

HISTORY OF DYEING.

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In England we find the first mention of Indigo in 1581 under the reign of Elizabeth; this, however, refers to black dyeing, *i. e.*, "that no woollen articles were to be dyed black with either Gall-nut, Madder, or other materials till they had received the first ground, or been rendered blue by Woad, or Woad and Indigo together."

There can be little doubt that the Early Britons knew how to weave, for pieces of coarse cloth have been found in ancient British barrows. Boadicea (*A. D.* 62) is said to have worn under her cloak a motley tunic checkered over with many colors, which was probably of native workmanship.

William of Malmesbury (1095-1143), in referring to the making of tapestry by Anglo-Norman ladies says: "The shuttle is not filled with purple only but with various colors."

In 1199 cloth was worked at Nottingham and "all persons within ten miles of the town were forbidden to work dyed cloth except in the borough." White and red cloth made in Ireland was at that time much used in England.

In 1268 an agreement was made between the citizens of Norwich and the Woad merchants of Amiens and Corby regarding dues on Woad, and in 1302 and 1303 we find reference to the importation of 11 casks of "wayd" from Amiens. In 1317 "Walter de Cotiller of Exeter lately brought five barrels of Woad (*gaide*), price 140 good pounds of Tours and Elbeuf."

Reference to a dyer, probably of leather, in Ireland, is found in an agreement *re* hides in 1354, which was made by John Dyere of Drogheda.

So far I have not been able to find any other records from which it might have been possible to obtain more exact information as regards the practice of dyeing and the gradual development of it during the 13th and the early part of the 14th century but the following extracts show that it must have been in a fairly advanced state about the middle of the 14th century.

According to Riley, in 1352-3 Edward III., had "a subsidy granted to him of 6d. per each Scarlet Cloth, 3d. for a Half Cloth died in Grain, and 4d. for a Cloth not grained." That the dyers tried to evade the duty is clearly shown, because in 1358 we find regulations *re* cloths which had been brought white to places and were then dyed, fulled, and sold before they were sealed. Edward III. appointed searchers "to make inquisition in the counties of Bedford, Buckingham, Cambridge, Huntingdon, what and how many weavers, fullers, dyers, and hirers of weavers there are in each city. . . . and in whose hands or keeping those dyeworks have been, and to charge and compel all such weavers, fullers, dyers, and hirers of dye-works, by their oaths and grievous ameracements, they must not let any cloths pass out of the dye house until it has been sealed with the seal ordained for the collection of the custom." This regulation was sent out to all counties. It is interesting to note that nearly all the names attached to this document are of foreign origin.

The following regulations for checking the "malpractices" of dyers were issued by Edward III., in 1362: "No dyer who dyes wools with Woad, shall dye hats, caps, linen thread, or silk," and "that no dyer shall refuse to let anyone take away his dyed

wools, without demanding anything for the dyeing of them, before the wools so dyed shall be dry."

Madder, Weld, and Woad are mentioned in 1374 by Chaucer, in "Former Age," "No madder, welde, or wood, no litemere Ne knew," and in Nun's Pr., "End-Link," we also find reference to Brazil wood and to Cochineal in the following words: "His color for to dyghen with brasile ne with greyn of Portyngale."

During the 14th century Edward III. brought a number of dyers from Flanders and Holland.

Already in 1415 Coventry was known for its blue dyed materials. In that year the inhabitants petitioned Parliament against the artifices of the dyers of that town, on the ground that "there is a confederacy and agreement in the mystery of the Dyers in the same town that none of the said Dyers will dye a dozen of cloth of common color for less than 6s. or 8s.," whereas they used to dye in ordinary past years a dozen of such cloth for 5s. or 6s.; and, further, if any of the goods were not sufficiently dyed or came out false "they would not abate a 'denier' of their price nor amend their mystery"; also that the said Dyers are great common clothmakers in the same town, and use in their cloth all the flower of the Woad, "and the remainder which settles down must serve the common people; to the great deceit, damage, and oppression, as well of the common people living in the said town as of others arauud."

According to Anderson, England exported in 1428 "two pieces of Scarlet, one piece of Sanguine dyed in grain, two pieces of Marbel color . . . two pieces of Russet of Mustrevillers, two pieces of black Cloth of Lyre, one piece of white cloth, three hundred pieces of Essex Straits (all woollen cloths), and a few more yards of Morrey, died in grain, some red, green, grey, Brunette, and twelve yards of red Sattin (*Satyn figurato*)."

The term "to dye in grain" has been used in very early times. Originally it meant dyeing with the scarlet grain or Kermes, and later on with Cochineal; but still later dyeing in the fibre itself or more generally to dye in any fast color. This Plutarch informs us that "this sail . . . was not white but red, died in grain, and of the color of Scarlet." In Fuller, *Pisgah IV.*, (1650), it is stated that the term "in grain" is distinctly used as referring to fast colors only, because he informs us that "these colors not being dyed in grain lose much of their lustre, and gloss in washing." Further proof of this is found in the *London Gazette*, of 1709, "the best broad Italian color'd Mantua's at 6s. 9d. per yard, and grain colors in proportion," and in *English Gasetter* of 1778, "Stroud, famous for dyeing scarlet broad cloth, and for all other grain colors."

Between 1429 and 1453, the following dyers are mentioned in different State Papers: Henry Dyer of Wytteney, Co. Oxford, "dyer"; Henry Moundevyle of Wytneye, Co. Oxford, "diere"; Thomas Dyere of Corscombe, Co. Somerset, "dyere"; William Dyer of Fordyngbrygge, Co. Southampton, "dyer"; Adam Dyer of Chepnyngcampeden, "dier," and John Dier, alias Henry of Warminster, Co. Wilts, "dier," alias "baker."

These names in addition to those already mentioned are chiefly quoted to show the different ways of arranging the names and of spelling the word dyer.

(To be continued)