

gress of the Roman armies may be traced in the subsequent Teutonic invasions of Angles, Saxons, Jutes, and Norwegians. Arriving from the east and north-east, these hordes found level lowlands open to their attack. Where no impenetrable thicket, forest, fenland, or mountainous barrier impeded their advance, they rapidly pushed inland, utterly extirpating the British population and driving its remnants steadily westward. By the end of the sixth century the Britons had disappeared from the eastern half of the island south of the Firth of Forth. Their frontier, everywhere obstinately defended, was very unequal in its capabilities of defence. In the north, where they had been driven across bare moors and bleak uplands, they found these inhospitable tracts for a time a barrier to the further advance of the enemy; but where they stood face to face with their foe in the plains they could not permanently resist his advance. This difference in physical contour and geological structure led to the final disruption of the Cymric tract of country by the two most memorable battles in the early history of England.

Between the Britons of South Wales and those of Devon and Cornwall lay the rich vale of the Severn. Across this plain there once spread in ancient geological times a thick sheet of Jurassic strata of which the bold escarpment of the Cotswold Hills forms a remnant. The valley has been in the course of ages hollowed out of these rocks, the depth of which is only partly represented by the height of the Cotswold plateau. The Romans had found their way into this fertile plain, and, attracted by the hot springs which still rise there, had built the venerable city of Bath and other towns. One hundred and seven years after the Romans quitted Britain, the West Saxons, who had gradually pushed their way westward up the valley of