

Looking at the territory occupied by the Cymry at the time of their greatest extension, we can see how their course northward was influenced by geological structure. As they advanced along the plains which lay on the west side of the great Pennine chain of the centre and north of England, they encountered the range of fells which connects the mountain group of Cumberland and Westmoreland with the uplands of Yorkshire and Durham. This would probably be for some time a barrier to their progress. But after crossing it by some of the deep valleys by which it is trenched, they would find themselves in the wide plains of the Eden and the Solway. Still pushing their way northward, and driving the Gaels before them, they would naturally follow the valley of the Nith, leaving on the left hand the wild mountainous region of Galloway, or "country of the Gael," to which the conquered tribe retired, and on the right the high moorlands about the head of Clydesdale and Tweeddale. Emerging at last upon the lowlands of Ayrshire and lower Clydesdale, they would spread over them until their further march was arrested by the great line of the Highland mountains. Into these fastnesses, stoutly defended by the Pictish Gaels, they seem never to have penetrated. But they built, as their northern outpost, the city and castle of Alcluyd, where the picturesque rock of Dumbarton, or "fort of the Britons," towers above the Clyde.

At one time, therefore, the Cymry extended from the mouth of the Clyde to the south of England. One language—Welsh and its dialects—appears to have been spoken throughout that territory. Hence the battles of King Arthur, which, from the evidence of the ancient Welsh poems, appear to have been fought, not in the south-west of England, as is usually supposed, but in the