from Ireland with a fleet of Irish Danes. Swiftly came King Gruffydd down from the north, and at **Pencader** the armies met in

stubborn battle. Again Gruffydd won, driving Howel and his Danes with speed to their ships.

But Howel was not finished yet. Three times beaten in the field, he was indeed a Cymro, for while he had life he would never give in. Back again he came a fourth time, landing at **Aber Towy** with another host from Ireland.

This time he would not fly. His Danes were beaten again, but he would have no more of exile. He would have no more of standing on the headlands of Ireland and watching, through the dawn, the mountains of his own land flashing into light and glory under the rising sun. His foot was on his native soil, his sword was in his hand. He would go back no more. He was a true descendant of Tudwal Gloff, there he would win, or die.

He died.

But the blood of Cunedda ran in other veins, besides those of the victorious king and the dead Howel. **Morgannoc** found the new men. Into the place of the slain Howel stepped the sons of **Rhydderch ab Iestyn**¹ of the old royal line of **Morgan Bule**.

Gruffydd and Rhys, sons of Rhydderch, conspired with the men of **Ystrad Towy**. Of a sudden those men rose and slew the household men of the king to the number of a hundred and forty.

With steel and flame the king avenged his dead, devastating Ystrad Towy mercilessly.

But the sons of Rhydderch were not content. A few years they waited, and then Caradoc and Rhys, sons of Rhydderch, led a great host of the men of **Gwent** and

¹ This Iestyn had nothing to do with the **Iestyn ap Gwrgan** of 1090.

Morgannoc into the field, to fight the king again for the government of Deheubarth. The 'Gwentian Chronicle' waxes eloquent about the battle which followed. So fierce was the fight, so bloody, and so many were slain on both sides, that in the end each side was obliged to draw off and leave the day undecided.

But Gruffydd had called in the Danes and Saxons from England, under **Sweyn**, son of **Godwin**, to invade Gwent and Morgannwg from the east. And while the sons of Rhydderch were fighting so furiously with the king in front, Sweyn and his host were burning and destroying their country behind them. Evil was the day for Gwent and Morgannoc when they marched against the king.

Once again, however, the men of Gwent and Morgannoc took the field and began to kill and ravage amongst the king's men in Ystrad Towy. Down came the king again and drove them out.

Then the king sent his brother **Rhys** to invade **Gwent** and **Morgannoc**, and to break the power of the sons of Rhydderch in its home. But the stubborn descendants of Morgan drove him back to the borders of Mercia. There they slew him, and sent his head to **Edward the Confessor**, King of the English, tempting him to aid them against their own king. The sons of Rhydderch would turn to any aid to get what they desired.

It was another son of Rhydderch who next came to the front. This son was called Gruffydd too, and next year he 'collected a very numerous army and went against' the king. 'And a fierce and bloody battle took place,' in which **Gruffydd ab Rhydderch** was slain.

All this was but the working of that law which said that each gwely of Princes should elect a chief for itself, and that then those chiefs should elect one of themselves as supreme chief or king of all the land. And just as the chief of every gwely must be the eldest efficient man of it, so the chief of all the land, the king, must be the eldest 'efficient' man. That one word efficient could have but one result, war between the gwelys, each chief trying to prove himself more efficient than the rest by conquering them.

In Gruffydd's day there were four great gwelys of princes in the land. There was his own gwely (that of the Borderers, or Sons of Conan ap Elisse, in Northern Powys), the gwely of Gwynedd, the gwely of Deheubarth, and the gwely of Morgannoc. These other three gwelys might hate each other, but they were all ready to join in one thing—they were all ready to work night and day to destroy Gruffydd, by any means they could compass.

And remember what manner of men the princes of these gwelys were. For of one thing there is no shadow of a doubt—in themselves they were men of splendid energy and courage. Under a happier law of succession they would have been the strength, instead of the ruin, of their country. Hear a tale of one of them, and from that judge the rest.

Sitric, King of the Danes of Ireland, landed a great host in Môn to ravage and destroy. Young Cadwallon, of the fierce gwely of Gwynedd (this was before Gruffydd's day), came swiftly to bar the way, at the place still called Cerrig y Gwyddel. So grim were he

and his *teulu* of household troops never to fly from that field, but there to win or die, that each man shackled his foot with his horse's fetter.

They won.

Amongst the old poems of that day, too, there is one long one about another Cadwallon,¹ of the gwely of Deheubarth. Fourteen battles and sixty lesser fights he fought, keeping the land for his father against the other princes, one of these being Edwyn of Tegeingl, now Flintshire. And many another poem tells of many another prince of those fierce old days, showing the endless warrings that kept the land from peace.

With all these foes within, and the ancient foe without, Gruffydd must indeed have been a great king, to have kept his throne so long and to have done such great work as he did on the eastern borders.

XXX

GRUFFYDD THE KING

For all this time Gruffydd the King had not forgotten the eastern border of his country. His great victory at **Rhyd-y-Groes**, in the beginning of his reign, had freed him from all further fear of Mercia.

But the wearer of the Crown of Britain, **Edward the Confessor**, inglorious descendant of glorious **Alfred**, was but a puppet in the hands of his earls and favourites.

¹ Son of Meredydd, ap Owen, ap Howel Dda.

He had surrounded himself with adventurers from **Normandy**, and one of those Normans, a nephew of his own, he made **Earl of Hereford**. **Ralph** was his name.

Earl **Ralph**, like a true Norman, soon began to try to extend his earldom at the expense of his neighbours. **Gruffydd** watched him at work till 1052. Then he moved. With a great army he came down, and near by **Leominster**, in a battle fought on the thirteenth anniversary of the victory of **Rhyd-y-Groes**, he taught Earl **Ralph** that there was a King in **Cymru**.

Three years afterwards, in 1055, **Earl Alfgar**, son of **Leofric**, the **Earl of Mercia**, was outlawed by the King of England, doubtless at the urging of some courtier who wanted an earldom for himself. Now **Alfgar** was nephew of the leader whom **Gruffydd** had defeated and slain at **Rhyd-y-Groes**. Yet he fled to **Gruffydd** for help, and **Gruffydd** gave him welcome.

For, since the day of **Rhyd-y-Groes**, **Gruffydd** had won the love of **Edith**, Earl **Alfgar's** beautiful daughter, famous for her loveliness, and had made her his wife. Thus **Alfgar** was his father-in-law; well might he welcome him.

He did more. He raised an army and marched forth to compel **Edward the Confessor** to set **Alfgar** back in his earldom. Near by **Hereford** he met again with his old enemy, **Ralph the Norman**. Read what the **Chronicle** says of it: '**Gruffydd . . . arrayed his forces at Hereford**. And against him the Saxons raised a very great host, **Ralph** being commander over them. **Gruffydd** attacked them immediately with well-ordered troops, and, after a desperately hard battle, the Saxons, unable

to bear the assault of the Britons, took to flight, and fell with a very great slaughter.

‘Gruffydd closely pursued them to Hereford, which he captured and burnt, and from thence, with very great booty, returned happily and gloriously to his own country.’

This victory was so great that Earl Algar was put back in his earldom, while the earldom of Hereford was taken from Ralph and given to **Harold**, son of **Godwin**. This was the Harold who afterwards became King of England.

Next year Gruffydd marched a third time into Hereford, and a third time won a pitched battle. It needed all the wisdom of the greatest men in England to persuade Gruffydd to make peace again.

Two years afterwards, 1058, he joined with the **King of Norway** ‘to ravage the dominions of the Saxons.’ Then for five years Gruffydd reigned in power, feared in the court of Edward the Confessor, beloved in Powys, and plotted against by every other gwely in the land. It was the plotting which at last prevailed.

The sons of Rhydderch were all dead, but Gruffydd, the last of them to be slain, had left a son Caradoc. Caradoc was still a favourite name in old Siluria.

This Caradoc, with the chiefs of the other gwelys, plotted with **Earl Harold**, the Saxon, and in 1063 came the end. Harold was the real ruler of England at that time, and could bring an immense army into the field. But that, it seems, was not enough. Our chronicle says that Caradoc ‘hired Harold to come with an army. And then, jointly with a great host of the men of

Glamorgan and Gwent, they went against Gruffydd.¹ And the Gwelys of Gwynedd and Deheubarth helped.

We know from the English Chronicle that Harold did raise all the might of England against Gruffydd.¹ And from both Chronicles, our own and the English, we know that King Gruffydd was betrayed and beheaded by his own people.

But it must be understood what is really meant by his own people. It does not mean the common people, the tribesmen. The Chronicle has already told us that Caradoc ap Gruffydd, with the Gwely of Deheubarth, was fighting against King Gruffydd, as ever. Another old document tells us that the Gwely of Gwynedd finished the work. For it says that it was **Madoc Min, Bishop of Bangor**, who finally betrayed Gruffydd. Now Madoc Min, as his pedigree shows, was one of the Gwely of Gwynedd. He was the only one of that Gwely allowed to remain in the land. Because he was a bishop, the King could not, or would not, drive him into exile.

Thus the three Gwelys of north and south had combined against Gruffydd to carry out their old object. Just as they had slain his father, and as he had slain their fathers, so they slew him. For he stood between them and the throne.

It was nothing to them that by his victories over the Saxons he had won back lands that had been lost to the Cymry since the days of **Offa**. It was nothing to them that he had settled the Cymry in a wide belt of lands where the Saxons had been living for three hundred years, and done it so thoroughly that the Cymry hold

¹ See Note 7.



St. Martin's Cathedral, Trier

those lands to this day. All that was nothing to the members of those other Gwelys. He was keeping them out of what they wanted, and so they worked on steadily to destroy him.

By working at last with Harold they did destroy Gruffydd. That in the same blow they destroyed their country, too, was nothing to them. Their country was merely a means of income to them.

‘And so,’ says one Chronicle, ‘Gruffydd lost his life, and he and his father were the noblest princes that had been in Cymru till that time; and the best for bravery and war, and for peace and for government, and for generosity and justice; and by their wisdom and understanding they united **Gwynedd** and **Powys** and **Deheubarth**, so that the Cymry were strengthened against all enemies and strangers.’

And read the splendid grief of the other chronicler: ‘1063 was the year when Gruffydd ap Llewelyn, the head and shield and defender of the Britons, fell through the treachery of his own men. The man who had been hitherto invincible was now left in the glyns of desolation, after innumerable victories and after taking immense spoils and countless treasures of gold and silver, and jewels and purple vestures.’

We need speak no more of Gruffydd. The law that had brought him to the throne had brought him to death also. Splendid king though he had been, yet his kingliness was not enough to save him. We do not even know for certain where he was beheaded.

He was a true flame-bearer.

XXXI

CADOGAN AP BLEDDYN

Gruffydd the King was slain in August, 1063, and at once the nation fell apart into the rule of four princes—the old weakness again. **Gwynedd** and **Powys** were ruled by **Bleddyn** and **Rhiwallon**, half-brothers to the dead King, while **Deheubarth** fell again to the rule of the descendants of **Howel Dda**. In **Dinevor** ruled **Meredydd ap Owen**, while, in **Morgannoc**, **Caradoc**, son of **Gruffydd ap Rhydderch**, kept his seat.

This **Caradoc** was the one who had invited **Harold** into the land against King **Gruffydd**. But he would have none of **Harold** in **Gwent**, for all that. After **Gruffydd** was dead **Harold** began to build himself a house by **Portscewit**, on the west side of the **Severn**. **Caradoc** came down and slew the men and carried off the materials for his own use. **Gwent** was his, said **Caradoc** apparently.

But within three years a greater calamity befell **Cymrù** than any temporary disunion—it was the landing of **William the Conqueror**. He did not land in **Cymru** itself. He landed in **England**. But whenever any invader lands in the **Isle of Britain**—anywhere—then **Cymru** is in danger with the rest.

It was at **Pevensey** in **Sussex** that **William** landed, and on **October 14, 1066**—the second most important date in **British history**—was fought the field of **Senlac**,

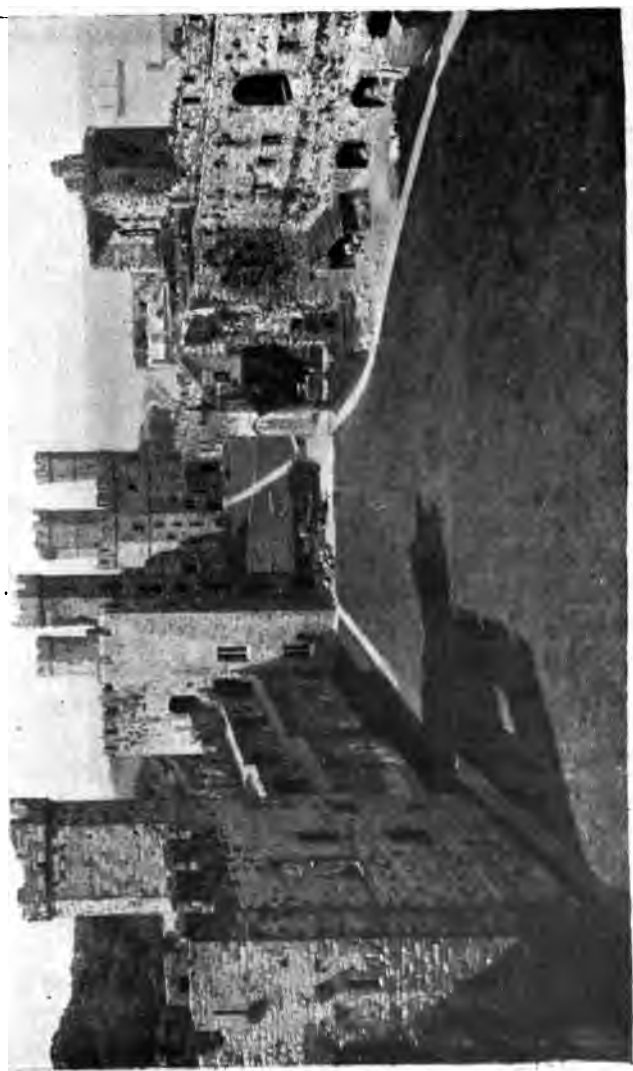
or **Hastings**. There **Harold**, last English King of England, fighting under the old White Dragon Standard of the Count of Britain, was slain, and his army defeated. In his fall fell the Crown of Britain too, the ancient Crown of Cunedda—fell to the power of the **Normans**.

If the princes of our western land were tempted to be glad at the fall of an ancient foe, when the English kingdom fell to the strong hand of William the Conqueror, they soon found their mistake. The Conqueror proceeded to build up the cities of **Chester, Shrewsbury, Worcester, Hereford, and Gloucester** into strong posts against Cymru.

Yet it was the same Caradoc ap Gruffydd who first brought the new, and deadlier, foe into the land. Still pursuing his intent of conquering all Deheubarth for himself, he hired a host of Normans, and on the banks of the **Rhymney** defeated and slew the prince who ruled the rest of old Deheubarth. That was in 1070. It was the beginning of the end.

For each claimant to the crown of the South brought in some host of mail-clad Normans to help him, and to kill off his own fellow-countrymen. The Normans, seeing how tempting a land it was, and how weakened it had become by the feuds and battles of the very princes who should have protected it, soon began to seize the land for themselves.

We need not go further into the miserable story of how the various princes in every corner of the land tore each other to pieces. We do not want to know which prince slew most of his fellow-countrymen. But in 1093 we find the Normans everywhere spreading over



CARNARVON CASTLE. INTERIOR VIEW

the land and building castles. **Morgannoc** and **Dyved** on the south ; **Ceredigion** in the west ; **Brycheinioc** and **Montgomery** on the east, these, and the coast of the north from **Chester** to **Deganwy**, were held down by Norman castles, each marking where the Norman had conquered, and was ready to conquer still further. And to face this position of defeat and desperation it was Powys which produced the man.

Cadogan ap Bleddyn was his name, son, that is, of the Bleddyn who was half-brother of Gruffydd the King. He had done his full share towards weakening the land and leaving it defenceless to this new foe. He was now the one who did most to attempt the repair of that fatal error.

It was in 1094 that **Cadogan** managed to open the eyes of all the Cymric princes to the evil that had been done, and to band them together to drive out the steel-clad enemy from the land. Like a fire the onset spread, Cadogan leading. **Gwynedd** and **Môn** were swept clear of Norman lord and Norman castle. **Chester, Shropshire,** and **Herefordshire** were ravaged with swift slaughter. Far and wide the towns were burnt, men were slain, and booty carried off.

Then into Ceredigion and Dyved marched the triumphing avengers, bearing down all before them, save only two castles, **Pembroke** and **Rhyd-y-Gors**. It seemed for a moment as if the strong old days of Gruffydd the King were to come back again.

The warmest hope of all lay in what happened in Morgannoc. There, strange tale, the Cymru were headed by one of the Normans themselves ; by **Pain**

Turberville, lord of **Coety**. This **Pain**, while other Normans were conquering by the strong hand, had brought his men one day to make war upon the house of **Morgan ap Meuric**, chief of **Coety**, of the old royal line of **Morgan**. But, before a blow was struck, out came the chief, his sword in his right hand and leading by his left hand his daughter **Asar**, who was his only child. 'Which shall it be between us?' said he. 'Shall it be the sword to the death, or will you marry this, my heiress, and so come into my lands like an honest man?' **Pain**, like a gallant gentleman, chose the maiden.

Happy she must have made him. **Cymro** she certainly made him. For now, in the hour of the national uprising, he led the men of **Glamorgan** to the attack on the castles of the oppressors. Far he slew, and fast he broke the castles down, nor did he cease to fight till the **Cymry** of the Lowland of **Glamorgan** (**Bro Morgannoc**) had won their old privileges back again. And to this day the farmers of that district have greater tenant-right with regard to their land than any other in **Cymru**. It is called in law 'The Custom of **Glamorgan**.'

In the midst of all this hubbub **William Rufus**, King of conquered England, swore great foolish oaths that he would wipe out the **Cymry** for ever. He drew out all the hosts of all his land, and came to where the tribesmen in the mountains laughed at him. And in the end he went back with loss of men and horses and tents and waggons innumerable. Nothing but shame had he to show for all his hosting and his boasting.

Two years afterwards, in 1096, the war blazed still higher. This time the men of **Brycheinioc**, **Gwent**, and

parts of **Morgannoc** rose with the rest, and the old glory of the Silures shone again, for awhile, in the gyls and on the uplands of Siluria. The Normans from every castle in Gwent and Morgannoc rode swiftly to crush this new rising. Swifter yet they rode back, as many as could escape, from the defeat of **Celli Darvog**.

Another and a greater host of Normans came to avenge that shameful defeat. The Cymry lured this host into the mountains that lie about the beautiful peak of **Cader Arthur**,¹ where the raven and the wolf waited for the red feast that spear and bow should kill for them. Forward struggled the doomed host, till it was far enough for flight to be in vain. Then the triumphant Cymry turned, and with one charge swept it to ruin. Only the fastest runners of the Normans could escape.

Then at **Celli Carnant**, as the Cymry pursued the flying remnant of their enemies, they met a third and still larger host of Normans coming to succour the defeated men. Two earls and many barons led it, swearing no less than the utter devastation of this stubborn land. Bright shone its armour, proudly its banners floated, many a war song went up from its minstrels as it marched. But **Ivor** and **Gruffydd**, sons of **Iorwerth**, called on their spearmen, and in one furious charge the Cymry dashed it to destruction, earl and banner, horse and man, arms and armour, piling the field, in witness of the valour of the men who would be free.

Then all the Cymry went to their homes, each man to his house, scornful of what few castles remained, and

¹ The highest peak of the **Brecnoc Vans**.

of their garrisons that dared not stick their noses out for fear of death.

Once again King William Rufus swore great foolish oaths that he would wipe Wales clean of Welshmen, and set it full of his own people. Next year he came with the whole force of his kingdom. Nay, twice he came, with every man that he could raise. And twice he went back with only defeat and disaster to tell of.

If the Normans had had no other way of conquering our land than that of conquering it in a campaign, then Cymru would have been for ever free of them. It was their castles that were to count, not their campaigns.

Remember **Cadogan ap Bleddyn**, Prince of Powys, then, when you think of those who did great deeds for our land.

XXXII

ROBERT CONSUL AND GRUFFYDD AB ARTHUR

It is not possible in a book of this small size to put down even a tithe of all the rousing deeds of bravery that were done in defence of our land during these days of the Norman attack. Even to give the bare names of the leaders in each desperate stroke for freedom would take up too much room. Let it be enough to say that there is no corner of Cymru that did not produce some heart of gold, to lead the spears to battle for the old land and the old laws. The men of other nations taunt us

for being so proud of being Cymro. If they could but read the history of those centuries of struggle they would wonder we do not fill the world with remembrance of all the splendid valour and dauntless tenacity of our forefathers.

How can we tell it all here—and yet how can we miss it all out? For instance, if you live in **Cardiff**, and see the great castle there, how shall we pass by the deed of **Ivor Bach**?

Robert Fitz-hamon, half a king himself in England, came to Cardiff and set himself up as all a king in Glamorgan. He swore that the old laws of **Howel Dda** should go, and Norman law should rule instead. High he swelled himself in his pride, and loud he boasted himself; safe, as he thought, within his great castle of Cardiff.

Yet in the night came **Ivor Bach**, and stormed the castle, and took **Fitz-hamon** and his wife prisoner. Nor did he set them free again till he had the **King's** own oath, as well as the oath of **Fitz-hamon**, that Cymric law and Cymric custom should stand for ever in Glamorgan.

Remember that, though the world seems to think of Cardiff as a modern town, it is, in fact, one of the oldest. Once it was a Roman fortress. Then through dim centuries it was the capital of the Sons of **Morgan**, two of whom are recorded as having re-built it at different times. Again, it was in the Castle of Cardiff that **Robert of Normandy**, son of **William the Conqueror**, was blinded and imprisoned till he died, by his brother, **King Henry I**. And our old tales tell that **Robert**, in his blindness and captivity, found his only relief and



THE TOWER IN CALDIÇ CASTLE WHERE ROBERT OF NORMANDY (BROTHER TO RUFUS AND HENRY FIRST) WAS CONFINED FOR 26 YEARS.—(*Before Restoration.*)

comfort in the warm friendship which the bards of Morgannoc felt for him in his misery.

Yet now, since we have mentioned Fitz-hamon, and spoken of a day when Cardiff Castle was a seat of oppression to Morgannoc, it is only right that we should go on a little and say something of a happier day at Cardiff. For there came a day when the Norman blood did great things for Cymru. Fitz-hamon had an only child, a daughter. But he had with him, in Cardiff Castle, a son of the king's to foster and bring up. That foster-son was the famous **Robert, Earl of Gloucester**, of whom you may read in English history.

The name, however, by which the men of Morganpoc knew him, and loved him, was **Robert Consul**. For his mother was a princess, **Nest**,¹ of the old blood of **Cunedda**, and he was born in Cymru. More yet, he was like fire in his pride of his country and his countrymen. When he grew up he married Fitz-hamon's daughter, and became Lord of Glamorgan and Earl of Gloucester.

Then he showed his love for his own land. In English history you will only hear of all his wars for his half-sister, **Queen Maud**, though it was his men from Glamorgan who carried his banner to victory in England. But in our own history he is lovingly set down as the first who brought architects, and craftsmen, and traders, to teach the Cymry all the arts that lift men forward in life. For before that, says one old chronicler, every Cymro had to be his own craftsman.

And he believed in all the ancient traditions of his mother's race. He was the champion of the bards in

¹ Not the western Nest, daughter of Rhys ap Tudor.

his day, and he was more, for he gathered round him in his court, at Cardiff, a band of brilliant prose writers, whose work laid the foundations of the literature of romance in Western Europe.

The greatest name amongst those writers was **Gruffydd ab Arthur**, or, as the Normans called him, **Geoffry of Monmouth**. Geoffry gathered together a great mass of old manuscripts, wherein the history of the earliest days of the Cymry was written, and he set to work to write it out afresh in one complete work, that the whole world might know the old story of this land in the west.

But because the ancient manner of setting things down in writing had been forgotten, so that men no longer understood the order in which the kings and their reigns should come, he drew the story out in one long line, instead of setting down the kings of the island side by side, as they had reigned.

Thus, without intending it, he led the world wrong in the matter of the history of the island, and most folk have begun to say he invented the whole story. By good fortune we know better now, and so can set to work and straighten out again all the good material he saved for us in his great work. We can only thank him more and more, the more we get at the truth.

For it was a great work. And so well was it written that, for century after century, it remained the great book of the English as well as the Cymry. And in the glorious days of proud Elizabeth it was devoutly believed by all the famous men who brought the name of Britain to such honour in the world.

But for **Robert Consul**, then, **Geoffry** might never have written his great work. But for **Geoffry**, not only England, but all the world, would have been beyond measure poorer. For but for **Geoffry** the world might have forgotten **Arthur**, and so have lost all the wealth of high resolve and generous emulation which have been born of that story.

Thankfully, then, we add those two names to our list of flame-bearers.

XXXIII

THE RETURN OF AN EXILE

It is no use trying to mention all the names of those who did so much for the land. Let the names pass, then, till you can read them all at large in a full history of Cymru. In that history, for one name, you will read of **Rhys ap Tudor**, Prince of Deheubarth, who came back from exile to reign in **Dinevor**, and to die at last in battle for his country against the Normans of **Brecnoc**. Here we can but name him and pass on to another exiled prince, one who came back from Ireland to rule in Gwynedd, and to lay the foundations there of two hundred years of strength for the whole land.

There had been a **Conan ap Iago**, Chief of the Gwely of Gwynedd, who had spent his life in warring against King Gruffydd ap Llywelyn. In his exile in Ireland he had married the daughter of the Danish King of

Dublin. A son was born to him, and—fair play to Conan—he named that son Gruffydd, after the king who kept him out of the throne of Gwynedd. A goodly soul Conan must have been.

Now, out of an ancient book,¹ read here the life of **Gruffydd ap Conan**.

In exile this young Gruffydd was born, and in exile he grew up, within sight of the mountains of his father's home. And as he grew up he asked who his father had been and what land he belonged to. Softly they told the lad how his father had been a king by right, and of what land he was.

Then he went to the Kings of Ireland and laid his complaint before them, that he was kept out of his kingdom, and that he had no help or hope in the world, save as they would lend him men and ships to win back the land of his fathers. So the kings hearkened, and comforted him that they would help him in the day when he should be a man.

But, when the day came that he was eighteen years old, other kings sat on the five thrones of green Ireland, and no help could young Gruffydd get from them, either of fleets or men. Yet he would not stay. The king's blood in his heart would not let him live and die in exile. He got one little ship and hoisted her sails to the winds, and sailed away across the sea towards the parts of **Môn** and **Arvon**, till he came to **Porth Abermenai**. In the year 1073 that was.

Then he sent messengers to the men of **Môn** and

¹ Hanes Gruffydd ap Conan.

Arvon, the **Sons of Merwydd** of **Lleyn**, and to many other chieftains, urging them to come quickly and speak with him. So the chiefs of the land gathered to him, greeting him well.

Then he showed them who he was, and that he was their rightful prince, come from over the sea to lead them and defend them from their oppressors, and from foreign tyrants.

But the men of those shores showed him all the might of **Trahaiarn ap Caradoc**, the man who was king now where once King Gruffydd had reigned. For Trahaiarn was of the Sons of Conan¹ too.

They told Gruffydd that he would need men and arms, a great host, if he would take the field against Trahaiarn, for they themselves alone were far too few in number. If he would only bring an army with him to give them a start, then they half promised to join him.

Sad wisdom it was they spake, yet it was truth, and so young Gruffydd turned to his ship and sailed away to sea. He thought of all the lands he knew, north and south, and east and west, and in no one of them all could he think of any friend that might help him. Then he bethought him of the enemies of his country—of the Normans—and he turned his prow to them.

Now this was in the time when the Normans were first spreading like a flood over the land. King William had conquered England and parcelled it out to his barons, and all the poor English were groaning under oppression. But the pick of all his earls and his

¹ This clan of the Sons of Conan (ap Elisise), the **Borderers**, must not be confounded with the Sons of Conan of Gerald's day.



RHUDDLAN CASTLE

men he had planted in the cities next to Cymru. In **Shrewsbury** he planted **Roger of Montgomery**, the greatest of the Normans after himself. And in **Chester** he set **Hugh the Wolf**, the most brutal of all his earls.

Hugh of Chester had conquered the beautiful **Vale of Clwyd**, and there at **Rhuddlan** he had built a castle and set his nephew, Robert, to hold what had been won, and to conquer more. It was to none other than this Robert, of Rhuddlan, that Gruffydd steered his ship.

The more trouble there was in the blue mountains to the west, the better for him, thought Robert. The more the princes of those mountains fought and slew each other, the easier it would be to take the land from the few that would be left alive. He gave Gruffydd three score picked fighting men, all Cymry of **Tegeingl**, to go with him and be his men.

Then to Gruffydd came a gentlewoman who had mourned long. Kinswoman she was to him, **Tangwystl** her name, and she was the wife of **Ilowarch**, once chamberlain and treasurer to Gruffydd the King. Warmly she greeted the exile. Solemnly she prophesied that he would soon be a king, and then over his shoulders she threw a mantle, the mantle that had been the royal robe of the great king after whom he was named. High soared the dreams of Gruffydd as he led his men to his ship, and dropped down with the tide, away to the glittering sea.

Once again he came to **Abermenai**, and he came just in time. For a whisper of the plotting and the planning in the far north-west had come to **Trahaiarn the King**, in his high home in **Arwystli**. And the king had



FORUM OF AUGUSTUS

sent **Cynric**, a Prince of his clan, to root out the Sons of **Merwydd**, and to destroy all those that he distrusted. The first word that Gruffydd heard was that the Sons of Merwydd had fled for refuge to **Clynnog**, hard pressed by the Powys men.

Then Gruffydd called his friends to him. Few they were, eight score picked men of Môn, three score chosen men of **Tegeingl**, and some warriors of the tribes of lower **Arvon**. But desperate men do desperate deeds and win amazing victories.

Swift as wolves, and stealthy as panthers, the warriors hurried towards **Lleyn**. Sure as tigers they struck, taking Cynric unaware, and leaving him dead on the field, with the best of his men stark beside him. The Sons of Merwydd were saved.

Back to Abermenai then went Gruffydd, to see what fate should befall him, and there **Eineon**, a freedman of Arvon, hastened to him, and told him what the beautiful **Dylad** had prophesied of him. Now Dylad was one who had been the beloved of **King Bleddyn**, slain not long before, and she had the gift of prophecy. And she had prophesied that Gruffydd should reign as king in the room of Trahaiarn, as **David** had reigned in the room of **Saul**, after Saul fell on the mountains of **Gilboa**.

All things seemed to promise well for the son of the exile Conan.

XXXIV

GRUFFYDD'S FIRST HOUR OF POWER

(still taken from the old book)

FROM Abermenai, Gruffydd marched forth till all Eryri was his, and all the chiefs of the mountains had bowed to him as their prince. Then King Trahaiarn from Arwystli gathered his men and came to battle with the intruder.

In Glyn Cyning the two armies met. So fierce was this battle that men named the spot 'Gwaed erw,' the 'Bloody Acre,' but the victory lay with Gruffydd. Thousands fell of Trahaiarn's men, and few they were that escaped with him, as he fled moaning from the bitter field, hard put to get away.

Far and fast Gruffydd followed the beaten king, till he chased him clear out of his borders, and from that fight he was hailed as King of Gwynedd—king of the land of his fathers.

Then he remembered the enemy of all Cymru. His mind went back to what he had seen at Rhuddlan. Gathering a host he turned to the east and fell upon the Normans there. The helmed and shielded knights of the Normans charged his ranks in vain. Down they fell from their horses, slain in the press of the attack, and the roar of the flames that licked up their castle of Rhuddlan was matched by the screams of the flying, as the remnant fled for Chester. The Norman, too, knew now that there was a king in Gwynedd.

But the kindred of Gruffydd's mother had flocked over to share in this good fortune of their kinsman. In their pride and arrogance they thought they could do as they willed in Môn, the land where they had settled. They did too much at last. The Sons of Merwydd led the men of **Lleyn** into Môn, and slew fifty of the proud fools, all chiefs of the kindred of Gruffydd's mother.

Glad was Trahaiarn in Arwystli when he heard of that. He knew that the men of **Lleyn** and **Môn** must now look to him for help against the vengeance of Gruffydd. He called to the men of **Powys** to avenge the death of **Cynric**, and the defeat of **Gwaed Erw**. The battle was at **Bron-yr-Erw**, and there the day went heavily against Gruffydd.

The follies of his mother's kin had turned the men of **Eivionydd** against him, too. His Danes and his Irishmen were of no avail against the anger of his own countrymen. **Tudor of Môn**, burning for vengeance on the foreigners, hewed down all before him with his streaming blade. One single ship carried all that escaped of Gruffydd's men, he with them.

Nay, he would not have escaped at all had not his foster father, gallant Irishman, **Prince of Crug Brenan**, stayed and kept the field. Like a true foster father he chose to be slain or taken, if thereby his foster son might escape. For the follies of his Irish kindred Gruffydd was now a fugitive. But it was by the valour of one of them that he was still alive.

And while a man is still alive, all things are still possible to him.

XXXV

KING GRUFFYDD THE SECOND

(still the old book)

For eight years Gruffydd remained in adversity, lurking oversea, with many a fugitive flying to him to tell him how all Gwynedd lay waste and unpeopled, by reason of the Normans and the men of Powys. And at last he arose, and all the fugitives with him, and he stood before the kings of Ireland and showed them all his barren fortunes, and all the sorrows of his land.

Then the kings of Ireland hearkened unto Gruffydd, and gave him ships and men, and so he steered for the headlands of Dyved in the south-west, and came to land by the grey-walled cathedral of **St. David**.

As he landed there came to him another prince like unto himself, one that lurked by the wet strand in the corners of his land, because Trahaiarn the King was too strong for him. That prince was **Rhys ap Tudor**, the one who had grown up in exile, and who had come from thence to be the chosen prince of the true men of Deheubarth.

And Rhys the prince told Gruffydd all that had befallen him in the grievous battle of **Pwll-gwdic**, and the names of all the hosts that had conquered him there. And they two made a compact between them, and the bishop blessed them. So they set forth to win them crowns and thrones again, **Cynddelw ap Cwnnws** of

Món going before them, with eight score chosen men of Gwynedd, as the old book says.

Then, by the way as they went towards Arwystli, they came to a mountain where rose a great cairn of stones, piled over a mighty champion of old time, whose bones lie buried there. And on that mountain waited all the hosts of King Trahaiarn, drawn up in battle array. And the day was far spent.

Then spoke Rhys the prince to Gruffydd the king. 'Lord King!' said he, 'fight not to-night, for evening is upon us, and the day dies.'

But Gruffydd turned upon him in wrath, his blue eyes flashing. 'Stay thou if thou wilt. As for me I will rush upon them now.'

Then trembled all the kings upon the mountain when they saw the onset coming. In the van was Gruffydd, leading, and after him the Danes of Dublin with their two-edged axes, and the javelin men of Ireland with their long-spiked iron maces, and the desperate men of Gwynedd with their glaives and shields.

Fiercest of all the fighters was Gruffydd himself, with his dazzling sword, driving on like a giant, and shouting to his men that they should fight on and never turn their backs. The earth rang with the noise of the multitude of the horsemen and the footmen, and the sound of the fighting was heard afar. Splendidly fought the men of Gruffydd; the sweat and the blood made running streams on them. It was a fight for the sons to tell of, after their fathers were dead, says the old book.

Then Trahaiarn the king was pierced through and

through with a spear, and he fell dying down, his teeth grinding the green grass, and his hands groping blindly over his fallen weapons. And as he lay there, **Gocharis** the Irishman slashed him asunder.

Thus died **Trahaiarn**, and five and twenty princes of his kindred with him, many another chief besides keeping them company in death. There too died that **Caradoc ap Gruffydd** of Gwent who had wrought such evil to the land. And the rest turned their backs and fled.

Then through groves and glyns, and marshes, and mountains, the victors chased them. All through the night, by the light of the eerie moon, the spears still slew. Not till day came again did the chase of the beaten men cease, and few of them escaped to their own countries.

But after the battle was won, and when, in the dusk, the colour of man and bush was all one, then Prince **Rhys** remembered the anger of **Gruffydd** before the fight began. And for fear of treachery he drew his men aside in the chase, and so kept his way to his own country.

Thus did **Gruffydd** become king indeed at last, from the victory of **Mynydd Carn**, in 1081. It is not known for certain which mountain with a carn upon it was the scene of this great victory. But it was at the end of part of a day's march from **St. David's**, and so it was somewhere within **Pembrokeshire**.¹

¹ See Note 8.

XXXVI

OUTLAW AND WANDERER

HERE the old history tells us what fashion of man this Gruffydd was to look upon. He was strong-limbed and middle-sized, with blue eyes and yellow hair, round-necked and comely bearded, and his fingers were long and his feet fine. He was eloquent in many languages, but he was hot-brained, too, and though noble and merciful to his own people, and terrible to his enemies, yet it was in battle he was most splendid. Altogether, though we must call him Gruffydd the Second, yet we see he was in no way so rare a king as his great namesake.

At **Mynydd Carn** he had slain Trahaiarn, and so he might have looked for peace for awhile. But hardly was he well settled in his kingly seat before **Meirion Goch** betrayed him into the hands of **Hugh the Wolf**, the Norman Earl of Chester. He had trusted the fair words of a race that never kept faith with any man. Treachery was his reward.

Six long years he lay in chains in Chester, the irons eating into his flesh. Then, one day, a young chieftain of **Edeyrnion**, going with a few of his men to Chester to buy necessaries, saw his king fast there in fetters.

Merry it was that day in the ancient city, all men eating and drinking, and even the keepers of door and gate in castle and wall enjoying themselves in their own

uses. The young chief looked at his king and he thought on the chance. Danger there was indeed. Torture and death would be his fate if he failed. But he was of the right race. He picked up the prisoner on his back, fetters and all, and, with his few men about him, carried the captive away to freedom again. **Cynric** **ir**, or the Tall, was the name of this gallant young chief, and it was afternoon when he crossed the Dee with his burden.

Once he was safe, Gruffydd lay hidden till his flesh was healed and he could walk again. But then began the strangest wandering that ever befell a king. First he was brought by night into Môn, where **Sandde ap Arawn** hid him till a ship could be brought to take him to Ireland. When he set sail for his mother's land, however, a storm blew him ashore at **Porth Hodni** in **Deheubarth**, a land where he had no friends.

Then, while he wandered in that land, nine chosen companions only with him, the people of the country fell upon him three times in one day. They killed one of his companions, but in return he slew a young chief of the best blood of that country, and thus he and the rest escaped.

From there he wandered to the wild land of **Arddwy**, lurking in caves and waste places, true men stealing to him till he had a band of eight score desperate fighters. And straightway then he began to make war on the Normans again, 'like **David** in the land of **Judea**, in the days of **Saul** the king,' says the old monk.

Once, from a great castle, the Normans spied him alone, and they chased him through fields and woods,

like mastiffs pursuing a tired deer. And once, too, he fell upon an hour of fortune, for he met with **Robert of Rhuddlan** for the last time. It was in 1087.

This time, however, it was in enmity, not friendship, that they met. For Robert had built a great castle at Deganwy, where of old **Maelgon** had reigned, and from that castle he was wont to harry all the land about. And on a summer day he laid him down to sleep, for the day was hot and the air of that land is very sweet and wholesome.

But while he slept came Gruffydd, with three ships, into the beautiful aber of the shining **Conwy** river, under **Gogarth**, and looking over the land he saw all the fat herds and flocks the Norman had stolen, feeding there on the fair green slopes about the frowning castle. He wasted no time. 'Come,' said he to his men, 'we will take this prey from the Norman and load it into our ships.'

Lightly they landed and fast they drove the sleek black cattle down to the stony beach. But up sprang Robert of Rhuddlan from his sleep, and wildly he looked upon what was being done. Cursing and swearing in his fury, he snatched up sword and buckler, shouted to his men to come, and rushed down after his prey.

He was too swift for himself. Only one knight could keep up with him. Gruffydd turned and met him with a shower of javelins that brought him to the ground. Then, with the fat black cattle stowed on his ships, and the grim head of Robert of Rhuddlan nailed to the top of his mast, Gruffydd sailed away in triumph.

XXXVII

KING AND STATESMAN

BUT even the old Monk who wrote the life of Gruffydd, taken down from the lips of men who had been his companions in his wanderings, could not set down 'all his sufferings, and all his sorrows, and all the numbers of his perils.' Neither is there room here.

We will pass by, then, all his adventures and all his warrings for his country, and come to the time when he joined with **Cadogan ap Bleddyn** in the great uprising which for a moment swept all Cymru clear of the cruel Normans. He took his share in that grand work, and for awhile reigned king again in Gwynedd, but the old curse of the law of disunion worked its ruin again.

Once the land was clear of the foreign foe, the old internal strife came up as ever. Prince after prince fell away from Cadogan till only Gruffydd remained faithful to him. Then **Owen of Tegeingl**, another of the Gwely of Gwynedd, thought he would take the crown from Gruffydd. He joined the Normans.

Stubbornly Gruffydd and Cadogan kept up the war. But the vast host of the Normans pressed them back and back, till they saw no help for it but to retreat to the isle of Môn. There, surrounded by the wild waves of the sea, they would be as it were in a fortress, and could beat back any attempt to cross the **Menai**.

The Normans saw that, and so they gathered a great fleet of ships, and took their soldiers on board to land on the island that way. And when Gruffydd heard of the gathering of that fleet, he sent to his mother's kinsmen, the Danes of Dublin, and hired a fleet to come and fight the fleet of the Normans, to keep the island safe.

That fleet came, but the Normans were richer and more cunning than Gruffydd. They bought the Danes over, and the very fleet that should have saved the island was its ruin. The Danes joined the Normans: two fleets, not one, landed their swarms. All resistance was swept under. Gruffydd and Cadogan escaped in a little boat to Ireland.

There is an old proverb which says, 'Môn, mam Gymru,' that is, Môn, mother of Cymru. It means that Môn was so fertile that all the land could draw corn from it. Small wonder that it should be fertile. If human flesh and blood and bone enrich the land, as we are told, then surely Môn should be the richest soil on earth, from all the countless massacres that have been done on its unfortunate inhabitants. And of all the awful cruelties ever done there by heathen Dane or Scot, none ever were so fiendish as what was done by those Normans on the day that Gruffydd escaped them.

They did not simply kill: they tortured. They broke the limbs of some, and then left them to slow death alone. They tore the eyes out of some, and some they mutilated in a way not to be described. The wretched remnant of the people, hiding in caves and wild places, prayed to God to save them, since now they

had no king to help them. And, as if in answer to their prayers, behold, next day the fleet of **Magnus**, King of Norway, came coasting down the land to **Aberlleiniog**.

Then were the Normans and the traitor Danes of Dublin in dismay, for fear of the lurking Cymry on the one side and this fleet on the other. They set their host in array, and tried to make peace with the islanders. But the islanders went down and spoke with the new fleet, and told the King of Norway of all that had been done.

The bluff fair-bearded king heard and smiled, and with three ships he came to land to let his fighting men make mock of the Norman earls. Then the keels touched the strand, and out leaped the pirates against the trembling earls, who sat on their steel-clad horses behind their shining shields.

King Magnus from his high ship's prow looked on at the flashing sport. A bow was in his hand, an arrow on the string. He marked where **Earl Hugh of Shrewsbury** towered above the rest, and he drew the arrow to the head and let it fly. Through the earl's eye the arrow went, so that he fell writhing down from his saddle. 'Let him leap!' cried the king, and while the Normans fled he called his men aboard again. So he sailed away, leaving the dead earl to the ravens. It happened on the strand of **Aberlleiniog**, and the old book is glad of it.

But when the Normans were safe back in Arvon they took a new revenge for the death of Earl Hugh. They did not simply sweep the land of all its cattle and sheep and horses. They swept it of its people too, driving them into captivity as if they had been cattle also. And

like cattle they parted the people amongst themselves, when they came to **Cantrev Rhos**. **Hugh the Wolf**, Earl of Chester, was the divider, and to him came the traitor Danes of Dublin, to claim what he had promised them. They asked for the men and women, manservants and maidservants, he had bargained to give them as their share.

Faithful to his faithlessness the Norman paid them in the false Norman way. All the lame, and the bent, and the withered, and the one-eyed, and the useless, of the captives he set on one side and offered them to the traitors in scorn.

So the traitors departed to their ships and sailed home over the deep sea to Dublin. And the king of Dublin took the traitors, and some he wounded, and some he banished, and he broke the limbs of others, even as they had broken the limbs of the people of Môn.

Behold, then, Gruffydd returning, to find his whole land waste and empty. The eagle and the wolf, the raven and the deer, were the people of Gwynedd then, where once the smoke of happy hearths had scented the evening breeze.

The rest of Gruffydd's story, how he brought back his people from captivity, how he established them in their homes again, until the land was full of orchards and gardens, and fields, and cottages, wherein every man ate of the fruits of the earth—all that is written in the old history we have been quoting from.

There too, you may read how Gruffydd rebuilt the ruined churches, and established courts for justice, and ruled with a firm hand, keeping peace with other

countries, but setting his sons in the cantrevs of the borders, to be a first defence to the land. And then at last, when he was come to four score and two years old, he died, his work done.

For, like as the children of **Israel**, coming back from the captivity at **Babylon**, went no more astray in their hearts, so the men of Gwynedd, through good and through evil, ever afterwards remained faithful to their country to the end.

That is why **Gruffydd ap Conan** is one of the flame-bearers of our race. That is why the Gwyndod—the people of Gwynedd—hold his name high.

XXXVIII

GRUFFYDD AP RHYS

PRINCES of Romance, sheer romance, were the Princes of old Cymru. And to prove it we need not take the story of **Owen ap Cadogan**—the son of that Cadogan who had led the glorious flood of valour in 1094. Nay, we could not take it if we would, for it would need a book as big as this to tell his story alone. And since he fought oftener for his own hand than for all Cymru, and since we speak here only of the flame-bearers, we leave him out of our account.

But if in some other book you ever read of him ; of all his valour against impossible odds, of all his misplaced love, and of his wild life and darkened ending, then you will know well why the young men of his day

loved handsome Owen ap Cadogan. Had Cymru in his day had a King like **Gruffydd I.**, then Owen would have made one of his finest leaders.

Take, however, the story of **Gruffydd ap Rhys**; the Gruffydd who was son to that **Rhys ap Tudor** who helped to win the great victory of **Mynydd Carn**, and who afterwards died for his country in battle against the Normans, in 1098.

As soon as his father was killed young Gruffydd was carried to hospitable Ireland for safety. But he had no kin amongst the kings of that green sanctuary, as Gruffydd of Gwynedd had. There was no one there to hearken to his complaint, and after long years he had to come back alone to the fringes of his own country, and to wander forlorn where any hearth would receive him, or any white hand of woman would give him food and drink.

But, as he wandered, young, and handsome, and forlorn of fate, the eyes of women began to follow him because of his sad state, and the hearts of men to warm with remembrance of his father's deeds and days. Happier still, the dreams of the young men began to turn to him, wondering if he would lead them to war again for freedom.

Henry, King of England, heard of all that at last, and then Gruffydd could no more abide in the coasts and mountains of Deheubarth. To save his life he fled to the court of Gruffydd ap Conan in Gwynedd.

The King of England feared greatly what might come of that, for he dreaded to be at war in Cymru again. So he invited the King of Gwynedd to come to

London to a feast, hoping to beguile him into delivering the wanderer into his hands ; for the two kings were at peace and friendship with each other.

Then when Gruffydd, the King of Gwynedd, sat with King Henry at the feast in London, and heard what the king asked, he was in sore plight. He knew well that, if he refused to agree, all the armies of England, and Scotland and half of France, would be brought to ravage Cymru again,—Cymru that still lay half waste from all the desolations of past years. It was a bitter choice.

There seemed no help for it. To save the land he must sacrifice the wandering prince who had fled to him for safety. Very sacred was the law of hospitality and defence of a guest in old Cymru. Very hard it was to King Gruffydd to break it. Yet it had to be done. He promised.

But, as he thought of it next day, he was filled with disquiet, and while drinking he let out some hints of what he had promised. The words were not lost, for in the king's palace there sat a man who was kinsman to **Gerald, Keeper of Pembroke Castle**, and he heard them. Straightway this man sent a swift messenger to tell Gerald, for Gerald had married **Nest**, a Princess of wondrous beauty, and she was sister to the young Prince Gruffydd, whose life was so threatened. In great haste the **Princess Nest** sent messengers to Gwynedd, to warn her brother, for she loved him dearly.

'Then,' says the old chronicle, 'it was told to Gruffydd, son of Rhys, that the King of Gwynedd was come home from the palace of King Henry, and was seeking to get hold of him. And some of those who



And him well began to urge him saying: "Do thou stay in the presence of the king till it be known which shall be the report of what he intends by thee."

And whilst they were urging him thus, behold! there came one, saying, "Here are horsemen coming in haste." And hardly had he passed the door to go, than there were the horsemen to seek him, and he could only fly for sanctuary to the church of Aberdaron.' Now Aberdaron is in the uttermost corner of wind-swept, rain-washed, grey old Lleyn.

Then King Gruffydd sent his officers and his men to fly the flying one to drag him from the sanctuary. But the priests and the chiefs of that country swore they would not have their sanctuary violated. And when they disputed, lo! a ship from Dyved came to the point of Eylli, hard by Aberdaron, and when the seamen saw all that was being done, they had compassion on Gruffydd, and took him aboard their ship and sailed away with him to Deheubarth.

There, when they came to land, they set him safely ashore, and he fled to the great forest of Ystrad Towy, the heart of what had been his father's kingdom. He saw at last that there was no help for him, and no safety, except what he could work out for himself. So he set to work with his own right hand and his own brain. For a man who does that has begun to win already.

So it was with Gruffydd. For straightway men began to gather to him. Every man that loved right, and every man that suffered injustice from the Norman, and every man that would rather die fighting than live enslaved, every one of them flocked to him with bow

and spear and shield. Fear came upon the Normans. The cry went amongst them far and near, and from far and near they mustered to root him out and destroy him. But they mustered in vain; they mustered only to their own ruin, for Gruffydd fell upon them like fire.

If we had room to tell all his story you would not soon forget it. But of all the victories that Gruffydd won, and of all the castles that he captured and burnt, you may read at large in the Chronicle of the Princes. There, too, you may read of all the wisdom by which he kept the kingdom which his valour had won. There is not room for it here.

There is one thing, though, of which we must speak. It needs a special chapter, however, and the heading of that chapter is the name of a woman, **Gwenllian**, the splendid wife of Prince Gruffydd. Meanwhile, we will finish about him.

It was in 1136 that Gruffydd ap Rhys died at last. He had made himself famous, however, for more than battles won and laws established, for he proclaimed a great **Eisteddfod**, and held it in the town of **Cardigan**; and the splendour of the meeting was talked of far and wide.

But a greater splendour still is his, namely, in the words in which the old Chronicle of the Princes sets down the sum of all he was. 'Died Gruffydd, son of Rhys, the *light*, and the *strength*, and the *gentleness* of the men of Deheubarth.'

Consider well that epitaph. Think—could there be a finer one?

XXXIX

GWENLLIAN

GRUFFYDD AP CONAN, King of Gwynedd, married **Yngharad**, daughter of Owen of Tegeingl, a member of his own Cenedl. Hear how the Elders of her people described her. 'Noble of stature she was, flaxen-haired, large eyed, and of bright bearing, slender and shapely. Small were her feet and long her fingers, with fine thin nails. Wise of counsel she was and charming of speech. Very kindly too, and very bountiful to all folk in misfortune.' So rare and fair a woman was Yngharad, wife to the King of Gwynedd—and she had a daughter, **Gwenllian**.

Splendid as her mother was, as splendid was Gwenllian. Youngest child of her father, she was the favourite of her brothers and sisters, as well as of her parents. When young Gruffydd ap Rhys fled to Gwynedd for safety, it must have been from her that he received the sweetest sympathy. Nay, we know that it was so, because, when he sailed away to Dyved from the sanctuary of Aberdaron, he carried with him Gwenllian's promise to be his wife.

She was fit, indeed, to be the wife of such a prince. She did not wait for him to win his kingdom and then come to marry her in peace and magnificence. Instead of that she stole away from her father's court and found a ship, and sailed away to Dyved too, and joined her hero in the forests of Ystrad Towy. And there they

were married, while the work of war had yet to be finished and the kingdom still to be won. Gallant Gwenllian.

After that, no matter what wars were raging, Gwenllian cheered the people by her high spirit and gentle courtesy, till all the land loved her. And as her boys grew up they showed themselves bright, brave young princes, fit children of such a mother.

At last, however, a time came when her husband heard of a fresh attempt that the Normans were planning against him, and that they were intending to bring an extra army over the sea to help them. To meet so great a danger he hurried away to Gwynedd to try and get extra men from her father, to offset this extra Norman army. And Gwenllian sent her eldest boy with her husband, so that her old father and mother might see their grandson and know how happy she was.

Now, while she was alone at home, Gwenllian suddenly heard that the Norman army from oversea had come before its time, and was landed in Glamorgan. She knew that this army was marching to join **Maurice de Londres**, in his great castle of **Kidwely**, and she knew that if once it did join him, then the combined host of all the Normans would destroy the land before her husband could get back to save it. What could she do in such a danger?

She did the right thing. She gathered the chiefs of the land together and told them all the news. They were good generals as well as good fighting men. They made a plan, and away they all marched at once, Gwenllian with them. It was a long swift march, but they



THE SOUTH-EAST VIEW OF KYDWELY CASTLE, IN THE COUNTY OF CAERNARTHEN.

This Castle is seated about eight miles south-east from Caernarthien. It is said that William de Lontres, one of the twelve Knights that came into Glamorganshire with Robert Fitz-Hamon, and had for his share the Castle and Manor of Ognore, made himself, after a tedious war, Master of Kydwely, and built this Castle there. A.D. 1093 Culo-gan ap Blethyn, who then ruled South Wales, destroyed this, and all the Castles, except two, that were in the land of Carliogan and Dyvet. A.D. 1190 Rees, Prince of South Wales, built again this Castle, and A.D. 1215 Rees, son to Gruffydd ap Rees, razed it, and, having gone through other revolutions, it fell to the Crown, then King Henry VII. granted it to Sir Rice ap Thomas, Knight of the Garter, but being forfeited by his grandson, Rice Griffith, it was granted to Richard Vaughan, Earl of Carbery, Lord President of Wales.

never halted till they had got between **Kidwely Castle** and the army that was marching to it. That was fine generalship.

Then Gwennllian sent off most of her army to find the Normans from oversea, and to attack and destroy them on their march, while she herself, with the rest of her men, faced the castle, to see that **Maurice de Londres** did not sally out to help the other Normans. That, too, was good generalship.

It was at the foot of **Mynydd-y-Garreg** that Gwennllian's small force was posted, with the clear little river **Gwendraeth** running past its front. Two miles away on the other bank rose the castle. If **Maurice de Londres** moved out with his men to attack Gwennllian, he would have to fight his way across the river. It is not easy to cross a river and fight too.

But suddenly, next day, a great host from behind swept down on Gwennllian's little force. The Normans from oversea, led by a traitor, had slipped past the army sent to look for them, and had caught Gwennllian unawares. Her men turned with fierce valour to meet this surprise attack, but, while they fought that way, the Normans from the castle crossed the **Gwendraeth** and took them from behind. Gwennllian's few were swept under in the press of so many foes. Her young son **Maelgon** was killed by her side. She herself was wounded and taken prisoner, along with her other boy **Morgan**. The battle ended.

Here is what happened to Gwennllian. What she had done she had done from the noblest feelings that can move a woman. She had done it in order to save her

country and her people, because her husband was not there to do it as he was wont. She had not spared her children. One of her sons lay dead beside her, his white young body gashed and red. Her own blood was streaming from a wound she had received, and she was in agony for the defeat of her people, as well as in agony for her brave son. She was the daughter of a king, too.

But no pity for her agony stirred these Normans. No pang of generous thought for her womanhood softened them; no flash of admiration for her heroic spirit moved them. There, over the corpse of her son, they hewed off her head. That was Norman chivalry, here in Cymru as it had been in England. Of their cruelties to the English you will read in English history.

But long indeed did the Normans of our land rue the stroke that beheaded Gwenllian. Blood ran like water, and steel flashed like lightning to avenge the foul murder. It would choke so small a book as this to tell of it all, and, besides, you can read it in history.

Her father joined with her husband in avenging her. Her brothers led down the hosts of the north to join the men of the south in a retribution that was told of for generations. Like fire the avengers swept the castles out of Ceredigion. In one great battle alone, fought beside Cardigan, the Normans were slaughtered and drowned in thousands, while the wives and daughters of the Cymry took them prisoners in droves. In another battle, when the **Earl of Chester** had marched to attack the north, only the Earl himself and five of his men escaped.

Long, long did the Norman widows curse the name of Maurice de Londres and the deed that he had done. Had every deed of Norman savagery been as terribly avenged as was the murder of Gwennlian, there would have been few Normans left to work ruin to our land. And to this day, in memory of the dark fate of the bright wife of Gruffydd, the place of her beheading is called '**Maes Gwennlian.**'

XL

OWEN GWYNEDD

1136 was the year in which Gruffydd ap Rhys, of Deheubarth, died. In the same year also died Gruffydd ap Conan, king of Gwynedd. It was Owen, son of this latter Gruffydd, who was the flame-bearer of the next three-and-thirty years. You will find his name in history as Owen Gwynedd, and the most famous writer of that date calls him **Owen the Great.**

Great he was, too, if we consider all he had to face, and all that he accomplished, in spite of endless difficulties. Wise and patient himself, he had a brother, **Cadwaladr**, who was neither wise nor patient, but only a headstrong fighter at best. At worst he was a man of tempestuous temper. And it was this temper which worked the first great harm to Owen's reign.

Gwennlian, of whom you have just read, was sister to Owen and Cadwaladr. Her sons were so young, when their father died, that her brother, **Owen Gwynedd,**

looked after them. One of them, **Anàrod**, was to have been married to Owen's daughter, and all the signs seemed to promise a long alliance between Deheubarth and Gwynedd. But in a moment of blind passion Cadwaladr slew Anarod, in a dispute over the boundary of some land.

Owen Gwynedd did not hesitate to punish the slayer. He sent his two sons, **Howel** and **Conan**, to do justice on Cadwaladr. They could not capture him, but they defeated him and drove him oversea to Ireland. Henceforth, for years, Cadwaladr was the bitterest enemy of his brother, Owen Gwynedd. And Cadwaladr was such a splendid fighter, and so recklessly brave, that he was a worse enemy than an ordinary man.

Another great grief Owen had when, in 1145, they brought him word of the death of young **Rhun**, his best loved son. All the land sorrowed with Owen, and the Chronicler fills the half of a tall page with passionate description of the goodliness and the beauty of the dead youth—'Fair of form and aspect . . . affable to all . . . tall of stature, fair of complexion, with curly yellow hair, and grey-blue laughing eyes . . .,' and so the description runs on, in long and pitying regret.

As for Owen, it seemed for a while as if he would die of grief. But 'God had compassion on the nation, lest it should perish like a ship without a steersman, and preserved Owen. For before insufferable grief had affected the mind of the Prince he was restored. . . .'

This comfort came from his other son, **Howel the Tall**; Howel the victorious; Howel the ambitious of fame and glory; Howel the poet—for by all these epithets he is to

be distinguished. While his father sat, dull with consuming sorrow, Howel, together with his brother Conan and his father's men, captured the great castle of **Wyddgrug** (Mold) and razed it to the ground. The castle had been so strong that it had been thought it never could be captured and destroyed, and the happiness of such a victory, won by his other sons, restored the stricken spirit of the sorrowing King of Gwynedd.

In 1149 **Madoc ap Meredydd, Prince of Powys**, joined the Earl of Chester in a war against Owen. It was one of the first of those many alliances with the Normans by which the Princes of Powys did so much to ruin the land.

Meredydd, father of this Madoc, had been a great prince in his day and a splendid fighter. Indeed, there were few princes of Powys who were not in love with the sword and the flame, and close friends of the wolf and raven that gorged upon the slain. If they had only done as much for Cymru as they did against it and for themselves, then we could fill a book with the flame-bearers of Powys alone.

This Prince of Powys, however, **Madoc ap Meredydd**, caught sharp punishment for his misdeed. In the wood of **Consyllt**, Owen Gwynedd fell upon him and the Earl of Chester with their men, ' . . . and slaughtered them dreadfully, and put the remainder to flight.'

Passing on to the date of 1156, the old **Chronicle** takes two whole pages to tell of a vast invasion by **Henry II.** and of all the deeds done in it. **Cadwaladr**, the outlawed brother of Owen, and **Madoc ap Meredydd**, of Powys, had stirred up the King of **England to come**

and root out Owen, joining themselves to the Norman forces with all the men they could raise.

But David and Conan, sons of Owen, met King Henry and his host in the trackless wood of **Coed Eulo** (or Cennadlog). And in the fight the men of the Norman host 'were slaughtered as if devoured, though they were ten to every one of the men of' David and Conan.

Then King Henry sent a great fleet to land in Môn, and destroy all the corn, that Owen might be starved. But the gallant men of Môn fell upon the host of the enemy as it was ravaging, and slew them with such fury that few indeed ever got back to their ships.

Amongst the slain, too, was the uncle of King Henry. Well might the King rue the day he attacked Owen.

XLI

THE TRIUMPH OF OWEN

IN 1164 King Henry came again. This time he brought 'a vast host of the choice warriors of England, Normandy, Flanders, Anjou, Gascony, and all Scotland . . . purposing to carry away and destroy the whole of the Cymry.'

Think for a moment of all the might of all those lands, gathered to destroy this little eagle's nest of freedom.

But against that multitude of steel-clad men came

all our land at last. Owen Gwynedd had with him his brother, Cadwaladr, no longer an outlaw, but here with bare blade *for* his country, instead of against it. All Deheubarth, led by Rhys, son of Gruffydd and Gwennifer, came crowding to the Red Dragon flag. All the Princes of Powys, name by name in proud array, thronged after **Owen Cyfeiliog**, their goodly poet as well as their prince. Even the sons of **Madoc ap Idnerth** brought up the men of the borders of **Gwent** to stand with the rest of their countrymen against this cloud of foes.

That was the true moment of Owen Gwynedd's triumph. That was the hour which proved him flame-bearer. No greater proof could be found of his wisdom and statesmanship than that the land should so gather to him. Even **Gruffydd the First**, son of **Llewelyn ap Sesyll**, had never, in the proudest pitch of his power, been able to gather the men of all Cymru under the Dragon at once.

King Henry camped at **Oswestry**, to see if the sight of all his vast army would not shake the hearts of some of the Cymric Princes, and cause them to desert to him. But no man gave way.

Then he advanced into the **Glyn of Ceiriog**, and began to cut down the woods to clear a passage. But straightway the scouts and skirmishers of the **Cymry** fell upon the pick of his men, 'and many of the mightiest fell on each side.'

At last Henry reached the **Berwyn mountains**, and found the host of the **Cymry** in front of him. But he made no attack, though their skirmishers hemmed him

in on every side, so that his troops dared not leave the camp to forage, and he must either fight or retire for want of food. Torrents of rain made matters still worse for him, and in the end he retreated ingloriously, losing men and material at every step.

Then he wreaked his anger on helpless children and prisoners. Two young sons of Owen Gwynedd, and two of Rhys of Deheubarth, were in England as hostages. He blinded them in revenge for the failure of his boastful expedition, 'and this the King did with his own hand,' says the Chronicler.

It was in November, 1169, that Owen Gwynedd died at last, having cleared every castle out of the borders of Gwynedd, even Rhuddlan Castle. But his sons were not as great as he, and it was his nephew, Rhys of Deheubarth, son of his slain sister Gwennifer, who carried on his work for Cymru.

So we will speak of Rhys.

XLII

THE LORD RHYS

Rhys was the son of that gallant Gruffydd the Wanderer, who had won back the kingdom of Deheubarth from the oppressor. He seemed to combine in himself the valour of his father and the wisdom of his uncle, Owen Gwynedd.

All through the reign of Owen this Rhys had been doing great deeds in the south, chasing one Norman

earl after another out of his lands, sacking and burning this town or that, capturing and razing this castle or that, and hunting Norman and Fleming and Saxon from his borders like driven cattle.

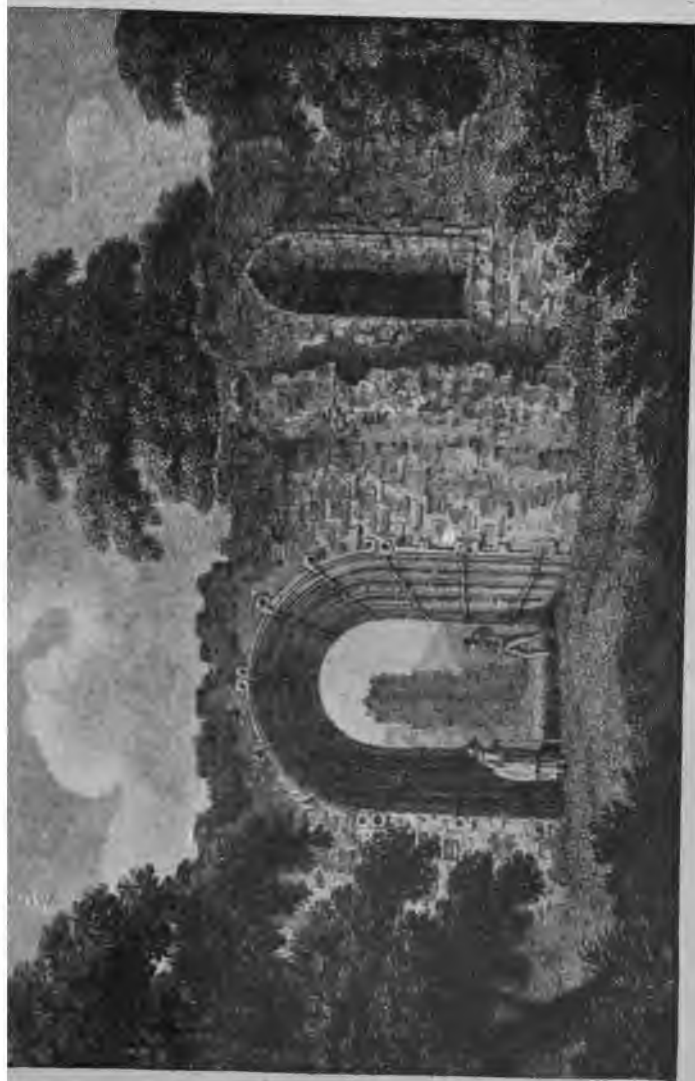
For one short while indeed, in 1159, he had defied alike the power of England and of Gwynedd, and had watched the armies of both come like a wave upon his lands. But he saw them also ebb like a wave, leaving his power but the greater.

Then the death of Owen Gwynedd left Rhys the foremost prince in Cymru, and he saw that there was one way by which he might, perhaps, succeed still more. He tried it.

All along the southern coasts of the land were ports and river mouths, where armies of Normans might land and fortify themselves. At those very places armies of Normans had landed and fortified themselves, building the castles of which the walls still remain. The greatest of these castles stood at the mouths of the rivers—which means that from each of them ran a green valley, far up into the heart of the kingdom of Rhys.

Any general accustomed to war will tell you that, as a consequence, the independence of Rhys should have disappeared in a single summer before the hosts of the Normans. That it did not disappear, that, in fact, his power continually grew greater at the expense of the Norman barons, is bald proof that Rhys was a great prince. With far-seeing wisdom and strong patience, then, he set to work to try his new plan.

He saw that, as often as he broke the Norman



ABBAY OF YSTIRAD FFLUR (STRATA FLORIDA).

power on his southern coast, the Norman barons fled to the King of England and brought him in, with vast hosts, to set them back in their lands and strengthen their demolished castles. So long as the King of England was the protector of those Normans, then so long the work of conquering them would have to be done over and over again. His plan therefore must be to detach the King of England from helping the Normans of Deheubarth.

The only way in which he could possibly do that was by getting the King of England on his own side. The only way he could get the King of England on his side was by consenting to become his vassal—till the work should be accomplished. Accordingly, when the barons of England rebelled against Henry their king, Rhys sent him help to subdue them.

He also made treaties with King Henry, and, lastly, accepted from him the office of Justiciar—that is to say, Minister of Justice or preserver of the King's peace—in South Cymru. From that office he was called the Lord Rhys, and it was as the Lord Rhys he became most famous. Yet the genealogies give him another name, which perhaps explains the secret of a deal of his success. They call him **Rhys Mwyn Vawr**, that is, the **Greatly Courteous**.

But there is another and different thing for which we, in these days, must be very thankful to him. In 1186 he established the **Abbey of Ystrad Fflur** (Strata Florida) in Ceredigion, and in that abbey was written the best of those old chronicles of the princes, from which we have continually been quoting such goodly descriptions.

It is a pity we have not room for all that Chronicle's description of all the deeds of the Lord Rhys in the year 1196. For in that year the Normans of the east encroached on the territories of Rhys, encouraged by the revolt of his own sons against him.

But the old prince rose 'like a lion of furious heart, with a mighty hand,' and though '**Roger Mortimer** and **Hugh de Say** marshalled their armed forces of cavalry, equipped with mail and helmets and shields, unawares against the Cymry,' yet the grey old prince 'heroically set upon his enemies, and turned them to flight, dealing vengeance on them scornfully.' Much more he did, capturing **Pain's** castle and burning **Maes Hyvaidd**, and spreading fear on the Normans. But is it not all written in the book of the Chronicles of the Princes, which the clerks of his Abbey of Ystrad Fflur inscribed on the yellow parchment?

One thing above all else the clerks inscribed therein. After they had told of all his braveries, under their dates, and all his wisdoms, and all his magnificence when he held a splendid Eisteddfod, as his father had done before him, then in due time they tell of his death in the year 1197.

Not with calm pen and quiet words, however, is the thing set down. Like the coming of the waves of the sea come the phrases of the summing-up of him who had been 'the head, and the shield, and the strength of the south, and of all Cymru; and the hope and defence of all the tribes of the Britons.'

But read it all there where it is written, with the Latin verses and the epitaph complete. Then, even

though history may show you some places where the Lord Rhys went wrong, yet you will still believe that he was great, and that he is in his right place when he is set down as one of the flame-bearers.

So we leave him, buried in the cathedral at far St. David's.

XLIII

IORWERTH AB OWEN

THE next name on our list is that of **Iorwerth ab Owen**, lord of **Caerleon-on-Usk**, the city which the old Romans built.

You will remember **Caradoc ap Gruffydd**, who in the old days had fought against **King Gruffydd the First**, and brought in **Harold the Saxon** to overthrow him. This **Iorwerth** was his descendant, and by the working of the law of succession he had succeeded to no more than **Caerleon** and part of **Gwent**. But he was of the old line of **Morgan Bule**, and he seemed to have succeeded also to a full share of the old fighting blood. Considering that he had but a corner of **Cymru** to work upon, he certainly showed a likeness to the greater princes north and west of him.

It is under the date of 1171 that we first come to **Iorwerth** at his best, in the pages of the **Chronicles**. In that year **King Henry** thought it time to go to **Ireland**, where the sons and grandsons and great-grandsons of

Nest—sister of Gruffydd ap Rhys, King of Deheubarth—were conquering broad lands for themselves.

And by the way as the king marched, he came to Caerleon, and took it from Iorwerth. It was sheer theft, but this was that king who blinded the little hostages. Little cared **Henry II.** whether a thing were right or wrong.

Iorwerth was no man to sit down tamely under such a wrong. All the kings that ever stole could not change God's law of right and wrong. Iorwerth gathered his men, and his two sons, and his sister's son, and he recaptured the old city for himself, giving the garrison leave to march after the king to Ireland. Then, that no king should ever covet Caerleon again, he burned it and laid the land waste about it.

Next year, as the king came back from Ireland, he sent and offered terms of peace to Iorwerth, asking him to come and see him and treat about a lasting peace; and, to persuade him still more, the king sent a safe conduct, or written pass, to him and to his sons. The Lord Rhys had been speaking with King Henry.

'And Iorwerth,' says the Chronicle, 'went to meet the king in peace, and sent his son Owen with gifts of such things as were suitable to him on his march. But the king's men set upon Owen and killed him. And when Iorwerth heard that, he went no farther to the king, but armed himself against him, and drove every soul of the Saxons from the land of Gwent, and slew many of them.'

'And, crossing the river **Wye**, he ravaged the country as far as **Gloucester**, slaying and burning all the way he

went. And from there to Hereford, the same work the same way, and after having burnt that town and sacked it, he returned to Caerleon and strengthened the town and castle, and placed a faithful garrison in it.

‘And during that time **Sesyll ap Dunwal** (brother-in-law to Iorwerth) captured the castle of **Abergavenny**, and **Sesyll ap Rhirid** (another kinsman) captured the castle of **Ceryg Howel** (**Crickhowel**), which belonged to the king, and the garrison was slain. And Iorwerth placed in them faithful garrisons of his own nation.’

It would have paid the king far better to have left Iorwerth ab Owen alone.

‘In 1175,’ says the other Chronicle, ‘by a sudden attack the Normans got possession of Caerleon, and drove away Iorwerth and Howel his son.’ It seems that Iorwerth had rebuilt it.

But the Lord Rhys came and made peace between Iorwerth and the king, the king restoring Caerleon to Iorwerth; and so that quarrel ended in triumph for the descendant of the prince who slew the men of Harold, and carried his building material away for his own use.

XLIV

THE MEN OF GWENT

KING HENRY, however, was no man to keep faith. He had been forced to do justice to Iorwerth, or else stand a war with Iorwerth’s Prince, **Rhys ap Gruffydd**, of **Deheubarth** (the Lord Rhys of our last chapter).

Henry could not afford to face such a war at that moment. He had trouble enough elsewhere because of his treachery, in England and in France. But what he could not do openly, he tried to do secretly. There is an old proverb which says, 'Like master, like man.' Henry the King had William the vassal—that is to say, **William de Breos**, of **Brecnoc**, who was a fit man to be vassal to so treacherous a king.

The people of Brecnoc had long groaned under the tyranny of William, for his castle there was high and strong, and its gallows ever ready. He had other castles beside, and chief among them was that of **Abergavenny**. To this latter castle then he invited all those chiefs who had lately carried the war so high. It was to be a great feast to celebrate goodwill and good neighbourliness.

To the castle of Abergavenny thus came Iorwerth, and with him **Sesyll ap Dunwal** and the rest of his kinsmen, some seventy in number. But William de Breos had provided more than the feast; he had provided soldiers under the command of **Ranulf Poer**, **Sheriff of Hereford**. At a given signal the soldiers rushed into the banqueting hall and massacred the unarmed guests.

Of all the chiefs there feasting one alone escaped. That one was Iorwerth, who snatched a sword and with it hewed a way through the murderers and escaped. The Normans could not overtake him, but they rode to the court of the murdered Sesyll (who was lord of **Upper Gwent**), and there they seized **Gladys** his wife, and murdered her little son, Cadwaladr, before her

eyes. 'And on that day,' says the old Chronicle, 'there was the most miserable slaughter of the chieftains of Gwent.'

Back came Iorwerth then, leading his men to vengeance; ravaging the lands of the Normans, till de Breos fled from the hall of blood at Abergavenny to hide in the towers of Brecon, escaping the day of retribution for a time.

Seven long years the blood of the murdered chieftains stained the floor of the murder-room. Then, one day, the sons and grandsons of the victims gathered to vengeance. One of them, **Sesyll ab Eudav**, went to the Constable of the Castle, and, pointing to a certain angle of the wall, said, 'Here will we enter to-night.'

All night the constable and his men watched, buckled in their armour and with weapons ready. At dawn they thought they were safe and so turned to rest. But all night the avengers had been lying in the foss below, and now they flung up their scaling-ladders and swarmed over the walls at the very spot that had been pointed out. Few of the garrison escaped, save only those of one tower. Then the stain disappeared from the floor of the hall at last. Fire swept it out, for the avengers burnt the castle to the ground.

Still, vengeance was not complete. **William de Breos** and **Ranulf Poer**, with their army, had marched to **Llandingat (Dingestow)**, near **Monmouth**, and begun to build a castle there. The avengers came upon them also. This time the Normans were drawn up in battle-array, but the furious avengers drove them back into their entrenchments. **Ranulf Poer** fell covered with

wounds and just able to make sign for a priest to shrive his guilty soul at parting.

William de Breos, however, escaped once more. He was dragged from one of the trenches, but before he could be slain a rush of his men saved him. The day was still to come when vengeance should reach him. It was God himself who dealt out punishment to him.

To close this tale of the Prince and the men of Gwent, we must quote one who knew these fighters of whom we have been reading. 'The people of what is called Gwent,' wrote he, 'are better skilled in war, more famous for valour, and more expert in archery than those of any other part of Wales.'

And in proof of their archery he goes on to tell how, in the capture of a certain tower, their arrows pierced through a gate of solid oak, four fingers thick. Also, one of the soldiers of William de Breos was shot through the thigh, the arrow passing through the armour on one side of the thigh, through the thigh, through the armour on the other side again, and after that it still passed on through the saddle and killed the horse.

Another soldier, also sheathed in armour, was pinned to the saddle by an arrow through the hip. Wheeling his horse about he was pinned to the saddle on the other side also, by another arrow through the other hip. Evidently these men of Gwent were not men to be cheaply meddled with.

And lest it should be thought that the man who said this of them was a man of Gwent himself, we had better have a chapter upon him. His name was—Gerald the Cymro.

XLV

GERALD THE CYMRO

AMONGST all the flame-bearers there is one who never led the spears to the field nor swung a blade in battle. Yet the **Prince of Powys** said of him that he had fought a mightier fight for Cymru than any one of all the princes of the land. That man was **Gerald**, who will live to all time by a name which of itself must stir our hearts. For he was called, and called himself, **Gerald the Cymro**. You will see the name oftenest, however, in its Latin form, **Giraldus Cambrensis**.

You will remember the Princess Nest, who sent the messengers to her brother, Gruffydd, to warn him that the King of Gwynedd intended to deliver him up to King Henry. She was daughter of the **Rhys ap Tudor**, King of Deheubarth, who fought at the great battle of **Mynydd Carn**.

But she was more. There are many princesses in history, but there is not one of them who could have been so fair and sweet as Nest. It seemed as if no man could see her without falling in love with her. The fame of her loveliness and charm went through the land, causing long war and bloodshed about her. Her first husband was **Gerald, Castellan of Pembroke**. Her second, to whom she was married by the old Cymric law, was **Stephen, Castellan of Cardigan**. King Henry was another

who fell in love with her, while **Owen ap Cadogan** boldly burnt the castle of Pembroke and carried her off to Powys in defiance of all the land.

Ireland knows her well—too well—for it was her sons and grandsons who led the way to the conquest of Ireland. Yet, in after years, her descendants fought as famously for Ireland as ever they had fought against it. It seemed, in truth, as if no man could be descended from her without being a gallant fighter. Of them all, however, the most famous by far is Gerald the Cymro.

His father was a Norman, but Gerald speaks no further of him. All his tale is of his kindred by his mother's side, for his mother was another **Yngharad**, daughter of Nest. He himself was born in his father's castle of **Manorbier**, by the edge of the sea in **Dyved**. Hear him tell of his native spot.

'As Dyved, linked in seven cantreys, is the fairest part of the land of Wales, as Pembroke is the chief and fairest part of Dyved, and this spot, Manorbier, is the sweetest of all Pembroke, it follows that Manorbier is the sweetest spot in Wales.' A right spirit that is, and the mark of a gallant fighter. Let us all be as proud of our homes as he was, and we shall do well.

He grew up to be a tall, slender young man, with fine features, altogether goodly to look upon. But he had something goodlier still; he had so good a conceit of himself, and was withal so gallant hearted, that he will remain famous so long as our land endures.

He studied so well that he became one of the foremost scholars of his time. He was, in fact, one of three great writers—all men of South Cymru—who had no



equal at that time in England, Scotland, Ireland, or, indeed, in Western Europe.

The first of them was **Gruffydd ab Arthur**, or **Geoffrey of Monmouth**, of whom you have already heard. He wrote the famous history of Britain. The second was **Walter Map**, born in Gwent or **Morgannoc**. He wrote the story of **Lancelot of the Lake**. Both the history and the story were written from much the same sources. And out of those two books, and their sources, as you know, have grown all the wondrous stories of **King Arthur** and his knights in their splendour.

The third scholar was **Gerald**, but it is not for his scholarship we write of him here. It is because the one dream of his life was to become Bishop of **St. David's**, and to make the Cymric Church free once more from **Canterbury**. He wanted to make the church a help instead of a weakness to the nation.

Stoutly he struggled to fulfil his dream. Let us follow the struggle.

XLVI

GERALD'S FIGHT FOR THE FREEDOM OF OUR CHURCH

HERE let us go back to speak of the beginnings of Christianity in Cymru. We are told in many books that Christianity was driven to the mountains of our country along with the Britons of what is now England,

when they fled like hares. We have already seen that those Britons stayed in England or went to Brittany, and did not come to Cymru at all. And you have seen that our Christianity did not come from over the Severn either, but from the North with the Cymry themselves, or was found here already amongst the Irish.

This church then, founded at the same time as the nation of the Cymry itself, and by such men as Teilo and St. David, was independent for centuries. Rome had no dominion over it, either direct or through Canterbury. By the time of Gerald, however, it had come under the power of the Archbishops of Canterbury, and was being used against the independence of the Cymry. Gerald saw all the injustice which followed from that, and he made it the grand work of his life to make the church of Cymru free again.

He tried first to do it in plain defiance of Canterbury. His uncle, David, a son of Nest, was bishop of St. David's. In 1176 the old man died, and the electors of the diocese nominated Gerald to be the new bishop after him.

Canterbury fought against this at once ; and Canterbury could call on the Norman King of England to back it. The election was declared null and void, and **Peter de Leia** was sent as Bishop instead.

. Gerald saw, from that, where lay the only chance of success. The Pope was then head of all the churches of Western Europe. The Pope could restore the independence of the church of Cymru with a single word, if he would. Therefore, when Peter de Leia died, in 1198, Gerald was ready with his plan. The electors again

GERALD'S FIGHT FOR FREEDOM OF OUR CHURCH 169

chose him to be their bishop. Canterbury and the Norman king again said, 'No,' and sent another man. But Gerald set to work to go to Rome and fight it out before the Pope himself.

At this time the sons, grandsons, and great-grandsons of Nest were busy conquering in Ireland. Gerald's two brothers were amongst the rest, and so his first step was to cross to Ireland to speak with his kinsmen.

They all encouraged him to the fight, for the descendants of Nest were fine fighters. His next step was to deposit all his precious books with the monks of **Ystrad Fflur** in **Ceredigion** for safety. Then by stealth he crossed to France.

There he found a war raging that barred the usual way to Rome. He found himself in a world of danger, and his companions sickened and were forced to return home. But Gerald never thought of turning back. Alone he kept on; alone he came to the imperial city safely at last.

The Pope cared nothing for the right or the wrong of the case. Canterbury had sent a clerk to forestall Gerald. All the Pope would do was to appoint a quibbling commission to try the case in England, for in this matter he had to look to his own policy of ruling the world.

Gerald returned to St. David's and found fresh evidence. Back he went to Rome and faced the Pope again. But again the Pope put him off, and again he returned to St. David's.

This time, however, the King of England declared him a rebel and an outlaw. But the kinsman of the

princes of Deheubarth could smile in contempt of such an edict.

Then the Pope's Commissioners in England pronounced against him, but he defied them and started for Rome to appeal to the Pope once more. This time he went in peril all the way. Stealing through England, he had to lie on the coast for days, in an open boat, looking for some vessel to take him over to France. After he got across he fell in with thieves and was robbed, and when at last he came to the Alps it was the dead of winter. He was forced to cross in the deepest snows. But he crossed; he reached Rome.

Yet once again it was in vain, and so the struggle went on, now up, now down, though Gerald was alone, single-handed against all the might of the Church outside Cymru. He lost in the end. The Church of Cymru fell into the power of Canterbury. But when it was all over at last, the Prince of Powys, a fighter himself, summed up the whole struggle in memorable words. 'Many and great wars have we Cymry waged with England, but none so great and fierce as his, who fought the King, and the Archbishop, and the might of the whole clergy and people of England, *for the honour of Cymru.*'

A finer epitaph no fighter could have.

XLVII

LLYWELYN THE GREAT¹

1196-1240

1188, Gerald the Cymro was guiding an Archbishop through Wales, preaching the Crusade. He afterwards told the story of the journey in a book, and in the course of the eighth chapter of that book,² he tells how **Llywelyn**, though then but twelve years old, was beginning to push his claim to the crown of Wales.

Llywelyn was not born in Gwynedd. **Howel**, eldest son of **Owen Gwynedd**, had seized the crown upon the death of his father. But **David**, another son, had rebelled and slain **Howel**, and then turned to deal with his other brothers in like manner.

One of those other brothers was **Iorwerth Drwyn-dwn**, who fled for refuge to **Iorwerth** of **Caerleon**, at the other end of the land. It was most probably there that his son **Llywelyn** was born, the **Llywelyn** who was to be once more that the blood of **Cunedda** was king's

in **Iorwerth**, father of **Llywelyn**, could make no claim to **Gwynedd**, because he was disfigured by a broken nose and no blemished man could bear rule among our

¹ Note 9.

² *Gerald the Welshman*, edited by Henry Owen, is the best for the reader.

ancestors. But the fact that his father had not reigned was no bar to the claim of Llywelyn. The old law of succession helped him over that.¹

Born in 1176, it was twenty years afterwards, in 1196, that Llywelyn drove his uncle from Gwynedd, and began to reign in his stead. Then for six and forty years he increased in wisdom and in power till, at his death, on April 11, 1240, all Britain, and not Cymru alone, knew him as Llywelyn the Great.

If ever you read a *full and true* history of England you will see there how great a part Llywelyn played in the history of England as well as of Cymru. And when you come to read further still, you will see how principal a part he took in a yet greater history, the history of human freedom. For without him the barons could never have forced **King John** to sign the Great Charter (**Magna Charta**), which is the first step in the personal freedom of the British people of to-day. The Norman Kings had seized the Crown of Britain from the English. They had ground down the people of England to the depths. And now it was a Son of Cunedda who was helping them to regain their liberty.

It is useless here to try to keep count of his campaigns even, let alone his victories. It would be like counting the succession of the breakers on the shore, as the stormy south-west tide sweeps up to its full height.

King John saw early what manner of man he was, and hastened to make an ally of him. By his first wife John had a daughter, **Joan**, and he arranged a marriage between her and Llywelyn, giving the lord-

¹ See Note 10.

ship of **Ellesmere**,¹ in what is now Shropshire, as her marriage portion. In his eagerness he gave the marriage portion long before the marriage took place.

But Llywelyn had need of more than usual wisdom and skill in war, for, besides the usual enemies of Gwynedd, he had to face **Gwenwynwyn, Prince of Powys**.

Gwenwynwyn was such a man, so able and so ambitious, that, had there been no Llywelyn, it is of Gwenwynwyn we should here be writing. Could his abilities have been used for his country, under Llywelyn, then the record of that time would have been finer still, and the result might well have been permanent.

As it was, there was no other way of peace but that Llywelyn must drive Gwenwynwyn into exile, and take Powys into his own hands.

In the south was another trouble at first, for the sons of the Lord Rhys had entered on the usual weary waste of fighting over their father's dominion. Llywelyn began by a war with them, but ended by so dealing with them that they became his staunchest lieutenants.

Another mark of Llywelyn's greatness lay in the way in which the great marriages of that day began to be arranged. From the very first it had not been unusual for Cymric Prince and Norman Baron to marry into each other's families. But in Llywelyn's day it seemed to have become almost a settled policy. Three generations of princes like Llywelyn would have made Norman and Cymro one, here in the west.

¹ See Note 11.

The crowning sign of Llywelyn's greatness, however, lay in his dealings with the **House of Breos**, the breed of the butcher of **Abergavenny**. But we will take a special chapter for that.

XLVIII

THE SIGNS OF LLYWELYN'S GREATNESS

LLYWELYN married the daughter of King John in 1206. Two years afterwards King John drove William de Breos, the William of the Massacre, into exile, and seized his lands and castles. The vengeance of God had begun to work. In the end William fled as a beggar and died in exile, while his evil wife and his eldest son were starved to death by John in the dungeons of **Windsor Castle**.

But William had two other sons, and those escaped. **Giles**, the second son, was **Bishop of Hereford**. In 1214 John made peace with Giles, and gave him back the titles to his lands in Cymru. But the title did Giles no good; Llywelyn was King in Cymru. Giles had to become the ally of Llywelyn, against King John, before he was allowed to take possession of **Brecnoc**, and **Abergavenny**, and all the other castles.

Then Giles died, and his patrimony came to his brother, **Rheinalt de Breos**, who took for his wife the daughter of Llywelyn ap Iorwerth, Prince of Gwynedd. The Norman baron had become the vassal of the Cymric Prince.

Then came a day when, King John being dead, Rheinalt thought he would turn to the new King, **Henry III.** Within a few days he woke up to find himself landless and penniless, and flying in fear. For, like a flood, Llywelyn and his princes swept him out of town and castle and lordship, so that bare life seemed a deal to have saved from the spears that drove him out.

Too late he saw his mistake ; too late he found the power of his prince. He took William, his heir, 'and six noble knights with him, and came to give himself up to the disposal of Llywelyn.' Again he swore allegiance to the Prince of Cymru.

But he did not get back all his lands at once. The castle of **Senghenydd** was all he got for the moment. Men found that Llywelyn could be as stern in justice as he was swift in action.

Then came another day when, Rheinalt being dead, William, his heir, was lord of Brecknock in his room. This William did evil by Llywelyn, and Llywelyn had him taken out and publicly hanged in the face of the world.¹ The King of England dared not hang a Norman baron of such high descent. Llywelyn did it. The Norman barons in Cymru noted that.

Another sign showed itself in the south-west corner of Cymru. There in the open land, pierced and flanked by the sea, a mixed breed of **Norsemen** and **Cymry** had been leavened by two successive imports of **Flemings**, whose name was afterwards used for the rest of the people they settled amongst. Many castles protected

¹ See Note 12.

these so-called Flemings. Fleets could always bring them help when they were hard pressed, and the kings of England were ever ready to encourage them, as well as the Norman barons of the districts. But now these Flemings, too, did homage to Llywelyn, a thing as new as the homage of Rheinalt de Breos, or the hanging of William.

But the real greatness of Llywelyn comes out in the fact of his calling together a **Parliament of Princes** and wise men to deal with the affairs of Cymru. You will remember that it was beside the aber of the Dyvi that the princes of old had gathered to elect **Conan Tindaethwy** as King. It was beside the same aber that Llywelyn called his Parliament to settle the affairs of the nation.

In 1215 this great Council was established, and thereafter whosoever rebelled against Llywelyn found that he had rebelled against the Council too, and that the Council was free Cymru in Council. In short, while that Council existed, the free Cymry were working together as a nation at last, united under one prince, wherever the Norman castles had been destroyed or did not exist; and while they were united they triumphed.

This lasted from 1215 to 1240, in which year Llywelyn died. But the more you examine his life and acts, his wisdom as well as his valour, the more you will see that he truly deserves his title of **Llywelyn Vawr**, i.e., the Great. It is because his life and deeds are set forth so fully, in so many books, in **English** as well as in Cymraeg, that we have here set down less of

his wars and victories, and more of the signs which are evidence of the dread in which he was held by all the enemies of freedom.

XLIX

THE RISE OF LLYWELYN III

LLYWELYN'S son that reigned after him was no Llywelyn. His grandson was, however, in action as well as in name.

We need not trouble about Llywelyn's son **Davydd**, who succeeded to the crown. First and last there have been three Davydds, princes of Gwynedd. Every one of them brought calamity to Cymru.

It was by a most strange and wonderful occurrence that this particular Davydd lived to become the curse of his country. One day, when he was a baby, his foster mother left him asleep on the bed, and went out of the chamber, leaving his father's gallant hound, **Celart**,¹ lying at the foot of the bed, as a guard while she was gone.

Presently in came a great grey wolf to devour the baby. Up sprang **Celart**. With bristles up, fangs bare, and eyes on fire, he flew upon the terrible beast. On the bed, on the floor, over and over and under they rolled and fought, locked in the death-struggle. The baby **Davydd**, tangled in the bedclothes, was pushed off the bed to the floor, but still the grim battle went on.

¹ See Note 18.

It was under the bed it ended at last, and from there Celart crawled, his jaws red with blood, leaving the wolf dead behind him. Then he lay down again, beside the tangled heap of bedclothes under which the baby was hidden, guarding his charge still till some one should come.

It was Llywelyn who came. He looked upon the bed for his little son and saw that he was gone. He looked in fierce fear round the room and saw no sign of Davydd. He looked upon the faithful hound and saw his jaws all red with blood. At once his fear believed that Celart had eaten the baby, and with that thought he flashed out his sword and ran it through the brave and loyal creature.

Poor Celart's dying howl rang through the chamber till it waked the little one beneath the heap of clothes, and its cry of fright came to its father's ears. Hastily he stooped and found it, and as he stooped he saw, too, the body of the dead wolf. Then he understood what had happened, and turned in swift grief to Celart. But it was too late ; Celart was dying.

Llywelyn buried poor Celart with many a sign of grief for what he had done. The grave is yonder yet in the place that is called **Beddgelart** after it. No one knows the grave of Davydd, neither is any place called after his name. But the bards as well as the princes remembered Celart, and in an old manuscript of 1591 there is still to be seen an englyn, or verse, about him. Alas that so true and brave a creature should have died for saving so worthless a prince.

Davydd reigned six years only, but in those six years he brought to the ground the strong Cymru which his

great father had built up, dying and leaving it desolate beneath the heel of **Henry III**. Let that be his epitaph.

But Davydd was not the only son of Llywelyn. There had been another, Gruffydd, a handsome giant of a prince, born of a Cymric mother. Llywelyn had weighed his two sons in his mind as to which would be the better ruler for the land. Davydd's mother was sister of the King of England—surely the King of England would be less the enemy of his nephew than of Gruffydd. So thought Llywelyn, and accordingly he made Davydd his heir; the one tragic mistake which undid all that he had accomplished in his own strenuous life. Gruffydd, with his turbulent valour, could not have brought his country lower than his brother's smoothness brought it. He might have saved it.

Davydd had handed over his brother Gruffydd to the King of England as a prisoner. The king sent him to the **Tower of London**. One night Gruffydd made a rope of his clothes and began to let himself down out of his window to escape. The rope broke, and Gruffydd was killed, his neck being broken by the fall. But he left four sons, **Owen, Llywelyn, Davydd, and Rhodri**.

Owen and Llywelyn seized the crown of Gwynedd between them when their uncle Davydd died. Now King Henry claimed all the land as his own, for, amongst the rest of Davydd's doings, he had agreed that, if he died childless, Henry should be his heir and take the country. It would be hard to find words severe enough to describe such a transaction as that.

As soon as Owen and Llywelyn came to Gwynedd, King Henry sent an immense army to ravage the land,

and the two princes had to agree that they were to rule only over as much of Gwynedd as was west of the **Conwy** and north of the **Dyvi**. There seemed little prospect of Cymru ever holding up its head again.

But the fire is never out while one spark remains. Llywelyn proved to be a true prince in charm and nature, as well as in name, and the hearts of the men of Gwynedd began to turn to him above all his brothers. Then Owen and young Davydd 'in their jealousy combined against him, and gathered an army to kill or drive him out.

But Llywelyn 'awaited their cruel coming' at **Bryn Derwen**, and in a battle of a single hour defeated them. Owen was taken prisoner and kept in **Dolbadarn Castle**. Davydd—woe to Cymru—escaped to England. Llywelyn had thus made himself sole prince of what remained of Gwynedd. This was in 1254.

In that same year, however, King Henry gave the Earldom of Chester to his son, **Edward**, and, besides all the powers of that great earldom, he gave him 'all his lands in Wales.' Chief amongst these 'lands in Wales' were 'the Four Cantreys'—meaning all the land between the **Conwy** and the **Dee**. Also, most of the present **Carmarthen** and **Cardigan** shires were included in the gift.

Edward himself was too young to administer these lands properly. But he had, as his official, a certain **Geoffrey Langley**. Now this man's name was a byword for wicked oppression in England and in Scotland before ever he came to **Cymru**. And the hate of England and Scotland against him only seemed to make him worse here.

Two years the godless **Langley** had his cruel pleasure



CONWY CASTLE.

of the wretched inhabitants of the districts under him. Then the desperate people reckoned it all up. There was no more to live for, if to live only meant to go on enduring such maddening injustice and oppression. Better a thousand times to die, fighting for deliverance, than to live any longer under the heel of the ruthless Edward. Their longing eyes went round them, looking for help, looking for a leader. Their aching hearts whispered a name to them, the name of young Llywelyn. Their weary feet moved under them, and to his court they came, laying all their sorrows before him, their tears pleading with him to lead them to battle for death or for freedom.

Llywelyn knew well all that he would risk if he hearkened to their bitter cry. Had he been as selfish as his brothers, or as calculating as his ancestor, **Gruffydd II.**, he would have refused to risk himself for them. But he was Llywelyn; and the king's blood in his veins stirred for the grief of the oppressed folk that stood before him. He put all other feelings by, save pity and golden valour, and turned to the remnant of the free Cymry, that lived with him in wild Eryri, to see if they would follow him for their brethren's sake.

Those few freemen also knew well all that they would risk if they allowed their prince to defy the vast armies of King Henry. But they were Cymry, their blood would not be quiet within them against the cry of the despairing. They gave the sign, Llewelyn drew the sword: in six days he swept the Four **Cantreys** clean of the oppressors, save only the great castles of **Diserth** and **Deganwy**.



MEN OF THE FOUR CANTREYS IMPLORING ILYWELYN TO LEAD THEM TO
BATTLE FOR FREEDOM OR DEATH

Southward next he went, clearing the land before him. **Ceredigion** he gave to **Meredydd ab Owen**; **Deheubarth** he gave back to **Meredydd ap Rhys**, of the old race of **Dinevor**. In his own hands he kept the lands from which he drove **Roger Mortimer**. Then from **Powys** he drove the traitor **Gruffydd**, son of **Gwenwynwyn** of traitor memory. **Gruffydd** brought up his Norman allies, but they were beaten, too, along with him. He had to give his son **Llywelyn** as hostage to the prince.

King Henry sent a great army to help a traitor prince of the south, **Rhys the Little**, and it landed at **Carmarthen** and attacked **Dinevor**. Down came **Llywelyn**, cut it to pieces, and passed on to raze the castles of **Dyved**. And so he went, like a flame, through all the borders of the land, driving out enemies, strengthening loyal men, and heartening his people, till in 1258 he had established once more the council of chiefs and wise men which his grandfather had first set up.

Thus his golden pity for the sorrows of his race had ended in his becoming prince of all the freed land, even as **Llywelyn the Great** had been in the day of his wide power.

And, to prove the truth of this, it was an English chronicler, **Matthew Paris**, who wrote that at last 'the North Welsh and the South Welsh were wholly knit together, as they had never been before.' Moreover, he praises the manly vigour, the courage, and the patriotism of **Llywelyn**, and finally writes down the words of the prince to the people, concluding as they do with that noble challenge: 'Is it not better, then, at once to die (in battle) and go to God than to live (in slavery)?'

L

THE TREATY OF MONTGOMERY

Of all the Princes of Cymru it was **Meredydd ap Rhys** of **Deheubarth** who owed Llywelyn most. Of all the Princes it was **Meredydd ap Rhys** who first turned traitor. That was in 1259, and at once the council of the Princes seized him, tried him, and imprisoned him at Crickieth Castle. Free Cymru was once more living under the strong rule of law and order.

But England was not. There the worthless King Henry was so oppressing the people that at last they rose against him and his wicked ministers. And, just as in the older day the champions of English liberties had turned to **Llywelyn the Great**, for help against the godless **John**, so now the new champions turned to this Llywelyn for help against **Henry**.

For you must always remember that, after the coming of the Normans, it was never a war of the **English** people against the **Welsh** people that we have had to write of. It was always a war of Norman kings who wished to reduce all men alike to vassalage, or the wars of Norman barons who warred against king, or prince, or people, or neighbour, or anyone whatsoever out of whom they might get gain and plunder.

The leader of the English in their new struggle for liberty was **Simon de Montfort, Earl of Leicester**, and in English history you will read how great a champion of

freedom he was. From first to last he cherished the alliance with Llywelyn, and it was under his rule that Henry first made a treaty recognising Llywelyn as 'Prince of Wales,' instead of merely Prince of Gwynedd, and admitting that he was to have the homage of all the barons in Cymru. Never before had any ruler in Cymru stood at such a pitch of power.

In time the king and his son Edward triumphed over Simon, when they defeated and slew him at Evesham in 1265. Yet that did not do away with the treaty. So strong was Llywelyn's position, as head of the chiefs he had united, that Henry re-established the treaty in its full terms. For at **Shrewsbury**, two years after the death of Simon, on Sunday, September 25, 1267, he agreed with Llywelyn's ambassadors, and signed practically the same treaty again.

Four days later he met Llywelyn himself at Montgomery, and there they ratified the treaty, honourable to both, and giving Cymru, until the death of Henry, such peace as it had never known since the days of Llywelyn ap Sesyll.

Henry died in 1272. Looking back at the five years between the **Treaty of Montgomery** and the death of Henry we see that, from being a loose welter of turbulent tribes, the free Cymry had at last been welded by suffering into what may be called an organised nation, with a promise of development to the highest levels. Had their country been as large as Scotland, as far from London and as difficult of access; or had it been set apart in the sea like Ireland, then any impartial student will admit that, in all human probability, it would have

progressed to a proud place amongst the countries of the world.

But Cymru is part of the Isle of Britain, and true progress and true development doom all the peoples of this isle to union. There is no question of that. The only question is, on what terms should that union take place. Llywelyn offered it on terms that were reasonable, honourable, and self-respecting. Edward, the new King of England, pupil of **Geoffrey Langley** of infamous memory, insisted on terms of brutal force and degrading exaction. Time shall judge between them.

LI

LLYWELYN AND EDWARD

WHEN King Henry died in 1272, his son Edward was away at the Crusades. He came home by easy stages, and was not crowned till 1274. Then he summoned Llywelyn to come and do homage to him, as the King of Scotland had done. By the Treaty of Montgomery Llywelyn was bound to do homage, but he refused. Why?

For one thing Edward himself had broken that treaty in a most important point; a fair sign that he did not intend to be bound by it. Yet that was not the real reason why Llywelyn refused. The truth is that he firmly believed that, if he went, Edward would have him seized treacherously and imprisoned. He had the fate of his father for a warning. He refused therefore

to go, unless Edward would give hostages for his safety. Edward refused to give hostages, a plain proof that Llywelyn's suspicions were right, and that Edward would not keep faith.

It is useless to say, as some writers try to say nowadays, that Edward would not have stooped to such a thing. For at that very time he was giving Llywelyn another proof of his contempt for right.

Llywelyn had long been betrothed to **Elienor**, the lovely daughter of his dead ally, **Earl Simon de Montfort**. She and her mother had been living in exile in France. There her mother died, leaving Elienor in a plight full of doubt and dangers. Llywelyn sent two Black Friars to bring his betrothed home to him, that he might protect and defend her. So Elienor and her brother **Amaury** sailed for Cymru, but Edward sent ships to waylay her, and captured her. He threw her brother into prison and kept her captive too. Worse still, he offered her as a bribe to Llywelyn, if Llywelyn would submit.

Small wonder that Llywelyn could not trust Edward, but believed he would be seized also if he went to London to do homage. To show his good faith, however, he offered in the end to do homage at **Montgomery** (where the treaty had been signed) or at **Oswestry**. But that was refused.

It is easy to say that Llywelyn ought to have trusted Edward. But Llywelyn knew Edward personally. He was therefore able to judge for himself. And on this point we have to remember what happened in the old days, after Llywelyn had swept **Geoffrey Langley** and

his crew of oppressors out of the land. The cruelties of Edward then had displeased even the English, while as to the Cymry, it made them offer to renew allegiance to Henry, but utterly refuse to trust themselves under Edward again.

So, Edward being what he was, war had to come. It came in the autumn of 1277. And Edward had been a whole year preparing for it, having all the wealth he could use to buy whatever was necessary.

LII

THE CYMRY WHO FOUGHT AGAINST LLYWELYN III

You will read in many books that Edward conquered 'the Welsh.' As a matter of fact, he was not fighting against 'the Welsh' at all. He was fighting against Llywelyn's men only, and the records show that more than half the men of Edward's great armies were 'Welsh' themselves. There were more Cymry under Edward's banners against Llywelyn than Llywelyn could bring to meet them. Let us see how this happened.

In the old days the country had been divided into **Cantreys** and **Commots**. Certain parts of each commot had been set aside for the use of the prince, and certain other parts for the use and support of the governor, or lord of the commot, who was also the prince's steward for the commot.

Now when the mail-clad Norman hosts had conquered

any commot of open ground, it was only the Cymric lord and his *teulu* of fighting men who were driven out, as a rule. For the rest, so far as the actual users of the soil were concerned, it was more the substitution of a Norman lord for a Cymric prince. The Norman lord took into his own hands the land that had been set apart for prince and governor before him. When he built his castle, to keep what he had won, he might clear the natives from close round its walls. Or, if he built a town, then he had to clear a certain space to furnish room for the townsmen's farms. But the indications all show that, except in one or two exceptional cases, the conquered land was still mainly occupied by Cymric tenants.

Had the Norman baron been content to draw no more than the old dues and rents which his predecessor had received before him, then he might have had little trouble with his new lands. But, being a Norman, he wanted always to add new exactions, and screw out greater dues from his tenants than the old Cymric law allowed. Accordingly he usually tried to introduce the same law that the Normans had set up in England to grind down the unfortunate English.

Then would come a rising, when his tenants saw a chance of help from any native prince. It was this which was the secret of the success of the rising of 1094. It is this also which explains what the chronicler meant when he wrote that **Ivor Bach**, when he captured **Cardiff Castle**, made **Fitzhamon** swear that the Cymry of his lordship should have their old laws and privileges back again.

Other barons beside Fitzhamon did the same thing,

in some parts restoring the old Cymric law, and in others modifying their own laws imported from England. So long as there were independent princes in the mountains it was plain wisdom to keep the Cymry of their lordships contented if they could; for, when once the people had got back something like their old rights, they were as well off under a Norman lord as they had been under a Cymric prince. Within a few generations, then, they more or less accepted the new order of things.

If one has rights, then one must fulfil certain duties in return. By Cymric law the people had been bound to follow the lord of the commot to war. So now, after a generation or two, they followed the new lord. That new lord happened to be a Norman, still they must follow him. And as long as he was a just lord to them, and did not try to add to their burdens, they were true to him. Whenever he became unjust they called in the nearest Cymric prince, and taught their lord a lesson by devastating his lands, burning his towns, and destroying his castles.

The successive devastations must have had a tendency to cause most of the foreign settlers to leave what lands they held. Those lands would then be occupied by Cymry. But it was an old Cymric law that, as a rule, when a man took a piece of land, he had to be bound by any particular law which attached to that land. Therefore, any Cymro taking a piece of land which had been held by an Englishman under English law, would loyally accept the English law and drop his own.

It was the Cymry of these lordships, then, who formed

the greater part of Edward's army against Llywelyn. They were simply following their lord as usual. Often enough he had led them against the King of England. This time it happened that he led them against Llywelyn, that was all.

Take, for instance, the case of the men of Gwent. Such lordships as the Normans held in Cymru they could continue to hold simply because they bordered on England or on the sea, so that fresh armies could continually be brought in. Gwent bordered on both. Moreover, the greater part of it was level enough to allow mail-clad horsemen to fight in it.

Cymru united could still have saved Gwent from the Normans after the battle of **Hastings**, so long as the Normans had to hold down the English and fight in France. But Cymru then was a land without a king, and torn by a crowd of princes, fighting each other. The prince of this very Gwent was one of the worst of them all. Therefore the Normans built castles in Gwent and the castles held it.

To blame the men of **Gwent**, or **Morgannoc**, or any other long-established Norman lordship, because they fought against Llywelyn, merely shows ignorance of the conditions of Cymric life and land at that date.

Had the men of Gwent happened to live in **Gwynedd**, they would have held out just as long as the men of **Gwynedd** did. Nay, they might have held out for ever. For the men of Gwent were bowmen, while the men of **Gwynedd** were only spearmen. It was just because Edward could bring the bowmen of Cymru against the spearmen of Cymru that Llywelyn was in danger. In our

own days what chance would men, with bayonets only, have against men with rifles as well as bayonets? And the astonishing bows of the men of Southern Cymru were the rifles of those days. It was from them that the English learnt to use the bow. There were Cymric bowmen present too, at the great battle of **Homildon** in the north, afterwards, as there were at **Cressy**, **Poitiers**, and **Agin-court**.

LIII

THE FIGHT FOR FREEDOM

WHEN **Edward** declared war against Llywelyn at last, he had all the Norman lords in Cymru to do the chief fighting for him with their Cymry. He also had the Norman castles in Cymru as fortresses to start from. But he had more still; he had a renegade Prince of Powys to help him, and Davydd, brother of Llywelyn, beside.

If you could read all the names of all the earls and all the famous leaders on Edward's side; if you could read all the numbers of his men marching into Llywelyn's little land from every direction; and if you could see the endless sums of money which Edward drew from rich England and paid out for keeping up the war, you would not wonder that Llywelyn had to give in at last.

Everything which his genius had won for his people, since the day he drove **Edward** and **Geoffry Langley** from the land, was taken from him now. The districts which

he had freed from the oppressor were put back under worse oppression. Not even all Gwynedd west of the Conwy was left to him, for he had to set free his brother **Red Owen**, and to give **Lleyn** to him. But perhaps the bitterest part of all was that, when the Four Cantrevs were taken away, two of them, **Dyffryn Clwyd** and **Rhuvonioc**, were given to his traitor brother Davydd.

Now, however, Edward had no longer any excuse for holding Elianor captive. He brought her to **Worcester** and there allowed her to marry the man she loved. Edward paid the expenses of the wedding of the two he had beggared. It is to be remembered that Elianor was his cousin. It would not have been seemly to have let her be married without some display.

It was not to be expected that a peace which was but another name for suffering could last. By 1282 the burden had become too bitter to be borne. Those days are gone and far behind us now; therefore it can serve no good purpose to set out here all that the people of the Four Cantrevs, and the rest of the lost districts, had to suffer. The sharpest pang was that, when they appealed to the King's judges for justice, they were thrown into prison and punished still further. The hopelessness of it all drove even Davydd to his brother's side.¹

Llywelyn set out some of those injustices in a long and heavy list when war came again. Attempts have been made in our days to sneer them down, by writers who would fill the newspapers with an outcry if they were forced to pay a single penny that they did not owe,

¹ See Note 13.

a policeman happened to handle them roughly. No man of sound heart and right feeling can read Llywelyn's answer to the demands of Edward, without seeing that Llywelyn was in the right when he said to trust to the king who had, as he showed, 'neither oath, nor covenant, nor grant by charter.' It was on March 21, 1282, that the flame of revolt broke out. On that day Davydd captured **Penarlagarden Castle** and burnt **Flint** and **Rhuddlan**. Swift as the wind it spread to the south, where the men of **Cardigan** captured **Llandovery** and **Caerwynon** on the

On April 9 the men of **Ceredigion** and the middle of the country swept **Aberystwyth Castle** and town out of existence. All the efforts Edward had made in the former war were now the child's play to his exertions now. His armies pressed to the borders of Llywelyn's country. Yet, at **Meibon Fawr**, one army was heavily defeated, and for the next few weeks Llywelyn drove the enemy back all the way to the south and middle borders. As ever, the men of **Merioneth** and **Radnor** were out again for freedom.

While Llywelyn was thus winning victory in the south, his brother Davydd had been slowly beaten back to the north by the Four Cantreys in the north by the overwhelming forces of Edward himself. **Denbigh** was lost in the north, and Davydd had to fall back west of the **Conway**. Means of his fleet Edward landed a great army in **Wales** also. Yet now he called a halt and began negotiations with Llywelyn for peace.

The truce, however, was broken by a piece of deliberate treachery. **Luke de Tany**, commander of Edward's fleet in **Wales**, had built a great bridge of boats across



the Menai at Moel y Don. He thought he could surprise Llywelyn's men and make an end of the war with his single army. On November 6 he crossed the bridge of boats to the Arvon side, but what he ended was himself and his army, for Llywelyn's men fell upon it and utterly destroyed it. Luke de Tany perished with the rest.

The blow relieved Gwynedd. At that crushing defeat Edward fell back to the Clwyd and sent for more armies. Then Llywelyn left Davydd to hold the north, while he himself sped down to help the men of Brecon and Radnor. At that moment of the war it seemed as if Llywelyn was to win. In a struggle where the odds were staggeringly against him he had won two great victories in the only battles fought. Well might he start for the south with a light heart. Unless some accident should happen he was certain to do well in this war.

LIV

THE PLOT TO DESTROY LLYWELYN

Now the Norman lords of Cymru—the lords-marcher as they were called—hated the Cymric Prince always, but neither did they love the King of England. They looked upon themselves as independent princes, each in his own domain.

So long as there were Princes of Cymru, however, to make war on the King of England, then the Kings of

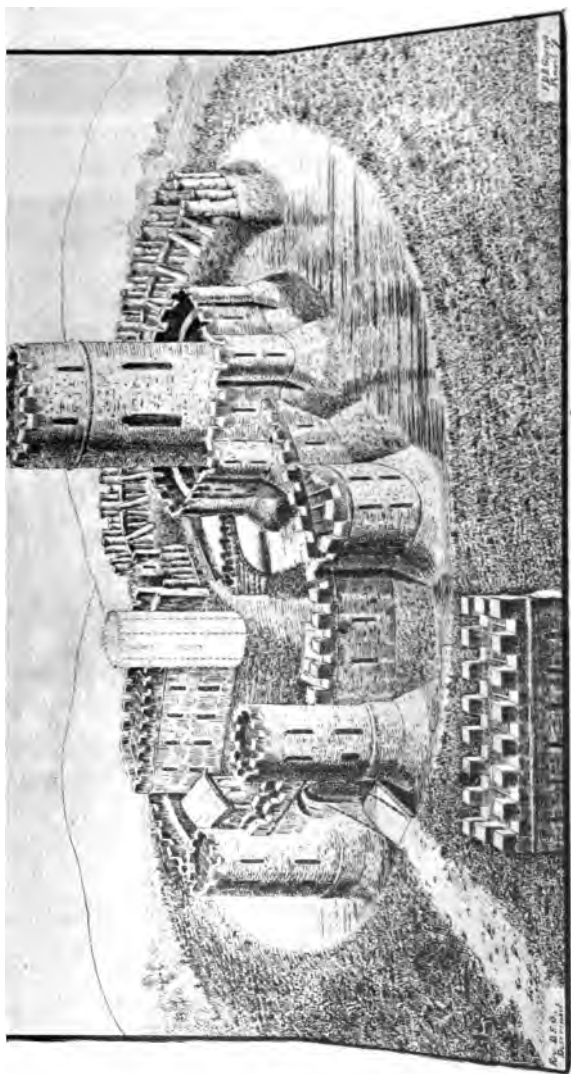
England would have to encourage the lords-marcher in their independence, that they might harass the Princes of Cymru. Once the Princes of Cymru were extinguished, then the next step of the Kings of England would be to crush the lords-marcher. Some of the Norman lords saw that, and they at least had no great wish to see Llywelyn crushed utterly.

Llywelyn knew this. Already some of the barons were in secret correspondence with him, and when he received word from **Edmund Mortimer of Wigmore**, one of the great lords-marcher, saying that he wished to come over to his side, he believed it. For the **Mortimers** were his cousins, descended from his father's sister, Gladys, daughter of Llywelyn the Great.

Now an English chronicler of that day tells us that **Edmund Mortimer** did this thing to please **King Edward**. Llywelyn had always believed that **Edward** would deal treacherously with him. **Edward**, therefore, to throw Llywelyn off his guard, chose **Edmund Mortimer** for this work, for Llywelyn had once spared the life of the father of this **Mortimer**, because of the kinship between them. He would never suspect treachery, then, from the **Mortimers**, who were his kinsmen and sons of the man whose life he had spared.

But there was another man in this dark plan who should stand forefront in the blame. That man was **John Giffard**, a baron whose lands lay close to those of the **Mortimers**, and who had just been appointed Constable of the new **Castle of Bulth**.

Whether **Edward** set him to work with the **Mortimers**, or whether, as seems more probable, the **Mortimers**



BUILT CASTLE AS IT WAS WHEN LLYWELYN RODE PAST IT

themselves took him into council and set him on the work, does not matter here. But, by the rewards which Edward gave him afterwards, it is certain that the actual plot which finally closed round Llywelyn was his.

For he was even more the right man to deceive the intended victim than the Mortimers themselves. First and foremost, he was one of those barons who had joined Simon de Montfort in the struggle for English liberty. He was, indeed, one of the busiest under de Montfort—as long as he thought it would pay. In those old days, when the champions of English liberty looked to Llywelyn for the ready help he always gave, Giffard must have professed himself a great friend of the Prince.

Further, Giffard had married **Maud Longsword** (**Longespee**) who was also a cousin of Llywelyn, for whom she had a warm affection, as she proved afterwards. And that marriage, moreover, made him a lord-marcher, in right of his wife's possessions.

Lastly, Llywelyn, knowing him personally, would know him to be quite unscrupulous, as his whole record shows him to have been. He had deserted Montfort in the old days, when he thought that hero's star was waning, and he was always ready to steal lands and revenues, wherever he thought he could do it.

In fact, as the documents of his life show, John Giffard was always for himself, no matter who was king or prince. He had fought against Edward and his father, when he thought it would pay. He was capable of fighting against Edward again if he thought that would pay. He was therefore just the man to change sides once more, after the defeat of **Luke de Tany** had so

attered all the prospects of the war. On all counts, then, he would be just the man to be the fittest tool in this affair.

The letters of Edmund Mortimer brought Llywelyn down to the valley of the Wye, with a little band of warriors from Gwynedd. John Giffard, **Constable of Builth Castle**, made him believe that Builth Castle would be given up to him. Never repeat that old phrase about 'The Traitors of Builth.'

The **Men of Builth**, fair play to them, were always as ready as the rest to come out for freedom. And the bard who composed the wild and fiery lament for Llywelyn speaks of Saxon, not Cymric, treachery. The only Saxon there was John Giffard.

Giffard had only just been appointed to the command of Builth: Before him, **Roger L'Estrange**, lord-marcher of **Ellesmere and Knockyn**, two Cymric lordships in what is now **Shropshire**, had been commanding there. The Cymry from Ellesmere and Knockin were still at Builth under Giffard when Llywelyn came down.

Now a year or two before this, when the castle was being built, Edward had commanded the father of the Mortimers to cut four roads in different directions from Builth. One of those roads was to a place which he called, in the document, by a name which it still bears, **Cevn Bedd**, or, as we now say, **Cevn y Bedd**. It was called Cevn Bedd because of the bedd or grave of some mighty chief of old, who lies buried at the foot of a stone on **Waen Eli** there.

The road from the Castle was cut accordingly. On the way it had to cross the River **Yrvon**, by a wooden bridge, of the sort still to be seen spanning the **Upper**

Wye. From the bridge it continued along the ridge, following an ancient path, to the homestead of Cevn y Bedd, two miles from Builth. There one ancient trackway branched off to the right, north-west, to **Llanavan Vawr**, and beyond; while another, the one which the road had followed to this point, kept on forward for a little way, till it passed the head of a little dingle with a clear spring in it, bubbling out in a tiny stream. There it turned to the left, south-west, to cross the Yrvo at another wooden bridge, within bow-shot of a ford which no man would think existed, unless someone pointed it out to him.

When Llywelyn came down he posted his little force on the high ground above the end of the road, between the two trackways. In front of him the road ran on to Builth, but the bridge that should carry it across the Yrvo had been destroyed, probably by Roger L'Estrange, after the defeat at **Llandeilo** had put all the lords-marcher on their defence. The lack of a bridge, however, would trouble Llywelyn little, and it was at this camp on the Cevn y Bedd, at the edge of **Waen Eli**, that the final phase of the plot against him was set in motion.

LV

'WHEN THE EIGHTEEN FELL.'

PRINCE of romance from the first hour of his power Llywelyn now entered on that scene which begets the sober inventions of romancers. Tradition—vivid

lasting, living tradition—still tells the tale of it, though in so wild a tangle that it needs much time and patience to straighten it out. But here is the story, partly from tradition and partly from ancient documents.

On Thursday, December 10, 1282, Llywelyn received a message from the plotters, luring him away to **Aberedw**, some miles down the Wye, below Builth, and on the other side of the stream. The snow was lying white on the world, and the rivers (deeper then than now) were running black and full, but the ford across the Wye at **Llechryd** was still passable.

Choosing eighteen of his household men, his body-guard, Llywelyn rode to Llechryd, and crossed. There he left his eighteen to hold the ford till he should come back, and then, attended only by one squire, young **Grono Vychan**, son of his minister **Ednyved Vychan**, he pushed on down the valley to **Aberedw**.

At **Aberedw** he was to meet a young gentlewoman, who was to conduct him to a stealthy meeting with some chiefs of that district. If it be asked why he rode thus, almost alone and almost unarmoured, the answer is that he was on a secret errand, in which he must not attract attention to himself until he had seen the local chiefs, and arranged all the details of a rising on their part. The more secret and sudden that rising was, the more likely it was to succeed. He was taking one of the risks that a fearless captain takes in such a war. It was like him to do it, for he was a steadfast soul.

At **Aberedw**, however, the gentlewoman was not there to meet him. In truth, the whole message was part of

the plot of Giffard and the Mortimers, though he did not know it yet.

Yet, as he waited, he thought of how the snow would betray which way he went, either in going to the secret meeting with the chiefs, or in stealing away for safety from any sudden enemies. Therefore he went to the smith of the place, Red Madoc of the Wide-mouth, and bade him take the thin shoes off the horses, and put them on again backwards. Anyone finding his tracks after that would think that he had been coming, not going.

Then, as dark fell, he found that the Mortimers, with their horsemen, were closing in round the place. Danger was upon him indeed. Swiftly he stole away with his squire, and hid himself in a cave which may still be seen at Aberedw.

All that night he lay hidden, and then, as soon as the earliest grey of dawn crept over the snowy earth, he stole away with his squire again, and rode back to Llechryd. He could only go slowly, so he had to go stealthily, for his horse could not gallop, because of its shoes being backwards.

At Llechryd he found his faithful eighteen, but by this time the river was too high for crossing there. They must find some bridge. Now, the nearest bridge was the one at Builth, under the walls of the great castle.

Llywelyn believed that, by the trick of the horse-shoes, he had thrown the Mortimers off his track. Also he remembered that Builth castle was to be delivered to him according to promise. He took his eighteen men



LLYWELYN'S CAVE

and rode back to the bridge at Builth, no great distance down the valley.

He reached the bridge barely in time. The Mortimers at Aberedw had terrified Red Madoc, the smith, into confessing the trick of the horseshoes. Like hounds they were following his trail, and now they caught sight of him, crossing the bridge with his little troop.

The bridge was of wood like the rest of the bridges of that district. Llywelyn turned and broke it down behind him, the black flood of the full Wye, mocking the Mortimers as they drew rein on their panting steeds, before the broken timbers. Their hoped-for victim had escaped for the moment. In their fury they turned and dashed back down the valley to cross at Y Rhyd (now called Erwood) eight miles below.

Llywelyn expected the castle of Builth to be given up to him. But the garrison refused, doubtless making some excuse of waiting till the country had risen. He could not waste time; the bridge on the road to Cevn y Bedd was gone; he took his eighteen and led the way along the southern bank of the Yrvon to another bridge, just above the little church of Llanynys. There he crossed, and posted the eighteen to hold that bridge, doubtless feeling himself safely returned from great peril.

In thankfulness for that escape, too, he caused a White friar to hold a service for him, perhaps at the end of the bridge, perhaps in the little church of Llanynys, beside the dark Yrvon. It does not matter much where the service was held, the whole of that ground was to be made sacred that day.



LLYWELYN'S MONUMENT

This done, Llywelyn went up to the grange of **Llanvair**, a farmstead belonging to the parish church of **Builth**, doubtless to get food and an hour's sleep, after the cold watching of that winter's night in the cave. After a frosty night of scout-work, one's eyes get very heavy when one gets warm next day, and a great drowsiness stills the blood, even of the stubbornest man.

Meanwhile the Mortimers had crossed the **Wye** at **Erwood**, and with Giffard were riding fast for the bridge of **Orewyn**, where the eighteen held their post. In headlong haste their leading squadron charged the bridge—but the eighteen had not been chosen in vain. They kept the bridge.

While the clamour was at its height, Grono **Vychan** roused Llywelyn and told him of it.

'Are not my men at the bridge?' demanded the prince.

'They are,' answered Grono.

'Then I care not if all England were on the other side,' returned Llywelyn proudly. He knew what manner of men he had left to hold that bridge.

But down in front of the bridge, where the enemy were shouting in their baffled rage, as they tried in vain to hew a way across, one of Giffard's captains spoke out. It was **Helias ap Philip Walwyn**, from lower down the **Wye**.

'We shall do no good *here*!' he shouted. 'But I know a ford, a little distance off, that they do not know of. Let some of the bravest and strongest come with me, and we can cross and take the bridge in rear.'

At once the bravest crowded after Helias to the ford, where the water seems as dark and deep in winter as the rest of the long black pool on either hand. They crossed.

The eighteen were charged in rear as well as in front. But they kept faith. Where Llywelyn had posted them, there they died. As men should end, proudly fighting, so they ended.

'Till the eighteen fell,' says the bard, 'it was well with Llywelyn ap Gruffydd.'

Then over their bodies poured all the mass of Mortimer's men, with Giffard's, to seek Llywelyn's little force on the high ground beyond. Fast the horsemen spurred, and as they hastened they came suddenly upon an unarmoured man with one companion, hurrying on foot towards where the bridge was roaring under the trampling host. One of the horsemen, **Stephen or Adam of Frankton**, in Llywelyn's old lordship of Ellesmere, dashed forward with his men, and one ran his lance through the younger of the two. The other one was running up through the little dingle, to get back to the army above in time to lead it in the coming battle. On the bank above the little spring at the head of the dingle, grew a great spread of broom (banadl). In that bush of broom Frankton overtook the man and ran his spear out through him in a mortal wound.

That man was Llywelyn. The accident had happened. Go to the spot, and the people will tell you that no broom has ever grown again in Llanganten parish from that dark day to this.

So died Llywelyn ap Gruffydd ; a gallanter soul never passed to God.

LVI

THE RISING OF THE PEOPLE

THE death of Llywelyn left his brother **Davydd** to carry on the war. But **Davydd** was no such leader as Llywelyn had been. **Edward** brought over an army of **Gascon** cross-bowmen to the help of his other armies, and in 1288 **Davydd** was captured.

More fortunate by far would he have been if he had died in battle, for the savage **Edward** invented a manner of death for the helpless captive which is too shocking to be described here. It is so full of horror upon horror that to read of it would only sicken the reader. Llywelyn had indeed been right in his judgment of **Edward's** character. Let us pass on.

Now amongst the most active of Llywelyn's enemies had been **Rhys ap Meredydd**, a prince of **Dinevor**. He soon found out what a mistake he had made in fighting against Llywelyn. In June, 1287, he broke out into war. As ever, the men of **Brecnoc** rose to help this new flame-bearer, and so formidable was the rising that 24,000 men—a vast army in those days—were hurried out to deal with it. But again the 24,000 were mostly Cymry, and they were too strong for him. In 1291 **Rhys** was captured, and sent to **Edward** to suffer the same death as **Davydd**.

With **Rhys** the old order of the struggle seemed to change. Up to his day it had always seemed that the

princes and chieftains were the chief figures of the wars. Their lives seemed to be the lives of the wars also; their deaths the deaths of the wars. After the passing of Rhys, it is the people who nurse the spark of freedom and keep ready for the struggle, to break out as soon as a leader appears. The white fire of the passion for freedom, from burning solely in the breasts of chiefs and princes, seemed now to find a home in the hearts of poor men and folk oppressed.

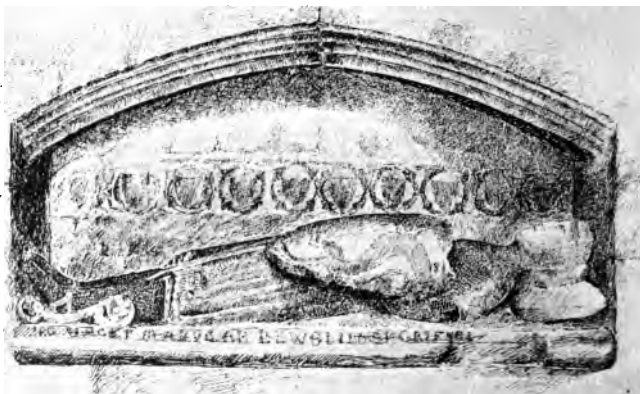
The next to suffer the horrible death of Davydd for Cymru was **Thomas Turberville**, a descendant of that **Payn Turberville** who, in the old days, had married **Asar**, and afterwards led a revolt. But his plot was discovered and he ended under the butcher's knife. That he should have plotted at all is plain proof that the people were known to be always ready to fight for freedom again.

In 1294 the people were ready for another attempt and the flame spread all over the land that Llywelyn had fought for. This time indeed it went farther. It even swept over into **Gwent** and **Morgannoc**, where the great **Earl Clare** was driven from his castles, while lesser barons shared the same fate. This time a special huge army was raised to deal with the ever stubborn men of **Brecnoc**.

The leader of the north was **Madoc**. You will remember that Gruffydd, son of Gwenwyn-wyn of Powys, had given his young son Llywelyn to be a hostage to Prince Llywelyn in Aberffraw. There that Llywelyn had grown up and married, and there he had a son. That son was the **Madoc** who led the north in

1294. In the south it was **Maelgon** leading the men of Dyved, and **Morgan ap Meredydd** of Caerlleon leading the men of Morgannoc. Victories were won, vengeance was taken on some oppressors, others fled. But again the great armies were hurried up, and numbers prevailed.

The last to hold out was **Madoc**. After sweeping



TOMB OF MADOC AP LLYWELYN IN GRESFORD CHURCH

the lords-marcher clean out of **Gwynedd** in 1294, he raised the men of Powys the year after, for he was a Prince of Powys. There he took **Oswestry**, and then he met the combined army of the marcher-lords at **Cevn Digoll**. All day he fought, and the sun at setting saw him stubborn still. But at night, while he slept, a traitor betrayed him. So ended that attempt. The name of the traitor is known. He was ancestor of

another traitor to a later Prince of Powys. But we need not name him.

Still the people of Cymru did not forget. They kept the fire alive in their hearts, waiting and looking ever for a fresh leader. It was in Morgannoc it next broke out, in 1315, under **Llywelyn Bren**. Llywelyn Bren rose because of his own wrongs, no doubt, but he could not have got the men of Morgannoc to follow him if they had not been cherishing the old dream of freedom.

We have to say too, of Llywelyn Bren, that he was noble enough to make a true leader. For when at last, after capturing the great castle of **Senghenydd**, or **Caerphilly**, he saw that the armies against him were so strong that all his men must be massacred if he fought, he refused to lead them to be slaughtered. Instead he disbanded them, and went down alone and gave himself up to the enemy. That was a hero's deed.

It was Edward II. who at last caused him to be hanged. But bitterly Edward paid for the deed, for, years after, when his own time came to fly before his enemies, and he came to Morgannoc, the men of Morgannoc remembered Llywelyn Bren, and not a spear was levelled, or a bow bent, to save Edward from his enemies. His death was more cruel than Llywelyn Bren's; a death by secret and brutal midnight murder in Berkeley Castle.

Seven years afterwards, in 1322, the flame broke out again, this time in Môn and Arvon. **Gruffydd Llwyd** was the leader, and his attempt was purely for his country, not for himself. For awhile he swept Gwynedd,

but, as before, the armies were too strong, and Gruffydd was beheaded at **Rhuddlan**. But his death was not the death of the people's determination; that determination still glowed on, though the records of that day in Gwynedd show us how the lands of the people were forfeited for the rising.

In 1371 we come to the name of another Gruffydd of the north—**Gruffydd Sais**. He had not yet broken out, but he was seized and tried at **Conwy**, for being one of the Council of **Owen Lawgoch = Owen of the Red Hand**.

In that name we come again to one of the Princes of Romance, living in the day when the spirit of romance flowered into a rule of life for splendid men. And the story of his life is found in the book which is one of the classics for all who love romance—the book known as Froissart's 'Chronicle.'

LVII

OWEN OF CYMRU (OWEN DE GALLES)

You will remember that the Llywelyn killed on the Yrvon had four brothers, **Red Owen**, **Davydd**, **Gruffydd**, and **Rhodri**. Now **Rhodri** had grown up in England, as a hostage, and he had learned so much as to all the armies which the King of England could gather, from the **Pyrenees** in the south to the **Orkneys** in the north, that he never tried to strike a blow for his own people. But he had a son **Thomas**, who had a son **Owen**, and in Owen the old blood of the kings stirred again. It is

that Owen who is so famous in the pages of Froissart as **Yeuan de Galles = Owen of Wales**:

Thomas, the father of Owen, had held one small manor in **Powys**, and, as heir of his uncle, Red Owen, had claimed the Cantrev of **Lleyn**. But the King had decided against him, plunging him still deeper into poverty. The refusal of justice must have embittered him to the heart, especially when he remembered all the glories of his ancestors.

Moreover, to bring up the evidence of his claim was to bring up all the story of all that his ancestors had been, and done, and suffered. That story would not lose in the telling, as little Owen would hear it from his nurse in childhood. Servants of great families always magnify the greatness of their masters, and what a boy is told in childhood of the greatness of his ancestors, by a loving nurse, he never forgets. Owen never forgot; as he grew up he began to dream of winning back the kingdom of his forefathers, as so many of the exiled princes of his family had done before him.

But now green Ireland was no longer the sanctuary it once had been. Its kings had work enough to hold their own at home. They could spare no men for strangers. Owen had to wander to other lands than Erin for help. And while he was yet a youth he went to the King of Denmark, and to all the kings of all the dim lands thereby, but the might of the King of England was too great for them. Only the King of France would dare to help him, and so to the King of France he went.

The King of France listened to him, and loved him well, and took him to be one of the 'children of his

chamber,' and companion to the princes in his palace—his sons and his nephews—and made him a captain over soldiers, and a leader in war. Of all the gallant deeds he did, and of the fleets he captained, and the armies he commanded, Froissart will tell you, and also of how well he was loved by all the men that fought for the King of France.

But all the while he never forgot that Cymru was the land of his fathers. The records of that day tell how the government in London was continually reminding the lords-marcher, its watchmen in Cymru, to be ready against invasion. The record of the trial of **Gruffydd Sais** at **Conwy** shows that they had need to be watchful, for the Cymry were waiting for the coming of Owen. It is the 'Chronicle' of Froissart which tells us why they watched and waited in vain.

Once again it was treachery that worked the harm to Cymru. This time the spear of a paid assassin did the work of the lords-marcher and the government. But let Froissart tell us the tale of it, in the words of the fine old translation of **Lord Berners**, condensed and modified a little.

Now Owen was besieging the castle of **Mortagne** (Saintogne) in France. And while this siege was thus 'enduring before Mortagne, there came a squire, called **John Lamb**. He was but a gentleman of small degree, and that showed plainly afterwards; for a true gentleman will not set his mind on so evil an intention (as this man intended).

'This **John Lamb** came into **Poitou**, and ever as he went he said that he was a servant to **Owen of Wales**,

saying how he was come out of Wales to speak with him. And so he was believed, and was conveyed by the men of the country to Mortagne.

‘Then he went cunningly to Owen, and showed him in his own language how he was come out of his country to see him and to serve him. Owen, who thought no evil, straightway believed him, and gave him much thanks for coming, and said how he would right gladly have his service. And then he demanded of him tidings of Wales. And Lamb made him believe how gladly the men of the country would have him to be their prince.

‘These words brought the treacherous squire high into the love of Owen, for every man naturally desireth to go into his own country, and to hear of it, so that Owen made him his chamberlain, and put not so much trust in any man as he did in him.

‘Now this Owen of Wales had a usage, being before **Mortagne** at the siege, that gladly in the morning, when he was up and ready, he would come before the castle and sit down, and comb his hair a good long space, sitting and watching the castle and the country round about. And lightly there went with him this John Lamb, and none but he, whereby at last came the end of Owen.

‘For on a morning early, when the weather was fair and clear, and the night had been so hot that he could not sleep, Owen rose and put on but a single jacket, and a cloak above it, and so went as he was wont to go, and sat him down, and this John Lamb alone with him, all other men being asleep yet, for it was early.

‘And when Owen was set on an old stock of wood,

he said to John, "John, go to my lodging and fetch my comb, for I will refresh me here a little while."

"Sir," quoth he, "it shall be done," and so he went.

'And as he went, the devil must have entered into him. For, beside the comb, he brought with him a short javelin of Spain, with a large head of steel, and with it he struck Owen as he sat, clean through the body, so that he fell down stark dead.

'And when he had done that, he left the javelin still in the body, and went to the castle and was let in. And so he was brought before the governor of the castle, the **Soudic of Lestrade**, and told him what he had done. And when the Soudic heard that, he shook his head, and darkly he looked at him with anger, saying—"And since thou hast murdered him, know for a truth that, but that the deed is done for our profit, it should cost thee thine head. But since it is done it cannot be undone, yet it is a great reproach that Owen should be so slain. We shall have blame for it rather than praise."

But the king's officials in France shared none of the brave Soudic's indignation. The records show that they had sent a messenger to arrange the deed with John Lamb. And now they sent the murderer home to England to tell the king of his success. The record still exists, dated December 4, 1378, for the payment of his expenses to 'John Lamb, an esquire from Scotland, because he lately killed Owen of Wales.'

So died Owen of Cymru. He sleeps his long sleep far from the land he loved. His dust lies in the **Church of St. Leger**, on the banks of the broad **Gironde**. But to

this day it is said in Cymru that he is not dead, but sits asleep in a green hillside, his captains round him, waiting till a bell shall ring to summon him to fight again for us.

LVIII

OWEN GLYNDWR¹

WHEN Owen of Cymru was slain in France another Owen of Cymru had grown to be nearly twenty years of age. This is **Owen Glyndwr**, the greatest of all the Owens.

No other of all our heroes ever seated himself so firmly in the hearts of our race as this Owen. And if it be asked why, the answer is, that it was because he was the champion of poor folk, of folk that live ever too near to misery, of the man who must earn house and fire, bread and clothing, for his wife and his children by the labour of his hands. Working folk live close enough to sorrow. When they find a prince who fights for them, toils for them, plans for them, and dreams for them, then they are not likely soon to forget.

You have heard enough about fighting in the story of the other princes. We will leave the fighting, then, and talk more of other things; the things that go to the hearts of quiet men.

Owen was descended in the straight line from those old Princes of Powys, of whom we have said so little,

¹ See Note 14.

because they fought so often for their own hand only. But, in producing **Owen Glyndwr**, Powys showed the old royal line of Cunedda in its brightness again.

His father's lands lay in the valley above **Llangollen**. Walk from Llangollen above the banks of the sacred **Dee**, to **Glyn-dyvr-dwy**, and you will know that God made this world, because that part of it is so beautiful. For beauty of another kind go to the banks of the **Cynllaeth**, on the other side of the **Berwyns**, where stood **Sycharth**, near to **Llansilin**. Ask in either place for the home of Glyndwr—folk will soon show you the spots. For Owen had a hall in each place, at Glyndwr and at Sycharth.

Yet Owen was not born at either of those places. If you go to the parish of **Brawdy**, in **Pembrokeshire**, they will show you where he was born. It was there, at **Trefgarn**, now called Trefgarn Owen, that he came into this world in 1359.

For Trefgarn was the home of his mother, **Elen**, daughter of **Thomas ap Llywelyn**, a chieftain of the old blood of Deheubarth, who was lord of that district.

Owen grew up to be a polished gentleman, well educated, and as well used to courts as to camps. He had been esquire to **Henry Bolinbroke**, afterwards **Henry IV.**, against whom he fought so long. It is thought also that for a year or two he followed the foolish **Richard II.**, especially in his last campaign in Ireland. Neither point matters here, except to show that Owen was a man of high position and culture, instead of the mere boastful half-savage that angry chroniclers tried to make people believe.

It was in September, 1399, that **Richard II.** was

betrayed into the hands of **Henry IV. at Flint Castle**. It was just one year later, September 1400, when Owen Glyndwr lifted his standard and proclaimed himself Prince of Cymru.

It is possible that he had long intended to raise the people and strike for freedom. In fact, there is an entry in history which makes one almost sure of it, for in the summer of the same year, 1400, a certain **Meredydd ap Owen**, of **Merioneth**, was planning to bring an army of Scots from the Hebrides, to land at **Abermaw (Barmouth)** and open a war. Now the only man, of consequence, bearing that name at that date, was **Meredydd** the son of Owen Glyndwr himself.¹

Be that as it may, the immediate cause of Owen's rising was a treacherous attempt to capture him in his house by **Lord Grey of Ruthin**, a typical specimen of the lord-marcher breed. Grey brought with him **Earl Talbot**, from **Chirk**, and their army moved so swiftly and secretly that Glyndwr had only just time to escape to the woods before his house was surrounded. The foremost Cymro of his day was thus driven into the forest like a wolf.

And for what? It was very simple; Grey wanted to take Owen's land for himself. That was the way the lords-marcher did things. But this particular lord-marcher rued it for the rest of his wretched life. Indeed, the power of the whole tribe of lords-marcher was so broken by Owen, as the result of Grey's treachery, that it never recovered itself.

¹ See Note 19.

LIX

THE LIFTING OF THE TORCH AGAIN

It was at **Caer Drewyn**—perhaps the old fortress of **Edeyrn Edeyrnion**—close by **Corwen**, that Owen raised his standard, the old Dragon, in red gold on a white ground. From there, too, he sped the bent bow, the old signal for war, calling on all true men of the old race to rise for the old dream—for freedom.

Wider flew Glyndwr's call than ever Llywelyn's went. For now the people of the marcher lordships were as eager to receive and speed the bow as the men of **Eryri** itself. At last the Cymry showed themselves unmistakably to be a nation.

The wiping out of the old princes had wiped out the enmity of their districts one to another. When all the land alike had come under the insults of the alien, the pride of all its people had alike been wounded. When all the land alike suffered the same hurt, then all the land alike began to plan the same relief. There was but one relief for the hurt which the whole race felt—the re-establishment of freedom. That Glyndwr had studied the heart and mind of his countrymen thoroughly is proved by his proclaiming the independence of Cymru. That he had judged rightly is proved by the instant and wide-spread answer to his call. The bards acclaimed him far and wide, for the bards were ever the high-priests of freedom.

Not alone from the hills and glyns of Cymru came

the answer to Glyndwr's call. From far wars in Eastern Europe and Asia, from plough and shop in England, from hall and college at Oxford and other universities—back they came, soldier and scholar and workman, to fight for freedom, now that a usurper had seized the Crown of Britain, the Crown of Cunedda, and murdered the rightful king.

Yet through the first six years of the new independence we seem to see, under all else, that in the oldest lordships-marcher, those of the south and east, the war was the revolt of ground-down tenants against their extortionate landlords. Hear, in fact, what Glyndwr's coming meant to men of the south. 'In 1400 Owen Glyndwr came to **Glamorgan** and won the castle of **Cardiff** and many more. He also demolished the castles of **Penline, Landough, Flemington, Dunraven of the Butlers, Tal-y-van, Llanbleddian, Llangian, Malevant**, and that of **Penmarc**. And many of the country people joined him with one accord, and they laid waste the fences and gave the lands in common to all. They took away from the powerful and rich, and distributed the plunder among the weak and poor. Many of the higher orders and chieftains were obliged to flee to England.'

Think over that and you will see why all the land seemed to be for Owen at first. He was the hero of the poor man in the south, as well as the hero of the dreamers in the north. He could carry the flame so far that it lit every corner of the land, because he fought to help the common people, the folk who suffer.

LX

GLYNDWR THE STATESMAN

If only Glyndwr could have been the hero of the rich men of the south too, then he might have set the land as free as Scotland was. But those 'higher orders and chieftains,' who had fled to England, had no means of living, except by crushing Owen and his movement. For awhile they trusted to **King Henry the Usurper**, till they saw that all his great armies could not set them back in their lands. Then they joined themselves to one who, like themselves, could not get what he reckoned to be his own except by crushing Owen. That one was the Prince Henry, son of the King, who afterwards became the **King Harry of Agincourt**.

Now Henry the Usurper had been a lord-marcher before he became king. His lordship was that of **Hereford**. When Henry, as king of England, had failed with his great armies, Prince Henry took up the task as a lord-marcher. All the dispossessed 'higher orders and chieftains' of the march lordships joined him. It was at **Grosmont**, within the reach of the Hereford lordship, that Prince Henry won his first victory, winning it against a tumultuous crowd of those who had 'thrown down the fences and taken the land in common.'

Yet Glyndwr worked and planned for the whole land, as well as for the poor man. He dreamed for the future as well as for his own day. He entered into negotiations

to make the **Cymric Church** independent, so that it could be filled with Cymric-speaking bishops and ministers. He planned to set up two universities—one for the South, one for the North.

And moreover he, too, called parliaments, as the old Llwelyns had done, but consisting of four members from each commot. Sometimes the parliament met at **Dolgelley**, sometimes at **Machynlleth**. The seal of this latter town to-day is a copy of the seal Glyndwr used when he held his parliament there.

Many a victory Glyndwr won in the field. He defeated and ruined Grey. But he was a statesman in war too. He made an alliance with the king of France. He sent to make alliances with the Scots and the Irish. Once, indeed, he formed such an alliance with part of the English against the usurping Henry, that it seemed for a moment as if he must win all that he dreamed of.

For one of his generals, **Rhys Gethin**, had defeated Edmund Mortimer in a great battle at **Pilleth**, in what is now **Radnorshire**, capturing Mortimer himself. Now Mortimer's nephew, the boy **Earl of March**, had a better right to the crown of England than Henry had, so far as law went. Henry therefore kept the boy a prisoner at **Windsor**, and was glad enough to hear that Mortimer was a prisoner to the terrible Glyndwr. While he remained a prisoner, Mortimer could not try to get the crown of England for his nephew.

But Mortimer had a brother-in-law in the famous **Hotspur**, son of **Earl Percy of Northumberland**, and **Hotspur** was not pleased that his wife's brother should

remain a prisoner. He demanded that King Henry should arrange for the ransom of Mortimer, as he had arranged for the ransom of Grey, when Glyndwr had captured him. Henry, however, refused. Now Henry owed his throne to the help which the Percies had given him.

Glyndwr had from the first kept in touch with Percy and spared the Mortimer possessions—plain proof that from the first he had been planning to use the right of the young Earl of March against Henry. Henry's refusal to ransom Mortimer was the one thing he wanted. He entered into negotiations in earnest, with Hotspur and Mortimer, to drive out Henry. He succeeded with both. Mortimer not only agreed, but married Glyndwr's daughter, Joan.

The plan was that the Percies should come down from the north and join with Mortimer and Glyndwr for a march on London. Before they started, however, Glyndwr would have to take the last moment for a fierce campaign against the lords-marcher and the **Flemings** of the south, so as to leave Cymru secure while he should be gone. Had the Percies stuck to the plan it must have succeeded, in all human probability.

But it was Hotspur who led the men of the north to join Owen, and Hotspur was ever a hothead. When he reached **Cheshire**—which Owen never harried, from first to last, because it was an enemy to Henry—and found himself joined by all that county, as well as by the Cymry of the nearest Cantrevs, he thought he was strong enough to pull down Henry **single-handed**. He turned east, instead of keeping to the plan and

marching on to join Owen. It was the old mistake of **Luke de Tany** over again, over confidence, and it had a like result.

For Henry was too strong and too ready. Too late Hotspur turned back and took up the original plan again. Henry was too swift for him. Hotspur reached **Shrewsbury** only to find that Henry, with an army twice as large as his own, was there in the town before him.

All that bravery could do to retrieve a fatal mistake was done next day in battle. But it was done in vain, and Glyndwr, finishing his work in the south, and turning at last to come and meet his ally, was met by the news that Hotspur had been slain, and his army destroyed, in one of the bloodiest battles of British history—the battle of Shrewsbury, 1403.

Yet, though so much was lost in that mistake of Hotspur's, Glyndwr never lost heart. He had the true hero soul that, like a star, burns only the brighter the deeper the darkness spreads around it. He still fought on—still made his power felt—still ruled Cymru.

He terrified Parliament as no Cymric Prince had ever terrified it before. In 1404 Parliament granted leave to the people of **Shropshire** to pay him tribute to save themselves. In 1408 **Shrewsbury** refused to open its gates to the King's army for fear of him. The **Flemings of Dyved** paid their price to him after he had defeated them and brought fire and sword to their doors. Countless castles he destroyed. To the bitter end he refused to yield.

It is not known where he died, though it is inferred that he died in 1416. In **Gwent** they say that he did

not die. They say that he and his men sit sleeping in **Ogov y Ddinas**, buckled in their armour, their spears leaning against their shoulders, their swords across their knees. There they are waiting till the day comes for them to sally forth and fight for the land again.

But other and learned men have vexed themselves looking for his real grave. They say they cannot be sure where it is. But that is because their eyes have wandered from the right way—looking to **Kentchurch** or to **Monnington**, in the green shire of **Hereford**, where his loving daughters lived.

They are all wrong. His grave is known—well known. It is beside no church, neither under the shadow of any ancient yew. It is in a spot safer and more sacred still. Rain does not fall on it, hail nor sleet chill no sere sod above it. It is forever green with the green of eternal spring. Sunny the light on it: close and warm and dear it lies, sheltered from all storm, from all cold or grey oblivion. Time shall not touch it; decay shall not dishonour it; for that grave is in the heart of every true Cymro. There, for ever, from generation unto generation, grey Owen's heart lies dreaming on, dreaming on, safe for ever and for ever.

LXI

DARK DAYS

Henry IV. had been a lord-marcher before he became king. He made himself king by raising an army and capturing King **Richard II.**, whom he afterwards caused to be murdered.

In the reign of **Henry VI.**, grandson of the former Henry, another lord-marcher raised an army, and made himself king. This was **Edward IV.**, who captured Henry VI., and in the end had him murdered too.

Then, in the reign of Edward's brother, **Richard III.**, came another man from Cymru and made himself king, by defeating and killing Richard III. This last man was **Harry ap Edmund ap Owen Tudor**, commonly called **Henry Tudor**, King of England as **Henry VII.**

Now Edward IV. had been heir of the Mortimers, and so was descended from **Llywelyn Vawr**. It was to his descent from the Mortimers that he owed his power to make himself king, for the Mortimer power in Cymru furnished him with his victorious army.

His first great victory was in Cymru itself, against the power of **Jasper Tudor**, **Earl of Pembroke** and uncle of the little Henry who was afterwards to become Henry VII. Edward had a huge army. Besides a host of **Kyffins**, **Kynastons**, and the like kindreds from the north, he had all the **Herberts**, **Vaughans**, **Gams**, **Mansells**, **Turbervilles**, **Matthews**, **Cradocs**, **Doons**, and so forth of

the south, while **Gruffydd ap Nicholas**, of **Dynevor**, came with eight hundred chosen men to fight out his own quarrel with Jasper.

Earl Jasper had but few men to match all those numbers with. Some he had from his earldom of **Pembroke**. More he had from **Môn** and **Arvon**, and the wildernesses of **Eivionydd** and **Ardudwy**, following his father, gallant old **Owen Tudor**. One kindred of romantic history joined him from **Ystrad Clwyd**, the **Salusburys**, under **Robert the Strong**. With these, and a body of Irish under the **Earl of Wiltshire**, Jasper came down and attempted to capture **Wigmore Castle**, the home and cradle of the **Mortimers**.

Edward marched at once to relieve **Wigmore**. Jasper met him at **Mortimer's Cross**. Fierce enough was the onset. **Gruffydd ap Nicholas**, pursuing his old quarrel with Jasper, was mortally wounded at the first shock. But his son **Owen** led his men on, and drove Jasper and his **Pembroke** men from the field. No one, however, could drive Jasper's father, old **Owen Tudor**, into flight. He stubbornly refused to turn his back, fighting on till he could fight no more. Then he was taken prisoner.

Next day he was 'brought to **Hereford**, and there beheaded at the market-place, and his head was set up on the highest projection of the cross. And a mad woman combed his hair and washed away the blood from his face, and she got candles and set them about him, burning—more than a hundred.'

Now this **Owen Tudor**, grandfather of **Henry VII.**, was, besides being a **Son of Cunedda**, a **descendant of a**

sister of **Owen Glyndwr's** mother. The Tudors had fought for Glyndwr, doing some of the most romantic deeds done for him. This Owen, however, outstripped them all in romance. For with no more than his handsome figure, and his soldierly courage, he won a queen for his wife. That queen was **Catherine**, widow of **Henry V.**, and daughter of the King of France.

There came a day when he was imprisoned in the **Tower of London** for having dared to marry a queen. But he wounded the jailer and escaped. He was sent there again, and again he escaped. In his old age he was captured by young Edward, afterwards Edward IV., and the men of **Morgannoc**, and sent prisoner to **Usk Castle**. There the chieftains of **Eivionydd**, led by **John ap Meredydd**, his kinsman, came down to see if they could help him. But on their way back, in a field beside **Caerleon**, they suddenly found themselves beset by a great force. They themselves were but a hundred men—it seemed as if they had come to their end.

But John ap Meredydd was of the right race. Out he spoke. 'This place shall never bear the name that here a hundred gentlemen of **Gwynedd** fled, but rather that here a hundred gentlemen of **Gwynedd** were slain.'

Yet some of them had all their sons with them, and some their only sons, and so, pitying the fathers, he set one son of each of these in the rear, out of the fury of the fight, that haply they might still escape, though all the rest should fall. Pitiless to himself, however, he set his own sons in the front, to lead the charge with him. And thus, with proud valour, the Hundred hewed their way through the thick of their enemies,

sweeping them from the field, as the whirlwind sweeps the chaff.

It was the defeated ones of that **Field of the Hundred Chiefs** who were amongst the victors of **Mortimer's Cross**, and it was in revenge of that day that they beheaded **Owen Tudor** at the **Cross of Hereford**.

But from all the romance of **Owen's** life we must pass on, to tell of the romance of the coming of his grandson to the throne—**Henry VII**.

LXII

THE BEGINNINGS OF HENRY VII

OWEN TUDOR had two sons, **Edmund** and **Jasper**, and they were half-brothers to **King Henry VI**. The King therefore gave **Edmund** the title of **Earl of Richmond**, and **Jasper** that of **Earl of Pembroke**. **Edmund** married the heiress of **John of Gaunt**, but he died very shortly afterwards, just before the birth of his son **Henry**.

Born in **Pembroke Castle**, young **Henry** soon found himself in the midst of war. After the defeat of his uncle **Jasper**, at **Mortimer's Cross**, even **Pembroke Castle** was not safe enough for him. **Harlech**, strong home of lost causes, became his refuge—beautiful, grey old **Harlech**, **Harlech** of song and story, and dim, old, haunting legends.

For years **Harlech** held out, though every other castle in the land had fallen. Then, one bitter winter, **Black William of Raglan** (but the king had made him

drop his Cymric name of William ap William, and take the Norman one of Herbert), came with his host, bent on winning it.

David ap Einion was Captain of the Castle. **Black William** summoned him to surrender. Hear his answer. 'Once I held a castle in France till all the old women of Cymru heard of it. Now I'll hold this castle in Cymru till all the old women of France hear of it.'

Giant **Black William** left his still more gigantic brother, **Richard**, to carry on the siege. Starvation did its work at last. The castle had to surrender. Young **Henry** found himself a prisoner at **Raglan Castle**.

Then fortune changed. **Black Earl William** and his giant kinsmen were defeated at **Hedgecote Field** and beheaded. King **Edward** had to fly. **Earl Jasper** got his nephew back from **Raglan**, and for a little while **Henry** was safe again at **Pembroke**.

But again fortune changed. **Edward** came back as king. At **Tewkesbury Field** the Lancastrians were defeated, and the only son of **Henry VI.** was murdered. Within a few days **Earl Jasper** was besieged in **Pembroke** by **Morgan ap Thomas**, grandson of the **Gruffydd ap Nicholas** slain at **Mortimer's Cross**. But **David**, brother to **Morgan** (a careless, reckless, dare-devil he was, famous as **Dio Ceffyl Cwitta**), raised a force and drove his brother away. Then he set **Jasper** and **Henry** aboard a ship at **Tenby** and they escaped to **Brittany**.

Long, long years **Henry** spent in exile. Then the **Duke of Buckingham**, lord-marcher of **Brecnoc**, made up his mind to try for the throne himself, against his friend **Richard III.** As a cover for his own design he used

Henry's name and Henry's friends; it would be easy to get rid of Henry if once Richard were finished with. But he failed, and his failure ruined Henry's real friends in England.

There seemed at last no more hope for Henry, but in that hour, when his fortunes were darkest, he made up his mind to fall back upon his name, his ancestry, and the fact of his being a Cymro. He remembered the bards, for ever proclaiming anew, from generation to generation, the old prophecies that a Cymro should yet wear again the Crown of Britain. By stealth he took ship and came to Cymru, to stir up his countrymen to rise once more for the old dream and for the old flag.

Well he did his task, as we shall see, though once he had a narrow escape indeed. He had come to the hall of **Richard ap Howel**, of **Mostyn**, to plead his cause. And while he sat there, lo! here came **King Richard's** men from the Castle of **Flint**, hammering at the door for Henry. But while the gallant chief kept the door, Henry was helped out of a window at the back, and away he went to the mountains. After he came to his kingdom he sent a silver rose bowl and ewer to the Lord of **Mostyn** in remembrance of that day.

The bowl and ewer are still at **Mostyn**; and the window through which Henry escaped is still shown in the hall. The descendant of **Richard ap Howel** is still lord there, as the descendant of **Harry Tudor** is still King of England.



WINDOW (MOSTYN HALL)



SILVER ROSE BOWL.



SILVER EWER.

LXIII

THE COMING OF HENRY

It was in 1485 that Henry landed in **Aber-dau-gleddau**, or **Milford Haven**, by the waters of which he was born, to seek safety or death in battle for the old Crown of Britain.

With him came some two thousand men, the worst that could be found in France, criminals and ne'er-do-wells—a sorry lot if Henry had depended on them alone. But besides those he had some two hundred or so of exiles, men of mark, who had fled for fear of death at the hands of Richard. His uncle, **Earl Jasper the Faithful**, came to raise the men of his earldom for this last attempt.

But those who came with him were not what Henry relied on for success. He relied on his countrymen, on the effect of the old prophecies, and on the white loyalty of the bards. The exiles were like himself, depending upon whatever help they should find when they landed. That help they knew they could not find in England, or they would have landed there. They landed in **Ymru** because they knew that it was only the **Cymry** who would rally to Henry in number enough to conquer Richard.

Just as **Glyndwr** had raised the Red Dragon, when he proclaimed himself Prince and called on his countrymen, so now did Henry raise the same flag. But, whereas **Glyndwr** had appealed to the toil-wrung toilers of the earth, as well as to the chieftains, Henry appealed

more to the latter alone. For he was striking, not to free Cymru from England, but to seize for a Son of Cunedda, once more, that Crown of Britain which the Norman stranger had wrested from the English at Hastings.

It was an appeal, however, which would be as strong to the hearts of the chieftains of his day, as Glyndwr's appeal had been to the common folk of eighty years before. For since Glyndwr had broken their power, the lords-marcher had nearly disappeared, being replaced almost wholly by Cymric chiefs. And every chief kept open house to all bards; that is, to the high priests of patriotism in the land.

Those bards had never ceased to sing of that far-off ancient day, when the 'Crown of Britain' had belonged to the Cymry. They had never ceased to keep men's hearts aflame with all the ancient prophecies that a Cymro should win that crown again, to the honour and glory of the Cymry. The chiefs had grown up under the spell of those bards and their songs and their prophecies. And now here was Henry, with every bard acclaiming him as "**Mab y Darogan**"—Heir of all the Prophecies—and Henry was calling on all true Sons of Cunedda to fulfil those prophecies.

To win the crown of Britain for one of their race was the one thing needed to complete the standing of the chiefs. Abroad they had established their fame as fighting men on a hundred fields of France and England. At home they were come into all the wealth and dignity the land afforded. To win the crown for a man of their own blood would bring them on a level of honour with

the proudest of any land. Small wonder that, with one exception, they rallied to Henry.

That one exception was **Watkin (Walter) Herbert**, wielder of all the immense power of all the lands and lordships that Black Earl William had won for himself, in fighting for Edward IV. But even Watkin Herbert would not fight against Henry. He was son of the man who had aforetime driven Earl Jasper from the land, taken his title and his earldom from him, and captured **Henry Tudor**, and held him prisoner in Raglan. Yet he would not fight against the Cymro now. He stayed at home, deaf to Richard, defying what might follow if Richard won.

LXIV

THE MEN WHO MARCHED TO BOSWORTH FOR HENRY

IN the south of Cymru the greatest power was that of **Dark Rhys ap Thomas**, of the old line of Urien Rheged, and grandson of that Gruffydd ap Nicholas who had died against Jasper Tudor at Mortimer's Cross. Would the grandson of that Gruffydd turn round and fight for the Tudors? He did; he would not lift his own Raven banner against the Red Dragon. Richard threatened him in vain.

Dark Rhys could have raised men enough of his own to have crushed Henry on the march if he would. Richard would have piled him high with rewards for

that. But he was true to his own race, and by the time Henry reached **Cardigan**, Rhys rode in to swear faith to him. Glad indeed were the exiles when they saw that, for then, at last, they had real hope.

Then, while Henry marched on to the north, by **Aberaeron** and **Aberystwyth**, Black Rhys rode away by **Carmarthen** and **Brecon**, to raise his own men, and to take with him many another kindred that had fought against Earl Jasper at Mortimer's Cross.

In the north there was the special case of **Sir William Stanley**. He was 'Chamberlain' (deputy of the King), and so could muster many men there by virtue of that office. But he was also lord of a wide spread of lordships between the **Berwyns** and **Tegeingl**. Out of those lordships he could draw still more men.

Stanley could not have got the men of the north to follow him to the field against Henry. The bards had done their work too well for that. But, as it happened, his own interest lay with Henry, instead of against him. For he was brother to **Lord Stanley of Lancashire**, and Lord Stanley had married Henry's mother. Sir William, then, would be for Henry, and so the men of his lordships followed him freely.

Northward then marched Henry, till he reached the legend-haunted shores of the **Dyvi**. There he divided his army. With one body he marched down the valley of the **Severn** to **Cevn Digoll**, near **Welshpool**. The other body swung north by **Mallwyd** and **Llanvyllin**, and then in again to **Cevn Digoll**.¹

To Cevn Digoll, too, came Dark Rhys from the

¹ See Note 15.

south, the **Salusburys** of **Ystrad Clwyd** joining him, and thither also came the men of **Ardudwy** and **Eivionydd**, of **Lley** and **Arvon**, of **Môn**, and all the grey wildernesses that had been **Glyndwr's** stronghold to the last. So the tale of fighting men was made up, chosen men only, Sons of **Cunedda**, bound over the border to win back the ancient Crown of Britain, lost to the **Cymry** when **Penda** fell, far off by the Northern Wall, and lost to the English when **Harold** fell, far south on the Field of **Senlac**.

Onward by **Shrewsbury** marched the host, and at **Newport** came **Gilbert Talbot**, with the men of the **Talbot** lordships by **Talgarth** in **Brycheinioc**, to join him. At **Stafford** **Henry** got into touch with **Sir William Stanley**, who had marched by **Holt Castle** and **Northwich**. At **Lichfield** he got into touch with **Lord Stanley**, who was there with all the pick of **Lancashire** and **Cheshire** men, and who now marched away three days ahead of him, as if he were fleeing to join **Richard**.

A stage further on **Henry** was joined by a goodly group of Englishmen of note, and also by **John Savage**, a cousin of the **Stanleys**, leading a chosen troop from the **Cheshire** border, called '**Whitehoods**,' from the hooded jackets of **Welsh flannel** which was their uniform.

It was on a Sunday that all the four armies camped in sight of each other in the parish of **Market Bosworth**, almost in the centre of England. **King Richard** had marched from **Stapleton**, by an ancient trackway, to **Sutton Cheynell**, and there he camped. That ancient trackway ran on over **Anbian Hill** to cross a marshy brook at **Sandeford**, on its way to **Shenton**. At the

Whitemoor, in Shenton, Henry had camped by the side of that trackway.

At **Nether Coton** was Sir William Stanley with his northern Cymry. South of **Bosworth** church was Lord Stanley with the men of Lancashire and Cheshire. In the field then there were two rivals and yet four armies. It was a strange sight. If the Stanleys were in the field for Henry, why did they not join him? If they were there for Richard, why did they not cross the marsh and join the royal standard?

The question might well have been asked by Richard and Henry that night. It may still be asked; but we cannot answer it truly, even yet.

LXV

THE BATTLE OF ANBIAN HILL OR BOSWORTH FIELD

CLOUDILY dawned the morning of that Monday, August 22, 1485, when **Henry Tudor** drew out the host of his gallant countrymen for the battle that was to close a thousand years of struggle. It was to close more; it was to close the mediæval period of British history, and to open the modern day, the day of our own Empire.

Richard III., king that morning, drew out his host from its tents at **Sutton** and saw, two miles to his left front, the host of Henry, king that night. To his right front, on **Hanging Hill** at **Nether Coton**, he saw the host

of Sir William Stanley, the men of North-east Cymru. On his immediate right lay Lord Stanley's men. He sent to order Lord Stanley to join him, but Lord Stanley would not come.

Then Richard measured what he had to do. His army was nearly equal in numbers to all the other three combined. It was far better equipped and armoured. Moreover it was composed for the most part of veteran troops ; there were no sweepings of jails and hospitals with him, like the men that Henry had brought from France.

The ground, too, was all in Richard's favour. In front of him ran out the long tongue of **Anbian Hill**. Round it, on the north and west, lay a long winding marsh, between him and the other armies. That marsh could only be crossed at **Sandeford**, where the ancient trackway, which he had followed from **Stapleton**, ran on down from Anbian Hill to **Shenton** and Henry's camp. Therefore he would take up a position on the end of the ridge of Anbian Hill, overlooking Sandeford crossing, and there wait Henry's coming. Richard was one of the best generals of his day.

But if he were to march straight off to do it, then Lord Stanley, yonder on his right, might swing round the head of the marsh, and attack him from behind, just when the others attacked him in front. That would mean certain defeat. Therefore he commanded the **Earl of Northumberland**, whose men were as many as Lord Stanley's, to stand fast where he was, and keep Lord Stanley off. Then, with his eight thousand and more of veterans, he set forward along the ridge of **Anbian Hill**.

Henry Tudor, as he drew out his men from the camp at **Whitemoor**, could look across the marsh and see the plain of **Redmoor** beyond it, swelling up into the crest of **Anbian Hill**. On that crest he could see the front of **Richard's** army, one wide wave of glittering steel, ranging into position. He saw what **Richard** intended. He knew that he himself must cross the marsh and attack **Anbian Hill**.

Every disadvantage was with **Henry**. His own men, including the worthless foreigners, were not nearly so many as **Richard's**. He had sent for **Lord Stanley**, and **Lord Stanley** had refused to come to him. But he still trusted **Sir William Stanley**, for **Sir William's** men were **Cymry**.

He knew that the marsh could only be crossed at **Sandeford**. The ancient trackway from his camp led to that crossing, and onward to **Richard's** position. The track would lead him the right way then; the marsh would protect his right flank while he marched to **Sandeford**, and there, when he turned the head of the column to the right to cross the little stream, the troops of **Sir William Stanley** would be but a mile or so away, behind him on **Hanging Hill**. Then **Sir William** could follow him on over the crossing and join him in the attack. It was the only plan, now—and he marched to carry it out.

When he came to **Sandeford** he led the way across the marsh to array his men on **Redmoor** beyond. Still no **Stanley** came. But it was ten o'clock, and the battle must be fought, **Stanley** or no **Stanley**. Above him rose the steel-crowned crest of **Anbian**, and the harvest sun shone dazzlingly into the eyes of his archers

as they faced the slope. Behind them was the wide marsh to cut them off from retreat or flight if they were beaten. They were few and the foe were many. They were on the low ground, and the foe with his cannon was on the high ground. To attack now would be boldness indeed. But they were bold hearts; they attacked.

When the order was given to prepare—'Lord!' (says the old Chronicler), 'How hastily the soldiers buckled on their helmets; how quickly the archers bent their bows and flushed the feathers of their arrows; how readily the billmen shook their bills and proved their staves, ready to approach and join, when the terrible trumpet should sound the blast to victory or death.'

The Chronicler used the right word there. It was a case of victory or death to the leaders.¹ For Henry was striking for the crown that meant life and safety to him. The exiles were striking for the home that was the only place in the world for them. The Cymry were striking, in the fire of a pride that nothing could tame, for the fulfilment of a dream that nothing could kill. Well might Richard feel haunted.

He looked at all the Cymric banners ranged against him, and he called for a bowl of Burgundy, and turned to his squire, **Rhys Vychan**.

'Here, Vychan,' he cried, 'I drink to thee; the truest Welshman that ever I found in Wales.' And with the words he drank the wine, threw the bowl behind him, and gave the word for the onset.

¹ See Note 16.

His van was stretched from the marsh on the right to the marsh on the left—'a very terrible company to them that should see them afar off,' says the Chronicler. In the centre were the archers, and on either hand of them two wings of men-at-arms, covered with steel from top to toe. Behind them on the hill were Richard and his main body with the cannon.

Henry's van was thin, because his men were fewer. But they were enough. 'The trumpet blew, the soldiers shouted, the king's archers let fly their arrows. But Henry's bowmen stood not still, they paid them back again. Then, the terrible shot once over, the armies came to handstrokes, and the matter was dealt with blades.'

Henry's tactics were all boldness. He still felt that Sir William Stanley's men must come in, for they were Cymry too, unlike Lord Stanley's. Therefore he pressed the fight on Richard's left till his van had outflanked it. By this movement he could face the slope now with the sun at his back, while it shone in the faces of Richard's men, dazzling their eyes in turn. By this movement, too, he had got Richard's army between him and Sir William Stanley, so that it would be taken in front and rear when Stanley charged—a thing that would mean complete disaster for Richard.

Richard saw that, and with his cavalry swung round to come on Henry's right flank and rear. But there was another green spread of marsh (where now wave Anbian Woods), and it was too soft. His good white horse stuck fast. Shouting for another horse he mounted again, and led the thundering charge straight at Henry's flank. But Earl Jasper was watching. He

had the main body of Henry's men under him, the men of old Deheubarth, and while the gallant **Earl of Oxford** continued the fight in the van, against the **Duke of Norfolk**, Jasper faced his men to meet the desperate



RING DICK'S WELL

Richard, and beat back his furious onset. Thus, 'in array triangle,' the fight raged on.

Keenly Henry watched the fight. Now or never was the moment. Where was Will Stanley with his Cymry? In his anxiety he rode back, attended only by his body-guard and standard-bearer, towards Sandeford,

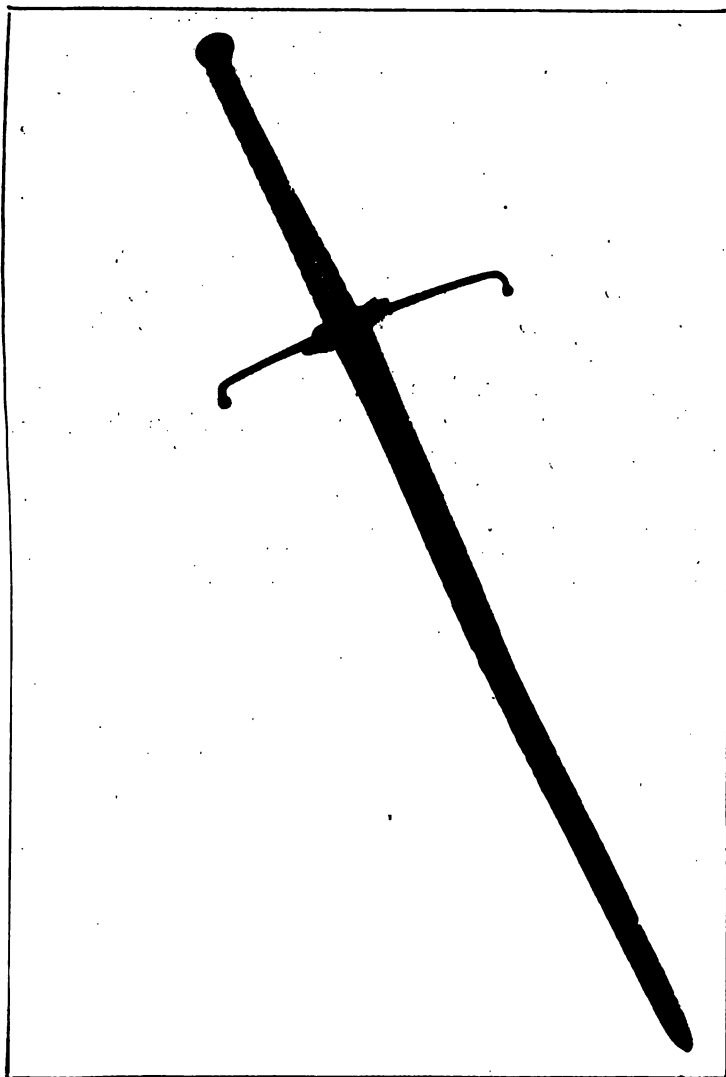
to where he could see if Will Stanley were coming. And as he drew rein to look, one of Richard's men saw him and sped away with the news to his master.

Richard was pausing for a drink from the spring, which is to this day called **King Richard's Well**, when the word was brought to him. He saw at once that he had still one last desperate chance. If he could reach and kill Henry, then the victory would be his, seeing that there would be no one left for Henry's men to fight for. He seized the chance. 'Let all true knights follow me,' he shouted, and spurred away over the hill to where he should find Henry.

Fast poured the flower of Richard's knights after him while Henry's body-guard saw the onset coming, and closed its ranks to defend him. Richard marked the great standard that **Sir William Brandon** bore, and he charged upon it like a demon. He unhorsed huge **Sir John Cheyney** who tried to bar his way. He slew the standard-bearer, and laid a hand upon the standard itself. But giant **Rhys ap Meredydd**, of **Nant Conwy**, seized it from him and drove him back a breadth, while Henry himself met him with a fury that astonished friend and foe.

Richard raged like a madman, but it was all too late now. Sir William's men were here at last, **Richard ap Howel**, of **Mostyn**,¹ with the rest and best. King Richard was borne back, fighting like ten men, yet still borne back. His horse fell; his lords and knights were dead or dying fast around him. Still he raged on. Then came **Dark Rhys ap Thomas**, seeking the King who had once

¹ See Note 17.



SWORD

This is the blade of Llywelyn ap Ieilyn of Bodorgan as it came home, sprung and bent from Bosworth Field.'

threatened him, and tradition still tells how the blade of Dark Rhys ended the life of the last Norman king, Richard III.

The fall of Richard was the end of the battle too, for all his men fled at that. Northumberland laid down his arms—there was no more to fight for. Lord Stanley, whose troops had never struck a blow, hurried over to Henry, whose men were following the flight of the vanquished.

But all was not done yet. The long fierce dream of the stubborn Cymry was to be fulfilled to the very letter. They had come into England to win the Crown of Britain back for one of the old blood of its founder. They did it in very deed. For when the chase was ended, the crown of dead King Richard was found in a hawthorn bush, and Lord Stanley lifted it and placed it on the head of Henry.

Thus was the long dream fulfilled. The Crown of Britain was come back to the descendant of its founder at last. And the wild shout of triumph with which the victors hailed their countryman King is remembered to this day in the name of the field in which they stood and watched him crowned. Its name means 'The field of the shout.'

You may still see the stone whereon that crowning took place. It is in **Stoke Golding**, and the spot is still called '**Crown Hill**,' in memory of the only time that ever a King of England was crowned on the field of battle.

Lost in battle, that crown had come back in battle. Did the bones of all the slain generations of the Cymry

who had struggled for this day stir in their red graves at that shout? Surely their spirits knew when the work was done at last. Surely a sound like the moving of a mighty wind must have swept over Cymru, for the ghosts of all the heroes, slain in the battles of the thousand years of struggle, could leave their graves at last and go to God—the long work done, the victory won; the ‘Nunc Dimittis’ chanted o’er the mountains as they passed.

LXVI

VICTORY AND FULFILMENT

THE dream had ended in victory. Henceforth the nation of the Cymry had no more to fight for against the English. The two races were co-inhabitants of different districts in the sacred isle that was the home of both. Only one thing remained to be wished for—namely, that all separate government should be abolished.

For the old lordships-marcher were still private little principalities, with their own laws and governments. Those laws and governments pressed heavily upon poor folk. The best of the people now began to ask to have the whole land parcelled into shires, and brought under the same laws as the rest of the land, giving them the right to send members to Parliament.

But Henry VII. was not secure enough on his throne

for that. It was better for him that Cymru should still be a wild land of fighting men, so that, if he were ever by any means to lose his hold for a while of the throne, he could fall back upon his native land and countrymen for safety and for fresh armies.

But in due time he died, and his masterful son **Henry VIII.** came to the throne. You will read a deal about him in many books; of how many wives he had and how he treated them; and of how he dealt with the Pope. But he did more than that; he assented to the petition of his Cymric kinsmen, and broke down all barriers between England and the wild land of his ancestors.

It was in 1536 that he passed the great '**Act of Union between England and Wales.**' This Act made the marcher-lordships into shires. Some of them, however, it added to the English shires next to them. Thus ten of the lordships were added to **Herefordshire**, six others to **Shropshire**, and three to **Gloucestershire**. Remember, then, that the western parts of those three counties, as well as the western parts of **Cheshire**, are parts of the land Glyndwr fought for, and their people the descendants of the men who fought for him.

At the same time all the shires were entitled to send members to Parliament, to help to make the laws by which they were to be governed, and the laws of **England** were extended to Cymru.

The effect of all this was seen at once. Read all the splendid activity of the people, sailors, soldiers, traders, and seekers after strange things, in the reigns of the next few monarchs. You will see that the Cymry jostled

shoulder to shoulder in the front with the English, in all the glorious bustle of these brave days, and were held in honour as brave men, and given due credit for all they did. It was a proud thing in the proud days of **Elizabeth** to be a Cymro.

It is a proud thing still to be a Cymro. Look back on all that your ancestors did and suffered in the centuries you have been reading of, and you will see how proud a heritage it is to be descended from such a race of splendid fighters for the right. For, though we seem to have spoken only of the princes, remember always that the princes were only great in so far as they were the true leaders of the people. For a prince cannot do noble things at the head of a people, unless that people be on the side of noble things, and as eager to be led on, to fight and suffer for nobleness, as their leader is to draw them on.

And many a time it was the prompting of the people which stirred the prince to do great deeds, and leave a proud name behind him. So, in like manner, to-day, when the old princes are gone, the man who is most passionately answered, and most closely followed, is the one who sets the noblest aim before him, or who calls the people to the stubbornest struggle for the right, and the greatest sacrifice for lofty ideals. The old blood still stirs to the right call, whenever a leader with the old fire and the old tenacity appears.

And so we come to ourselves and our own day, when the days of the princes and their wars are far past in the mist of years. Well, and those old times are gone, the souls of those old heroes are with God; their dust

and the memory of their deeds alone remain with us. Yet, if we are as true to follow the right, and to struggle for it, whenever we see it, as stubbornly as they did, then, when our own time comes to lay down this life and pass beyond the veil, we shall find the old leaders ready to acknowledge us as being of the old blood and the old name.

And they, those splendid men, knew no greater praise than that. Nor shall we, if we be but true to the nobler spirit of their history.

NOTES

¹ It is from working out the genealogies of the Sons of Gloiuda that I am constrained to accept Skene's identification of Valentia. The name, however, is a detail; the fact of the rule of the descendants of Gloiuda is the vital point. They did rule in the land here called Valentia—that is absolutely certain. As to Valentia, here is one point. The poem of Lludd and Llevelys is one of the very few genuinely ancient poems we have. I can find no excuse for rejecting it. And Llevelys, the Gloiudan prince who fought against Lludd, had the White Dragon for his Standard. Now that White Dragon seems to have been the Standard of the 'Count of Britain,' ruler of 'Valentia.'

² It was possibly a custom amongst our ancestors that, whenever they met for friendly contests, the best man at the meeting received a rose, as token that he was the best man there.

³ The story of Maelgon Gwynedd dying in a church is all part of the *Tale of Taliesin*, invented by the mediæval romancer, as it is plainly stated in the *Iolo MS*. The saint after whom Eglwys Rhos was first named, *i.e.* its founder, was not born till long enough after Maelgon died. And Maelgon Gwynedd is not the gentleman Gildas wrote at.

⁴ The genealogy of Maeldav Hynav proves him living in the days of Conan, nine generations after Maelgon. Moreover, in Maelgon's day the Scots still held Aberdovey. There were no Cymry, then, south of the lower Conwy. Lastly, the tale makes the men of 'Reinoc' and the men of 'Sesylloc,' come with the rest to the election. Now Maelgon Gwynedd was dead six generations before Rein was born—the Rein after whom Reinoc was named—while the Sesyll after whom Sesylloc was named was possibly still alive when Conan was elected, being of the generation next before him. This national election, however, must have occurred every third generation, in which connection it should be noted that the Maeldav who was lord of Penardd in Arvon comes on line 6. That is, he was contemporary with Lludd and Iago, sons of Beli Mawr [see GENEALOGIES in Public Edition] who were third in descent from Maelgon Gwynedd, in whose days the first election (that at Carlisle) gave the crown to Cunedda II.

⁵ A passage in the History of Gruffydd ap Conan seems to show that the cyvarwys was a gift from a lord to the one who became his man. Where the two were not already kin, this ceremony put the receiver of the cyvarwys 'upon the privilege of kin'—a pregnant phrase in the old laws.

⁶ This is the name now spelt Griffith in English. But as the 'th' should be pronounced soft, like 'th' in this and that, it is perhaps best to insist upon it by using the Cymric 'dd,' as has been done with Meredydd also.

⁷ They tell a tale in English History that Harold set up great stones all over our land, each carved with the words 'Here Harold conquered.' Now there are tall stones still to be found in Cymru that were old a thousand years before Harold was born, and stones that were carved with words seven centuries before him. But no man has ever found any stone of Harold's.

⁸ Stephens, in his *Literature of the Kymry*, puts it between Fishguard and Haverfordwest, which agrees with the probable distance of a long half day's march. I do not know, however, if he meant Tregarn.

⁹ Read the chapter on Llywelyn the Great in O. M. Edwards' *Wales* (Story of the Nations). That chapter must always remain the classic short sketch of Llywelyn, by the breadth of its power and charm.

¹⁰ It is another proof of the working of the old law of succession that Llywelyn, in making his claim, set forth his descent from Meuric, great-grandson of Rhodri Mawr. Llywelyn's father, Iorwerth, was ninth in descent from Rhodri. Had Iorwerth set up a claim he could have claimed as being within the ninth degree of descent from Rhodri.

But Llywelyn himself, being only tenth in descent, could claim nothing in that way. He had to come down to the next link in the chain of descent, the next generation of electors after Rhodri—to the generation of Meuric. Meuric, it is true, had never borne rule, being slain too soon, but on the extinction of the descendants of his brothers, it was the grandson of Meuric who reigned for awhile in Gwynedd. And Conan, father of Gruffydd II., was his great-grandson.

Llywelyn therefore put forth his pedigree thus:—Llywelyn ap Iorwerth, ap Owen Gwynedd, ap Gruffydd, ap Conan, ap Iago, ap Idwal, ap Meuric. He did not continue it on up to Rhodri Mawr.

¹¹ It must not be forgotten that Ellesmere was a Cymric district, inhabited by Cymry. See the proofs set forth by that most cautious historian, Mr. A. N. Palmer, *Cymmrodor*, x.

¹² 'At Crokeen,' say the *Annals of Margam*, meaning Abergwyn-gegin: Aber of the White Shells; now plain Aber, between Bangor and Penmaenmawr.

¹³ Or was it not rather that Elianor was now dead, leaving Llywelyn childless, save for a baby daughter, and daughters could not rule in Cymru? David then, was heir-presumptive to his brother.

¹⁴ The teacher will find Bradley's *Owen Glyndwr*, in the Heroes of the Nations series, the only real history of this great prince in English. In Cymraeg he should read the little *Owen Glyndwr*; by L. J. Roberts, M.A.

¹⁵ Thomas Darlington, Esq., H.M. Inspector of Schools, reminded the writer of this division of Henry's forces. Evidence of it is also to be found in that splendidly sober book, *Cantrev Meirionydd*.

¹⁶ A distinguishing feature of the Wars of the Roses was that mercy was seldom shown (before Bosworth) to the leaders of the losers of any battle. If captured they were usually put to death.

¹⁷ After the battle was won, Henry unbuckled his sword and gave it to the lord of Mostyn, for a token of all he owed him that day and formerly. He urged him to come to court, where he would advance him. But the gallant chief answered him with the noble words that have been the guiding motto of his house ever since: 'I dwell among mine own people.' Would there were more of his like.

¹⁸ The story of Celart, or Gelert, has had some hard knocks lately, but since the name of Beddkelert is used by Sir John Wyn of Gwydir, a sixteenth century man; and since the englyn in the book of John Brooke of Mowddwy, 1591, vouches for the former existence of 'Kill hart' as the name of one of the hounds of the princes of Gwynedd, one must put two and two together for a start. It is also certain that King John would include choice hounds amongst his gifts to his son-in-law, Llywelyn; hounds, hawks, and horses being regular gifts between princes. On several counts one finds it difficult to quite reject the story which has warmed so many imaginations. And yet, the thing which causes most difficulty, to anyone who goes into the matter seriously, seems never to be mentioned. How came a wolf into the royal chamber? Wolves were plentiful enough in Cymru in Llywelyn's day (the last wolf in Wales was killed on Cader Idris in 1768), but when one remembers the fashion of attendance upon a Cymric prince, whether of the chiefs

upon the ruler, or the foster parents and their kindred upon the nursling heir, it is hard to imagine the child left to sleep unattended, even though we grant that Llywelyn was on a hunting progress.

In spite of all this, however, I cannot but believe that there must be some kernel of truth in the legend, though its present shape may owe more than a little to the later importation of legends from abroad. And in that belief I let the story stand, for we should all lose much if we lost it.

¹⁹ If the search for any other Meredydd ap Owen—of standing sufficient to bargain for an army of Scots to land at Abermaw—should continue fruitless, then we shall have to recast our theories as to the rank of Glyndwr amongst the world's great men. For we shall have to regard him no longer as a mere opportunist, turning his personal outlawry to national account, but as a cool and daring statesman from the beginning. This makes him of a far higher stamp, a stamp which, once granted, solves a good many problems of his career.

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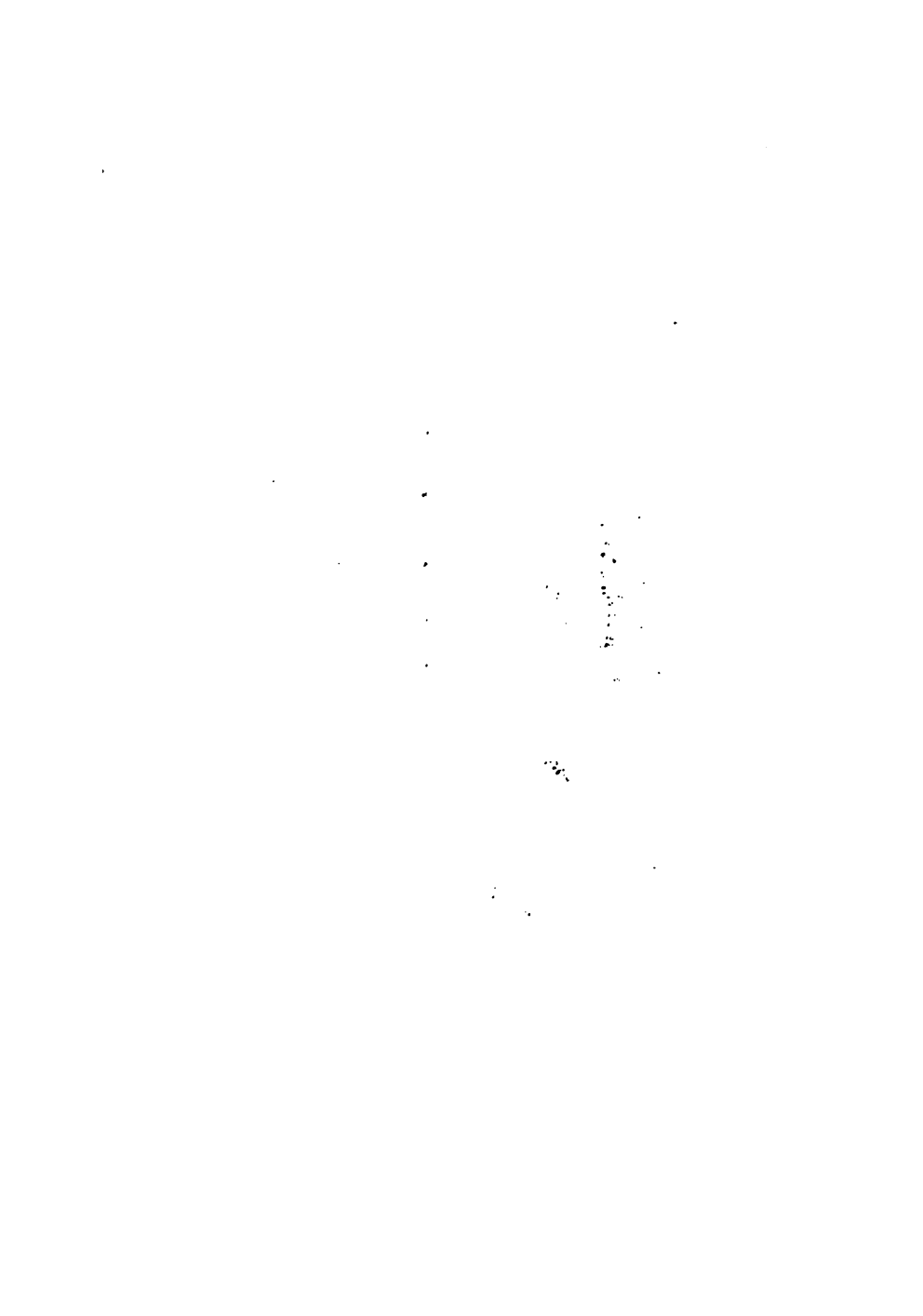
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