

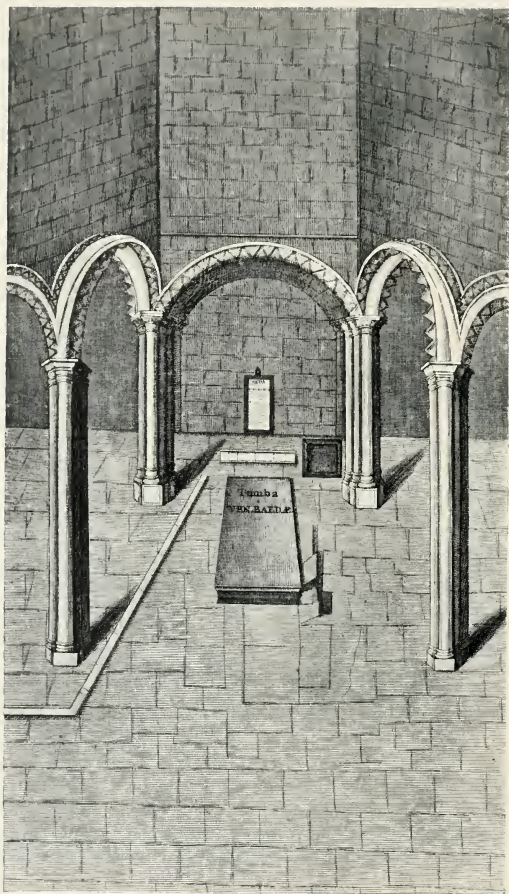
THE GOLDEN DAYS
OF THE
EARLY ENGLISH CHURCH

SIR HENRY HOWORTH



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THE GOLDEN DAYS OF THE
EARLY ENGLISH CHURCH



THE GRAVE OF BEDE IN THE WESTERN GALILEE AT DURHAM.

Vol 1., Frontispiece.]

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THE GOLDEN DAYS OF THE EARLY ENGLISH CHURCH

FROM THE ARRIVAL OF THEODORE
TO THE DEATH OF BEDE

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"THE LIVES OF POPE GREGORY THE GREAT AND AUGUSTINE THE MISSIONARY"

"THE HISTORY OF THE MONGOLS" ETC. ETC.

WITH ILLUSTRATIONS
MAPS, TABLES, AND APPENDICES

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TO
CANON GREENWELL, D.C.L., F.R.S., F.S.A.
AND THE
REVEREND C. PLUMMER

I WISH to associate the following volumes with the names of two friends, for whose gifts I have a special regard. Both of them have added greatly to our knowledge of early English history, and both of them have had the untiring zeal, modesty, and patience of the ideal scholar. Canon Greenwell of Durham, whose venerable age seems unassailable by time or human frailty, will live for ever in the memory of the archæologist, and most notably among those disciples of "Old Mortality" who have explored and expounded the grave mounds of our ancestors. His name will live still longer among the disciples of Izaak Walton, as a hero among fishermen and as the inventor of "Greenwell's Glory," the most famous of trout flies. My other friend, Mr. C. Plummer, has given us the definite and ideal edition of the two corner-stones of our earlier history, Bede's

DEDICATION

immortal *Church History* and the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle*, both of which he has illumined with unflagging patience and success. My own obligations to him are to be seen on every page. I cannot think that his own University has adequately appreciated the merits of one of its greatest scholars.

It is pleasant to have the opportunity of recording our obligations to such men, and pleasanter still to number them among our friends.

H. H. H.

CONTENTS

	PAGE
PREFACE	ix
INTRODUCTION	lxxxiii
TABLES OF EMPERORS AND POPES, KINGS, ETC.	clxxxi
NOTES ON FOREGOING TABLES	clxxxvii

CHAPTER I

ST. OSWALD AND ST. AIDAN IN NORTHUMBRIA AND ST. BIRIN IN WESSEX	1
--	---

CHAPTER II

KING OSWY AND THE NORTHUMBRIAN CHURCH—ST. FURSEY IN EAST ANGLIA	74
--	----

CHAPTER III

KING OSWY, ST. WILFRID, AND ST. BENEDICT BISCOP	156
---	-----

CHAPTER IV

CONSTANS THE EMPEROR, ST. BASIL THE MONK, AND ST. THEODORE THE ARCHBISHOP	228
--	-----

CHAPTER V

ST. THEODORE AND THE ENGLISH EPISCOPATE—THE COUNCIL OF HERUTFORD AND THE RESULTS OF KING EDWY'S DEATH	304
---	-----

LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS

THE GRAVE OF BEDE AT DURHAM <i>Frontispiece</i>
Smith's <i>Bede</i> , p. 804.	
	FACING PAGE
MAP OF ENGLAND IN THE SEVENTH AND EARLY EIGHTH CENTURIES	1
MAP OF LINDISFARNE	22
Archbishop Eyre, <i>History of St. Cuthberht</i> , p. 25.	
THE SEAL OF DURHAM PRIORY	62
Smith, <i>op. cit.</i> p. 721.	
THE CROSS OF ST. OSWIN	92
Stephens' <i>Runic Monuments</i> , vol. i. p. 391.	
MEMORIAL STONES OF EDELWINI, WERMUND, AND TORHTSUID	94
Hubner, <i>Inscriptiones Brit. Christ.</i> , pp. 69, 70.	
HOLY WELL OF ST. FURSEY	100
From Miss Stokes' <i>Three Months in the Forests of France</i> .	
RUINS OF THE CHURCH AT KILLFURSA (NOW KILLARSA) .	102
<i>Ib.</i>	
RUINS OF ST. FURSEY'S CHURCH AT INCHQUIN	104
<i>Ib.</i>	
BURGHCASTLE, IN WHICH ST. FURSEY PLANTED HIS MONASTERY	114
GRAVE SLAB OF KING OIDLWALD	134
Bishop Browne, <i>Conversion of the Heptarchy</i> , p. 15.	
GROUND PLAN OF ST. PETER-AT-WALL AT YTHANCAESTER, IN ESSEX, BUILT BY BISHOP CEDDE	142
TWO VIEWS OF THE CHURCH OF ST. PETER-ON-THE-WALL	144

	FACING PAGE
SUPPOSED GRAVE SLAB OF BISHOP CEDDE	208
<i>Bishop Browne, Conversion of the Heptarchy, p. 152.</i>	
GROUND PLAN OF THE SAXON WORK IN THE CHURCH AT RECVLVER	316
<i>Arch. Journ., 2nd ser. vol. iii. p. 298.</i>	
GROUND PLAN OF THE CHURCH OF SOUTH ELMHAM	316
<i>Arch. Journ., 2nd ser. vol. viii. p. 4.</i>	
TWO PILLARS ONCE SUPPORTING THE EASTERN ARCADE OF THREE ARCHES IN THE SAXON CHURCH AT RECVLVER, NOW PRESERVED AT CANTERBURY	318
<i>Rivoira, Origini de la Architettura Lombarda, vol. ii. p. 273.</i>	
THE FOUR SIDES OF THE CROSS AT BEWCASTLE 340, 342, 344, 346	
From photographs taken by Mr. J. C. Montgomerie in Hewison's <i>Runic Roods.</i>	
DETAILS FROM THE BEWCASTLE CROSS	348
WILFRID'S FRITH-STOOL AT HEXHAM ,	368
PLAN OF WILFRID'S CRYPTS AT HEXHAM AND RIPON	370
From Baldwin Brown's <i>Arts of Early England</i> , vol. ii. p. 265.	
THE SOUTH PASSAGE INTO THE CRYPT AT HEXHAM	372
FRAGMENTS OF SHAFTS OF CROSSES FROM HEXHAM	374
SOME EXTANT REMAINS OF SEVENTH-CENTURY CRYPTS 376, 378	
The extant remains of English crypts at this date being so few, I have added some representations from foreign specimens for comparison, for two of which I am under obligations to Rivoira's fine work, vol. ii. pp. 81, 83. The plates represent the seventh-century crypt of the Church of St. Paul at Jouarre, and another interesting crypt, namely, that of St. Geneviève at Paris, from Dahn, <i>Urgeschichte</i> , vol. v.	

NOTE.—I am greatly indebted to the Authors and Publishers of the works I have quoted for their permission to use the plates I have borrowed from them.

PREFACE

IT was many years ago, when I used to discuss early English history with Mr. Freeman (with whom I had more than one sharp polemic), that I formed the intention of sometime trying to analyse its early sources and to unriddle its difficulties and obscurities in greater accordance with modern scientific methods than do some popular guides. It is indeed rather scandalous that in this particular period of our national story we should be so far behind both the Germans and French in our methods of writing history, and should still present so much matter for criticism in our books on the subject.

The first thing which struck me was, that if the work was to be done with any lasting profit we must begin by exploring our early ecclesiastical history more minutely and thoroughly before facing the problem of its civil and secular side. The first people who wrote our annals, drew up our charters, and composed our memorials on stone, were priests and monks and nuns. To them almost alone was the art of writing known, and they used it to tell the story of their Church, to defend its dogmatic position, to set out its ritual, to record the lives and deaths of its saints and its devoted officers, to secure good titles to their lands, and

to correspond with each other and with the great ones of the earth about the concerns of heaven and the methods of getting there. Their interest in secular affairs was a secondary one, and if they diverged into a discussion of them it was generally in a very elementary fashion. Hence it is inevitable that we should know a great deal more about the early ecclesiastical history of England than we do about its civil history, and if we are to examine the latter profitably we must first plant our feet on the more solid basis which is buttressed by more adequate evidence. Having done so, we can use the vantage so gained for the purpose of exploring its complementary field where the mists hang heavier on the fields which we wish to explore.

This method is particularly advantageous in our own country, where we, and we alone in all Europe, possess a work of the matchless worth of Bede's *Ecclesiastical History*, unequalled in its time in style, picturesqueness, and extraordinary general accuracy, and presenting an historical and moral outlook of a very ideal kind. It is the one matchless literary work of art in the European literature of the first half of the eighth century A.D., and it forms a splendid scaffolding upon which to raise our building, and on which to hang the various illustrative decorations or additions which lesser lights have provided for us. This, then, explains the object and purpose with which, at the close of an exceptionally strenuous life and by the evergreen kindness of my old friend, Mr. Murray, I have

written five volumes of closely packed matter dealing with the beginnings of the English Church during less than a century and a half of its early career.

In England we have a further good reason for adopting this method, in that here we can trace the story of the national Church, the mother Church of Germany, and of its own many offspring, to its exact starting-point. It began as a missionary Church, planted by a number of Roman monks trained and sent by a master of whom we know a great deal. We can follow his aims and plans as set out by his own pen, and we can trace the steps of his evangelists step by step. I have been blamed by some writers for devoting a whole volume to the life and career of the great Pope himself who started the English mission. I think I was right, and others were good enough to think so too. There are few characters in history who, in a career of thirteen years, did so much to alter the serious thoughts and ways of influential men as Gregory the Great, and there are very few of whose doings and thoughts we know so much at first hand. He had an almost vacant stage to play his part upon, and when he left it there was no one to fill his place for centuries. Whether for good or ill the life of the Church for many a decade followed the lines marked out largely by his strong will and stronger prejudices. He was also an experienced politician and magistrate, and held his own with the powerful Emperor and with the Lombards. He was an excellent man of busi-

ness and managed the estates of the Church wisely and righteously. He had high ideals of morals and conduct, combined with courage and energy ; he presided over the hierarchy of the Church with a master's skill, administered its eleemosynary functions with a magnificent, if too lavish hand, and was doubtless tempted to do so by the then enormous income of the Holy See. He reformed the Church's ritual and music, and he wrote many able commentaries on the Bible, and some fine sermons marked by a highly mystical exegesis, but in which the essence of personal goodness was largely enforced, and he discussed dogmatic issues within limited conditions with a certain subtlety and imaginative power of his own. Lastly, he had a vigorous Latin style, and, like Erasmus, treated the language as a living one and not merely as a mummified echo of that of Cicero and Horace. These things were all to his credit, and they involved gifts which had become exceedingly rare at the end of the sixth century. On the other hand, he shared the prejudices and the obscurantism of his day. The transference of the capital of the Empire, with the home of the civil administration, the upper law courts, and the civil service of the State, to Constantinople left Italy very poor in men who cultivated literature, art, science, and affairs. The Byzantine reputation for vice and luxury is still with many people its chief title to fame. The closer study devoted to Byzantine history in recent years has shown, however, that under this sybaritic veneer there

still remained a great deal that was remarkable as a proof of virility and strength. In the sixth, seventh, and eighth centuries it produced several emperors who may claim to stand by earlier Roman rulers as soldiers and as statesmen. If its secular literature had lost the ancient flavour of Greek prose and verse, we must remember that the inroads of Christianity had turned men's thoughts into other channels than those which inspired the earlier poets and historians, and the new men seem to me at times to show proofs of the same subtlety and acuteness in the field of theology that their fathers showed in more profitable fields. We can never forget, again, that it was in those centuries that the codification of Roman law took place under Justinian and Theodosius, a work compiled by some of the ablest practical lawyers of all time, while the new laws passed during the same period were in no wise behind the earlier ones in excellence. Apart from this was the fact that the possession of the Greek tongue at least opened the door to the wealth of fine thought of the classical writers, while the necessity of learning Latin was imposed on a large number of its people by the fact that Latin was the language of the courts and of the codes. It was the *lingua franca* used in the army, including the words of command, while the inscriptions on the imperial coinage show how long the Western language continued to be the official tongue. This meant that a larger part of the community was bilingual, which in itself was a great educational advantage.

It also went far to retain for the new capital on the Bosphorus the imposing influence which attached to the name and prestige of Rome, and no doubt caused it still, even in far-distant Britain, to be treated as the mother of the nations. Hence the necessity of always keeping in view the political and other movements going on in the Byzantine capital when we are treating of the domestic history of the Western world, and I have continued in the three following volumes the abstract of its story to which I devoted a number of pages in the earlier volumes. This is more especially necessary in the period we have reached, when the Persian wars on the one side and the great victories and conquests of the Muhammadan Saracens on the other did so much to alter the map of the world and to wreck the Roman traditions and culture in Syria, Egypt, and the province of Africa, while it produced such great figures as Constans the Second and the family of Heraclius, notably the latter great soldier himself.

This period is also coincident with the growing antagonism in religious matters which originated largely in the jealousies of the patriarchs of Old Rome and New Rome. It magnified the importance of small differences out of all proportion to their gravity, and led presently to the great and still lasting schism between them. Of these differences I have tried to give a summary.

While the Eastern Empire still largely retained its prestige and its influence, matters were very different in the West.

There, in the period to which the following three volumes refer, the condition of things had become pitiful. Unlike the Eastern Empire, the Latin West had been tramped over mercilessly by hordes of barbarians which had succeeded a number of paralysing civil wars. The order of the great Roman nobles who produced a patriotic and exceedingly able administrative class was almost extinct in Italy. The schools had greatly decayed, and the old Greek colony at Rome, which kept a bright light burning there in the time of the Empire, was extinct. No better proof could be found than the fact that the greatest of the Popes, Gregory the First, could neither speak nor read Greek, and utterly despised the treasures of Greek and other art and literature. There still more than at Constantinople was secular learning dead, except in matters like logic, rhetoric, and grammar, which were treated entirely as subservient to the study of the Latin Bible and the very thin commentaries upon it. Here, again, the dying out of a knowledge of Greek practically shut out from students all the accepted masters of theology then extant, except a feeble echo produced by a small number of African and Gaulish writers. This necessarily led to a very narrow and ignorant priesthood. With some who in our day have chiefly drunk at these insipid springs this probably means a great gain, since it also largely excluded the schisms and heresies which the subtleties of the Greek mind made easy in the East. It really meant utter stagnation and decay in the higher walks of human

culture. This was very notable among the higher clergy. The series of Popes between Gregory the First and Gregory the Second, whose lives I have here epitomised, is notable only for the poverty of their attainments and of their practical gifts, a poverty which only makes St. Gregory stand out more brightly. The only ones of any mark were two or three who were prominent as champions of orthodoxy, or as its victims in the great Monothelite controversy, and notably Martin the First, whose crooked ways and illegitimate title I have discussed at some length in the following pages, since they affect larger issues than his personality. No better proof of the depressing poverty of the Latin Church at this time in men of mark need be quoted than the fact of there having been several Popes in succession who, although they were Greeks by race, and on that ground alone objects of suspicion in the West, commanded a corresponding influence by their education and relatively greater talents. The conquest of the province of Africa and of Spain by the Saracens and Moors also greatly impoverished the resources of the Western Church both in money and in talents.

It was not only in religious matters that Old Rome had greatly fallen from her high estate. This was still more marked in matters in which she had won the world's crown of practical wisdom. What had not Old Rome, in fact, done in these respects?

It had disciplined the community in the ways of public virtue and patriotism, and created and maintained a superb army; it had built up a colossal and

masterly scheme of jurisprudence and law, and had organised a civil service and ideal colonial institutions, and had covered the Western world with a fine police, fine roads, schools and academies, splendid and practically designed towns and public buildings, including stately markets, courts of justice, temples, and palaces. These had now largely disappeared or were in ruins, and we can hardly realise what a terrible loss the world had sustained. What was left was, with some local exceptions, a barbarised, impoverished commonalty, eaten up with frequent epidemics and famines, and a decreasing number of great landowners with increasing acres and a shrinking sense of public duty to the State and its poorer neighbours. The coarse, rude, cruel manners of the barrack-yard had everywhere replaced the amenities and the taste of a rich and ancient aristocracy. Meanwhile, the animal vices engendered in such times flourished, while the arts of courtesy and chivalry and the graces of unselfishness and refinement, outwardly marked by the gravity of the costumes and the clothes, the ornaments, and the manners of men and women in better times, had disappeared. What alone was left was venerated by a barbaric splendour and an unchastened taste.

The widespread and heart-breaking decay and desolation of the Western world was somewhat disguised by the fact that certain limited oases, such as the valley of the Rhone, the Visigothic and Burgundian districts of Southern Gaul, the Exarchate of Ravenna, the diocese of Seville in

Spain, and the fertile lands of Sicily and North Africa, still retained some prosperity as well as some colour and beauty, material and human, the last purple and golden touches in a sky where the sun was setting fast. This did not, however, include Italy, outside the Exarchate, which had been stripped to its bone of nearly all it once possessed of beauty, culture, wealth, and art, and was largely parcelled out among the wild Lombards, while all the old machinery of government, including the Senate and the offices of the civil administration, were in the dust.

Rome itself, the mother of so much greatness, was a forlorn mass of ruins; its once teeming population was reduced to the numbers of a second-class provincial modern town in England, and with the old lands of Latium was, in civil matters, largely administered by the Pope and his officials, who were nominally the deputies of the Emperor, but were too far off and of too little consequence in such strenuous times to give him much thought.

The picture here drawn, which condenses much that I said in my volume on St. Gregory, is only a part of the landscape, however. In order to appreciate the chaos and anarchy that existed at this time in the Western world we must go further. What gave it its most despairing outlook was the fact that what was once a homogeneous community stretching from the Irish Sea to the Adriatic, obeying the same ruler, governed by the same laws, administered in the same fashion, and protected by the same armies, was now broken up into a number

of rival communities, having few ties with those of Old Rome and carrying on their barbaric traditions under the superficial and scanty covering of a cruel soldiery and savage crude laws. For the most part, the tribes which had become separate nations were allied in blood and language. In England they remained pagans, while in Gaul, Spain, and Italy they were Christians; but this latter tie, which ought to have been a close bond between them, was entirely paralysed by the great schism which clove them in twain and prevented any friendly intercourse between them, namely, the existence of Arianism. Unfortunately, too, the Arians dominated the most cultured and most promising of the Germanic nations, the Visigoths, Burgundians, and Lombards, and apparently possessed the most learned clergy. If their writings had been preserved in anything but mere fragments, we should possibly find (as is beginning to be realised) that they also had the most rational creed. This latter fact did not, however, greatly strengthen the perilous political position, since their "heresy" separated them both from the Emperor and from the Senior Bishop of Christendom (the Pope), who both stood for orthodoxy; while the latter was the possessor of enormous wealth and great estates, which gave him a special power in times when poverty and decay were so widely spread in Italy.

Into this world Gregory was born. He received the education of a lawyer, and had the advantage of filling the position of one of the greater officials

(greater in sound than in fact) in the capital city ; but it made him a man of business and affairs, which he remained to the end of his career. The most important and far-reaching political act of his Popedom was the virtual abolition of Arianism and the reunion of Western Christendom under one faith and creed, save only in a few dioceses which retained a small schism of their own, namely, that of "the Three Chapters." Politically, this reunion of Western Christendom was a great gain, and the memory of what the separation had cost Christendom continued to pursue the Church and led to the treatment of schism as *the* unpardonable sin, as it was certainly the most dangerous one politically, but it completely paralysed original investigation and thought in religious and secular matters, and strengthened the bonds and chains of rigid dogma.

The reunion of Western Christendom, if the most important, was not the most difficult danger which Gregory had to face. A much more difficult one was the stupendous ignorance, incapacity, and want of discipline in which the clergy were steeped in many places, and notably in the one hitherto orthodox Germanic realm, namely, that of the Franks ; but the Western Church as a whole, and with only very local exceptions, was in a hopeless condition in these respects.

In its primitive days, and during the time of the Empire, it had been governed by its bishops, each bishop being supreme in his own see and controlled only by the synod of his diocese which had met

regularly and exercised supervision and control, the bishops being, nominally at all events, elected by their priests. The heads of the hierarchy were the five patriarchs, whose control was limited to larger issues and to presiding at larger synods, but in their own dioceses the bishops were masters. This was a reasonable method of government before the Church had become so Erastian and the bishops had so largely lost their sense of high aim or of duty. For the most part they had become a worldly, dissolute, and ignorant class, each one going his own way, and all objecting strongly to the control of their synods, which had, in fact, almost ceased to meet. They were appointed by the kings as the result of bribery and other base motives and with the slightest endowments for their posts. Especially was this the case in the empire of the Franks. The outcry everywhere was against the indecent offence of simony, and about nothing was St. Gregory so persistently plain-spoken. When this was the reputation of the bishops, we need not wonder at that of the lower orders of the clergy, whose scandalous lives and neglect of duty were appalling.

Those who want to see a real picture of the condition of Latin Christianity in large areas at this time should turn to the account of Gaul and its Church by Bishop Gregory of Tours. I have tried to condense it in previous volumes. This being the moral side of the secular clergy, their mental attitude was still more deplorable. Except a very

small sprinkling they were steeped in incredible ignorance and superstition. Under these conditions it is not wonderful that Gregory, with other serious men who yearned for better things, should have turned elsewhere than to the secular clergy for a remedy. The terrible times in which men were living, in which every human passion was let loose, and every bright spot in the material world was being desolated by outrage and internecine strife, made the thoughts of men and women abandon the hope of making this life tolerable, and prompted them to indulge in visions beyond the grave where their religion promised them a happy surcease of suffering. The temptation to withdraw from the world and all the few attractions it offered, and to seek in asceticism and seclusion a mode of discipline which should secure them a safe journey to heaven, became dominant everywhere. Presently men like Basil and Benedict, utilising this fervour, led it into more profitable channels, and induced the solitaries to unite in communities helpful to each other, governed by stringent Rules and dominated by a devotion to work, prayer, and an abnegation of pleasure and amusement. They were not priests but laymen, and they had no parochial functions and no evangelical aims. They were simply devoted to a sacrifice of the pleasures and relaxations of this life in order to secure a happier one beyond the grave. To these monasteries the poor, the heart-broken, and the suffering, the exhausted sybarites and those gentle spirits who had happier surroundings

but for whom the world as it stood was a cruel and trying despotism and place of misery, flocked. Gregory and others like him who were rich, educated, and refined accepted the new theory with avidity. The great Pope cherished the monks and their establishments as the very salt of the earth. He founded many monasteries, gave them his fortune, and lived his leisure among their inmates. Perhaps he looked to a future when the primitive constitution of the Church as a hierarchy of ecclesiastics set over a lay body of Christians would give way to a great collection of monasteries of laymen governed by abbots and friars, leading the simplest of simple lives, and in which priests and bishops should hold no special authority but be merely officials to perform certain functions which only priests and bishops were deemed qualified to perform.

To apply this ideal to communities where the Church already existed and was organised on the earlier plan was not feasible. In such cases he could only hope that by planting monasteries here and there in the various dioceses a continual example of better living might lead to a reform of both bishops and priests. An opportunity fortunately arose, however, for putting the new theory to a complete test. The Pope had learnt that there was still a portion of the Roman Empire which belonged theoretically to his patriarchate, which no longer contained any Christians, but had passed entirely into the hands of pagans, namely, England. He accepted the

duty of planting the faith there. He chose as his missionaries not bishops and priests, but a number of lay monks from his Monastery of St. Andrew, with a priest or two to sanctify the sacrament and perform other priestly functions. I have traced the progress of his mission in a previous volume of this work, from the landing of St. Augustine at Thanet to the extinction of the direct descendants of the original missionaries, and have pointed out how its early promise failed to fructify, and how it became a parched and shrunken venture even in Kent, instead of covering the whole land with its motherly mantle. Augustine's monks were Gregory's spiritual children. What they knew, Gregory had taught them; his ideals were theirs, and they proved unwelcome and unattractive. He had deliberately set his face against all learning and all culture and taste as inconsistent with the ascetic life of men who had no other business in this life than to prepare their souls for heaven, and they did the same. The continual repetition of the same prayers; the continual reading over and over again of a small book of religious poetry called the Book of Psalms, divided into sections which were recited at intervals of three hours day and night in constant and wearying iteration; the reading of, or listening to, the lives of hysterical enthusiasts and ascetics, in which the incidents were mostly incredible or childish and only to be tolerated by those whose minds were atrophied; the neglect of all healthy occupation save a few very tiresome forms of daily labour meant to kill time rather than for real profit—

these were the occupations of their thoughts. They involved an absolute void in the knowledge of the world outside that of their little community, and they were ignorant beyond all imagination of everything that men had done in the past, and despised reading outside their service books and saints' lives as pernicious. These were poor creatures to face the strong, masculine barbarians whom they came to convert. Having no real education and knowing no language but rustic Latin, they could not preach in the vernacular. The people could not understand them, and they doubtless seemed to them like some strange wild professors of magic, whose sayings and doings perhaps awed them by their unintelligibility as those of any other magicians might. Apart from this, their mission was crippled and decimated by the ravages of the Plague, and their sphere of action by the return of the great northern kingdom of Northumbria to paganism, and the apostasy of several of the princes in Southern England.

It was with the account of this woeful failure that my former volume closed. I ventured to hope in it that I might have the health and strength to carry the story into a more sunny landscape. This is, in fact, the purpose of the volumes which I now offer to my readers. They begin when the fortune of the English Church was at a very low ebb, and relate the history of its revival under better auspices and give the detailed lives of the notable men who illuminated its steps along a more promising path :

some of them self-willed and strong and unlovable, others gentle and simple and full of goodness ; some of them steeped in all the learning of their times, others the patrons of all the then known arts. They form a striking galaxy in our Church history, from the coming of Archbishop Theodore to the conclusion of Bede's immortal work.

The new departure here described had two roots—one of them Irish, and the other Greek.

The Irish Church at this time was a great missionary Church and inspired by undying fervour and energy. The Scottish branch of it sprang from Columba, whose scholars and evangelists sought out almost every lonely islet and corner of these islands in which to practise their austerities. Another and even more adventurous swarm of Irish cœnobites claimed Columbanus as their father, and did much to infuse the Frankish realms, Switzerland, and the Apennines with a more spiritual life and a much-needed religious discipline. In both cases there was a real passion for culture, both in art and letters, in each of which it had a notable part. Its art was that known to archæologists as Neo-Celtic. It was remarkable for its virility and grace, and had originated centuries before among the pagan Celts. Its literature, apart from Bible studies, consisted very largely of heroic tales, which were suffused with pagan notions. Where these Irish monks went they introduced new methods of teaching, and speedily took advantage, as we shall see, of the opportunities of studying Greek which were afforded

by the migration of Eastern monks to the West, when the Muhammadans overwhelmed Palestine and Egypt.

When Ædwin, the famous King of Northumbria and the patron of Paulinus, defeated his rival Ethelfrid on the Idle in Nottinghamshire in 616, the latter's family fled, and for many years became exiles among the Scots of the north-west of Scotland. There his sons apparently became close friends with the natives. More than one of them married Celtic wives, and they were converted to Christianity by the monks of Iona. When, on the death of Ædwin, they returned to their old English home and successively occupied the throne of Northumbria, they brought back some of these monks with them, who settled at Lindisfarne. Their long exile of seventeen years among the Scots had doubtless created close ties of language, customs, and arts with the latter, who were much more cultivated than their own people. The Christian mission which they thus imported into Northumbria meant a new departure, since that of Paulinus had been virtually destroyed. This was so in one important respect, namely, that the Northumbrians became converts to a Church which disclaimed all administrative ties with that of Rome, governed itself entirely independently of Rome, and was separated from that of Rome by ritual and other matters which I have described at length in the following pages. Thus Britain came really to include three independent Christian com-

munities : one in the south of England, presided over by the Archbishop of Canterbury, and accepting the ultimate primacy of the Bishop of Rome ; another among the Celts of Ireland and Scotland, with a branch in Northumbria ; and the third among the Celts of Wales and of Strathclyde.

The Scoto-Irish branch was entirely organised as a monastic Church in which the bishops were subordinate to the abbots, and the abbots in most cases belonged to a hereditary caste descended from the founder, who himself was often of royal blood, and in many cases consisted of double foundations of men and women living in different monasteries side by side, and being ministered to by a small section of the monks who were ordained as bishops and priests. Each mother-monastery was governed very autocratically by its abbot, who also ruled its offspring, but there was no superintending synod and apparently no episcopal visitation. Such was the Celtic graft which infused our north of England Christianity with very special features.

The field open to the Scoto-Irish monks when they came to England under the patronage of the Northumbrian king was a wide one, and included both of the great pagan states of Northumbria and Mercia, and the relapsed provinces of the East Saxons, all of which were Christianised by them. The only parts of Britain which accepted the ecclesiastical supremacy of Canterbury were the small kingdoms of Kent and East Anglia, while an

independent mission from Rome was working in the kingdom of Wessex.

Apart from the ritual differences which separated them from the Roman mission, the Irish monks also had a distinct style of architecture in their churches, which were almost entirely built of wood, while they were also great patrons of double monasteries, and especially of those presided over by women. Nothing is more remarkable than the passion which at this time seized the women of royal and noble stocks for the religious life, and I have devoted a long Appendix to an account of the high-born nuns.

Let us now turn to the second Roman mission to England.

When the episcopal succession, descended from Augustine, came to an end in Kent, it was succeeded by that of Theodore, with whose life the following volumes have much to do. It will be seen what a high place this great prelate fills in the history of the organisation and consolidation of the English Church, for which his rule really constituted a new birth. Like St. Gregory's (the founder of the mission Church), Theodore's most lasting work was putting an end to a troublesome schism and the consolidating of a homogeneous Church. It was not limited to this, however. He was a Greek by origin and education, nor had he anything to do with the Latin monks and their teacher, Benedict. He was an Eastern monk following the Rule of St. Basil,

which I have described at some length in a succeeding chapter.

He was a person of much wider views than Benedict, and his monks were immeasurably better educated than the Latin monks. His ideas of Church administration were also based on wiser models. It was not strange, therefore, that the fine old scholar who undertook to amend the machinery of the English Church should have turned his early thoughts to strengthening its episcopal government, a measure which Gregory had not so much at heart as the welfare of his monks. Gregory no doubt had contemplated an increase of the highest Episcopate, but neither he nor his successors had carried the notion beyond a suggestion, nor had the early Archbishops of Canterbury either the power, the initiative, or the gifts for organising such a work. Having united the whole English Church into one Catholic fold, he proceeded with the work of dividing England into a larger number of dioceses in spite of opposition from several sides, and especially from that self-willed autocrat, Bishop Wilfrid. Hitherto there had been only one bishop at the most in each of the Anglian kingdoms, except Kent, who was really treated by the king as his own ecclesiastical official. Theodore broke up the larger kingdoms, namely, Mercia, Northumbria, and Wessex, into smaller areas, in which he created sees, and thus considerably increased the English Episcopate. Under his fostering care and by his encouragement, diocesan synods

(the early method of Church discipline), which had almost died out in France, began to be a regular custom here.

With the help of Theodore and his suffragans, the number of resident priests gradually increased in rural districts as well as in towns. This did not mean that parishes in our modern sense were introduced, but it became the fashion for the great landowners to have domestic priests to administer the sacraments to themselves and their tenants, and to build chapels for them. The monasteries similarly had local clergy on their big estates, while it seems clear that the payment of tithe became very general, if not compulsory. It was a manorial rather than a parochial clergy.

The third great reform which Theodore introduced was in the education of the clergy. With Abbot Hadrian he greatly cherished the cathedral school at Canterbury, which became the model for other diocesan schools. Their first purpose was the teaching of candidates for the clergy, and included separate schools where "the humanities" were taught, as well as choir schools for teaching music and chanting. Both archbishop and abbot were men of very much higher gifts than Augustine's monks. They both knew Greek. It was their native tongue, and this gave them access to much wider fields of knowledge, and Greek was almost certainly taught in the Canterbury school, as it was in the Irish schools at this time. It was, in fact, essential if any learned theology was to be

prosecuted, for virtually all the original dogmatic writings were written in Greek, as was the New Testament, and also the edition of the Old Testament which had been used in the Church in early days. The clergy naturally became a very different class to what they had been, and in all parts there arose scholarly men who were quite equal to the scholars produced at Lérins, Seville, or in Italy. Aldhelm, Alcuin, and Bede are notable examples.

It was these men who were the best fruits of the golden but unfortunately short-lived period of English Church history to which these volumes are devoted, and which owed so much to the practical wisdom of the great archbishop and the scholars he gathered round him. He was essentially a practical administrator, and the only known written record which he inspired was a collection of decisions on questions of discipline, and known as his *Penitential*. In matters of dispute or doubt in regard to dogma he took no part, so far as we know, except in presiding at an English synod which affirmed the views of the Pope, or rather Anti-Pope, Martin I., on the question of the two Wills, which was tearing Christendom asunder in the East. The English Church, after the healing of the Celtic schism which had largely affected its northern half, was unmarked by dogmatic differences. While Canterbury continued to be its hierarchical capital, its intellectual centres were presided over by Aldhelm at Sherborne, and the great school of Benedict Biscop and Ceolfred at Jarrow and

Monkwearmouth. The former did a great deal to spread a scholar's tastes and gifts as then understood among the monks, and especially the nuns of western and southern England. His tastes as a scholar were professedly ancillary to the study of the Scriptures. This, however, was widely interpreted to mean the pursuit of grammar and rhetoric with models and examples from a large catena of pagan and Christian writers, while the learners were encouraged to make various experiments in Latin versification, including some new departures in metre, rhyme, alliteration, etc. etc., of which we have sufficient examples. These were accompanied by a quite hyperbolically inflated diction, which St. Aldhelm made fashionable. I have much to say of him later on.

A much more important school of learning was that of which the chief ornament was Bede. We cannot doubt that Durham was in Bede's time the most learned centre of light in England, if not in the west of Europe. He excelled not only as an ideal Church historian, but also as a commentator on the Bible and an exegetical scholar, and made splendid use of the great library which Abbots Benedict Biscop and Ceolfrid had collected, and which contained not merely a great wealth of materials for study but some codices of the highest importance. I have devoted a special Appendix (which may perhaps be found to contain some new views) to one of them, the *Codex Amiatinus*. An analysis of Bede's works will appear later on in the

Introduction : here I would refer to two matters only. First, so far as we know, he was the first to introduce into the Church's creed north of the Pyrenees the clause about the double procession of the Holy Spirit of which the first authoritative pronouncement was made at the third Council of Toledo.¹ At all events, so far as our evidence goes, it first occurs in Bede's writings. Secondly, he was the first Western scholar, so far as we know, to use the two Latin versions of the Bible systematically, the older Vulgate, sometimes called the Itala, and Jerome's edition ; Cassiodorus and St. Gregory had both done the same in part, but Bede did it systematically, being tempted to do so in all probability by the presence in the library at Jarrow of a splendid codex of either version.

In his commentaries and exegetical works Bede abounds, as his master Gregory had done, in allegorical interpretations, although in a more restrained fashion. Several of his works are avowedly school-books to teach the arts of grammar and calculating (especially in so far as the latter assisted in fixing ecclesiastical feasts and fasts), and also such science as was then available. One very notable thing which he introduced, and which was taken over from him by subsequent continental writers, was the Dionysian method of dating events by the Nativity of Christ, *i.e.* by the phrase "Anno Domini," and not by Indictions.

There was another centre of learning in the north,

¹ See Howorth, *Saint Gregory the Great*, Appendix.

a training-school of bishops and saints, and a most effective missionary cradle, namely, St. Hilda's double monastery at Whitby. I have much to say of it in the first Appendix. For us the greatest treasure it produced was its inmate Cædmon, whom in the Appendix I have devoted to him I have styled "The Morning Star of English Poetry." It is not only that Cædmon was the first writer in the vernacular whose writings have survived to our day in considerable quantity that we place him so high, but because his sacred poetry is of so choice a class, and so full of masculine thought and powerful expression, that it puts him in no mean competition even with Milton, who it has been thought received inspiration from him both in matter and form. On the other hand, his mixture of heathen with Christian images in his pictures of Hell no doubt affected the later eschatologists.

It is a great pity that the works of both Bede and Aldhelm in the vernacular are no longer extant. We would gladly have exchanged the turgid Latin lines of the latter for some of his English songs. This was not to be. When the language became unreadable and people could not understand it, the parchment on which it had been written, which was very valuable, was devoted to other purposes. Of the two scholars just named we have, in fact, nothing remaining in English except a few lines written by Bede, which are preserved by Symeon of Durham.¹ He says of him: "He

¹ *H.E.D.*, lib, i. ch. 15.

was skilled in our native tongue, that is, Anglian, and in our songs."

I will now quote the few lines that alone remain of one of his English poems, with a translation by Mr. Plummer. The lines refer to the awful departure of the soul from the body, and were recited by him on his death-bed.

*"Fore then neidfaeræ nænig uiurthit
thonc snottura than him tharf sie
to ymb hycggannæ ær his hin iougæ
huæt his gustæ godæs æththa yflæs
æfter deothdæge dæmid uueorthæ."*

"Ere that forced journey, no one may be
More prudent, than him well beseemeth
If he but meditate, ere his departure,
What to his spirit, of good or evil,
After his deathday, may be decreed."¹

It was not only literature which flourished in the period we are dealing with. The arts in England also received a great impetus. The taste and wealth of Wilfrid and Benedict Biscop, both of them far-travelled men, caused a great change in English churches, which rapidly grew in size and in ornament, until we are told that one of those built by the former was unmatched north of the Alps. The description of the remains of the churches of the time which survive (alas! so scanty) occupy a considerable space in the following pages. It was not the buildings only which show this growth of taste and skill, but also the very fine stone crosses which luckily exist in considerable numbers and offer

¹ Plummer's *Bede*, i. lxxiv and clxi.

puzzles to the archæologist as well as delight to the artist. Some of them have been discussed in a special Appendix further on. The church furniture, the coffins, the gold and silver vessels used in the services, and the embroidered vestments all became very much more ornate and decorated, and a considerable school of handicraftsmen, who doubtless followed the models of that great artist Eligius (St. Eloi), arose to match the unrivalled schools of illumination which flourished in Northumbria as in Ireland.¹ Very fine specimens of the latter remain among us to excite our wonder and admiration, but the former have gone, and we have to travel beyond the Channel for contemporary specimens made elsewhere. There are fanatics in all creeds, and the fanatics of another creed swept them all away. We can only guess what they were like from foreign examples, from descriptions and from the English goldsmiths' work of a somewhat earlier time found in the pagan graves.

This is not all the picture, however. The Renaissance associated with Theodore's new departure, which may be called the first of several English Reformations, had a wide influence. The English saints and monks had triumphs beyond the sea as well as here. The glow and fervour which followed the adoption of the ideals of Christianity by a young race hitherto untouched

¹ It is an interesting fact, unfamiliar to most people, that St. Eloi's favourite pupil, companion, and assistant was a certain Teilo, who must from his name have been a Welshman.

by such thoughts in England were bound to bear similar fruit if transplanted to other undrained and unploughed pastures where husbandmen were available who knew how to use their spade and plough. We have seen in our account of St. Augustine's mission how loath the ancestors of the modern Flemings, the old Franks, were to assist in evangelising the English Saxons, whom they seem to have treated in this behalf as foreigners. They showed the same feeling towards the Saxons of Nether Saxony, the Thuringians and the Bavarians, their neighbours beyond the Rhine, whom they pitilessly slaughtered in many campaigns and ravaged their lands. We do not hear of a single Frankish missionary going thither to do the work which the Christian priesthood had been specially commissioned to do. They left them passively to their old gods. It was left for the English Church to face this duty, and it sent some of its most notable sons to court martyrdom and toil and eventually to plant vigorous and flourishing churches in Friesland and in Germany. Among the notable men who did the work were the pupils of St. Aldhelm and St. Wilfrid, and especially Willibrord, Suidberht, and, greatest of all, Winfrid, styled Boniface, the great Archbishop of Mainz.

It was not only in Germany that the English Church most effectively assisted the cause of Christianity abroad. It must not be forgotten that the Church among the Franks, which had in every way become decayed, unlearned, undisciplined, and

scandalous, was reformed and revised by Charles the Great and his dynasty. Charles's great instrument in the work was Alcuin, a Northumbrian scholar brought up and taught in the school at York. He transplanted the Biblical learning, the zeal, and the moderating good sense and political instincts he had learnt in his English home, and did largely for the Church of the Franks what Theodore had done a generation earlier for that of England. The Continental Germans, whose unmeasured language and fierce campaign of hatred against our English people has burnt into our souls in these later days, are prone to forget many obligations they have been under to us in the past. Of these none is greater than that of having rescued their people and land from barbarism and from paganism when no one else was willing or perhaps able to do the work.

Such is an epitome of the condition and work of the English Church during that bright period in its history which we are surely entitled to call the golden days of its early youth. The pity of it is that it lasted such a short time. Like most of the attractive things which Nature makes and unmakes in such reckless wantonness, like the painting of the sky at sunrise and sunset, the colours of the forests and the flowers in spring and autumn, the laughter and the rosy cheeks and the innocence of lovely children, winter comes and blights them all too soon and too inevitably; and thus it was with the promise of those early days of the eighth century when England held a lantern to the Western world. It decayed so soon

and so fast. Let us shortly inquire why this was. The early English Church suffered greatly from its isolation. There had been few ties, sympathies, or intercourse between it and the Church of the Franks. Rome was a long way off and the journey thither was difficult and dangerous. It had to be left very much to its own resources, and how ill-equipped St. Gregory's monks were in knowledge of the world and in tact, to undertake the responsibility of steering its fortunes without guidance, may be judged by an analysis of the childish interrogatories which Augustine himself thought it necessary to send all the way to Rome for the Pope's advice, and by the early paralysis of his mission.

We must always remember that the English Church during the period we are dealing with was essentially a monkish Church. It was nursed and fostered by monks and the parochial system, with its hierarchy of bishops and other secular clergy, and was during the whole of this period in a very immature state of organisation. Its scholars, its preachers, its ascetic ideals were all monkish.

By this we must not understand Monachism as organised and disciplined by St. Benedict, St. Bernard, and others, with which it may be too easily confounded, but Monachism which was largely undisciplined. Some of its Rules were too stringent and some too lax, and were based too often on the whim and fancy of the founders of monasteries. The Benedictine Order had as yet, in fact only, a very small foothold here. The Gregorian monks who came with St. Augustine,

and the Irish monks who came with St. Aidan, divided the field between them, and St. Wilfrid was, so far as we have evidence, the first who professedly introduced the Benedictine Rule in England. Unfortunately, among English prelates of the arrogant, tactless, and domineering kind none has earned the title of either Saint or Great so undeservedly as Wilfrid. He kept up a lifelong fight with his kings, with his archbishops, with his brother bishops, and with all who thwarted him, and accordingly lived a large part of his life in exile. He could not tolerate discipline when applied to himself, and, as he belonged to a good family and was rich, he had been generously treated by more than one king. He had founded several monasteries, which, contrary to the Benedictine Rule, he kept in his own hands, and thus secured a very large following of monks who were dependent on his bounty and were proud of his magnificent ways, of his indomitable spirit, and of his championship of their cause. By courtly complacency to the influential Italian clergy he also acquired considerable power in Rome, where sinister and corrupt influences were notoriously very successful at this time, as was complained of by his opponents. It was a sad spectacle, that when the yearning which began to be shown everywhere for a more adequate discipline in the Western Church, and when an attempt was being made to meet it by such a wise person as Theodore, his efforts in favour of dividing and regulating the quite unwieldy provincial sees should have met with

such persistent and acrimonious opposition by Wilfrid. He artfully played off the ambition of the Roman Court, which was pleased to be made the arbiter of such issues, and which encouraged and supported him against his hierarchical chief. It is true that although the verdicts at Rome were mainly in Wilfrid's favour, they were not accepted at home by the highest authorities, clerical and lay, but they created precedents which flourished at a later day, and meanwhile the cause of discipline, so important in a new religious movement, suffered greatly. The hands of Archbishop Theodore in his early days were thus greatly crippled. Presently the monks took care that Wilfrid should be placed among the saints in the calendar, while Theodore was not.

The Church in England suffered especially from the very inadequate control and supervision of the monasteries, and the greatest scandals in consequence began to flourish. The practice initiated by Wilfrid of making himself (as founder of several monasteries) the perpetual abbot of all his spiritual progeny was directly contrary to a most wholesome Benedictine rule, that no man should be abbot of more than one monastery. This was further aggravated by another practice he favoured and which became common, namely, that of the abbots and abbesses nominating their successors. This again was contrary to the discipline introduced by St. Benedict.

All these things, it can be seen, created possibilities of mischief. They were immensely aggra-

vated by the class of men and women who, after the devotional fervour of the very early period of Church revival, began to enter monasteries in large numbers for other purposes than to live austere lives. As I have shown at length further on, the monasteries soon developed into comfortable and even luxurious homes, far more comfortable than the country houses of the gentry, while a much greater refinement was to be found there. It was natural that those who had sybaritic tastes, or longed for quiet and safe lives, should flock to them to find opportunities of spending their days in a much pleasanter and brighter way than in their rough homes. This new departure broke through all the original objects and purposes of conventual life, which was not to spend pleasant lives but to penalise all pleasures. It was natural that as this new class of monks and nuns increased there should grow relaxations of all kinds from the dreary and monotonous iteration of services and of penances. I have quoted the accounts given by such a good monk as Bede, of the doings at Coldingham, and the pictures drawn by Aldhelm and Boniface of the very unmonastic life led in some of the nunneries he knew. This evil must have prevailed pretty frequently and widely, or would not have been thus noted by men who were so friendly to the cause of monasticism. If it thus existed in the regular monasteries, it prevailed much more in the irregular and so-called private monasteries set up by rich men and landowners, which soon became common, and people lived very

irregularly and apparently without reproof and without control, and where all kinds of scandals prevailed. In order that this statement may not be thought the outcome of prejudice, I will quote at some length an additional testimony of Bede's contained in his famous and epoch-making letter to Archbishop Egberht of York. I have thought it well to give it the prominence of special mention in my Preface. It is a most important historical document and emphasises in every sentence the need for more supervision and discipline in the Church. Bede begins the letter by a reminder to the archbishop that they had agreed to renew a conversation which they had had the previous year when he spent a few days in the latter's monastery. He had been prevented from going to see him by the weakness of his health, and he accordingly wrote the letter in question. He regretted the more detailed, fuller freedom of speech which a personal interview would have afforded, and he begged him to banish from his mind any idea that the letter was dictated by arrogant affectation of superiority. This Bede might well do, since he was an old man with an established reputation for wisdom and learning. He exhorted him to make his works conform always to his teaching, to restrain himself from idle speaking and detraction, and to be guided specially by the Scriptures, and more particularly by St. Paul's Epistles to Timothy and Titus, the Pastoral Rule of St. Gregory and his homilies on the Gospels! His speech should be always seasoned with the salt

of wisdom, far above common speech. "As it is disgraceful," he says, "that the consecrated vessels of the altar should be profaned to vile and common purposes, so is it shocking for one who has been ordained to consecrate the Sacraments of our Lord upon the altar, on his departure from church to act and speak frivolously."

Not only should he read holy books, but consort with good men, so as to preserve his deeds and tongue from impurity. "Nor do I mention this," he adds, "as if I had any knowledge of your acting otherwise, but because it is commonly reported of certain bishops that they consort with those who are given up to laughter, jestings, fables, revellings, drunkenness, and other allurements of a loose life, and daily feed their bellies with feasts rather than their minds with heavenly sacrifices." If he found any such he bade Ecgberht correct them by his holy authority.

He reminded him that as the stretch of country over which his diocese extended was so great and precluded the possibility of his visiting it adequately and preaching the word of God in every village and farmstead, he should associate with himself a greater number of assistants in the holy work, by ordaining presbyters and appointing teachers who might preach the word and consecrate the holy mysteries, and especially perform the office of holy baptism. In such preaching the greatest care should be taken that the Catholic faith, as it is contained in the Creed of the Apostles (*quae apostolorum symbolo*

continentur), or in the Lord's Prayer (*Dominican orationem*), "which the Scripture of the holy gospel teaches us." "These," he says, "have no doubt been perfectly learnt (*optime didicisse*) by all who by constant study know the Latin tongue, but they should also be taught in their own tongue (*ipsa sua lingua discere*) to those clergy and monks as well as laymen who did not know Latin, and be continually repeated (*sedulo decantare*)."

"For this reason," he says, "I myself have given many unlearned priests an English translation of both the Creed and the Lord's Prayer. St. Ambrose admonished that the Creed should be repeated every morning by all the faithful . . . with us more frequent repetition of the Lord's Prayer has also been taught us by our custom of constant prayer and frequent bending of the knee."

He especially denounces those bishops who had had the presumption to receive temporal benefits which had not been repaid by them with any of the gifts of the heavenly bounty. "We have heard," he says, "and it is common report, that there are many homesteads and villages (*villae ac viculi*) of our nation situated in inaccessible mountains and wooded valleys, which for many years have never been visited by a bishop, yet none of which have been meanwhile exempted from the bishop's tribute (*a tributis antistiti*); not only have these places been without a bishop to confirm the baptized, but they have not even been visited by any 'doctor' to teach them, and yet such bishops have been guilty

of the grave crime of taking money from those who ought to have been their hearers." He very aptly quotes 1 Sam. xii. 3 against them. Bede therefore bids his correspondent repair whatever was amiss in this respect.

He further reminds him that in this work he could rely on the ready help of King Ceolwulf, who was bound to him by ties of relationship and affection, and would most readily carry out the good suggestions initiated by himself. He therefore prayed him to admonish that king to effect in "our own time" a reformation (*ipse ut perficiantur opitulari curabit*), so that the ecclesiastical condition should be put in a better position than before. He told him that he saw no better method of doing this than by consecrating a greater number of bishops for the nation, after the example of the giver of the law (*legislatoris*), *i.e.* Moses, "who, being unable by himself to bear the burden and litigation (*jurgia ac pondus*) of the people of Israel, was urged by divine counsel to consecrate seventy elders so as to render that weight less oppressive." He goes on to remind his friend that Pope Gregory, in a letter he had sent to Augustine, decreed that, as soon as the people had been converted, twelve new bishops should be appointed, of whom the Bishop of York should receive the pallium from the Holy See and become the Metropolitan; and he hopes that Ecgberht, under the patronising presidency (*patrocinate praesideo*) of the before-named most pious and God-beloved king, would endeavour to com-

plete this number of bishops in order to better regulate the government of the Church and the performance of the services. He adds that the matter had been made more difficult by the negligence and by the stupid munificence of former kings (*per incuriam . . . donationesque stultissimus*). The latter especially had made it almost impossible to find vacant sites suitable for planting sees. He therefore counselled that a larger Synod (*majori concilio*) should be held by the joint edict of the archbishop and the king (*pontificali et regali edicto*) in some place belonging to a monastery where a new see might be suitably founded. Lest the abbot and monks should resist, let permission be given them to choose one of their own body to be ordained bishop and to have charge of the district adjoining the monastery, together with the monastery itself. If there did not happen to be a monk in the monastery fit for the position, let the monks still retain the right of choosing some fit person in Ecgberht's diocese of York in accordance with the canons. If the matter was carried out as he suggested, it would be easy by a decree of the Apostolic See to secure that the Church of York should have a metropolitan pontiff. If it was necessary that for the maintenance of such a bishop the monastery should receive an augmentation both in regard to the extent of its territorial jurisdiction or its possessions, there were numberless places which were most stupidly called (*stilo stultissimo*) monasteries, but which possessed no features of the

monastic life. Some of them might be appropriated for the purpose. "I would wish," he says, "that they could, in fact, be by synodical authority turned from the purposes of luxury to those of chastity, from vanity to the truth" (a variant says "temperance"), "from gluttony to continence and piety of heart."

It is clear that Bede here points to a widespread and very great scandal. He goes on to say that such foundations were very numerous and extensive. They are said by him to have been useful neither to God nor man, since there was neither a regular life practised in them, nor were they occupied by soldiers or by nobles (*comites*) who would help the country in days of danger, and if in consequence of the necessities of the times it should be necessary to utilise them for the purpose of founding episcopal sees, it could not be imputed as a fault but as a virtue. "How can it be accounted a sin," he says, "to correct the unjust judgments of former rulers by the just ones of their successors, or that the work of the lying pen (*mendax stilus*) of wicked scribes should be cancelled by the discreet sentence of prudent priests?" Following precedents from the Old Testament, which he quotes, Bede bids the bishop destroy the unjust documents of title and the charters of former rulers, and to make such provision as was necessary for "the Province" whether as regards God or the world, lest by the cessation of religion in their times all restraint should be lost, while by the diminution in the numbers of the secular armies the land should be left undefended against the

assaults of barbarians. "As you well know, those who are utterly regardless of a monastic life have got into their possession so many houses in the name of monasteries, that there is no place which many of the sons of the nobility and veteran soldiers can occupy. They accordingly, when they have reached the age of puberty, live in idleness and unmarried, without any intention of being chaste, or else quit their native land, for which they ought to fight. With greater wickedness and shamelessness, those among them who have not made a profession of chastity surrender themselves to luxury and fornication, nor do they even abstain from the virgins consecrated to God. These last are even worse, for, being laymen, and not actuated by a love of a regular life, they by pecuniary payments to the kings and under the pretext of founding monasteries, have purchased for themselves territories where they find immunity for their lust (*libidini*). These territories they have secured by royal edicts as hereditary possessions, and have further had their charters securing privileges confirmed by the subscriptions of bishops, abbots, and the secular powers, as though they were really worthy of God. Thus they have obtained possession of fields (*agellulis*) and villages (*vicis*), and exempted themselves from the service both of God and man, obeying only their own desires. Although only laymen, they have monks under their rule, or rather people professing to be real monks, but consisting of those who have been expelled from actual monasteries for disobedi-

ence and have become vagrants ; or those who have been incited away from monasteries. In other cases they have converted their own servants into spurious monks by giving them the tonsure and exacting vows of monastic obedience to themselves. With such people," he says, "they have filled the buildings (*cellas*) which they have erected. Thus there is presented the shameless spectacle of the same men at one time being engaged in conjugal duties and the procreation of children, and at another rising from their beds to perform the internal duties of the so-called monasteries. They further seek with equal shamelessness sites on which to plant nunneries for their wives, who, with like presumption, being laywomen, thus they become the rulers of the handmaids of God." To such, Bede aptly applies what he calls a common proverb, "Though the wasps indeed build cells, yet they do not treasure up honey in them, but only poison."¹ This almost incredible condition of things is fully confirmed by the fifth canon of the Synod of Clovesho,² and by the letter of St. Boniface to Archbishop Cuthberht,³ where he speaks in indignant terms of practices such as are here mentioned.

"Thus," says Bede, "for thirty years, and since King Aldfrid left the world, our province has become so insane and raving (*vesano*) with this mad error that there is scarcely a single reeve (*praefectus*) who has not during his term of office founded a monastery of this description and at

¹ *Op. cit.* 121.

² Haddan and Stubbs, iii. 364.

³ *Ib.* 381.

the same time bound up his wife in a similar noxious net (*p̄ari reatu nocivi*). Their dependents and servants have done the same, and numberless persons are to be found who style themselves indiscriminately abbots, reeves, officers, or servants of the king, and who have learnt by hearsay something of the monastic life, but who know nothing of the real character of that profession whose duty it is to give instruction. Such persons without any due preparation and at their own caprice have received the tonsure, and by their own decision alone (being only laymen) have become abbots." Bede asks the bishop (with the aid of his Pontifical Synod — "*pontificali ac Synodica auctoritate*")¹ to restrain such scandals by the introduction of a stricter discipline, while the bishops and others should be induced to cease to encourage these scandals by giving the use of their names as parties to the charters referred to, thus sharing the covetousness of the founders of the establishments. He makes a special appeal to Ecgberht on the ground that it was commonly reported that the bishops were wont to claim that the inquisition and examination of the internal affairs of monasteries was the duty not of kings or other secular rulers, but of the bishops themselves, unless in cases where some one in a monastery had offended against the secular rulers. He urges him to see to it that the devil did not usurp "the rule of places" consecrated to the service of God, so that instead of peace, piety,

¹ See Plummer's *Bede*, ii. 386.

sobriety, charity, and chastity; discord, strife, drunkenness, fornication, and homicide dwelt there. He then pointed out the special duty of providing lay-people with suitable teachers, who should instruct them in what things are pleasing to God; in what they ought to believe of Him, and what they should abstain from if they are to please Him. Among other matters he specially impressed upon bishops the necessity of frequently fortifying themselves against the assaults of evil spirits and all who belonged to them by the sign of the cross, and urged how salutary it was for all Christians to daily partake of the Lord's Body and Blood, "according to the custom¹ which, you know, is closely observed by the Church of Christ throughout Italy, Gaul, Africa, Greece, and the whole of the East." This practice, he says, is so banished from nearly the whole of the laity of our province that it has become almost disused, and those who pass among the most religious, communicate only on the day of the Nativity of our Lord, the Epiphany, and Easter Day. Meanwhile he adds: "There are numberless innocent and chaste boys and girls, young men and women, old men and old women, who have no sufficient excuse, and who ought to partake of these mysteries at least every Lord's day and on the birthdays of the holy apostles and martyrs, as you yourself have seen

¹ Stevenson adds the note that in his Commentary on St. Matthew (*Op.*, v. 24), Bede says: "*Panis quotinianus . . . dictus est . . . pro sacramento Corporis Christi quod quotidie accipimus*" (Stevenson, *Bede*, 662, note).

done in the Holy and Apostolic Church at Rome.”¹ “Even married people,” he says, “if they would exercise a due measure of continence and of chastity, might lawfully be able to do the same.” He further reproves what he calls the modern tradition among those who called themselves the children of God, and who were in the habit of keeping property which they had owned when in the secular life.²

Such a picture as Bede here draws (almost without qualification) clearly proves how rapidly the Church had sunk from the ideals which permeated it in its very earliest days of golden sunshine, and justifies abundantly his plaintive longing for the coming of another Nehemiah.

The form of monkery which monopolised English religious life in the seventh and eighth centuries suffered, in fact, from two fundamental vices. It exaggerated the quality and practice of asceticism to a quite ridiculous excess, and it was not duly and adequately supervised by any competent authority.

The Latin world was much too barbarous, ignorant, and vicious to be cured as a whole by a remedy so drastic as that urged by the monks. For a while the fervour and mental elevation which

¹ This refers to his visit to Rome with Egred, Bishop of Lindisfarne (Plummer's *Bede*, ii. 378).

² The Rev. J. Stevenson quotes a sentence from St. Jerome's Epistle against Jovinian, *ad Pamm*, chap. vi., showing the practice at Rome in his time. “*Scio Romae hanc esse consuetudinem, ut fideles semper Christi corpus accipiant; quod nec reprehendo nec probo, unusquisque enim in suo sensu abundet.*”

naturally followed an attempt on a great scale to substitute a monk's ideals for those of the wild soldiery of the Lombard, Frankish, and Visigothic kingdoms, and of the worn-out sybarites who still survived among the Italian gentry, attracted a good number of recruits, but it could not last. Unless a large proportion of the men and women who became monks and nuns were permanently inspired by monkish ideals, the experiment was certain to fail. The great mass of men and women, however, are incapable of sustained and aggravated asceticism as a rule of life. The experiment as tried in the seventh century no doubt produced a certain number of ideal characters, but much fewer than is generally thought.

It has been my purpose in these volumes to describe some of this class who belonged to our English race in greater detail than has been done hitherto, but the harvest was a short one, and was followed by a deeper gloom when it was found impossible to recruit the original type of cœnobite, and the natural man overwhelmed the saint in the monasteries. As a whole, it was a dismal failure, and when it was presently swept away by the Danes it had to be revived in a new form and under different auspices.

Perhaps the position might have been saved if the monks would have tolerated supervision by some outside authority, either lay control under certain conditions, as was advocated by Bede, or episcopal visitation. They objected strongly to both. They deemed themselves quite able to pre-

serve the life of their monasteries free from vice and from the decay of fervour, reality, and self-sacrifice. Unfortunately their notions in this behalf were largely supported by the Popes, who found them most useful janissaries in their fight for autocracy against the early and only sound method of Church government, namely, that by a generous and cultivated oligarchy of bishops. By far the greater number of those early charters, which are *entirely* spurious, consist of grants of indulgences and of dispensations from episcopal control and visitation. The evil grew with the ages, and it was in vain that great monkish reformers, like the founders of the Cistercian and Cluniac orders, tried to design amended regulations to adequately meet the difficulties. These difficulties were a consequence of the one serious blot in the Benedictine Rule, namely, that of making the monasteries which called St. Benedict their father entirely independent of each other without providing some common system of discipline, some corporate responsibility, and some independent and drastic method of control that should be above suspicion.

The monks and nuns were not the only devotees of religion who found the enjoyments and temptations of the world too much for them at this time. Among the favourite forms of professed penance at this time were pilgrimages to different saints' shrines and especially to Rome, and the roads thither were crowded with such folk. Many of them were not too ascetic in their tastes, but were rather on pleasure

bent, and cloaked themselves under the pretence of doing God's pleasure and helping themselves on their way to heaven. I have in the following pages quoted from one of Archbishop Boniface's letters describing what took place habitually on this "Canterbury pilgrimage on a large scale," and how almost every town and village on the way to Rome had one (or more) Englishwoman living in it who had set out as a pilgrim but had lapsed into vicious ways and become morally lost. The fact is, the conditions were too dangerous and too risky. The institution of double monasteries also lent itself readily to breaches of morals, and was discouraged by the more serious clergy. As again it has been found in our day, in times of great spiritual exaltation, such as "revivals" and similar experiments in nervous tension, the passions easily succumb to hysteria and excitement under mental strain; while the herding together of men and women for purposes of safety on their long, difficult, and dangerous journey through wild peoples, and their unrestrained companionship with rough nobles, was certain to produce a continual crop of scandals.

There was one aspect of the extraordinary rush for the monastic life at this time which greatly troubled many thoughtful people, for it threatened to deprive the State of all suitable administrators and all protection. In my volume on St. Gregory I ventured to defend the Emperor Maurice (whom the Pope eventually treated so ill) for his attitude on this question, in which he strongly opposed

the rush of soldiers and others into monasteries ; thereby deserting their civil duties in pursuit of a contemplative life. The same evil was pursuing the community in England, and at a much more rapid pace. It is a remarkable fact that within little more than a century after the conversion of England, as many as eight Anglian kings resigned their thrones to adopt a religious life, namely, Sigeberht of East Anglia, Caedwalla of Wessex, Sebba of the East Saxons, Ethelred of Mercia, Coenred of Mercia, Ina of Wessex, Offa of East Anglia, and Ceolwulf of Northumbria. Four of them also went to Rome after abdicating, namely, Caedwalla, Coenred, Offa, and Ini. "Among the retiring kings were some by no means inactive, unwarlike, or unsuccessful men, and the resignation of Ceolwulf's successor, Eadberht, who also entered a monastery, was a national loss."¹ It was not the kings only who thus ran away from their duties. Symeon of Durham, writing of Ceolwulf's reign, says : "The beginning and progress of his reign were marked by a continued succession of misfortunes, but afterwards, when peace and tranquillity smiled upon him, many of the Northumbrians, as well nobles as private individuals, laid aside their arms, and having accepted the tonsure, gave a preference to the monastic life over that spent in warlike occupations."²

Bede had naturally noticed this tendency, and seems to have had forebodings of what would

¹ *Dict. of Ch. Biog.*, i. 443.

² *Hist. Eccl. Dun.*, ch. xiii.

follow from the strange movement. He expresses a fear that from the very large increase in illicit monasteries there would be such a diminution in the numbers of the secular armies that the country would be undefended from its enemies.¹ Again, elsewhere, he says: "Such being the peaceable and calm disposition of the times, many of the Northumbrian nation as well of the nobility as private persons, laying aside their weapons, incline to accept the tonsure and to dedicate both themselves and their children to monastic vows rather than to exercise themselves in the study of military matters. *What will be the end hereof, the next age will show.*"²

The next age did, in fact, show it in an unmistakable way, for when the northern pirates came upon the land like swarms of wasps, they found the country quite unprepared to meet them, and the once warlike people of the Anglians were reduced to decrepitude and effeminacy. Our land in consequence became the victim of merciless attacks, and well-nigh perished, just as the Eastern Empire similarly reached the verge of destruction and lost many of its fairest provinces when the Arabs overwhelmed it, because a large proportion of its people had become anchorites and nuns,—a story I have related at greater length in the following pages.

It was not merely these very open and patent ulcers which afflicted the Church at this time.

¹ Letter to Ecgberht, par. 11.

² *H.E.*, v. 23.

Perhaps the most woeful result of asceticism and of Pope Gregory's crusade against culture was the rapid decay of the human mind and the atrophy of all learning and refinement. The morbid and the extravagant in human nature have always had a certain awe and attraction for the crowd, whether induced by natural causes, as in the cases of epilepsy, etc., or brought about by putting a great strain on the reason and imagination by a course of penalising asceticism. The inevitable results of this self-mortification have been viewed by simple people in all climates and by all races and religions of men as in some way transcending the legitimate processes of logical thought and action and as implying a supernatural and inspired origin. The notion that there is something peculiarly Christian in the asceticism and visions and eccentricities of *Christian* anchorites is, of course, irrational. The same type of mental aberration and disease occurs among the savages of Africa as among the recluses whose lives fill so many pages of the *Acta Sanctorum*. The dervishes and fakirs and self-penalised saints of the Muhammadans, the Hindus, the Buddhists, etc. etc., are made of precisely the same stuff as St. Symeon Stylites, St. Guthlac, and St. Bartholomew, and in all cases there is a corresponding result when the self-abnegation is carried far enough. In all such cases the ordinary processes of thought and reasoning give way to phantasms and visions and transcendental ecstasy. These self-deluded creatures are accepted as

specially inspired by the Almighty by the uneducated crowd, and also by a certain number of educated people, who in such matters abandon every reasoning process. Their lapse into mental paralysis has been and still is in many latitudes accepted as evidence of a divine intervention by which the secrets of another world have been divulged and the laws of Nature have been suspended or reversed at the whim or bidding of poor, simple, daft people.

In the earlier days of the monastic movement, when it was inspired by extraordinary fervour and recruited by vast numbers of men and women of all conditions, it was natural that the asceticism should become more and more exaggerated. Exceptional instances when certain extremes of suffering pain and hunger, cold and heat, loneliness and monotony, were reached without dying, became ideals and standards of the highest kind. They received a correspondingly extravagant adulation and reverence from the crowd who flocked to their hermitages, listened to their wild words and thoughts, and acquired faith in the powers by which they claimed to influence the Ruler of the Universe and His saints in heaven, and acquired magical gifts of curing disease and of otherwise moving the forces of Nature.

It was the fashion (a fashion adopted by Gregory the Great, and given a great impulse to by him) to treat the monastic life as something much higher than that attainable by

the secular clergy. The monks in turn looked upon the hermit's life as a still higher ideal,¹ the highest of all being reached in the case of those who had had themselves walled in in holes, the "includens" as they were called, who never moved about again till their death. Such extravagances flourished greatly at the time to which this book relates. They were especially luxuriant among the impressionable Irish Celts. Bede tells us of an Irish monk, Adamnan, in the monastery of Coldingham, who only touched food on Sundays and Thursdays. Drythelm, who had the famous vision, would stand up to his loins, or sometimes up to his neck, in the river Tweed reciting prayers and psalms even when he had to break the ice in winter to get in, and would then let his cold garments dry upon his body.² The excesses would not have been so harmful if they had been treated simply as experiments in living by those who had concluded that the sole object of life was a continual warfare with their own passions, which they apostatised as so many devils. The real mischief came when the mental aberration and disturbance was accepted by such influential teachers as Gregory as divine inspirations, on the ground that no higher witness for the truth was available than the visions claimed by irreproachably pious men as direct communications from the

¹ Thus even Bede says of Cuthberht, when he abandoned the monastery at Lindisfarne to become an anchorite, that he rejoiced "*quia del onga perfectione conversationis activae, ad otium divinae speculationis jam mereretur ascendere*" (*Vit. Cuthberhti*, c. 17).

² Plummer, *Bede*, i. xx.

Almighty. Hence the teaching of the Gregorian *Dialogues*, in which such visions are appealed to continually. Hence also the more elaborate visions of a later day to which England furnished more than its due quota. They especially prevailed here in the seventh and eighth centuries, and I have thought it right to give considerable space to them, for they introduced a vast change into the eschatology of mediæval Christianity, and filled up the extremely scanty information about the conditions of heaven and hell and those who dwell there as given in Holy Writ, by a huge mass of imaginative details. These became the principal subject-matter of the teaching of the clergy and the monks, and were disseminated not only from the pulpit but in endless paintings on the walls of the churches, where they were pictured in a great variety of very crude and very highly coloured representations. Not only heaven and hell were thus constructed afresh, but also the very newly discovered and recently introduced realm of purgatory. This had been a mere suggestion in the works of St. Augustine of Hippo, but had vastly grown since his time. The only tangible evidence for it was ultimately based, as far as the Bible was concerned, on a solitary ambiguous verse of the uncanonical Second Book of the Maccabees. This tropical growth of fantastic eschatological thought almost completely shrouded and covered up every other teaching of Christianity. It became a mighty weapon in the hands of reckless and unprincipled men and women, whose rôle it was to collect huge

sums of money for monasteries and churches by bribing the expectant who were longing for a great prize in another world, and by frightening evil-doers into making huge gifts of land and money to secure them as short and as pleasant a journey as possible across the Christian Styx.

Most of this pernicious new departure, which almost monopolised the pulpit in the Middle Ages, originated and was largely developed at the time covered by these volumes. The mischief was noted by a few far-seeing men, but the advantages it offered in securing recruits for the Church and for enabling it to pay its way were too great to cause men to heed and to halt, and the result was a pitiful sacrifice of a great deal of what was best in Christianity to sordid and demoralising influences, and the chaining of those who had to teach the higher duties of man to a huge mass of charlatany and imposture.

It was not only beautiful heavenly visions of forbidding pictures of the nether world which engrossed men's thoughts who had become ecstatic by depriving themselves of nourishment and who had otherwise persuaded themselves that they had actually seen and visited realities. Others claimed to have had experiences of the whole hierarchy of angels and the many forms of devils who lived around them in this world, both of which had an ancestry in pagan times, and are now represented by the ghosts and apparitions which frequent old manor-houses, and the fairies and ogres which

people woods and caverns, and whose potency is still firmly believed in by many of the humbler rustics in out-of-the-way districts. Sometimes the visits of departed saints to their old haunts assume a picturesque form in these visions, and the stories are sometimes at least delicately painted. Let me quote two about St. Cuthberht as examples. They are told by the famous story-teller so often referred to in the following pages, namely, Reginald of Durham.

In one he reports how two Durham monks happened to be once at Farne Island serving the chapel dedicated to "the holy confessor," Cuthberht. About Christmas-time one Sunday, at midnight, they were chanting the first Mass, as (says Reginald) was the universal practice of the whole Church. Having finished it, one of them, who was not a priest, lay down a while to rest while the other remained in the choir praying and watching, when, behold, he saw a glimmer of light through chinks in the door, which then opened of itself on its hinges. He then beheld two tonsured men enter with lighted torches, while a man of venerable age vested as a bishop followed them. He was none other than St. Cuthberht. All three proceeded to the altar in the sanctuary. When they had recited the Confession and Absolution, they began the Mass with the office for Christmas Day, and sang the *Puer natus est nobis* (i.e. A child is born unto us) to the clearest music. Meanwhile, the candelabra on each side of the altar shone with a conspicuous light, and the bishop chanted the *Gloria*

in excelsis Deo, while a multitude of angels began to sing on high. When the brother saw this he tried to sing himself several times, but could not do so till the Mass was finished. It was his intention to have followed the bishop's steps if he had been able, but he could not move. The latter and his companions now completed the Mass with all its ceremonies, and the holy man duly gave the pontifical blessing to all the people and clergy (who were apparently part of the vision), and then withdrew in the same manner as they had entered. Meanwhile, the brother who had gone to sleep awoke and proceeded to recite the Mass, when he was stopped by his companion on the ground that it was not lawful for a priest to recite a Mass at an altar on the same day when a bishop had already done so. Reginald claims to have heard the story from the monk who saw the vision, whose testimony he therefore urges was conclusive.¹

The second story is very similar. It relates to a vision seen at Lindisfarne, three days before a promised visit of Bishop Pudsey. For this visit the procurator of the abbey had provided all things needful for the service, including two wax candles of great length to be carried before him. They were placed on a credence table in the Church of St. Cuthberht. On the night of the third day before his arrival, the deacon, who was charged with the custody of the church ornaments, etc., had gone to sleep with his colleagues at the north side

¹ *Op. cit.* ch. lviii.

of the church. It was midnight, and on awaking from his sleep he heard a loud noise at the great west door of the church and also some very melodious music. He then saw the doors open, and two persons stood beside his bed, dressed in albs or surplices (*albis indutos*). They asked him for the two great candles, so that they might wait on the great man who was expected, and they also asked for some clean linen to decently clothe the altar, for the great bishop of the Church, St. Cuthberht, had come to celebrate Mass there and had sent them to prepare the place. He timidly pointed out to them where the candles were, and produced the keys of the linen press from his girdle, for he was afraid to rise from his bed or to ask them any more questions. They opened the presses and took out the best linen, with which they decked the altar. Putting the candles into candlesticks they carried them, thus heading the procession of singers to the choir, where they joined those already there. Among the latter were many elderly men in surplices (*virorum dealbatorum*). They were followed by the bishop. When he reached the choir he proceeded very solemnly to recite the Mass, accompanied by the singers, with sweetest music. They first sang "the Gradual" and some other parts, and the choir afterwards decently repeated them in the ecclesiastical fashion (*more ecclesiastico*). The deacons (*levitae*) assisted the bishop in the approved canonical fashion. Meanwhile the whole church was effulgent with light. The Mass, as far

as the reporter could judge, was that of the Holy Ghost. When it was finished all the assembly withdrew as they had entered. He further reported how he had heard the music die away as they departed in the direction of St. Mary's Church.

Presently the torch-bearers returned, bringing back the torches, and left the doors open as they went out. When the brethren came to church in the morning they wondered much at seeing the doors open and the altar clothed. When they examined the candles they found that more than one palm of their length had been burnt away, which was conclusive, says Reginald (*Certis experimentorum insigniis omnem incertitudinis ambiguum excluserunt*).¹

Let us now return again to the inner state of the Church at this time.

The stagnation of culture, learning, and criticism which began to be so marked in the seventh century led to the revival on a large scale of those forms of pagan magic and necromancy among the upper and middle classes which had always prevailed among the peasants and villagers in the rural districts. This popular religion, like that of the Indian villages, was very different to the religion defended and patronised by the more accomplished clergy. It was called "pagan" because it prevailed among the *pagani* or villagers. It steeped Christianity with its materialistic ideas and notions, and it peopled the universe with countless hosts of good and bad

¹ *Op. cit.* ch. lix.

spirits who were perpetually struggling for the possession of human souls, and trying to torment or injure men, or, on the other hand, to protect and cherish them. As the upper strata of society became more ignorant and barbarous, their faith was more and more sophisticated by the superstitions of the wise women and professional witches and soothsayers who had a wonderful store of magical remedies for human ills.¹ Among these charms the broken bones and the sordid rags which had belonged to reputed saints became as popular as they have always been among the Buddhists. As I have tried to show, the cult of such relics had become at this time most extravagant, degrading, and superstitious, and had no warrant in early Christianity or in the documents of the early Christian Church. It is little short of astounding that so many people should have allowed themselves to be deluded into supplying large funds for building monasteries and churches; not because such places were acceptable to God, but because their local saint's intervention had been secured to gain advantages in both worlds by appeals to the débris of his skeleton and clothes, remains which were in nearly all cases spurious and in theory not Christian at all, but mere survivals of the lowest forms of idolatry and fetishism. It is more strange that the cult should survive so widely in the twentieth century.

¹ The cult of charms and mascots in our own day still marks the level of intelligence which prevails in the empty heads of many of the leisured classes.

I think it profitable as an object-lesson in early mediæval thought to make a selection from a particularly famous magazine of relics of a great and wealthy mediæval church of which we have a detailed list. I will therefore select some of the more fantastic and incredible of these treasures from St. Cuthberht's shrine in his great minster at Durham, which was largely built with the proceeds obtained by the exhibition and cult of his relics. It must be remembered that this very rich foundation was naturally officered by some of the picked clergy of the Middle Ages, while its relics attracted thither not the ignorant and humble only, but was the goal of the best-born and best-educated in the land. The complete record is given in the list written down in 1383 by Richard de Segbrok, who then had charge of the relics.

“ A pyx of crystal containing the blood of that blessed man, St. Thomas, the martyr of Canterbury.

A vial and crystal containing the veil and hair of St. Mary Magdalene.

Some of the coals which burnt St. Laurence.

A vestment of St. John the Baptist, a portion of his dish.

Some of the ashes of St. Amphibalus¹ the martyr.

A piece of the manger of the Lord.

A part of the beard of St. Godric.

A joint of St. Laurence, partly consumed in the fire, in a crystal vial ornamented with silver.

A pyx of crystal containing the milk of the Virgin Mary.

Portions of the sepulchre and chemise of the virgin, and of the sepulchre and veil of Anne, her mother.

A tooth of St. Stephen and portions of his skull and bones.

¹ This saint, as is well known, was invented by a mistake, the cloak of St. Alban having been mistaken for a saint's name.

- Part of a stone on which Mary, the mother of the Lord, spilt some of her milk (*mulgebat lac suum*).
- A piece of the stone where our Lord was born.
- A piece of the robe of John the Baptist.
- A crystal vial with manna from the grave of St. Mary.
- A portion of the bread which our Lord blessed.
- Part of the skull of St. Peter.
- Portions of the flesh and fat of St. Thomas the martyr, and some of the robes in which he was buried.
- A piece of the stone upon which Jesus sate in the judgment-seat of Herod.
- A piece of the tree under which were the three angels with Abraham.
- Some of the bones of the Innocents in a vial of crystal.
- A portion of the rock from which Christ ascended into heaven, of His manger and cradle, of the stone upon which He was born, of His tunic, of the stones beyond Jordan, of Christ's face-cloth.
- Portions of the tree of the Lord, of the stone which lay at His head at the sepulchre, of the tree of Paradise.
- A thorn of the crown of Jesus.
- A portion of the flesh of St. Oswin, the king and martyr.¹
- Pieces of the side of St. Margaret and of the dish of St. John the Baptist.
- A portion of the sponge of the Lord, and of the desert in which He fasted forty days.
- A piece of the table of the Lord, of the stone upon which was born John the Baptist, and of the stone and vessel in which were washed the feet of the apostles.
- A particle of the pillar where Christ was scourged, and of the palm of the Lord.
- A portion of the Circumcision of the Lord, of St. John the Baptist, and of James the Lord's brother.
- A piece of the stone with which St. Stephen was stoned.
- A piece of the Annunciation of St. Mary. [What this means I do not know.]
- The skull and bones of one of the eleven thousand virgins.
- A piece of the breast (*inter mamillas*) of St. Gracian, the virgin and martyr.

¹ To which there is an amusing note in a more modern but mediæval hand, "*The writer told a lie, for he remains in a state of incorruption.*"

A piece of the throne on which Christ sat with His disciples.

A piece of the stone on which He wrote when His disciples questioned Him about the law.

A piece of the twelve thrones of the apostles."

These are a selection only, they do not include endless numbers of bones and rags professing to come from more or less well-known persons to whom special sanctity and special occult powers were attached. They need no comment. They afford a degrading proof of the depths reached by the credulity and materialism of professing Christians. They assuredly supply the best antidote to the pretensions of those whose hearts are bent on finding an ideal path to heaven by following the steps of the approved teachers of the seventh and succeeding centuries.

Similar collections existed in all the larger churches in Europe, and in order that all the more potent saints should be represented in each of them, their heads and limbs had to be multiplied just as pieces professedly belonging to the True Cross were to be found in sacristies in sufficient numbers to build up several editions of the Rood.

Bishop Forbes has a notable story illustrating this last phase of relic-mongering. Speaking of St. Baldred, he says: "He died in the house of the parish priest at Aldhame. His three churches each demanded his body, and when the people could not agree, being advised to pray to God to give them a sign, in the morning they found three bodies laid out, each with the same exequial pomp,

and each congregation carried off one to its own church, where the writer of the Breviary of Aberdeen says, 'It is kept with great honour unto this day.'" A similar legend as to the triplication of his body is narrated by Capgrave about the great Welsh saint, Helias. Two bodies of St. Patrick were also miraculously produced. Camerarius, the writer of one of the Calendars edited by Bishop Forbes, when treating of the Holy Eucharist seeks to prove by the example of the body of St. Baldred that the same body can be in diverse places at once (*simul et semel*).¹

The cult of relics in its crudest and most material forms has been put into the background in the fashionable churches of Vienna and Munich, of Brussels and Madrid, but it may be still seen in full bloom in the churches of Mexico and South America, of Sicily and the old kingdom of Naples. In the centres of taste and fashion it has given place to other cults quite as revolting in their undisguised materialism, and quite as remote from the slightest warrant to be derived from the Bible or early Christian tradition, notably the well-known Jesuit invention of the Sacred Heart, and such miracles as the liquefaction of the blood of St. Januarius.

The theory by which relics of saints were endowed with magical virtues easily spread in other directions, and a whole machinery of thaumaturgy was invented or else copied from the superstitions and

¹ Forbes (*Kalendars of Scottish Saints*, 273-74).

the witchery and magic of the still very pagan rural poor and easily adapted to a Christian dress. Consecrated buildings, consecrated crosses, holy water, sanctified oil and salt were all made to pass as embodying magical virtues. They were deemed as potent and operative as they are among nearly all savage races, as my friend Professor Frazer has so well shown and so well explained in his *Golden Bough*.

This materialism, again, invaded the mysteries of the Sacraments, which in the hands of those who fashioned the beliefs of the seventh and eighth century speedily passed away from their original meaning as pledges (*Sacramenta*) of the devoted loyalty of Christ's soldiers to their first Commander into mere magic. It will be remembered that at this time men had not yet discovered the long-lost metaphysical works of Aristotle which presently enabled them to qualify the crudity of the conclusions about the change of bread and wine into flesh and blood (then prevalent) by an utterly illusory metaphysical postulate and nothing more. This latter twelfth-century invention, which many people fancy has quite an early origin, was based on no evidence whatever. Upon nothing, in fact, but two unverified and unverifiable postulates, namely, that it is possible for Substance to exist without any Accidents, and, secondly, that it can change its essence without affecting in any way its qualities as recognised by the senses. This pseudo-philosophical hocus-pocus was not available to the theologians of the seventh and eighth centuries, and they did not

therefore scruple to teach that the host in the Sacrament could bleed and be made to have a nauseous taste or smell, which, if true, would entirely destroy the basis of the later theory of Transubstantiation, while it is itself a revolting thought. It is assuredly the strangest thing of all, that if Aristotle's suggestion was needed in order to rightly explain the Sacrament, for mistakes about which the sinner was repeatedly sent to the stake in later times, that it should not have been disclosed by the Great Father to mankind, for whom it was so exceedingly important, until the twelfth century, and then only by an accident. I may be rebuked for speaking thus plainly of matters which some people persistently and most inconsequently disguise under the term mystery. It is not the mystery I complain of. Like my master in these matters, the greatest of the Schoolmen, "The Invincible Doctor," our English Occam, who has been so neglected by our teachers at Oxford and Cambridge, I complain of the attempts to materialise and explain mysteries. With him I hold that it is futile to try and establish dogmas by dialectics. Their province is faith and not reason. If dialectics are invoked, however, let them be rational and logical, and not be based on a postulate which revolts reason and is condemned by the common sense of mankind.

We must not forget, while writing or reading about the religious life of the eighth century, how many of the *modern* trappings under which primitive Christianity was afterwards concealed, and which

qualify its worship in many latitudes, is directly traceable to the deliberate teaching of those who in the seventh and two following centuries cast behind them most of the traditions of the early Fathers, and entirely transformed much of primitive Christianity into a department of magic. Nor must we forget that what was really the invention of the darkest centuries the world has probably ever seen, both morally and mentally, are accepted by a large number of living Christians as the most cherished fountains of their faith. This has been defended on the utterly false plea that men were so much wiser and better long ago, and it has been gilded to look more comely and more attractive by carefully concealing the blots on the older picture, as painted by the artists inspired by Pope Gregory's ideas and the early monks, and passing off an imaginative ideal landscape on the unwary. The period we are dealing with has, in fact, few or no lessons for us, and is marked by the growth of at best a few beautiful parasites on a decaying tree. "*Lucus a non lucendo*" is a poor lantern to guide our feet across the dark fields we all have to traverse.

It was not only their surroundings, but the character of most of the alleged saints themselves of that time, which was so questionable. Saints then found their way into the Calendar without any examination or criticism of their deserts and were multiplied exceedingly. Whatever gross lives, whatever cruelties or crimes or offences against morals and charity men committed, if they at the

close of life endowed the Church with solid gifts or privileges, it was easy for them to be enrolled in the phalanx of the saints. At the period we are dealing with there was no inquisition or inquiry made. Popular repute was enough, and any wild legend about wonders having been observed at the tomb of a dead man, or the existence at his grave of a visible halo or a fragrant scent, were accepted as sufficient testimony of the sanctity of the person lying there, while certain classes of men, like anchorites or hysterical ascetics, had their names transferred to the Calendar without further ado. The number of these saints in Anglo-Saxon times was very great, and they were nearly all high-born, which is itself a sinister proof as to the methods by which the title could be secured. In Ireland at the same time, where saints were a most ambiguous and motley body of people who led most irregular lives, all the members of certain families were treated as saints, and the caste was hereditary. I will quote a single sample of the kind of men who thus secured "a cult" and who were addressed as intercessors with the Almighty—even in later times when more care was taken to verify their pretensions than was the case in the seventh and eighth century.

In Segbrok's list, already referred to, there are recorded among the relics to which honour was paid at St. Cuthberht's shrine at Durham, a pair of beads belonging to *Saint* Thomas of Lancaster who was beheaded at Pontefract on the 22nd of March 1322, for rebellion against Edward the

Second. Let us see what Holinshed, a good Catholic, has to say about him. "Touching the foresaid Earl of Lancaster, great strife rose afterwards among the people, whether he ought to be reputed for a saint or no. Some held that he ought to be no less esteemed, for that he did many almsdeeds in his lifetime, honoured men of religion, *and maintained a true quarrel till his life's end. Also his enemies continued not long after, but came to evill end.* Others conceived another opinion of him, alledging that he favoured not his wife, but lived in spouse-breach, defiling a great number of damsels and gentlewomen. If anie offended him, he slue him shortly after, in his wrathful mood. Apostates and other evill doers he maintained and would not suffer them to be punished by due order of law. All his dooings he used to commit unto one of his secretaries, and took no heed himself thereof; and as for the manner of his death, he fled shamefullie in the fight and was taken and put to death against his will, because he could not avoid it; *yet by reason of certaine miracles which were said to be doone neare the place both where he suffered and where he was buried,* caused many to think he was a Saint. Howbeit at length, by the King's commandment, the church doors of the Priorie where he was buried were shut and closed, so that no man might be suffered to come to the toome to bring any offerrings or to do any other kind of devotion to the same. Also the hill where he suffered was kept by certaine 'Gascoignes,' appointed by the Lord

Hugh Spencer, the sonne, then living at Pomfret, to the end that no people should come and make their praier there in worship of the said Earle, whom they took verelie for a martyr.”¹ All this did not prevent his relics from being publicly exhibited and cherished in the relic house at Durham, and his being distinctly styled “Saint Thomas” in the official list of the treasures there.

In concluding my long preface, which was necessary to explain a long and crowded book, I have to make some apologies, as all authors with any modesty must do, for lapses of different kinds, lapses of memory, lapses due to personal carelessness and inattention when unwell or weary, lapses from following too faithfully my erring guides, who like myself have sometimes nodded. These pitfalls and others are shared by all those who write the kind of history which is dependent on multiform sources, many of them requiring special knowledge to test accurately, many of them ambiguous or contradictory, and many, again, dishonest. Those who have rambled along similar paths will remember the brambles that have torn their clothes, as they have torn mine too often. Perhaps they will find in the five volumes I have offered them some things they have not known before, some things which appear in a new light, and if so, they will for the sake of the harvest, however small, not think exclusively of the blots and blemishes they meet with. They will be compassionate too,

¹ Holinshed, *sub an.* 1322.

perhaps, if they do not always agree with the author's conclusions and deductions. Those last have not been made arbitrarily, nor to sustain or support any foregone conclusions or to defend any citadel. If the picture he has drawn has its sombre shadows as well as its bright lights this is inevitable in the subject. The monastic and ascetic English Church produced during its first two centuries some beautiful individual examples and characters, but it was bound to fail. It was based on ideals which are not consistent with human passions and human foibles. It reduced human life to a perpetual sacrifice of happiness and joy in the vain hope that wicked, sensual, selfish, and animal thoughts and lives could be finally banished by cruelly torturing the body and paralysing the mind and conscience. Many men of fine character tried it and failed, St. Augustine of Hippo, St. Jerome, and St. Bernard among them. Their efforts only increased the burning fires in their blood and the overwhelmingly morbid thoughts in their minds. It is a pitiful confession that St. Jerome has to make.

Let me quote from one of his epistles. I will take it from Dr. Workman's excellent translation. "How often," he says, "in the desert, in that vast solitude which, parched by the sultry sun, affords a dwelling for the monks, did I fancy myself in the midst of the luxuries of Rome. I sat alone, the companion of scorpions and wild beasts, and yet was in the midst of dancing girls. My face was white and fasting, but the mind in my cold body

was hot with desires. The fires of lust burnt up a body which was already dead.”¹

It was for results like this, then, that men and women were taught by nearly all the available Christian teachers of the time we have written about to abandon their civil and their social duties, their family ties, and the cultivation of all that is covered by the word beauty and taste in art, literature, and the amenities of life. All this gigantic immolation of what the great Father has made part of our nature was labelled wicked and rigidly abnegated in order to save the shrunken, barren, dried-up things into which men had converted their souls and their characters from the fires of a hell built up of childish material horrors and from a world teeming with horned and hooved demons invented by a quite morbid imagination. Is it not well to remind those who are always harking back to a factitious golden age, which they fancy they see through the gloaming, and only do so by hiding the plain truth of things from themselves while doing homage to some phases of the picture? If we are to moralise at all on these lines, must we not—while duly appreciating the poetic halo which attended the simple, naive, ingenuous lives of the saints at their best, who remained children at seventy and eighty years old—speak in the clearest fashion, without any evasions or interpolations, about the wickedness and folly, the feebleness and impotence which substantially marked human society in those

¹ Workman, *The Evolution of the Monastic Ideal*, p. 321.

times, and to be thankful that they came to an end and were swept away before they had corroded our English life and converted it into a shadow of that of Tibet, where extreme ascetic ideals have had full sway and have done their worst? In England Nemesis came quickly, and with her the strong and cruel, but masculine and virile, Northmen, and they did their work effectually in sweeping away a large part of the spurious morality and self-deception, and of the paralysis of the mind, the heart, and the active virtues of man, with the grim remedies of blood and iron. Let me finish by quoting a truer and a better ideal which was well set out by the blind seer who wrote so much wisdom in such majestic English, our own unmatched Milton.

“I cannot praise,” he says, “a fugitive and cloistered virtue, unexercised and unbreathed, that never sallies out and seeks her adversary, but shrinks out of the race where that immortal garland is to be run for, not without dust and heat. Assuredly we bring not innocence into the world, we bring impunity much rather ; that which purifies us is trial, and trial is by what is opposite.”¹

¹ *Areopagita* (ed. Bohn, ii. 68).

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INTRODUCTION

THERE is no period of English history known to me in which there are so many doubtful and difficult materials as the one dealt with in the following volumes. I deem it necessary to analyse these, if not completely, at least with some patience, since it is not possible to write history reputably until the bases of the story have been established by the verification of our materials. The consideration of these doubtful materials I shall precede by a survey of others of a different quality, and shall begin with Bede, whose *Ecclesiastical History* is a unique possession of our race, no other people having anything to compare with it at this time or till much later. In the Preface to my volume on Augustine, pp. lxvi, etc., I have had something to say about him, and will now supplement what I then wrote.

I have called him Bede, because that mode of spelling the name is most familiar, but he was really named Bæda or Beda. His birth has generally been fixed at the year 672 or 673, which date is accepted by Mr. Plummer, but the Rev. Joseph Stevenson gives some plausible reasons for putting it in 674.¹ He was born, as he himself tells us, in the territory of the twin monasteries of Wearmouth and Jarrow, and at the age of seven he was sent by his relatives to be educated by Abbot Benedict Biscop and afterwards by Abbot Ceolfrid. He himself says he received deacon's orders in his nineteenth year, which was before the canonical age,² and those of the priesthood when he was twenty-nine, both of them at the hands of Bishop John of Hexham, and at the request of Abbot Ceolfrid. From this time to his fifty-ninth year, when he was writing the epilogue to his *Ecclesiastical History*, he spent his life in the monasteries just named, applying himself, as he says, "to the study of the Scriptures amidst the observance of regular discipline and the daily singing in the church; and in learning, teaching, and writing, in

¹ Preface to *Bede*, pp. iii and iv.

² Plummer, *Bede*, i. x, note 2.

which he always took delight.”¹ Symeon of Durham tells us that in his time there still existed a small house (*mansiuncula*) of stone, in which it was reported that he studied and wrote. According to Reginald of Durham, he had an impediment in his speech (*linguae impeditoris impedimenta ipsius meritis absolvi meruit*).² Of this he was cured by St. Cuthberht.³

When the community at Jarrow was exterminated by the plague, as I have described, the abbot and a small boy, who, it has been generally concluded, could have been no other than Bede himself, alone survived.⁴ I have told the story how the boy assisted Ceolfrid in the services during the time when the two alone remained in the monastery. His later life was spent almost entirely in one or other of the two monasteries on the Wear, but chiefly at Jarrow. We read elsewhere of his having visited Lindisfarne and York, but it would seem that the widespread notion that he had visited Rome is founded on a mistake.⁵ Pope Sergius had apparently heard of the learned men in Northumbria, and wrote suggesting that Abbot Ceolfrid should send him one, but it is clear that Bede never went. Bede only mentions one of his teachers by name. This was Trumberht, whom he speaks of as one of the brethren who instructed him in the Scriptures, and who had been brought up in St. Chad’s Monastery at Lastingham;⁶ but we cannot doubt that at that time there must have been a goodly number of competent teachers in Benedict Biscop’s famous monasteries from whom the great historian learnt the Greek and Latin in which he was so proficient. One learned traveller was certainly living there in his time, namely, John, the arch-cantor of St. Peter’s. His special patron, Abbot Ceolfrid, had been a scholar in the school at Canterbury where Theodore and Hadrian taught, and there were doubtless others at Jarrow who had had the same advantages. Bede was further fortunate in having access in his own monasteries to the large stores of fine books collected there by both Benedict and Ceolfrid. As Mr. Plummer says: “It is pretty certain that one of his industry and ability would pass at a comparatively early age from the ranks of the taught to those of the teacher.”⁷ He quotes several sentences in which Bede largely extols and exalts the profession of a

¹ *H.E.*, v. 24.² *Op. cit.* ch. 76.³ *Ib.*⁴ *Anonymous History of the Abbots*, par. 14; Bright, 346 and 347; Plummer, i. xii.⁵ Plummer, i. xvi and xvii.⁶ *Bede*, iv. 3.⁷ *Ib.* i. p. xxi.

teacher.¹ The fact is, that his great rôle was that of a school-master, and a considerable number of his books were school-books and manuals for teaching. As the Rev. J. Stevenson says: "We have no ground for supposing that he took any prominent part in the public transactions of either monastery. We are justified in concluding that his days glided on in the undisturbed tranquillity of monastic seclusion, occupied alternately in the duties of religion and in the service of literature."² His was indeed the life of a saintly scholar, and as such he was accepted all over the Western Christian world. Dante couples his name with that of St. Isidore of Seville. His fame was wide and long-lived, and he was known as the Venerable. The origin of this title was the subject-matter of more than one pretty story. Thus we are told that when he had grown old his eyes grew dim through overstudy, and he became blind, whereupon the mockers said, "Bede, behold, the people are gathered together waiting to hear the word of God; arise and preach to them." He, thirsting for the salvation of souls, thought there were other people in the church at the time, not knowing he had been deceived and that only the mockers were in fact there. He concluded his sermon with the words, "This may God deign to grant to us, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost," whereupon the angels replied, "Amen, very venerable Bede."³ Another story puts the incident in a stone-strewn valley while Bede was on a journey, and it was the stones that replied, "Amen, Venerabile Pater."⁴ Fuller makes his name the subject-matter of one of his quaint conceits. "He is generally surnamed Venerable," he says, "but why, authors differ therein; some say a dunce-monk, trying to write his epitaph, was nonplussed to make that dactyle which is onely of the quorum in the hexameter, and therefore at night left the verse gaping thus: *Hic sunt in fossa Bedae . . . ossa*, till he had consulted with his pillow, to fill up the hiatus. But returning in the morning an angel had filled up the chasm with *venerabilis*."⁵ Bede's command of Latin, as Plummer says, is excellent, and his style is clear and limpid. Unlike Pope Gregory, who professed to despise grammar, he was contemptuous of those who wrote of sacred things ungrammati-

¹ *Bede*, i. p. xxi.

² *Church Historians of Eng.*, vol. i. part ii. xvii.

³ *Chron. Min. Auct. Minorita Erphoirdiensi*, Pertz, xxiv. 180; Plummer, *Bede*, xlvi.

⁴ *Bede*, *Op.*, i. clxi; Plummer, *op. cit.* xlix.

⁵ *Ib.*

cally (*indignum vehementer existimo, ut verba coelestis oraculi restringam sub regulis Donati*).¹ Alcuin speaks of his style as *Sermo simplex*,² and Roger of Wendover as *stylo ad purum purgato*.³

Bede also knew Greek. This is shown most clearly, as Mr. Plummer says, by his two works on the Acts, the *Expositio* and the *Retractationes*, throughout which he is constantly comparing the Latin version with his "*Graecum Exemplar*," which, from the readings he gives, must have been a MS. now existing in the Bodleian Library.⁴ Of this MS., Mr. Plummer says: "It has the Greek and Latin in parallel columns, and as the writing is very large, there is seldom more than one word in a line, so that the Latin forms an almost word-for-word translation of the Greek." He adds that there are many other passages in Bede's works which seem to imply some knowledge of Greek. Of these he gives a list in a note.⁵ Symeon of Durham says of him: "*Graecae (linguae) peritiam non mediocriter percepit*."⁶ Stubbs also says he knew some Hebrew.⁷ There ought to be no doubt about Bede's knowledge of his own vernacular speech, and yet there are difficulties in some of his interpretations of Northumbrian names which seem either to point to this conclusion or else to show that the text of our author has been more interpolated than some have supposed—for example, his mistaken translation of Heruteu (Hartlepool) by *insula cervi*,⁸ and Strenæshale (Whitby) by *sinus Fari*.⁹ He also gives more than one gloss from the Celtic tongues which might make it appear that he had some knowledge of them; thus he glosses *Dearmach* as the Scotie for *campus roborum*,¹⁰ while he explains Dalreudini as meaning in the same tongue *pars Reudini*, adding: "*nam lingua eorum daal partem significat*."¹¹ Again, in speaking of the island on the coast of Mayo, called in the Scots speech Inisboufinde, to which Bishop Colman retired, he adds: "*id est insula vitulae albae nuncupata*." He also gives us a specimen each of a gloss in British and in Pictish. Thus, speaking of Alcluith, on the Clyde, he says: "*quod lingua eorum significat petram Cluith*"; while he tells us that the place named Penneltun, near Abercorn, was called Peanfahel by the Picts.¹² His best-known pupils were Huætberht

¹ *Comm. on Job*, cited by Werner, p. 19.

² i. p. 220.

³ *Op. cit.* i. liv, note 5.

⁴ *Dict. of Chr. Biog.*, i. 301.

⁵ *Ib.* 25.

⁶ *Op. cit.* i. 1.

⁷ *Mon. Alc.*, 598, 599.

⁸ *Laud. Greek* 35.

⁹ *H. D. E.*, lib. i. ch. 29.

¹⁰ *H. E.*, iii. 24.

¹¹ *Ib.* 4.

¹² *Op. cit.* i. 12.

and Cuthberht, Abbots of Jarrow, and Nothelm, Archbishop of Canterbury.

We must remember that "Jarrow had not, like some larger and later monasteries, a great scriptorium with a staff of trained copyists. In the preface to his *St. Luke*, Bede expressly says that, in addition to the various ties of his monastic duties, he had to be his own amanuensis, shorthand writer (*notarius*), and copyist."¹ When he became feeble, however, it is clear that he used to dictate his work. Thus, in the beautiful account of his death by one of his pupils called Cuthberht, we read that at the last he was still engaged in completing two works he had been busy upon, namely, his translation of the Gospel of St. John into English, and some extracts from the works of Isidore. On the Wednesday before Ascension Day he became worse, but still taught and dictated cheerfully; "next day he bade us write diligently what we had begun, and this we did up to the third hour. We then walked in procession with the relics, as was customary. One of us stayed behind, who said, 'There is still one chapter wanting of the book which thou hast been dictating, but it seems hard for thee to be questioned further.' 'Nay,' he said, 'it is easy; take thy pen and mend it and write quickly'; and he did so. The Brethren were then summoned to hear his last commands. Then the same boy Wilberht said once more, 'There is still one sentence, dear master, which is not written down'; he replied, 'Then write it.' After a little space the boy said, 'Now it is finished,' and he answered, 'Well, thou hast spoken truth; it is finished. Take my hand in thy hands' . . . and thus, upon the floor of his cell, singing Glory be to the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Ghost, and the rest, he breathed his latest breath."² A pathetic letter from the Abbot of Jarrow to Archbishop Lullus of Mainz points to other difficulties in scholars' ways at this time. He complains that he had not been able to send him a copy of all Bede's works, because the intense cold of the late winter had stopped the hand of the scribe, though he and his young men had done their best.³

Bede's own honesty in naming his authorities has been extolled by other writers, and he specially asks the copyists of his

¹ See Bede, *Opera*, i. 268; Plummer, *Bede*, i. xx.

² *Vide op. cit.* in Plummer, i. lxxvi, clxiii. The Wilberht here mentioned was doubtless the monk of the name recorded in the *Liber Vitae* at Durham, who became Abbot of Lindisfarne.

³ *Mon. Alc.*, p. 301; Plummer, i. xxi, note 1.

theological works to preserve the indications which he had placed in the margins of the sources from which he borrowed: "*Multumque obsecro . . . ut si qui forte nostra . . . opuscula transcriptione digna duxerint, memorata quoque nominum signa, ut in nostro exemplari reperiunt adfigere meminerint.*"¹ This request, as Werner points out, they must have almost entirely neglected.²

The first works written by Bede, so far as we know, were the two memoirs entitled *de Metrica Arte* and *de Schematibus et Tropis*. The two tracts really form one volume. Bede says of them: "*Item librum de metrica arte et huic adjectum alium de schematibus et tropis sacrae scripturae libellus.*" They were clearly meant for school-books, and were written when he was still a deacon, as appears from his dedication of them to his friend Cuthberht, in which he says: "*Haec tibi dulcissime fili, et conlevita Cuthberte . . . excerpere curavi.*"³

The tract *de Metrica* begins with an account of the alphabet, which is followed by a notice of the forms of syllables. It then discusses the peculiarities of hexameters and pentameters, and of the later lyrical poetry, and ends with an account of the difference between rhythm and metre, and a short notice of the nature of the poetic art. All this Bede copies from earlier writers, such as Donatus, Pompeius, Sergius, Audax, Victorinus, Mallius Theodorus, Servius, Charisius, and Diomedes, a list which is ampler than one would expect, but not so long as that of Bishop Aldhelm. Unlike Aldhelm, he only gives his pupils examples from the Christian poets, except in a few cases from Vergil, and one each from Lucan and Terence. His point of view may be seen from a reference to Porphyry and others, where he says: "*Quae quia pagana erant, nos tangere non libuit.*" Among Christian poets he cites Iuvenus, Prudentius, Paulinus of Nola, Prosper, Sedulius, Arator, Cyprianus Gallus, and the Ambrosian hymns. Most of these references he seems to have derived from the Irish scholar Cruindmelus.⁴ Remigius of Auxerre wrote a commentary on Bede's work *de Metrica*.⁵

Bede describes the contents of the second tract above mentioned as devoted to a discussion of the rhetoric of the

¹ *Vide Opp.*, x. 269.

² "*Selbst in ältesten Handschriften fehlen die Namenszeichen der benützten Erklärer*" (*op. cit.* 195).

³ Plummer, i. cxliv.

⁴ See Manitius, *Gesch. der Lat. Lit. des Mitt. erster theil*, 74 and 75.

⁵ *Ib.*

Old Testament writings: "*de figuris, modisque locutionum quibus scriptura sancta contexta est.*" The book consists of seven schemata and thirteen tropes, and is based entirely on Isidore's *Origines*, i. 36, ii. 22.¹

The next work I shall mention (also a school-book), is entitled "*De Orthographia alfabeti ordine distinctum,*" and was, according to Plummer, written about the same time as the former two. It was used both by Alcuin and William of Malmesbury.² Its title is a misnomer, since it has not to do with Latin orthography, but is a glossary with the words arranged alphabetically, each word being accompanied by its meaning, its etymology, or its flexion, and includes later Latin as well as more classical forms. It is chiefly based on Charisius, which accounts for the many Greek words it contains. Bede also quotes many examples from the Bible and from the four Doctors of the Latin Church, as well as from the grammarians Diomedes, Caper, and Agræcius, and probably Dositheus.³ The three books just mentioned were doubtless written between 691 and 703.

We next come to another work, entitled "*de Temporibus,*" which Plummer dates in 703. Bede speaks at the end of it of the fifth year of the Emperor Tiberius (*i.e.* Tiberius III.), which was 702-3.⁴ This is also a school-book and is a much-condensed narrative. The first five lections are almost entirely taken from Isidore. The next one, "*de Mensibus Romanorum,*" is from Macrobius and Isidore. The third one, about the solstice and equinox, is partly from Isidore, but the greater part is taken verbatim from Pliny. Isidore supplies what is said about the *circulus decennovennalis* and the rest of the work. So that as a whole it is really based on Isidore, with additions from Pliny and Macrobius.

We shall see⁵ how Bede was charged by a rustic monk with heresy in regard to a statement in this book, and how he completely absolved himself. This defence is contained in a letter from him to Plegmund, which he tells us was written five years after the work last described, namely, in 708.

In the preface to Bede's later work, "*de Temporum Ratione,*" which was written in 725, the tract "*de Temporibus*" just

¹ Manitius, *Gesch. der Lat. Lit. des Mitt. erster theil*, 74 and 75.

² Plummer, *Bede*, i. cxlv.

³ Manitius, *op. cit.* 75 and 76.

⁴ *Vide* Giles, *Beda's Op.*, vi. 130 and 138.

⁵ See Plummer, *Bede*, i. cxlvi.

named is mentioned with another one entitled "*de Natura Rerum*," which was dedicated to Abbot Huætberht. Of the two he says: "*Duos quondam . . . libellos composui.*"¹ They seem to have been found difficult reading by his students, for he says of them: "*Quos cum fratribus quibusdam dare atque exponere coepissem, dicebant eos brevius multo digestos esse quam vellent, maxime ille de temporibus.*"

The work "*de Natura Rerum*" is a kind of cosmography of the universe, mainly based on Isidore, with help from Servius and Suetonius. In it Bede also takes a good deal from Pliny, whom he quotes at first hand. Thus he says: "*De quibus si plenius scire velis legis Plinium Secundum, ex quo et ista nos excerpimus.*" Manitius has traced the various portions of the work to their several sources in some detail. He differentiates it from that of Isidore mainly by its more distinctly Christian outlook. The account of the Flood in it was apparently Bede's own work.

We now come to a series of works written between 705 and 716. This is shown by their dedications. Thus Bede's work "*de Apocalypsin*" is dedicated to Abbot Huætberht under the name of Frater Eusebius, and was doubtless written before he became abbot, which took place in 716.²

Another work in which Huætberht is mentioned in the preface under the name of Eusebius, is Bede's book on the Acts, "*In Acta.*" It is dedicated to Bishop Acca (*Accae episcopo*),³ and was copied in great haste.⁴ With it was sent the commentary on the First Epistle of St. John, which was therefore, as Plummer says, composed about the same time.

Plummer next names a work on the Catholic Epistles, with the approximate date 709-716.

We next have the Commentary on St. Luke, which was composed after both the tracts "*In Acta*,"⁵ and "*In Apocalypsin.*"⁶

Next we have the Commentary on Samuel, "*In Samuelem*," between books iii. and iv. of which comes the paragraph referring to Ceolfrid's departure for Rome, so that books i. to iii. were doubtless written before, and iv. after June 716.⁷ Plummer says of it: "In this work Bede's allegorical method appears in its greatest hardness; the determination to get an allegorical

¹ Bede, *Op.*, vi. 139.

² Bede, *Op.*, xii. 1.

³ *Vide Op.*, x. 265; xii. 1.

⁴ See *Op.*, vii. 369, and viii. 146; and Plummer, i. cxlviii.

⁵ Plummer, i. cxlvii.

⁶ Plummer, i. cxlvii.

⁷ x. 267, 269; Plummer, i. cxlvii.

meaning at all hazards out of every passage leads to much forced artificiality." Archbishop Lullus of Mainz asked Ethelberht, Archbishop of York, to send him a copy of it.¹

We next have two epistles addressed to Bishop Acca, one entitled "*De mansionibus filiorum Israel*," and the other, "*De eo quod ait Isaias 'Et claudentur,'*" etc. They were written in 716, while he was engaged on Samuel,² and cannot therefore have been later than 731, when he died. Nor can they be much earlier than the "*de Temporum Ratione*," composed in 725, where he speaks of having lately (*nuper*)³ composed the life of Samuel. Alcuin thought that the prose life was written before the poetic one,⁴ in which he was probably misled by his own lives of Willebrord.

We have here to insert a work, which has been mistakenly dated by Dr. Plummer by a misunderstanding (a very rare occurrence with him), namely, the poetical life of St. Cuthberht, originally apparently headed "*Liber de Virtutibus Cuthberhti*." Plummer argued from a statement in it, that it had been written in the reign of Aldfrid, King of Northumbria, *i.e.*, before 705. On this Manitius argues as follows: "*Denn Beda erwahnt ch. 22, 55 (= vs. 543 Migne, vol. 94, 587), erst den Tod Ecgfrids, spricht dann 56 von der Nachfolge von dessen Brüder (Aldfrid) und kommt vs. 61—*

*'Hujus nunc Tyrio venerabile pignus in ostro,
Jure datas patrio sceptri jam tractat habenas.
Utque novus Josia fideque animoque magis quam
Annis maturus, nostrum regit inclitus orbem'*—

*mit ganz klaren Worten auf Aldfrids sehr jungen Sohn zu sprechen, der von Beda⁵ als puer octo circiter annorum, regnavit anno XI. eingeführt wird."*⁶ The poem is a romantic narrative compounded from materials in the older anonymous life of St. Cuthberht and of the traditions about him at Lindisfarne. It contains 976 lines, and enlarges greatly in the first 36 chapters on the Saint's miracles; the next verses deal with Cuthberht's death, and it finally concludes with the miracles performed at his grave. The versification is more simple and lucid than Aldhelm's, nor does Bede use the rare and unusual words to which the

¹ Plummer, i. cxlviii, and note 1.

² *Op.*, i. 198, 202; Plummer, *loc. cit.* i. cxlviii.

³ *Op.*, vi. 329; Plummer, i. cxlviii.

⁴ *De Sanct. Ebor.*, vv. 684–686.

⁵ *Hist. Eccl.*, v. 18.

⁶ Manitius, *op. cit.* 84.

latter is prone. A few lines from the preface may be quoted to show its quality :—

“Nec jam orbis contenta sinu trans aequora lampas
 Spargitur effulgens, hujusque Britannia consors
 Temporibus genuit fulgur venerabile nostris,
 Aurea qua Cuðberctus agens per sydera vitam,
 Scandere celsa suis docuit jam passibus Anglos
 Hunc virtutis honor jam primo a limine vitae
 Aethereumque decus signis comitatur apertis.
 Cujus cuncta licet nequeam, tamen ultima malim
 Commemorans operum vestigia tangere versu,
 Quis pateant interna sacrae fundamina mentis.
 Tu rogo, summe, juva donorum Spiritus auctor,
 Te sine nam digne fari tua gratia nescit.”

The poem closes with one of Bede's short and graceful prayers. The work itself is published in Smith's edition of his works, 1722, p. 268. It was dedicated to the “Presbyter Johannes” on the latter's setting out for Rome. The dedication ends with the words, “*Obsecro cum ad limina beatorum apostolorum, Deo protegente, perveneris, pro me intercedere memineris.*”

The two lives of St. Cuthberht by Bede were sent as a present by him to St. Boniface.¹ King Athelstan (about 931) gave a copy of them to St. Cuthberht's shrine at Chester-le-Street.² This copy is now in the library of C.C., Cambridge, No. 183.³ The prose life is preceded by a letter written to Eadfrid, Bishop of Lindisfarne, and the brethren there. In this prefatory letter he says he has not presumed to write any circumstance about so great a man without the most assured research, nor to give out for transcription what he had reduced to writing without the examination of the most trusty witnesses, and especially the brothers at Lindisfarne, and those who had been by the Saint's death-bed. He had not indeed begun to write, till he had carefully examined the beginning, progress, and end of the Saint's most glorious life and conversation, and as a proof of the truth of his narrative he had given the names of his authorities in the course of the work. The two lives in verse and prose by no means consist of the same matter. Several of the miracles in the poetic life are omitted in the prose one, while other sections are taken bodily over.

¹ *Mon. Mag.*, p. 301.

² *Sym. Dun.*, ed. Arnold, i. 211.

³ Plummer, i. cxlvii, and note 1.

It is a curious thing that Bede nowhere in these works mentions that they were preceded by an anonymous life of Cuthberht by a monk of Lindisfarne, on which a good deal of his own was based. Mr. Plummer says: "It cannot be said that Bede has bettered his original. He has improved the Latinity and made it run smoother, but he has obliterated many interesting details of time and place, and exaggerated the ascetic and miraculous side of the life. On the other hand, the account of Cuthberht's death, derived from an eye-witness, is of real and independent value."¹ It is a pity that Mr. Plummer did not print this anonymous life alongside of the other.

Some time after 716 Bede wrote his *Historia Abbatum*, dealing with the history of the abbots of Wearmouth and Jarrow. It must have been written after 716, since it relates the death of Ceolfrid and the accession of Abbot Huætberht in that year. We cannot fix the date more approximately. This is one of the most valuable of Bede's works, since it gives a detailed account of Abbot Benedict Biscop and his many journeys to Rome, and also gives a graphic picture of the times, and it is, in addition, the earliest detailed account by far of an English monastery,² while its text is in very good condition and is admirably edited in Plummer's *Bede*, i. 388-404. It has been much used in the succeeding pages.³

In the year 720 Bede wrote a work on Genesis entitled "*In Genesim*," and also called "*Hexameron*," which he dedicated to Bishop Acca (*Antistiti Accae*).⁴ The date is reached by Plummer and T. A. Archer by an ingenious calculation based on a sentence in the work which runs, "*Si enim hodierna die, verbi gratia, per calendas Apriles esset luna septima decima*,"⁵ and the further fact that in his chronological works Bede takes his examples from the actual year in which he was writing it.⁶

We now come to two works which are closely tied together. One, the "*de Ratione Bissexti*," is incorporated in the other, entitled "*de Temporum Ratione*," and must therefore have preceded the latter, which, as we shall see, was written in 725.⁷ It is addressed to one Helmuald, who must have been a person of some consequence from the prefatory address, which runs:

¹ Plummer, i. xlvi.

² Manitius, *op. cit.* 83.

³ Plummer, i.; Manitius, *op. cit.* 84 and 85; Smith, *Bede*, 227, etc.; Rev. Joseph Stevenson, *Bede*, i. 546, etc.

⁴ *Beda Op.*, vii. 1.

⁵ *Op. cit.* vii. 117.

⁶ Plummer, *op. cit.* i. cxlix.

⁷ *Ib.*

“*Dilectissimo in Christo fratri Helmualdo, Beda famulus Christi salutem.*” The “*de Temporum Ratione*” was written in 725, as shown, says Plummer, by the mention of that year three times in the course of it (*i.e.* chapters 49, 52, and 58, *Opp.*, vi. 244, 249, and 256), and it is so dated by Marianus Scotus.¹ It was dedicated to Abbot Huætberht, and is in effect a manual for reckoning the dates of the festivals, and especially for fixing Easter. It contains a table by which the date of the Paschal feast is calculated from 523–1063, and, as Manitius says, it remained for centuries the first authority on the subject of these calculations. It contains seventy-one paragraphs, and is based on Bede’s own lesser work “*de Temporibus*” above named, on Macrobius and Pliny, and more especially on Isidore and other Christian writers. The most important of his Christian sources was Jerome’s edition of Eusebius. Then follows the chronicle of Prosper, probably reaching to 445; then that of the Marcellinus, which Bede uses from 379–534; then the great chronicle of Isidore, till its conclusion in the reign of Justin II., and that of Marius of Avenches; Bede also uses a copy of the work of Dionysius Exiguus on chronology, the *Liber Pontificalis*, and the histories of Eutropius and Orosius. For domestic matters Bede has recourse to Gildas, and, according to Manitius, he also used the first short redaction of the *Historia Britonum*. In addition to all these authorities, he used the well-known works on the lives of famous men by Jerome and Gennadius, and certain writers on the Paschal table such as Anatolius, Cyrillus, Paschasinus and Proterius, Victorius Aquitanus, with a work only known from his citations, namely, Victor Capuanus against Victorinus, together with the Acts of the Councils.²

The most important practical result of this work was the general substitution of the method of dating by the year of the Incarnation (which had been previously followed by Dionysius Exiguus), for the method of dating by the date of the Creation.³ To this work is generally appended a short chronicle, of which an Irish adaptation exists.⁴

Bede’s Chronicle here referred to became very famous, and is preserved in a great many MSS., of which Mommsen mentions forty-seven. Few libraries were without it, and it became the

¹ Plummer, *Bede*, i. cxlix and cl.

² See Manitius, *op. cit.* 79 and 80.

³ Manitius, *op. cit.* 78 and 79.

⁴ See M. Rawl., B, 502, p. 41; see also Plummer, *Bede*, *op. cit.* i. cxlix, note 2.

foundation-stone of a number of the late world-histories, e.g. Paulus Diaconus, Ado of Vienne, Regino of Pruhm, Hermann of Reichenau, Marianus Scotus, Ekkehard of Aura, etc. In some MSS. of the Chronicle there is a continuation to 741, and in others to 761, with extracts from Fredegar and the *Gesta Francorum*. It was commented upon by several later writers, and notably by Brightefert of Ramsey about the year 1000, when he was living at Thionville.¹

It is from the "*de Temporum Ratione*" and his former work "*de Temporibus*" that Bede derived the name of "*Beda Computator*," as he is called by Marianus Scotus.² Florence of Worcester calls him "*Computator Venerabilis*." In these works Bede, following Isidore, lays down the notion of the six ages of the world: the first one from the Creation to the Flood, the second from the Flood to Abraham, the third as far as David, the fourth to the Captivity of Judah, the fifth to the Birth of Christ, and the sixth to the Day of Judgment—the date of which, he says, is known to God alone—"solo Deo cognitum."

These six ages answered to the six days of God's labour in the work of creation; a seventh answered to His Sabbath-rest. This was deemed to be continuous with the other six, and to be marked by the period during which the souls of the faithful, separated from their bodies, would rest from their labours in the unseen world. It lasted from the death of Abel to the general resurrection, when the souls were to be reunited to their bodies for ever in a glorified eighth age.

Between 725 and 731 Bede wrote a work on Ezra and Nehemiah. As it refers to the "*de Temporum Ratione*," it must have been written after 725, while it is mentioned in the list of Bede's works in the *Historia Ecclesiastica*, written in 731. Plummer says that in it the restoration of Jerusalem is treated as a type of the restoration of the sinful by repentance, in a way that is very beautiful. It is brief, and consequently there is not that tendency to force minute details to yield a symbolical meaning, such as occurs in Bede's work on Samuel.³

His book on Nehemiah closes with a beautiful prayer, which is thus gracefully translated by Mr. Plummer: "Thou great Father of Lights, from Whom cometh every good and perfect gift, Who hast given to me, the humblest of Thy servants,

¹ See Manitius, p. 80.

² Pertz, v. 544-546.

³ *Op. cit.*, i. cl, note 1.

the desire and means to see the wondrous things of Thy law, and the grace to bring forth out of the treasure of the prophetic volume things new and old for the use of my fellow-servants, remember me, O my God, for good!"¹

We will now turn to two small tracts, one on the Tabernacle (*de Tabernaculo*), and the other on the Temple (*de Templo*), the former being the earlier,² and written therefore probably before 729. The latter is mentioned in Bede's letter to Albinus which accompanied a copy of the *Historia Ecclesiastica*, in which it is said to have been written not long before 731, and apparently refers to the troubles following the accession of Ceolwulf in 729. Plummer says that with some things that are fanciful there is much spiritual beauty in the *de Tabernaculo* and *de Templo*.³

About this time Bede completed his greatest work, the *Historia Ecclesiastica*, to which we shall return presently.

There are several of Bede's books which we cannot definitely date, but which, having been referred to in the *Historia Ecclesiastica*, must have been written before 731. The first of these is entitled "*De locis sanctis*," of which he says it had been written *dudum*, i.e. not long since. It consisted apparently of extracts from a work with a similar title written by Adamnan, giving an account of Bishop Arculf's visit to the Holy Land, and was afterwards again used in the *Hist. Eccl.*, v. 15 and 16. At the end of some extracts from this volume of Adamnan, in the work just cited Bede says: "*Haec de opusculis excerpta praefati scriptoris ad sensum quidem verborum illius, sed brevioribus strictisque comprehensa sermonibus, nostris ad utilitatem legentium historiis indere placuit. Plura voluminis illius, siqui scire delectat, vel in ipso illo volumine, vel in eo, quod de illo dudum strictim excerpsimus epitomate requirat.*"⁴

There exists a Commentary on the Book of Kings, which was originally written by Bede in the form of answers to thirty questions put to him by Nothelm of Canterbury.⁵

There is also another Commentary on the Book of Proverbs. Boniface in one of his letters asks Archbishop Ecgberht to send him this Commentary,⁶ so does Hincmar of Rheims in another letter.⁷ The last part of it sometimes occurs separately under the title of "*de Muliere Forti*."

¹ *Op. cit.* i. xxii.

³ *Ib.* cl.

⁶ Haddan and Stubbs, iii. 389.

⁴ *Ib.* v. 17.

² Bede, *Opp.*, viii. 357.

⁵ Plummer, *Bede*, i. cli.

⁷ Pertz, xiii. 531.

Bede also made a number of extracts from the Commentary of St. Gregory on Canticles, which occurs as a book by itself. This is one of the works Archbishop Lullus asks Cuthberht to send to him. There is a poem on it written by Walafrid Strabo entitled "*Contra Julianum divinæ gratiæ repugnatorem.*"¹

Another of his commentaries is dedicated to his dearest Sister in Christ (*dilectissima in Christo sorore*), by whom some nun or abbess is doubtless meant. It is upon the prophet Habakkuk and is entitled "*de Canticum Habaccuc.*"

We also hear of a commentary by him on Tobias. Alcuin asks Ricbod, Archbishop of Treves, to lend him a copy of it.²

Of the so-called *Martyrology*, printed among Bede's works by Smith, Plummer says: "It has been so added to, that it is impossible to say what part, if any, is really due to Bede." He adds: "There is much in it we would willingly believe not to be Bede's, too much gloating over the physical horrors of martyrdom and of legends of the purely silly kind."³

Later than this, we have at least two small works, one entitled "*Retractationes in Acta.*" As it is not mentioned in the list of Bede's works in the *Ecclesiastical History*, which was published in 731, it is fairly certain that it appeared after that year. It was written many years (*plures annos*), as he says, after his original Commentary on the Acts.⁴

The famous epistle Bede wrote to Archbishop Ecgberht, which is condensed in the Preface, is dated November 5, 734.

A number of homilies which have been attributed to him were no doubt written at various dates; we cannot assign them to any particular year. In regard to them, Plummer says that the criticism of their genuineness would be a very difficult task. "Of those printed by Giles, I believe all to be genuine except the following: Nos. 10, 12-15, 19, and 58, which are spurious. No. 7 is a genuine homily with a new exordium; Nos. 11 and 15 are merely extracts from Bede's commentaries on Mark and Luke respectively."⁵

"Of the fourteen hymns printed by Giles, Nos. 1-3 are in hexameters and deal with subjects connected with the calendar. They are probably genuine." They contain features very

¹ Plummer, *op. cit.* clii.

² *Ib.*; *Mon. Alc.*, p. 683.

³ *Op. cit.* i. clii.

⁴ Bede, *Opp.*, xii. 96; Plummer, i. cli.

⁵ Plummer's *Bede*, i. cliii.

characteristic of Bede, as: "The doctrine of the six ages," "The mystical interpretation of numbers," "The fear to keep back knowledge bestowed by God," "The exhortation to prelates to teach by example and not only by precept, and to be careful whom they ordained."

"Nos. 4-13 are in iambic tetrameters. No. 4, on the correspondence of the six ages of the world with the six days of Creation, is very characteristic of Bede, and its genuineness is expressly testified by Alcuin.¹ The others are ordinary festival hymns, some of considerable merit, and may well be genuine. No. 14, in hexameters, is on a favourite subject of his, namely, the Day of Judgment, and as in one copy of it there are some additional lines addressed to Acca, in which he is styled *pater*, he must then have been a bishop. It is pretty conclusive that Bede was the author. A mutilated Anglo-Saxon version of it occurs, which was printed by Dr. Lumby in 1876."²

Among the works of Bede which Lullus asked to have sent to him was "*The Epigrammata*"; no such collection is now extant. Plummer suggests that the little poem in the *Vita Cuthberhti*, 242, may have come from it.³

A letter addressed to Wicred, "de Aquinoctio vernalii juxta Anatolium," is dated in 776, which excludes it from Bede's works, unless the date has been sophisticated.

A prose rendering of Paulinus's metrical life of St. Felix by Bede is extant, and printed by Smith in his edition.

Bede also issued a corrected edition of a translation of the life of St. Anastasius from the Greek, which is not extant.⁴

Several authors, according to Gehle, have cited excerpts made by Bede, "*In Isaiam, Danihelem, XII. Prophetas, et partem Hieremie.*" These, says Plummer, I have not met with.⁵

There are also certain *Capitula lectionum* on various books of the Old Testament. Of these Gehle rejects all as spurious which are not in the printed editions of Cologne and Basle. Other similar *capitula* on the New Testament, except the Gospels, are attributed to him. The two sets of *Capitula*, according to Plummer, are probably referred to by Lupus, Abbot of Ferrara,

¹ *Mon. Alc.*, 748, 749.

² Plummer, *op. cit.* cliv.

⁴ *Ib.*

³ *Ib.*

⁵ *Ib.* clv.

in a letter to Altsig, Abbot of York, under title "*Beda . . . Quaestiones in utrumque Testamentum*";¹ while St. Boniface asks Archbishop Egberht to send him "*Beda super lectionarium anniversarium.*"²

A work of Bede's which is apparently still unprinted exists in more than one MS. It is entitled "*In Apostolum quaecumque in opusculis Sancti Augustini exposita inveni.*"³

These, says Plummer, are all the works of Bede for the genuineness of which we have the security of his authority. There are quite a number of others, however, which have been attributed to him without any real reason, or upon very slight evidence. Some of them are discussed by Plummer. These include a *Penitential*,⁴ against the genuineness of which he has produced evidence which seems conclusive; a work "*de Tonitruis*," which he calls a most contemptible work, and which is clearly spurious; a supposed work "*de Schismatibus*," which is a mistake for "*Schematibus*," and is the work already mentioned; a poem entitled "*Cuculus sive veris et hiemis conflictus*," which is printed among Alcuin's works by Dümmler; a hexameter poem entitled "*Passio Sancti Justini Martyris*,"⁵ and a "*Martyrologium Poeticum*," both certainly spurious, says Plummer; a work entitled "*Liber Scintillarum . . . diversarum Scientiarum*"—this is really by Defensor of Ligugé;⁶ a so-called "*Psalterium Bedae*"—this is from a manuscript at Cologne Cathedral, No. 106, originally sent by Alcuin to Arno, Archbishop of Salzburg.⁷

We will now turn to the history of the text of Bede's great work—the *Historia Ecclesiastica*. In the following short analysis I have entirely followed Mr. Plummer's masterly dissection in his ideal edition of the work, which must remain the last word upon the subject for a long time to come.

The popularity of the work may be guessed from the fact that more than 130 MSS. of it exist. Of these, Mr. Plummer has selected four as the basis of his text; all of them date from the eighth century. Of these four he has virtually discarded one now preserved at Namur, and known as N, which he describes as worthless for textual purposes and as full of mistakes. He has cited it only in the case of proper names.⁸

¹ Haddan and Stubbs, iii. 635. ² *Ib.* 389; see Plummer, *op. cit.* i. clv.

³ *Ib.* ⁴ Haddan and Stubbs, iii. 326-334. ⁵ *Op. cit.* i. clviii.

⁶ See *Dict. of Chr. Biog.*, *sub voce* "Defensor"; Plummer, i. clix.

⁷ *Ib.* clix. ⁸ *Op. cit.* i. lxxxviii.

Of the remaining three MSS. the most famous is that known as the Moore MS., which was made the basis of Smith's edition, which Mr. Plummer calls "truly monumental," published in 1722 at Cambridge. It is one of about fifty volumes bought on the Continent after the Peace of Ryswick on September 20, 1697, and sold to John Moore, Bishop of Ely, whence its name. On his death in 1714 they were bought by George III. and presented to the University of Cambridge. It once belonged to a monastery or church of St. Julian, probably that at Le Mans. It is written in old Hiberno-Saxon minuscules, and very probably on the Continent, perhaps at Epternach or at some such Anglo-Saxon colony on the other side of the Channel, and probably about the year 737, as appears by the chronological entries at the end. Although the best existing MS., Plummer has shown that it is by no means immaculate, but contains numerous errors of orthography and of arbitrary spelling. It is referred to as MS. M.¹

Next to MS. M, Plummer puts another eighth-century MS., namely, MS. B, which is contained in the Cotton Library and labelled "Tiberius A, xiv." It is essentially a sister MS. to M, with the same type of text, and they agree in many minute particulars, which cannot be accidental; but neither of the two MSS. is copied from the other. Hence it follows that both MSS. must be copied from a common original, and that both have an equal claim to be consulted in the settlement of the text. It is very unfortunate that MS. B suffered serious losses, both at the beginning and the end, in the great Cotton fire of 1731. M, B, and N belong to a class of MSS. closely allied and of one type. On the other hand, MS. C contains a different recension of the text from M and B, and is therefore a wholly independent witness. It also dates from the eighth century, and is in the Cotton Library and labelled "Tib. C, ii." It was also injured in the Cotton fire, but only slightly. Like MS. B, it is written in Saxon minuscules. Plummer says that it is certainly a Durham book, possibly originally brought from Lindisfarne.² The type of text in C is in several points very distinct from that in M, B, and N. The most important variants (apart from verbal ones) are the omission by C and the class of MSS. which follow it, of chapter 14 of book iv. as given in the printed editions, while it also omits the mention of excerpts from Jerome on the Prophets

¹ *Op. cit.* i. lxxxix-xci.

² See Plummer, i. xciii and xciv.

mentioned by the other MSS. in the list of Bede's works in book v. chapter 24.

Plummer concludes that M and B represent a slightly older text, since M ends its chronological summary with the year 731, when its text was doubtless composed, while C adds two later annals in 733 and 734, which seem to show that C was written in the latter year, and as it does not mention the death of Archbishop Tatian, which took place on July 30, 734, it is probable that it was written before that date.¹

Mr. Plummer has given an analysis of a considerable number of MSS., besides the critical texts just described. Their *differentiæ*, however, belong to a later time, and form no part of my present subject.

A few words must now be said on the Anglo-Saxon translation of the text, about the origin of which authorities are not quite agreed. The authoritative edition of the work is that published by Mr. Miller among the works issued by the Early English Text Society. Mr. Plummer says that the translator used a text of the C type, and it was a good and pure MS. of that type. The translation is first cited at the beginning of Ælfric's homily on St. Gregory, where we read: "*istoria Anglorum þa þe Ælfred cyning of Leden on Englisc arwend.*"² This is a very early and positive statement in favour of its having been made by King Alfred. This translation is also mentioned by Rudborne,³ who seems to think it was made by Bede himself; thus he says: "*Liber quem composuit in lingua Saxonica de Gestis Anglorum . . . cujus copiam habui in Prioratu Canoniorum de Suthwyk.*" This, says Plummer, is interesting as showing that Saxon studies were not extinct even in the fifteenth century.

Again, in MS. Ca, Cambridge University Library, KK, iii. 18 and 194, we have the couplet:—

"Historicus quondam fecit me Beda latinum
Ælfred rex Saxo translatis ille pius."

Lastly, William of Malmesbury,⁴ in quoting the various translations due to Alfred, includes the "*Gesta Anglorum Bedae.*"

The same conclusion seems to get support from the fact that

¹ *Op. cit.* i. xciv-xcvii.

² *i.e.*, the *Historia Anglorum* which King Alfred turned from Latin into English, ed. Elstob, p. 4; Plummer, *op. cit.* i. cxxviii, note.

³ See *Anglia Sacra*, ii. 183.

⁴ *G.R.*, ii. par. 123.

two copies of the work contain a pedigree of the West Saxon dynasty brought down to Alfred's accession.

On the other hand, Dr. Miller, in his edition of the work above cited, has subjected the language of the extant copies of the work to a careful analysis, and says very positively that the dialect of the translation is Mercian and not West Saxon. "All issues raised," he says, "lead to similar results, placing the origin of the version in Mercia."¹

The evidence of the dialect favours production in Mercian soil. One characteristic of the translation specially supports this view. The translator shows some familiarity with Scottish localities and circumstances, and a certain tenderness for national susceptibilities,² and he suggests that the version may have been executed by Mercian scholars under orders from the King. William of Malmesbury, it will be noted, expressly tells us that no one in Alfred's kingdom was skilled in letters (*nullus in suo regno literarum erat peritus*), and that he accordingly summoned Werfrith, Bishop of the Hwiccii, from Mercia, who by command of the King translated the books of the dialogues (*i.e.* of Gregory's *Dialogues*) into the Anglian speech.³

There are four MSS. of this version extant, the best one being that in the Bodleian Library,⁴ which was written by five scribes. Miller says of its date: "From the writing, most authorities place the MS. about the end of the tenth century. My own judgment favours a somewhat earlier date."

A second MS. was much injured in the Cotton fire at the British Museum. It was labelled "Otho D, xi." It belongs to the end of the tenth century, or rather the very beginning of the eleventh. Wanley, who described it before the fire, says it formerly belonged to the Church of St. Mary at Suwika (probably the priory of Southwyke, in Hampshire, and doubtless the very MS. referred to by Rudborne). "Lists of bishops," says Miller, "show that the MS. originated or lay for a long time in the south."

A third MS., at C.C., Cambridge, is there numbered 41. An inscription in it says the volume was a gift from Bishop Leofric to St. Peter's Church at Exeter. It was written about the time of the Conquest.

Another MS., O, in the same library is numbered 279. Its date is twelfth or thirteenth century. It contains numerous

¹ *Op. cit.* liii.

³ *G.R.*, ii. par. 122.

² *Ib.* lvii.

⁴ Tanner, 10.

erasures, with corrections. "The important point to notice," says Miller, "is that later West Saxon forms replace Anglian, not early West Saxon vowels."¹ "Again, the evidence of the erasures, taken in conjunction with the forms left untouched, show us Southern scribes at work with an Anglian original before them."²

Having considered the form, now for the matter of Bede's great work.

He tells us it was completed in 731. It is preceded by a letter acknowledging some gift from Abbot Albinus, together with the transcripts of documents procured for him by the Priest Nothelm. Then follows a tabulated list of the *capitula* or chapter-headings of the work, about which a few words may be said. These *capitula* agree with the chapter headings in all the rescensions of the Latin text, except in some cases, in books iii. and iv., where a divergence occurs.

In MS. M, chapters 14 and 15 of that book do not occur in the text with separate headings, but run on continuously with chapter 13. In B these two chapters form a single one, which is separate from chapter 13. In N the two chapters in question occur separately and distinct from chapter 13. In C, chapter 14, which refers to the miracle at Selsey, does not occur at all; and chapter 15 forms a part of chapter 13. The reason for the omission is not very obvious.

When we turn to the *capitula* we find that the headings of chapters 14 and 15 are absent from all the MSS. It has thus come about that the enumeration of the chapters has got into confusion in some of the printed texts. In the *capitula* to two chapters of book iv., namely, 14 and 15, those numbers are repeated, there being two chapters numbered 14 and two

¹ *Op. cit.* xviii.

² *Ib.* xix. The Anglian version has omitted a good deal contained in the Latin text, chiefly paragraphs which had probably ceased to be interesting. Thus, most of the papal letters are omitted, also the references to the affairs of the Picts and of the Scots. It is notable that chapters 25 and 26 of the third book in the Latin version, giving an account of the triumph of the orthodox under Wilfrid, with the defeat and retirement of Colman, are omitted; so is the defeat of the latter at the beginning of book iv. On the other hand, the deprecatory words about Aidan, in book iii. 3, from the words "*zelum Dei*" to the end of the paragraph, are omitted. The translator also omits book v. chapter 15, which speaks of the perversity of Iona on the subject of Easter. See Miller, *op. cit.* Introduction, p. lviii. All this points to the author having close ties and sympathies with the Celtic rather than the Roman side in the Church controversies of this period.

numbered 15. Consequently, it has become necessary, in order to make the position clear, to duplicate all the rest of the chapter numbers to the end of that book, thus, 14 (16), 15 (17), etc. etc.

MS. C has a similar divergence in book iii., where chapters 1 and 2 run on without a break.

The earliest part of the work, consisting of a general geographical description of the land, is taken almost entirely from Pliny, Orosius, and Solinus (perhaps also from Gildas), with occasional extracts from Eutropius, Prosper, the *Liber Pontificalis*, and Fortunatus. Then Gildas becomes the chief authority down to the time of the Emperor Maurice. The life of St. Germanus of Auxerre, by Constantine, supplies the materials for chapters 17-21, the first book. With chapter 23 of the same book begins Bede's account of the Christianising of Britain, which is dependent largely on native traditions and reports, as mentioned by Bede himself in the dedication of the work to King Ceolwulf. In regard to local sources he seems to have been indefatigable in searching out the most authoritative persons, and chiefly relied on old men and others who were contemporaries of the events he describes. He specially refers to some of them in his preface, which I abstracted in my life of *Augustine the Missionary*.¹ In this he confesses special obligations for information about the important kingdom of Kent and the metropolitan see of Britain, to Albinus the Abbot of St. Augustine's, and to Nothelm, Archbishop of Canterbury, who had special access to every available source.

From them, as Plummer points out, he derived his valuable account of the Archbishops of Canterbury, both before and after their ordination;² the place and date of consecration,³ even though it took place abroad;⁴ the days on which they severally took possession of that see;⁵ the duration of their episcopate;⁶ their deaths;⁷ burial-places;⁸ and the intervals which elapsed before the election of their successors.⁹ "It is evident that the minuteness and accuracy of this information could have been preserved only by means of contemporary written memoranda. From a story told by Bede¹⁰ it is clear that the Abbey of Selsey preserved a volume in which were entered the obits of dis-

¹ *Vide* pp. lxxviii, lxxix.

² ii. 18; iii. 20; and v. 8.

³ iv. 2 and v. 8.

⁴ ii. 7, 18; iii. 20; iv. 1; and v. 8.

⁵ iii. 20.

² v. 8.

⁴ ii. 7.

⁶ iii. 20; iv. 2; and v. 8.

⁸ ii. 7, and v. 8.

¹⁰ iv. 14.

tinguished individuals; the same practice probably prevailed elsewhere."¹

Albinus also reported some of the information possessed by Bede about East Anglia,² including a short pedigree of its kings,³ its conversion to Christianity,⁴ the history of Kings Sigberht and Anna,⁵ and a few particulars about its Bishops Felix, Thomas, Beorhtgils, and Bisi,⁶ and the life of Bishop Aldwulf. He also acknowledges his obligations to Abbot Esi and to some anonymous sources. His words are: "*Porro in provincia Orientalium Anglorum, quae fuerint gesta ecclesiastica, partim ex reverentissimi Abbatis Esi relatione comperimus.*"⁷

His information about Wessex, and partly also about Essex, was derived from Albinus and Nothelm, who, he says, informed him by what bishops and under what kings the provinces of the West Saxons received the faith of Christ. In like manner, he adds, the most Reverend Bishop of the West Saxons who is still living, *i.e.* Daniel, communicated to him in writing some things relating to the ecclesiastical history of that province, of that of the South Saxons, as also of the Isle of Wight;⁸ a few unimportant additions were afterwards made, to the information here mentioned, in a hurried and incidental manner chiefly about Bishop Hæddi,⁹ evidently showing that Bede's information on this head was neither copious nor definite.

The monks of Laestingaeu, whose monastery was built by St. Cedde, were his informants about the conversion of Mercia and the reconversion of Essex, while the connection of the South Angles with the princes and bishops of Northumbria accounts for what Bede has to say of their early history.¹⁰

"Bishop Cyneberht and other faithful men" furnished the scanty materials about the province of Lindsey.¹¹ One of the latter was Deda, Abbot of Partheney, who had been baptized by Paulinus.¹² For Northumbria, beside his own special knowledge, he had what he calls the faithful testimony of innumerable witnesses.¹³ Stevenson says: "We may infer from what Bede says of the mode in which Oswald's reign was generally calculated,¹⁴ that in that king's reign there existed annals or chronological

¹ Stevenson, *Bede*, xxiv.

² See Dedication to Ceolwulf, par. 2.

³ ii. 15.

⁴ *Ib.*

⁵ iii. 18.

⁶ iv. 5.

⁷ *Ib.* Preface, p. 7.

⁸ *Bede*, Pref. p. 2.

⁹ iv. 26, and v. 18.

¹⁰ iii. 21.

¹¹ Pref. p. 7.

¹² ii. 16.

¹³ Pref. 7.

¹⁴ iii. 1 and 9.

tables in which events were inserted as they occurred ; the regnal year of the ruler who then filled the throne being specified in the history of Ædwin with interesting details shows that Bede must have had access to highly valuable materials. We have further accounts of the pedigrees of their kings, their accession, exploits, anecdotes of them, sketches of their characters, and their deaths and the duration of their reigns—details too minute in themselves and too accurately defined by Bede to have been derived by him from mere tradition.”¹

Some of Bede’s written materials are still extant, and to them we will now turn.

Perhaps the most important of them were the inscriptions upon crosses and other funereal monuments, of which a goodly number are extant, although doubtless the mere wreckage of many more. I have tried, for the first time, to systematically incorporate this information, and have, I hope, duly acknowledged my obligations in the text to those who have written memoirs on them or illustrated them. Besides the inscriptions on stones, Bede used the lives of several saints ; some of these are extant, but I cannot avoid thinking that at one time there were more. It is hardly likely that such a notable figure, for instance, as St. Hilda should not have had some scholar to record her doings and to describe the obligations of the Church to her great foundation, the Alma Mater of many saints and scholars. It was there that was written the first recorded life of St. Gregory the Pope, which I used in my life of that pontiff, and it was there that the long and fruitful and inimitable river of English poetry had its source in the peasant poet Cædmon, to whom I have devoted one of the succeeding appendices. We, in fact, are *specially* told by Bede, that Bishop John of Beverley wrote an account of St. Hilda, which does not seem to be extant.

The first native source actually mentioned by Bede as his authority, in the portion of his narrative dealt with in the following pages, is the life of St. Fursey, where in referring to his sickness he says : “As the book about his life fully informs us.” While in concluding his life he says : “which, whosoever will read it, will find more fully described, as also about his fellow-labourers, in the book of his life above mentioned.” This life, which was anonymous, was, according to Hardy, composed soon after his death. Hardy also refers to a second anonymous extant life of

¹ *Op. cit.* Pref. 26.

the Saint, whose date of composition is uncertain, but which is of great antiquity.¹

The next authority Bede mentions is in reporting the life of Æthelburga, sister of Earconwald, Bishop of London, and herself Abbess of Barking. In describing her miracles he says they had been committed to writing by many, from the report of those who knew them, so that their memory might be preserved.² Speaking of Æthelburga's successor at Barking and of the graves in the cemetery there, he says: "Whoever wishes to read about it may find in the book from which we have gathered these things, how a fragrance used to proceed from these graves."³ He also refers to the same book for an account of a miraculous cure which was performed at Barking.⁴ Again, speaking of Sebbi, King of Essex, he refers for his authority to "the same little book."⁵

In book iv. chapter xxvii. of the same work, in giving an account of St. Cuthberht, Bede refers to his own former lives of the Saint in the words, "as has been said." In this he closely follows his former prose life of him. This latter life is founded on an older biography of the Saint which is still extant and is anonymous. It was written by desire of Bishop Eadfrid and the monks of Lindisfarne, between the year 698, when Eadfrid became Bishop, and 705, the year of Aldfrid's death, who is spoken of in it as the reigning sovereign.⁶ It is doubtful whether the author resided at Lindisfarne or at its daughter Melrose, but it is probable that it was at Melrose, since, says Hardy,⁷ the union of the two monasteries (which originated in the election of Eata,⁸ who was Abbot of Mailros, to the see of Lindisfarne) still continued.⁹

Bede has incorporated this anonymous life, both in thought and expression, in his life of Cuthberht, and he clearly thus refers to it in his history: "*Ea quae de sanctissimo patre et antistite Cudberto, vel in hoc volumine, vel in Libello Gestorum ejus, conscripsi, partem ex eis quae de illo prius a fratribus ecclesiae Lindisfarnensis scripta reperi.*"¹⁰

¹ See *Cat. of British History*, i. 240.

² *H. E.*, iv. 7.

³ *Ib.* x.

⁴ *Ib.*

⁵ *Ib.* xi.

⁶ "*De Alfrido qui nunc regnat pacifice*," *ib.* par. 28.

⁷ *Cat. of British History*, i. 298.

⁸ *Hist. Eccl.*, iii. 26.

⁹ Thus the author says "*nostrum monasterium*" when speaking of Mailros (par. 21), and again he refers to the period "*quo fuit nobiscum in monasterio, quod dicitur Mailros*" (par. 13). Lindisfarne is called "*nostra ecclesia*" (par. 30) and "*insula nostra*" (pars. 23 and 24).

¹⁰ Hardy, *op. cit.* 298.

The life, as I have said, was the basis of the two lives of the Saint written by Bede, one in verse and the other in prose. He nowhere speaks as if he had known Cuthberht, and all that he relates of him in his lives was derived from this biography or from the testimony of others,¹ nor does he seem to have been present at the translation of the Saint's remains, which he always speaks of as under the superintendence of others.² Bede's life, however, seems to have been written some time after this translation, for in describing the shoes then found in the tomb he says: "*In basilica nostra inter reliquias, pro testimoniis usque hodie habentur.*"

Hardy says that "there is a remarkable similarity, both in thought and diction, between the Prologue of the anonymous life and the Life of Wilfrid, by Æddi." It is not probable, however, that Æddi was the author; but it is indisputable that he was acquainted with the biography.

There is an Irish life of the same Saint which has deceived and misled some notable scholars. It is absolutely worthless as a life of Cuthberht, and is apparently based on a mystification by which that Saint has been mixed up with some Irish saint called Mulluc, Nulluc, or Yulloch, if it be not in fact an entire sophistication. This Irish life has been printed in one of the volumes of the Surtees Society.³ The editor of the life of Cuthberht, in the *Acta Sanctorum* (March 20), enters fully into the whole narrative and rejects it as fabulous. "*Certe,*" he says, "*Baeda nollet illustri suo purpureo operi hos laceros assui pannos,*" when commenting on Bede's silence in regard to his alleged royal descent, he thus concludes his remarks: "*servent Hiberni suum Nulluhoc (sic) ejulantem et relinquant Anglo-Saxonibus Cuthbertum.*"⁴

Plummer⁵ has a caustic sentence about it. He says: "The whole composition is of the most worthless character." Its picturesque fables were too valuable, however, for the hagiographer and the artist of old days for him to take this view, it furnished many subjects for the glass painter and the sculptor, and it fills a notable place in the old tract on "The Ancient Sites and Monuments of the Monastery and Cathedral Church of Durham." In it Yulloch is made the Irish form of

¹ See pars. 13, 17, 20, 34, 35, 36, and 39.

² See par. 43.

³ *Biog. Misc.*, edited by Canon James Raine, 63-87.

⁴ *Il.* Preface, ix.

⁵ *Bede*, ii. 265.

Cuthberht. Its stories especially occupied a place in the glorious range of stained window, now, alas! no more, which Bishops Skirlaw and Langley put in the cloisters when they built them. So says the tract last mentioned. "Every miracle that he (*i.e.* Cuthberht) ever did from his infancy was set in the said windows by itself, and under every miracle there were certain verses in Latine, declaring the contents and meaning thereof, in most excellent coloured glass most artificially set forth and curiously wrought. . . . In the reign of King Edward the Sixth, this story was pulled down by Dean Horn and broken all to pieces."¹

This Irish life was converted into a poem in Leonine verse, of which a copy exists in the British Museum, Titus A, ii. 2. It begins as follows:—

" Si cupis audire, Cuthberti miraque scire
 Virtutis mirae, potes hunc sanctum reperire.
 Sanctus Cuthbertus Anglorum tutor apertus
 Regis erat natus et Hybernicus est generatus," etc.

It is imperfect, and the imperfection existed long ago, for a former owner quaintly says of it in a note: "*Hear wants fyve leaves, for which I would giv fyve ould angells.*"² Another life of the Saint in simple Leonines, of the end of the twelfth or thirteenth century, is preserved at University College, Oxford. There is a third. It is based entirely on Bede's narrative, of which Mr. James Raine writes: "Nothing can exceed the ingenuity and simplicity of the verses, and of all the numerous poets who cultivated this peculiar style of metre, the author before us has been the most successful. It is also printed in the *Biographia Miscellanea*, 91-117, where another poetical life is mentioned as preserved among Sir Matthew Hale's MSS. at Lincoln's Inn."³

Bede's work on the lives of the abbots was preceded by a similar work whose character has been misunderstood. "The earlier work has been generally quoted as the lives of the Abbots of Wearmouth and Jarrow by an anonymous writer." "This description," as Mr. Boutflower says in his life of Ceolfrid, "is unfortunately both confusing and incorrect, for the work is simply a commemoration-sermon relating to the main particulars of the life of Ceolfrid, and describes itself as the Life of the Most Holy Ceolfrid."⁴ It is preserved in two MSS. only. One is much older than the other, and has been interpolated from Bede. The

¹ *Biog. Misc.*, ix-x.

² *Ib.* xi.

³ *Ib.* xv.

⁴ *Op. cit.* 1 and 2.

older one is of the tenth century and is preserved among the Harleian MSS. It was first printed by the Rev. Joseph Stevenson in 1841, and later by Giles in 1843. "The author of the tract was a fair scholar," says Mr. Boutflower, "and his Latin is simple and good though not fluent, and if his language represents the usual style of the average monk on the Wear or the Tyne it speaks well both for teachers and learners."¹

In book v. chap. 13 of his *Ecclesiastical History* Bede tells us that Adamnan wrote a work about the Holy Places "most useful to many readers, his authority for which was Arculf, a Bishop of Gaul who had gone to Jerusalem for the sake of the Holy Places, and having surveyed all the Land of Promise, travelled to Damascus, Constantinople, Alexandria, and many islands of the sea, and returning home by sea, was by a violent storm forced upon the western coast of Britain." He was entertained by Adamnan, and the latter presently committed to writing all that Arculf said he had seen that was remarkable in Palestine. "Thus he composed a work useful to many," says Bede. Adamnan presented this book to King Aldfrid, and through his bounty it came to be read by lesser persons (no doubt including himself). From this book, as Bede expressly says, he took the matter in chapters xvi. and xvii. of his *Ecclesiastical History*. In addition to these extracts Bede apparently claims to have himself written an epitome of the work.²

Chapter xix. of the *Ecclesiastical History* is chiefly devoted to the life of Wilfrid, and is largely an epitome of the biography of that Saint by Æddi, whom, oddly enough, he does not mention in the text. It is to be hoped that mention was made of him in the marginal notes, an acknowledgment which as we have seen he asked his scribes not to omit. Its author, Æddi or Heddi, was surnamed Stephen. According to Bede he was taken by Wilfrid out of Kent to teach the Northumbrian clergy the Roman mode of chanting the Church service. He was present with Wilfrid at the Synod of Austerfield, and accompanied him when he was driven out of Northumbria and had to escape abroad. On his return he became a monk of Ripon, where he remained until his death in 720.³ He undertook the Life at the request of Acca, Bishop of Hexham, and Tatberht, Abbot of Ripon. He states in his preface that he only inserted such facts

¹ *Op. cit.* 49 and 50.

² See chapter 17, *ad finem*.

³ Hardy, *op. cit.* i. 398, 399; *ante*, ii. 183.

as he had learnt from competent authorities, and that he would rather be silent than relate what was false." The work, however, is really a panegyric and apologia, and, as will be seen further on, needs to be used with care and its statements require vigilant criticism. As Hardy says, however, his notices of manners, customs, buildings, etc., are valuable, while his style is diffuse and his facts are few.

The life of St. Guthlac, upon which Bede's and other biographies are based, was composed by Felix and dedicated to Ælfwold or Elfwald, King of the East Angles, by whose command it was written, and it claims to be based on the testimony of competent witnesses, such as Abbot Wilfrid, Cissa the priest, and others who had been acquainted with the Saint. The life was composed within a short period of Guthlac's death, and its author, Felix, who was a monk of Crowland, lived at the beginning of the eighth century, and is said to have also written a work entitled *Gesta Abbatum Croylandiae*. Two of the MSS. of the Life date from the ninth century; one of them is preserved at Christ College, Cambridge, 307, and another among the Royal MSS. in the British Museum is numbered 13 A, xv. In the former library there is also a translation of the work into Anglo-Saxon.¹

Aldhelm, the Bishop of Sherborne, fills a large place in the following pages, where I have described his life and his various works in detail in the text.² They were collected and printed by Giles. His life occurs in two editions: one of them written by Faricius (a foreign monk of Malmesbury), who became Abbot of Abingdon in 1100, and died in 1117, is printed by Giles in his collection of the works of St. Aldhelm, and the other was written by William of Malmesbury; both of them are very creditable performances, but the most valuable materials for the life of the famous scholar and saint are his own works, which largely survive. They have been printed in a very useful edition by Giles. A poem on the Saint, by a certain Frithegoth, seems to me to be very probably a sophistication. It is at all events of no value as an authority, and when trustworthy seems to be entirely based on the life by Faricius, which it turns into verse that is marked by pompous diction and many Græcisms, and is well described by William of Malmesbury as written: "*Quidam versibus non ita improbandis, nisi*

¹ See Hardy, *op. cit.* i. 404-6.

² *Vide infra*, ii. p. 451.

quod Latinitatem perosus Graecitatem amat: Graecula verba frequentat, ut merito dictis ejus aptetur illud Plautinum."

A third life of the Saint was composed by Eadmer, a monk of Canterbury, who, although he bases his biography almost entirely on those of Æddi and Frithegoth, does not name them. His work is chiefly valuable for the account he gives of the translations of Wilfrid's remains after the ravage of the Danes, and especially for the alleged second removal to Canterbury, after the cathedral there had been burnt in Lanfranc's time, and which, as I have reported later on, led to much heartburning among the claimants for his real relics.

John of Beverley was another famous personage occupying a considerable place in the following pages, as he does in Bede's history, v. 2-6. Leland in his *Collectanea* has a number of extracts from an anonymous life of the Saint no longer extant. The principal extant authorities for his life, after Bede, are a biography of the Saint by Folcard, a monk of St. Bertin in Flanders, who migrated to Canterbury in the reign of King Edward the Confessor, and was appointed Abbot of Thorney, but was never consecrated. His life of St. John was dedicated to Aldred, the last Anglian Archbishop of York. As Canon Raine, who edited it in his volume on the historians of York, says, he makes the most of his materials, which were scanty enough, and adds little to Bede's account save the notice of St. John's miracles. These last also form a goodly collection in a work by a certain William Ketel specially devoted to them, which is enlarged by three appendices of later date by other writers.

A work of considerable value, filling an otherwise empty gap, and which has been too much overlooked by historians of our period, is the poem of Æthelwulf, "de Abbatibus," in which he gives us many graphic details of a series of abbots of some monastery of which he does not give the name, and which has been identified by Mr. T. Arnold, with considerable probability, with that of Craike, in Yorkshire. It is printed as an appendix to the first volume of his edition of Symeon of Durham's works from the MS. Bodleian 162-0-2, which he claims to be a better one than that contained in Mabillon, *Acta Sanct.*, etc., vi. 304.

This work was probably imitated from a similar one, also in verse, written by Alcuin, a former scholar of the school at York, and afterwards secretary to Charlemagne, and entitled *de Pontificis et Sanctis Ecclesiae Eboracensis Carmen*. It is printed in the

first volume of Canon Raine's book on the historians of York, and like the previously quoted work has been freely used by me.

Among the saints' lives which bear a respectable age, there still remains two to be considered: one is the life of St. Mildred. It occurs in an Anglo-Saxon copy which is mutilated, and was probably composed by Ælfric.¹ Hardy says it is the basis of the *Narratio de Sanctis in Anglia sepultis*, written in the vernacular and printed by Hickes, *Diss. Ep.*, ii. 115, and of the life of St. Mildred by Gocelin, and what is more important, it was much used by Florence of Worcester in his account of the Saint. Although marked by the usual credulity of saints' lives, it has preserved some useful information about the foundation of the famous monastery of Thanet in Minster, and about the lives of the royal Kentish nuns.

Another life, which occurs in a MS. of the tenth or eleventh century, MS. Cott., Nero E, i., is a life of St. Ecgwin, the Bishop of Worcester, attributed to Brithwald, a monk of Ramsey, or of Worcester. Wharton calls him a monk of Glastonbury.² According to Hardy, it is supposed to be founded on his Autobiography. A good deal of it, however, is fabulous, but it contains some picturesque stories about the early days both of Worcester and Evesham.

Let us now turn to another source which contains some first-rate material for the history of the English Missions in Germany in the eighth century, and also a number of letters written to and received from English correspondents, which have all the value of contemporary documents. This is the collection of letters of St. Boniface, Archbishop of Mainz, and his successor Lullus, and of other religious persons in Germany, of which the latest and best edition is that contained in the *Mon. Hist. Germ.*, in the third volume devoted to "Letters," and which was edited by Dümmler. The collection also contains some letters and poems of Bishop Aldhelm of Sherborne, to which reference will be made later on. Some of these are doubtless referred to in a letter from Archbishop Lullus to the (*magister?*) patrician Dealwin, in which he asks: "*ut Aldhemi aliqua opuscula seu prosarum seu metrorum aut rithmicorum dirigere dignaretur ad consolationem peregrinationis suae.*"³

There are, in addition, in this collection other English docu-

¹ Hardy, *Cat. B.H.*, i. 381.

² *Ib.* i. 415, etc.; *op. cit.* i. 470.

³ *Op. cit.* p. 215, note 1.

ments belonging to our period and relating to Britain, which have been quoted in the following pages. They are as follows :—

1. Letter of Aldhelm to Geruntius.
2. Letter „ „ Sigegyth.
3. Letter „ „ Hedda.
4. Letter from a certain Scot to Aldhelm.
5. Letter „ Ædilwald to Aldhelm.
6. Five poems sent by the same to Aldhelm (the last being his own).
7. A letter from Archbishop Berhtwald to Forthere, Bishop of Sherborne.
8. A letter from Ælfeda, Abbess of Whitby, to Adela, Abbess of Palatiola, near Treves on the Meuse.
9. A letter from Wynfrith (*i.e.* Boniface) before he was Bishop, to the young Nithard.
10. Letter from Wynfrith to Eadburga, Abbess of Thanet, reporting the vision of a Wenlock monk.
11. Another from Daniel, Bishop of Winchester, commending Wynfrith the priest.
13. Letter from Egburga to Wynfrid.
14. Letter from Abbess Eangytha and her daughter Heaburg to Wynfrith.
15. Letter from Bugga to Boniface.
27. A letter from Boniface to Bugga.
29. Letter from Leobgytha to Boniface.
30. Letter from Boniface to Eadburga, the Abbess of Thanet.
32. Letter from Boniface to Pethelm, Bishop of Candida Casa, 735.

Turning to the professed chroniclers. A valuable and early document which I have had constantly by me, and which ought long ago to have been edited in a scientific fashion, is the *Chronicon ex Chronicis* of Florence of Worcester. It ended in 1117 when the author died, but was continued by one or more monks of Worcester. Hardy rightly says of him: "His materials have been selected with great care, and used with fidelity and industry." Appended to the chronicle we have another useful work by him, entitled *De regali Anglorum prosapia, sive Genealogiæ Regum et Episcoporum series*, in which he shows considerable skill in constructing a rational story out of sometimes contradictory materials. He also appends to his work certain regal genealogies of the various Anglo-Saxon dynasties, and also an account of the limits of their several kingdoms, with lists of bishops, which are grounded on some very ancient list still remaining.¹ These lists have been too readily accepted as almost inspired. It must be remembered that Florence's aim was to give as clear and reliable a story as he could out of broken materials, and that his result

¹ Hardy, *op. cit.* ii. pp. xciii and 129, etc.

is often an exercise in syncretism. I have quoted him from the edition in the *Mon. Hist. Britannica*.

Another excellent work which I have naturally found most helpful has been the classical history of William of Malmesbury, who, after Bede, was the greatest mediæval historian produced in these realms, and in fact in Western Europe, down to the twelfth century. Although making occasional mistakes, he is an authority of the first value, whose Latin style is excellent, and who was not only a very learned person but had the critical gifts of a true historian, and used inscriptions and other sources as well as written documents, and is often very attractive from his sly hints at the credulity and lapses of others. I have used both his *Gesta Pontificum* and his *Gesta Regum*.

On a lower level, but a valuable and honest writer, was Symeon of Durham, whose various works have preserved a great quantity of the best material for the history of northern England, and who had a minute and picturesque knowledge of the geography and legends of his native Northumbria. Both these great writers are too well known to need any fuller introduction.

Another Northern work which I have found of great service is the *History of the Church of Hexham*, by Richard, prior of the monastery there, who became prior in 1141, and of whom the last notice occurs in 1154. This book is a painstaking and careful record of the monastery from the earliest times, and it was edited with a great mass of illustrative notes by Canon Raine for the Surtees Society, who incorporated other materials and documents relating to the abbey.

I have also had by me the *Annals* of the Abbeys of Abingdon, Evesham, and Malmesbury, and notably Thomas Elmham's *Chronicle of St. Augustine's, Canterbury*, which last I have used and described in a previous volume of St. Augustine. These works I have quoted from the Rolls editions.

Another work to which I am under great obligations is not a history but a delightful story-book. It ought long ago to have had scientific and critical editors, and deserves translation on account of its multiplicity of tales and incidents picturing the early mediæval life of churchmen and laymen in northern England, and is especially full of stories about St. Cuthberht. I mean Reginald of Durham's so-called "*Libellus*." Each of its 141 chapters contains one or more good stories of men, women, and boys of all conditions, saints and sinners. I have drawn largely

from it to try and enliven my duller pages by "an occasional bit of stained glass" from a delightful kaleidoscopic author. The edition I have used is that published by the Surtees Society.

Another document which I have frequently quoted is generally known as the *Liber Vitae* of Durham. It was written at various dates, and contains a list of the benefactions and gifts presented to the monastery at Lindisfarne by different donors, who are arranged under classes. The earliest section of it has been published by the Surtees Society in the second volume of the *Catalogue of Ancient Manuscripts in the British Museum*, edited by Sir Edward Maunde Thompson, and by Dr. Henry Sweete in his *Old English Texts*. It is in the Cotton Collection, and is bound up with other works in the vol. Domitian A, vii., folios 15-45. Sir Edward Thompson fixes the date of the compilation about the year 820, within the half-century following the destruction of the monastery at Lindisfarne by the Danes in 793, and before the flight of the monks from the island at the approach of the same enemies in 875. The three last entries in the original hand are of three kings: "Ecgbercht" of Wessex (800-837), "Uoenan," *i.e.* Eoghenan of the Picts (836-839), and Eanrid of Northumbria (808-840). These dates would suggest that the book was written about 836 rather than 820.

This remark refers to the original portion of the work, to which various additions were made down to the sixteenth century. These last have no interest for us. The original part is written in gold and silver letters alternately, except the first column of the first list, which is all written in gold, while in the first column of another folio¹ three consecutive names in one case and five in another are also in gold. The initial letter of the first name in each list is of large size and ornamental character, and the names Eduini and Rægnmaeld are in capitals, in the latter case of rustic type.²

The book is thus described in the old MS. at Durham on "The Monuments, Sites, and Customs of Durham":—

"There did lye on the High Altar an excellent fine Booke, verye richly covered with gold and silver, conteininge the names of all the benefactors towards St. Cuthbert's Church, from the first originall foundation thereof; the verye letters, for the most part, beinge all gilded as is apparent in the said booke to this day. The laying that booke on the Altar did show how highly they esteemed their founders and benefactors, and the daily and

¹ f. 24.

² Thompson, *op. cit.* 84.

quotidian remembrance they had of them, in the time of Masse and divine service, did argue, not onely their gratitude but a most divine and charitable affection to the soules of their benefactors, as well dead as livinge. Which booke is as yet extant, declaringe the said use in the inscription thereof."

The original binding is referred to in two lines in the handwriting of Dr. James, Sir Robert Cotton's librarian:—

"Textus hoc argenteo tegmen fulgebat et auro;
Intus ut abbatum, nomina celsa regum."¹

The whole list of names is divided into ten sections, denoted respectively: 1, kings and "duces"; 2, queens and abbesses; 3, anchorites; 4, abbots (*gradus presbyteratus*); 5, abbots (*gradus diaconatus*); 6, ordinary abbots; 7, presbyters; 8, deacons; 9, clerks (*clericorum*); 10, monks.

It is very strange that no list of bishops occurs in the document.

It will be noticed that in this list of works I have not named the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle*, which has been made a fetish of by many writers. This is because I deem it as almost, if not quite, worthless for the period covered by Bede's history, from which almost if not all its statements of any value are derived. I am giving an elaborate analysis of the work in a series of papers in the *Archæological Journal*.

Turning to diplomatic and other similar documents, I must put in the forefront the famous *Penitential* or *Book of Penances* of Archbishop Theodore.

Like similar documents it was so called because it imposed penalties for various ecclesiastical offences. This one has the special interest that it is apparently the first document of the kind known in the West, except a small tract, the product of the Irish monks, which is quoted in it as *Libellus Scotorum*.²

The nature and authority of Theodore's *Penitential* have been analysed by Haddan and Stubbs. They say of the work that it may with the utmost confidence be affirmed to be that known during the early Middle Ages as the *Penitential* of Theodore. It claims for itself the character of an original

¹ Thompson, *op. cit.* 84.

² The latter is generally identified with a work also called *Liber de Penitentiarum mensura*, published by Fleming (*Collect. Sacra*, 197-210), and afterwards in the *Bibliotheca Patrum*, vol. xii., and assigned to St. Cummian, Abbot of Iona. See *Dict. of Chr. Biog.*, i. 723.

treatise, and in one MS. describes itself as written "*consiliante venerabili Theodoro Archiepiscopo Angelorum*" (*sic*), and again as "*Libellus quem Pater Theodorus diversis interrogantibus ad remedium temperavit poenitentia*";¹ but although drawn up under the eye, and published with the authority of Theodore, it is not, in the modern view, a direct work of the great Archbishop. According to the preface, it is a collection of answers given by him to persons questioning him on the subject of penance, to which, in book ii., are added answers on the whole range of ecclesiastical laws and discipline, most of them received by a priest named Eoda, "of blessed memory," from Theodore himself, and edited by a person who gives himself the title of "*Discipulus Umbrensi*um," meaning thereby either a native of Northumbria, who had been a disciple of Theodore, or, more probably, an Englishman of southern birth who had studied under the northern scholars. Eoda, according to the meaning of a very corrupt sentence in the preface, had compared Theodore's answers with those of the *Libellus* of Scottish origin already mentioned. There is no clue as to who is meant by Eoda. It is probable that it was so drawn up with the sanction of Theodore or under his eye; in fact, the verses at the end, in which Theodore commends himself to Bishop Hæddi, make this almost certain, and also show that the work was distributed by him to his bishops. It has been made the subject of much remark that Bede does not mention it. This seems to me to be due partially to the fact that it was essentially a southern document, and probably it was not very widely known till some time after Theodore's death. The fact of Theodore having written or dictated such a work is clear from the statements to that effect in the *Liber Pontificalis*, in the history of Paul Warnefrid, generally known as Paul the Deacon, in the Irish and French *Penitentials* from Theodore's date downwards, and its mention by Rabanus Maurus, a pupil of Alcuin, by Regino of Pruhm, and others. The most important testimony to the fact is that of Ecgberht, Archbishop of York, 734-766, whose memory must have covered twenty or thirty years beyond the former of these dates, and who twice mentions our *Penitential* as Theodore's. The *Codex Canonorum Hibernicorum*, one MS. of which, at least, is of the eighth century (A.D. 763-790), also quotes the work as Theodore's.²

¹ Haddan and Stubbs, iii. 173 and 203.

² *Ib.* 418 and 422.

Of modern editions, the first of any importance came out in Wasserschleben's *Die Bussordnungen der Abendlandischen Kirche*. This again was supplanted by the critical edition of Haddan and Stubbs in the third volume of their *Councils and Ecclesiastical Documents*, 176-213, to the introduction to which I am indebted for the above account.

These recent editions have shown that by far the most valuable MS. of the *Penitential* is MS. CCC, 326, in which the document is attributed to the *Discipulus Umbrensius*, and which they make the mainstay of their edition. "It is by far the most ancient MS. existing, not being later, probably, than the eighth century, although the reference to another copy in lib. ii., ch. 12, par. 5, precludes the idea of its being the original. It has, however, lost its first folio, which should contain the title and first half of the preface, which are supplied by Haddan and Stubbs from Wasserschleben. They also add to their edition some other canons ascribed to Theodore in other collections."

The English translation of the *Penitential*, which is contained in Appendix I, is, I believe, the first one that has been attempted. Perhaps this may be accounted for by its complex or rather barbaric Latin, which in some cases precludes all rational translation. In my own effort I have been helped by more than one good scholar, to whom I have expressed my indebtedness in the text, but I have failed to satisfy myself or them in all cases.

We will now turn to other documents. In regard to the papal letters which Bede uses, he himself tells us that some of them at least he received copies of from Nothelm, who was permitted to have access to them in the papal registers. Mommsen wrote a memoir on them, which is contained in the sixth volume of his *Gesammelte Schriften*, pp. 629, etc. He points out that as the heading of one of these letters is given in Bede's *Chronicle*, which was written in 725, it shows the transcripts must have been in his hands at that time, and he argues that the transcripts were made before 715, when Gregory II. became Pope, before which he had charge of the Papal Library.¹ I may add that in regard to Gregory's answers to Augustine's interrogatories, about which, as I showed in my Augustine volume, there have been some discussions, Mommsen calls attention in this paper to an important reference to and epitome of part of the document in a MS. at Lucca dating from

¹ *Op. cit.* 620.

the end of the eighth century, which is virtually conclusive as to their authenticity.¹

We will now turn to another class of evidence—charters, grants of land, privileges and exemptions to monasteries, etc. etc. I have discussed some of them in my volume on Augustine, and shown that most, if not all, the earliest ones are spurious. Before dealing with the period covered by the present volumes, I must make some preliminary remarks. It is a scandal that the extant diplomatic evidences for our history of Anglo-Saxon times have not long ago as a whole been subjected to a careful analysis according to modern methods of testing such documents. I feel it incumbent to partially fill the gap in regard to the period I am dealing with, for no class of evidence has proved a greater snare to the historian. The sifting of this class of evidence in a sporadic but not unintelligent way was begun by Hickes in his *Thesaurus*, but it was first methodically done by Kemble in his famous *Codex Diplomaticus*, published by the English Historical Society in 1839, etc. etc., and in which he first dealt methodically with the *Diplomata* of the Anglo-Saxon period. Unfortunately, he very seldom gives his reasons for his judgment on the charters, and we only have his *obiter scripta* for the results he arrived at. This he records by attaching an asterisk to all documents whose genuineness he doubts.

In the year 1865, Mr. B. Thorpe, to whom everybody who is interested in the Anglo-Saxon period ought to feel indebted for a great deal of illuminating work, issued a volume with the principal purpose of publishing the new materials which had come to light since Kemble's day or been omitted by him. It was entitled *Diplomatarium Anglicum Ævi Saxonici*. He also marks with asterisks such charters as he deems spurious, but he gives us no means of testing his judgment by giving the particular criterion by which he tests the document in each case. The preface doubtless explains why. In it he complains pathetically of his ill-health and of the want of sympathy or help from those who had charge of our public records. He was the first to translate the Anglo-Saxon in which the boundaries and parcels are often set out, which was a sensible and useful thing to do.

In 1886, Mr. Walter de Gray Birch brought out the first volume of what was intended to be a general *corpus* of all the known Anglo-Saxon documents, in which he not only included

¹ *Op. cit.* 627 and 628.

charters, but papal letters, professions of their faith by bishops, etc. It was entitled *Cartularium Saxonicum*. Unfortunately the work was unfinished. It only goes down to the end of the reign of King Eadgar inclusive, and, secondly, it only professes to be an edition of the texts themselves. The preface contains no prolegomena, no discussions of difficulties or questions of authenticity. Even the asterisks attached by Kemble are left out, and the only useful additions to the latter's work are the large number of additional documents it includes and the fact that the sources from which they come are mentioned in detail, while there is also an attempt to collate the MSS. Notwithstanding these shortcomings, which were not due to my friend Mr. Birch, but to the fact that it was a private venture and proved to be too costly, the book is a most useful one. It ought to have been a national work published by the Government, and we can only express our gratitude for the large mass of new materials which Mr. Birch has brought together.

In 1877 a joint work was published by two English scholars and historians of the first rank, Haddan and Stubbs, the latter a kind friend of mine, and known wherever a high standard of historical acumen and accuracy is cherished. It is entitled *Councils and Ecclesiastical Documents relating to Great Britain and Ireland*. Volume iii. of this book has naturally been of the greatest service to me in the following work. Although I have not always been able to agree with its authors, they discuss the reputation of a large number of documents relating to English history down to the ninth century with their usual acumen and learning. Bishop Stubbs has, in addition, published a separate volume.

In 1888, Professor Earle brought out a very useful and excellent handbook on *Land Charters and other Saxon Documents*, in which for the first time a really scientific method of analysis was applied to such documents, to sifting out the large mass of those which were obviously spurious, and to converging attention on a typical selection of the more interesting ones, with a rich commentary on the value and nature of their contents. The work is in fact indispensable, and deserves a new edition, bringing it up to date. In this book Earle for the first time definitely established the fact which had been questioned and even denied by Kemble and Thorpe, that one of the most conclusive criteria by which to test the

genuineness of our early charters is the method by which they were dated, and he showed conclusively that the system of dating documents by the date of Christ's birth, *anno Domini*, was first introduced by Bede in the year 725. In this he was following the lead of Hickee in his *Thesaurus*, and his case seems to me unanswerable. I quoted a passage from his argument in my book on Augustine, and I will supplement it by a few more words now.

About the year 532, Dionysius Exiguus introduced a more scientific way of calculating the Easter feast; in doing so he changed the era employed from that of Diocletian to that of *anno Domini*. Following him the Easter tables were afterwards calculated by the same era by Isidore, but so far as we know this method of dating was limited to the Pascal tables and the Calendar, and not applied to documents or literature until two centuries later. Kemble quite arbitrarily suggested that St. Augustine had introduced it into England for this latter purpose. He does not tell us whence he could have derived it, for Pope Gregory never uses it in any of his letters or his books, nor does Gregory of Tours, who was Augustine's contemporary. The first known literary document in which it is set out is in the 45th chapter of Bede's work *De Temporum Ratione*, which is headed "*De Annis Dominicae Incarnationis.*" This work was published in 725 and the method was fully adopted by him in his *Ecclesiastical History*, first published in 731. Up to this time it was quite unknown as a mode of literary or diplomatic dating. In Gaul it was not so used till the ninth century, and in no papal document could it be found so dated by Mabillon before the reign of Pope Leo the Ninth, in the middle of the eleventh century. It is perfectly plain, and the conclusion is emphasised by the greatest authority on chronological questions, Ideler, that this method of dating documents was not introduced anywhere until after Bede had made it fashionable.

Before that it was customary to date all documents by indications, namely, cycles of fifteen years. Originally it was the method in accordance with which the assessments of taxes were revised, and so named of the public notice of each revision (*indictis*) which was duly given. The series of fifteen years as a note of time began with 312 A.D., the first year of Constantine's undivided Empire, and is found used for dating at the end of the same century. Under this system each year began with 1st

September and ended with 31st August. It is perfectly plain therefore that any charter professing to be dated by *anno Domini* before the year 725, or rather 731, must either be spurious or must have been altered or tampered with. This does not mean that all the statements in such documents are worthless. That depends on their contents.

I have still to mention what is an ideal work, which makes one wish that its two authors would publish a complete corpus of our vernacular diplomata on the scale and with the thoroughness they have shown in this one. I mean the discussion of Crawford charters by Stevenson and Napier. Unfortunately, only one of these comes within our period.

Let us now turn to the documents.

The appalling destruction of literary documents caused by the Danes in their ravage of Britain cannot be exaggerated. Nearly all the existing materials of this kind which existed at the time of their invasion were preserved in the monasteries, and we can almost count on the fingers of one hand the monasteries that then escaped utter destruction. A good proof of what I am stating is to be found in the fact that in Northumbria, where the destruction was most complete, not a single document has survived from this period except the few quoted by Bede. It follows that any charter or similar document coming from an English source, and professing to be older than the ninth century, is not, *prima facie*, to be trusted as a faithful witness, and has to establish its character before it can be quoted with confidence. The chances are that it is a forgery. A critical examination of the extant documents answering this description amply confirms this probability. Nearly all of them are spurious. It does not follow that because they are spurious they are all entirely useless for our work. The fact is, the sophisticated charters belong to two entirely different classes. First we will deal with those which were deliberately forged in order to found claims for privileges and rights of exemption from control in the perennial warfare which the monks in later times waged against the bishops and others in authority. This class of charters never had any genuine originals and were dishonest concoctions. A complete exposure of the kind of chicanery involved was made by the Archbishop of Canterbury and his officials in the twelfth century. The evidence is extant. It relates to the privileges of St. Augustine's Monastery at Canterbury, and I collected it in the Introduction to my book on

St. Augustine, and showed how every such grant of privileges by the papal authorities, down to the time of Archbishop Theodore, was a falsification. I now propose to continue the analysis down to the year 732. The first papal letter professing to deal with England during the period covered by these volumes is only found in the very notorious collection of decretals of Yvo, from which it was taken by Mansi, Migne, and Jaffé.¹ The Saxon king to whom it is addressed, namely, Bulcred, is quite otherwise unknown, and its style and contents are really impossible; the Pope to whom it is attributed, John iv., reigned from 640 to 642.

The next Pope who is supposed to have had intercourse with England was Vitalian I. He professes to have written a letter during a vacancy in the See of Canterbury on the death of Archbishop Deusdedit. According to Bede, when the see thus became vacant, Oswy, King of Northumbria, and Ecgberht, King of Kent, wrote a joint letter requesting the Pope to fill up the post. The letter is preserved by him, and has therefore a *prima facie* good character, and it has been accepted, I believe, by all previous writers. It seems to me, notwithstanding this high patronage, that the document as it stands must be either entirely spurious or interpolated. It refers to the appointment of a successor to the see of Archbishop Deusdedit, in answer to a joint request from Oswy, King of Northumbria, and Ecgberht, King of Kent. In regard to the intervention of Oswy in this appointment, I have shown in the text how very improbable it is.² To the criticisms there offered, I will now add some more.

This letter, if sent, would not be accessible to Bede, who in fact only gives an abstract of it, together with what professes to be the Pope's reply, not to the two kings, but to Oswy of Northumbria. It happens that the position and attitude of Bede in describing the events at this time are very ambiguous, and his statements cannot always be equated with the facts as we otherwise know them. In the first place, he makes the Pope write to Oswy, not about his own Church of York, but about the Church of Canterbury, with which he had nothing whatever to do. Further, the whole attitude of Oswy towards the Pope and his special party in North Britain had been, and so far as we know, continued to be, very hostile, and it is most unlikely that he would address a letter to the Pope, or that the Pope would address any letter to him. Thirdly, Oswy had at

¹ Birch, *Cart.*, I, No. 21.

² *Vide infra*, i. 251-2.

York a bishop of his own choice and appointment, whose ties and traditions were with the Scotie school of churchmen with which he was associated, namely, St. Chad. This would make it still more unlikely that he would intervene in a Canterbury appointment. It seems to me that if the letter is genuine the name of Oswy has been introduced into it at a later time by Bede or one of his copiers (whose account of this particular time is so thin and apparently diplomatic) for the purpose of trying to make out that the attachment of Northumbria, and in the greater part of Britain to the Roman party (to which he himself belonged), was at that time much stronger than it was. I have the greatest suspicion that the letter in question, if not originally written to the King of Kent, was a sophistication, like the letters supposed to have been written to Ædwin and his wife, also given by Bede and discussed in a former volume.

There is a further notable fact to be here remembered, namely, that in Bede's transcript of the letter we have a hiatus. The Pope is made in it to refer in an odd way to the burning subject of Easter, upon which question Oswy sided with the Irish monks. The broken sentence runs thus: "*Quamobrem oportet vestram Celsitudinem, utpote membrum existens Christi, in omnibus piam regulam sequi perenniter principis Apostolorum, sive in Pascha celebrandum; sive in omnibus quae tradiderunt Sancti apostoli Petrus et Paulus; quae ut duo luminaria coeli illuminant mundum, sic doctrina eorum corda hominum quotidie inlustrat credentium.*" The succeeding passage is left out in Bede's text, and a few other words supplied, but it was supplied by Ussher from certain ancient documents at Whitby, "*Ea antiquissimis fortasse Whitbiensis coenobii schedis,*" and it runs thus: "*Nunquam enim celebrare debemus Sanctum Pascha nisi secundum Apostolicam et Canonicam fidem, ut in toto orbe celebratur a Christiana plebe, id est, secundum Apostolicam regulam CCCXVIII. Sanctorum patrum et computum sanctorum Cyrilli et Dionysii. Nam in toto terrarum orbe sic Christi una Columba, hoc est, Ecclesia immaculata, Sanctum Paschae Resurrectionis diem celebrat. Nam Victoris [lege Victori] regulam Paschae sedes apostolica non adprobavit, ideo nec sequitur dispositionem ejus pro Pascha.*"¹ All this increases the probability that the document we are dealing with, if not entirely sophisticated, has been hopelessly tampered with.

¹ Smith's Bede, *H.E.*, iii. 29, note.

A second letter, professing to be from the same Pope, and to be written to Archbishop Theodore,¹ is among the discredited Malmesbury charters,² and is described by Haddan and Stubbs as of doubtful authenticity.³ Mr. Plummer says of it: "It is the fourth of the Malmesbury series of letters connected with the primacy of Canterbury; it is not such a glaring forgery as some of the others, but it is not genuine."⁴

The next papal document of which we must speak, is a grant of exemption and indulgence by Pope Adeodatus, dated 23rd December 673, and granting privileges to Abbot Adrian and his monastery.⁵ It is contained in Thomas of Elmham's collection of documents about St. Augustine's Canterbury, which is a very suspicious source.⁶ There is a difficulty about its date, and Haddan and Stubbs tell us the indiction bears marks of having been written over an erasure. This kind of alteration, adapting a document to artificial conditions, is always suspicious. The document was known to the earlier chronicler Thorn, ed. Twysden (column 1770), who seems to have had certain doubts about it, for he says: "*Hoc privilegium non habemus sub plumbo, sed transcriptum in textu Adriani et in pluribus aliis locis.*" Thorn further tells us that when the monks of St. Augustine's were challenged in the days of Lanfranc to produce their charters, "*Asseruerient etiam privilegia Adeodati et Johannis paparum aut non habere, aut ignorare an haberent.*"⁷

The fatal thing about the bull, however, is the fact that such a grant of complete exemption from episcopal control was quite impossible at this time.

A more extravagant document of the same kind, also preserved by Thomas of Elmham,⁸ is that granted by Pope Agatho to St. Augustine's Abbey, and dated 15th May 675, in which not only is the monastery exempted from episcopal supervision but put immediately under the control of the Holy See: "*Omnem cujuslibet ecclesiae sacerdotem in praefato monasterio ditionem quamlibet aut auctoritatem, praeter sedem apostolicam, habere prohibemus. . . . Interdicimus etiam omnibus omnino ecclesiae praesulibus vel quacumque dignitate seu regali praeditis potestate.*" This is the language of quite another period. Guizot says that among

¹ Birch, No. 24.

² See Howorth, *St. Augustine of Canterbury*, Introd. lviii.

³ *Op. cit.* 116.

⁴ *Op. cit.* ii. 205.

⁵ See Birch, No. 30.

⁶ *Vide* Howorth, *op. cit.* Introd. xxxviii.

⁷ Twysden, *op. cit.* col. 1833.

⁸ P. 246.

the Franks, Faulda was the first monastery to be put under the direct jurisdiction of Rome. Haddan and Stubbs label this document as of questionable authenticity.¹ Plummer speaks of the flagrant character of the forgery and the extravagant nature of the privileges claimed, adding that the first *real* case of exemption of an English monastery appears to have been that of Battle Abbey.²

The dubious quality of this document is supported by its having several companions about which there is no doubt: one of them granting privileges to St. Paul's, London (Birch, 55), labelled corrupt and spurious by Haddan and Stubbs. A grant to Chertsey, labelled by the same writers, "Probably a forgery of the time of Edgar."³ Plummer calls it a spurious grant.⁴ It is numbered 56 in Birch. A third grant from the same Pope professes to secure privileges to Peterborough Abbey, and is incorporated in the description of the foundation of that monastery contained in Codex E of the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle*, which I have described in my analysis of that work in the *Archæological Journal*. I have there proved that with other early documents relating to the same abbey it is a fabrication of the twelfth century. It is styled spurious by Haddan and Stubbs.⁵

The only grant of privileges by this Pope to an English foundation which is beyond reproach, is recorded in Bede's *History of the Abbots* as having been brought home by Benedict Biscop from Rome in 678. The terms of this papal grant as there referred to are not recorded.⁶

We now reach two papal documents⁷ attributed to Pope Sergius. The first bids Æthelred, King of the Mercians, and others receive Archbishop Berhtwald as Archbishop of Canterbury as Primate of all England. In the other he writes in a similar tone to the English bishops.⁸

They are both preserved by William of Malmesbury in his *Gesta Pontificum*, ed. Hamilton, 52 and 53—a very doubtful source for such documents. They are declared by Haddan and Stubbs to be questionable.⁹ Speaking of these letters, Dr.

¹ *Op. cit.* iii. 124.

² See Plummer, *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle*, ii. 30.

³ *Op. cit.* iii. 161.

⁴ *Bede*, ii. 217.

⁵ *Op. cit.* iii. 153.

⁶ See Bede, *Hist. Abb.*, ch. v. 12; Haddan and Stubbs, iii. 126.

⁷ Birch, Nos. 83 and 84.

⁸ Haddan and Stubbs, iii. 229 and 230; Birch, Nos. 83 and 84.

⁹ *Op. cit.* iii. 229.

Plummer says they belong to the suspicious series connected with the primacy of Canterbury; and although not such glaring forgeries as some others, are very unlikely to be genuine.¹

Another letter is from the same Pope to Ceolfrid, Abbot of Wearmouth, desiring him to send a member of his community to the Papal Court.² This seems quite regular and genuine.³ It comes from William of Malmesbury's *Gesta Regum*, i. 86, and not from his *Gesta Pontificum*. Bede also speaks of his having given a grant of privileges to Benedict Biscop when the latter was at Rome. Malmesbury does not give the text of the document, but only a paraphrase.⁴

Another grant of privileges from this Pope is undated, and professes to have been made to Abbot Aldhelm and the Abbeys of Malmesbury and Frome in Wiltshire. It is preserved in William of Malmesbury's *Gesta Pontificum*. Malmesbury says it was secured by Aldhelm on his visit to Rome. Of this document there is a Saxon original, preserved in the Cott. MSS., Otho C, i. 18, which suffered greatly in the Cotton fire in 1731. The volume is, according to Hamilton, a tenth-century copy of the Gospels. Birch attributes it to the eleventh. The document was printed for the first time by Hamilton,⁵ and contains an additional sentence which Aldhelm translates into Latin, and further adds in the margin the reason of the bull. The Charter, without this addition, is also given by Faricius.⁶ It forms No. 105 of Birch's collection. It is framed in most extravagant terms, and contains most outrageous exemptions from episcopal and other control quite inconsistent with the time of this Pope.

Another letter from Pope Sergius, addressed to the Abbot of Wearmouth and the brethren there, is preserved in the eleventh-century MS. Cott., Tiberius A, xv., and extracts from it are given in William of Malmesbury, *Gesta Regum*.⁷ The two texts vary a good deal. In the older version of the letter, that in the Cotton Library, Abbot Ceolfrid is asked to send one of his monks to explain the position of things at Wearmouth. The sentence reads: "*Absque aliqua remoratione religiosum famulum Dei N.*

¹ Plummer, *Bede*, vi. 283.

² Birch, No. 104.

³ Birch, No. 104; Haddan and Stubbs, iii. 248.

⁴ Bede, *Hist. Abb.*, ch. 15.

⁵ William of Malmesbury, *Gesta Pont.*, 371, note.

⁶ *Vit. Ald.*, lxxxix. 70.

⁷ *Id.*; Hardy, i. 80; Birch, 104; Haddan and Stubbs, 248 and 249.

venerabilis monasterii tui, ad veneranda limina apostolorum . . . ad nostrae mediocritatis conspectum non moraris dirigere." William of Malmesbury alters this to "*Absque aliqua immoratione religiosum Dei famulum Bedam, venerabilis monasterii tui presbyterum . . . electi.*"

Inasmuch as Pope Sergius died in 701, the letter could not have been written later than that year; but Bede was not a presbyter till 702, so that Malmesbury's alteration is clearly illegitimate. This and the fact that Bede, who was then only twenty-nine, take away the foundation for the view that Bede was the person invited by Sergius. Apart from this interpolation by Malmesbury, the letter of the Pope (as contained in the Cotton MS.) seems to be genuine. The *privilegium* asked for by Ceolfrid was doubtless sent, for Bede says expressly in his *History of the Abbots*, ch. 12: "*Missis Roman monachis tempore beatae recordationis Sergii papae privilegium ab eo pro tuitione sui monasterii instar illius quod Agatho Papa Benedicto dederat, accepit, quod Brittannias perlatum, et coram synodo patefactum praesentium episcoporum simul et magnifici Regis Aldfridi subscriptione confirmatum est.*"

The next papal letter is from Pope John VI. to Æðilred, the King of the Mercians, and Alfrid (*sic*), King of the Deiri and Bernicii, about Wilfrid. It is given in Birch, No. 110, followed by an epitome of the same, numbered 111, from William of Malmesbury's *Gesta Pontificum*. Bede says expressly that the Pope wrote such a letter, and the text is given by Æddi in his life of Wilfrid, and seems beyond suspicion.

Pope John VI. (705-707) addressed a short letter to the archbishops, presbyters, deacons, and the universal Church of the English, ordering all the English clergy on the vigil of St. Gregory, when they had been wont to wear a particular vestment, to adopt that in use at Rome: "*apostolicae sententia usque adeo sedis praevaluit, ut voluntarie omnes Anglorum clerici sub ipsis vigiliis sancti Gregorii laicalem et sinuosum sed et cunctum habitum deponentes, talares tunicas, secundum Romanum morem induerunt.*" This trivial document is printed by Baluze and by Jaffé. It seems vitiated by the fact that it speaks of archbishops in the plural, while there was only one archbishop in England at the time.¹ Perhaps it may have been issued by a later Pope John, who reigned when there were two archbishops in England.

¹ See Birch, No. 119.

We now have a series of very dubious grants professing to be made by Pope Constantine, and chiefly connected with Evesham, a notorious source of many forgeries. One letter, not in Kemble, and numbered 126 in Birch, professes to be addressed to Archbishop Brithwald (*sic*), and refers to a vision of Bishop Ecgwin of Worcester, the holding of a Council near the spot where the monastery of Evesham was afterwards planted, and the consecration of the monastery. It is called "spurious" by Haddan and Stubbs,¹ as is a second letter from the same pope to the same archbishop for the protection of Evesham Abbey.²

Another letter of the same pope professes to be addressed to Hedda, the Abbot of Bermondsey (Vermundesei) and Woking (Wocchingas), granting privileges to those abbeys. It comes from the so-called *Liber Niger Petroburgensis*, now in the Library of the Society of Antiquaries, lx. p. 50b. It is No. 133 in Birch, and also printed by Haddan and Stubbs, p. 276. On this document they have an interesting note. They say: "Nothing else is known of any monasteries at these two places at this early date, the Peterborough entries in the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle* being not entirely satisfactory. The document is of course of very questionable authority, and should be compared with the privileges of Chertsey and Evesham already cited, and also with the privilege of Uchtred. But it is difficult to say whose interest it could have been to forge such a charter, and how it finds its way into the records of Peterborough at all. . . . The chief importance of the document is the light it throws on the privileges of exemption which the monks wished it to be believed that they possessed. Whether a forgery or no, it shows that the framers of it had no thought of the extensive monasteries afterwards claimed under the title of exemption."³

This is a very mild way of describing the document, and I think I have shown very clearly that, with all the other Peterborough documents in Codex E of the *Chronicle*, this is a forgery of the twelfth century; and it seems to me there was a very good reason for the Peterborough monks, who were adept forgers, to make up the document, for Woking was afterwards a daughter house of Peterborough.⁴

We will now turn to the grants of property and privileges by

¹ *Op. cit.* 281.

² Birch, 129; Haddan and Stubbs, p. 282.

³ *Op. cit.* 277-8, note,

⁴ *Arch. Journal*, cxv. 20 and 21.

others than the popes, of which, unfortunately, there are very few that can be accepted as perfectly satisfactory among those that have reached us from this period. This class of documents, when doubtful, may be divided into two or three classes. In one class the object was the securing of privileges from kings or other great people. Such documents were often deliberately concocted with a dishonest purpose, and are worthless. Those that merely profess to convey lands or other property were not so immoral. The destruction of monasteries and libraries by the Danes, to which I have already referred, was not the only cause of the wholesale destruction of documents. There was another, which was continually happening during the Middle Ages, namely, the terrible fires which were habitually taking place, and which were most destructive, especially when the domestic buildings of the monks were made of wood. It was not unnatural that under these circumstances they should try and replace their old charters by new ones framed from memory or purely imaginative. It did not necessarily involve any dishonest motive. It was not easy to appropriate other people's property by means of forged charters in the Middle Ages, since it was well known to the neighbours who had paid and who had received rents for a long time past, and a jury could always be summoned to try the case. There would, no doubt, be occasional frauds, more frequently in testaments and death-bed gifts, but this could only be in a limited number of cases, and it is not improbable that in many of these substituted charters the descriptions of the estates and of their boundaries, "the parcels," as lawyers call them, may be trusted. The dates, the names of the witnesses, and in most cases those of the grantors and grantees, must be exceedingly doubtful, and in many examples they have been obviously constructed out of fictitious persons or from names derived from other old documents. Here, again, there would be a certain difference in their value, according to whether the copies were made at an early date when they embodied a decent tradition, or a late one when the tradition was quite dead.

During the period we are dealing with there are very few charters with any claims to be the original documents themselves. For the most part those we have are professed copies which have come from chartularies, or are detached charters on vellum and paper made to look as like old ones as possible. It is very seldom, therefore, that we can apply the tests of the quality of

the parchment or paper, of the ink or of the writing, and we have to turn to internal contradictions, such as making certain men contemporaries who lived at different times, or using words and phrases that were not known at the time, or making statements not consistent with those of good authorities. This negative evidence, however, is not always safe, since the number of our documents is so small. Mistakes in dates, and, above all, the use of the Incarnation in dating documents before it had come into practice, are good criterions of a good or bad character.

Let us begin with Peterborough Abbey. That all the documents belonging to Peterborough Abbey before the Danish invasion were destroyed during that raid is virtually admitted in the text of the *Peterborough Chronicle* itself.

In the year 868 we read that "the Danes went to Medeshamstede and burnt and broke the buildings, and slew the abbot and the monks and all they found there; then made they that which was once full rich so that it was reduced to nothing." Almost a century later, namely, in 964, we have an entry in the same document about the rebuilding of the monastery by Æthelwold, Bishop of Winchester. In it we are told that "the bishop went to Medeshamstede, which had been destroyed by the heathen men, and there he met with nothing but old walls and wild woods, and he found hidden in the old walls writings that Abbot Headda had once written, how King Wulfere and his brother Æthelred had built it, and how they freed it against the king, and against bishop and against all secular service, and how Pope Agatho had confirmed it by writ and also the Archbishop Deusdedit."

This is surely a very naive statement. It will be noted that the abbey had been a hopeless ruin for nearly a hundred years, and yet we are told that these precious and most fragile MSS. were found intact in the ruined walls. It was, in fact, quite an ordinary artifice among the forgers of deeds at a later time to make statements about the discovery of old documents in the holes of old walls. Thus in Matthew Paris' *History of Abbot Eadmer of St. Albans*, there is a tale of a very ancient book written in the British language, which was discovered in the recess of a wall, and of its having been with some difficulty deciphered by Unwana, an aged monk, when it was found to contain the life of St. Alban. It was rather unfortunate that in this instance the very interesting original disappeared directly it had been copied and was published in Latin. In the present case, the documents

which were professedly found in a hole in the wall can be shown by overwhelming evidence to have been compiled several centuries after the rebuilding of the abbey by Bishop Æthelwold.

I have already discussed the alleged grant of privileges by Pope Agatho; let us now turn to the clauses in the "deed" relating to the foundation of the abbey. These clauses, which do not occur in any other copy of the *Chronicle* except MS. E, are found entered under the years 654, 656, and 675. They are not original compositions, but have been derived from a long Latin document professing to be a grant from Wulfhere, King of the Mercians and Southern Angles, of certain lands and privileges to the Abbey of Medeshampstede, which is dated in 654, and is preserved in two old copies, one in the Cotton MS., Augustine, ii. 5, and another one in that of the Dean and Chapter of Canterbury.

As I have shown,¹ there cannot be any doubt that the two insertions of 654 and 656 in the *Chronicle* down to the dating clause are merely a short paraphrase and epitome of the Latin charter of Wulfhere just named. Let us then turn to this charter. It has been universally treated as a forgery by the best authorities—Kemble, Haddan and Stubbs, Plummer, etc.² Its contents betray it in almost every sentence. It is full of anachronisms. Thus in "the parcels" it refers to the inhabitants of Huntingdonshire (*Huntingdouneschira*), doubtless referring to the shire of the same name, which was not founded till long after. In a later passage, danegeld and shires and hundreds are mentioned, so are castles and parks (*castelli, parci*)—a phraseology which could not have been used before the Conquest. The following phrase belongs to an entirely different period, with different modes of thought to the seventh century: "*Haec nobis beato Petro principante principalis in sua regione et specialius (sic) Romana sit ecclesia, hic quaeramus ipsum patronum qui Romae non possumus. Non decet immo non expedit nobis ut haec seruiat quae fide ipsius Petri Christo regaliter disponata est.*"

Lastly, the collocation of witnesses is impossible. Ithamar, Bishop of Gloucester, died shortly after 655, and Damian, his

¹ "The Anglo-Saxon Chronicle: Its Origin, etc.," *Arch. Journ.*, lxxv. 20, 21.

² Plummer speaks of the flagrant character of the forgery and the extravagant nature of the privileges claimed, adding that the first real case of exemption of an English monastery appears to be that of Battle Abbey (Plummer, *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle*, ii. 30).

successor, must have died before Deusededit, and therefore before July 14th, A.D. 664; while Tuda, his successor, was not bishop till after the Whitby Conference in A.D. 664, and died the same year. Yet all these are made witnesses of the same document.¹

The dominating blot of the charter, however, which makes it quite impossible, is that it is dated according to the year of the Incarnation, a mode of dating, as we have seen, first introduced by Bede. No wonder, therefore, that it is referred to by Haddan and Stubbs as the spurious act of Wulfhere.² Another and much shorter edition of the grant occurs among the Lansdowne MSS., Nos. 992 and 994. It is numbered 944 by Kemble and 22a by Birch. It is not an abstract of the larger document, but a translation into Latin of the Anglo-Saxon version in the *Peterborough Chronicle*. Its language is of the twelfth century, to which, in fact, both documents are now universally attributed. I will quote a sentence from the longer charter, which is conclusive as to its real date. It is as follows: "*Praecipimus etiam quod praedictum monasterium et dominia sua sint libera et quieta ab omni dominacione et exactione, Comitum, Baronum, Vicecomitum et Ministerialium suorum.*"

Assuredly these titles are quite impossible in a genuine charter of the seventh century, or in any charter before the Norman Conquest. This also puts out of court Mr. Plummer's suggestion that the charter was a forgery of the time of Eadgar, and makes it clear that it was, in fact, a concoction of the twelfth century, as Haddan and Stubbs concluded, and as I have shown in much greater detail in the memoir on the *Peterborough Chronicle* in the *Archæological Journal* above cited.

We will now turn to the charters of St. Augustine's, Canterbury, which were set out in order with a commentary as far down as the reign of Richard I. by a monk of the abbey, who has been identified with great probability with Thomas of Elmham, the author of the *Vita et Gesta Henrici Quinti*, who, in the first half of the fifteenth century, wrote the splendid MS. of the work we are now discussing, and which is preserved at Trinity Hall, Cambridge. I described the author and his work in my Introduction to my *Life of St. Augustine*, and shall not do it again here. It was edited by Hardwicke for the Rolls Series. Elmham quotes the early charters from a volume he calls *Textus Adriani*, which is also quoted by Thorn. It was apparently the document

¹ Haddan and Stubbs, iii. 100.

² *Ib.*

called the Red Book of Canterbury, which is described as "a fine MS. register of St. Augustine," Cott. Lib., Claudius D, x.

I will take up the story here where I left it in my previous volume, and begin with three charters¹ professedly conveying lands to Abbess Æbba, unknown to Bede, from Oswyn, styled in them King of Kent. He is not mentioned elsewhere in that capacity, nor is there, in fact, any place for him among the Kings of Kent at this time. Elmham was evidently puzzled by this fact, and identified him with the King of Deira in far-off Northumbria, who ruled at this time but had no ties with Kent. The internal evidence of the charters confirms their external story. They are all marked as spurious by Kemble.²

There next follow in Elmham two charters, pp. 232 and 234, one of them professing to convey a place in Thanet called Sudanie, and another beyond the island (*ultra insulam*) from Swaebhardt, King of the Kent men (*Rex Cantuariorum*), with the consent of his father, Sebbe, also to the Abbess Æbba, and signed by Archbishop Theodore, Abbot Adrian, by Oswyn, and by Ædilred, King of the Mercians. It is dated in the year 676 from the Incarnation, which is quite impossible at this time in a genuine charter. They are numbered 14 and 15 by Kemble, and 41 and 42 by Birch. Kemble argues that the month quoted, namely January, was a mistake for June.

The second deed conveys lands at Sturige and Botdesham, to the same abbess, and is not dated. It is also marked as spurious by Kemble. He would have done better, as would Birch, if they had also printed Elmham's commentary on these two charters, in which he shows us how baffled he himself had been by the persons who had charge of the documents of title at St. Augustine's. He says of them: "*Secundum quod notantur in Textu Adriani et in aliis sparsim libris, forte ex scriptorum negligentia, vel ex compilatoris legendi Saxoniam Scripturam imperitia, aliquam discrepantiam retinet ab originalibus qui continentur in librario codicellis.*"

He then goes on to say that the statements in these codicelli differed from those in the true chronicles—"a veris chronicaribus reperi discrepasse." He quotes two clauses from the two codicelli, and then continues: "*Ex istis enim duabus clausulis sequetur quod reges Lotharius, Edricus, et Mulus intrusor, regem Suabhartum*

¹ *Thomas of Elmham*, pp. 226, 229, and 230.

² *Cod. Dip.*, Nos. 8, 10, and 30; answering to Birch, 35, 40, and 73.

praecedent, qui contemporaneus fuerat cum Egberto, qui post eundem Egbertum immediate fuerant succedentes: quod impossibile fuit," etc.¹

The fact is that the whole story told in these charters about Swaebhardt is a pure invention. It is a curious proof of the ineptitude of forgers of such documents that in the list of witnesses of the first of the two documents, Oswyn, who, according to Elmham, *preceded* Swæbhardt as king, signs among the rest, and that Æthelred, the King of Mercia, who concludes the list, is made to sign in this fantastic way: "*Signum manus Edilredi regis Merciorum, dum ille infirmaverat terram nostram in hoc loco erat qui dicitur Mirasfield apud Stapulford.*"

The next charter in *Elmham*, p. 248, is one from Hlothaire, King of the Kent men, conveying lands in the marsh called Stodmersh, near Fordwich, to St. Augustine's, Canterbury. It is dated 1st April 675, and is witnessed by the grantor, by Archbishop Theodore and Abbot Adrian, by Ecca and Osfrid. The document is numbered 9 by Kemble, who marks it as spurious; and 36 by Birch.

In the text of his work Elmham tells us that "Lothaire" confirmed the charters of the aforesaid King Swaebhardt to the Abbess Æbba about Sturregia and Bodesham.² It is reasonable to conclude that if the original deeds were spurious these confirmations must be so also. The confirmations are not mentioned by Kemble or Birch.

The next document cited by Elmham is a grant by King Eadric, son of Hlothaire, of all the rich lands (*terras sationales*), meadows, fields, woods, meres, or marsh called Stodmersh, adjoining lands left by his father, bounded on one side by the ford called "*Fordstreta publica indirectum*," and on the other by the river Stour, to Abbot Adrian and the monastery at Canterbury. It is dated in June 686, and signed by Ædric the King, and Archbishop Theodore.³ This deed is not marked as doubtful by Kemble, but it seems to me to be in the same category as the documents last mentioned. One of its clauses describes the land Eadric is conveying as "*terram juris mei . . . quod situm est juxta civitatem Dorovernis . . . quae supradicta terra conjuncta est terrae quam Sanctae memoriae Lotharius quondam*

¹ *Op. cit.* 237.

² *Thomas of Elmham*, p. 250.

³ *Ib.* p. 251; Kemble, 27; Birch, 67.

rex beato Petro . . . donasse cognoscitur." This clause clearly contemplates the previous grant, which Kemble marks as doubtful. Nor can we in such a matter avoid remembering that the charter is preserved in a collection otherwise consisting almost entirely, if not quite, of forgeries.

We next come to a series of five charters,¹ all claiming to be grants from Wythred, sometimes called King of Kent and sometimes of the Kent men, and all of which are marked as spurious by Kemble.

In I. (Kemble, 37; Birch, 86), dated 17th July 694, he and his wife, Kynigitha, grant lands at Humeratun, in Thanet, to the Abbess Æbba.

II. This is dated February 696. In it the King, with the concurrence of Archbishop Berhtwald and Abbot Adrian, "*et omnium ecclesiasticorum graduum,*" together with Bishop Gebmund of Rochester, grants certain privileges to his relative St. Mildred (*propinquae meae Mildrythae*) and her successors. Kemble marks it 39; Birch, 88.

III. Witred (*sic*) and his wife, Ædelburga, grant lands at Littelborne to St. Peter's Monastery (*i.e.* St. Augustine's).² It is dated March 696, and signed by the grantor, his wife, and Bishop Gemund (*sic*).³

IV. A grant, dated 2nd April 697, of land at Haeg to the Abbess Eabbe (*sic*) by Withred and his wife, Queen Ædilburga (among the witnesses she signs herself Ethelburga), and Archbishop Berhtwald. The king signs, although a grantor, after the archbishop and an unknown Agesmund. It is numbered 42 by Kemble, and 96 by Birch.

V. A grant of privileges and exemptions to the churches and monasteries of Kent, dated 8th April 699. This document occurs also in the Stowe MSS., B.M., 636, and in MS., Trinity Hall, Cambridge, p. 48. Berhtwald the Archbishop, and Gebmund, Bishop of Rochester, both give their assent, as well as Abbots Ailmer and Adrian, the latter of whom signs himself "*indignus monachus.*" Four abbesses concur in the body of the deed, but do not sign as witnesses, namely, "Hirminhilda, Irminburga, Æbba, and Nerienda." It is numbered 44 by Kemble, and 99 by Birch.

It seems to me that the grant of privileges here described

¹ *Thomas of Elmham*, pp. 288, 289, 290, 291, and 295.

² *Ib.* p. 299.

³ Kemble, No. 41; Birch, No. 90.

has really to do with the same transactions dealt with in a group of documents of high importance, connected with an alleged Synod at Baccanhelde. They have without much doubt misled some very able antiquaries, and are very notable specimens of sophistication and chicanery as practised in ecclesiastical circles in the twelfth century. The earliest known form in which the grant occurs is the Latin text in the very late bilingual copy of the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle* known as Domitian A, viii., and classed as MS. F. I have dissected it and its history at some length in the *Journal of the Royal Archaeological Institute*, and have shown that it was not written before the second decade of the twelfth century. The document in question professes to be a grant of privileges to the churches of Kent by a Council or Synod held at Baccanhelde, and presided over by King Wihtried of Kent. It is most curious that this supposed Council or Synod is entirely ignored by Bede, by all the early copies of the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle*, and by Florence of Worcester. The copy in MS. F is not specially dated, which is very singular, but is entered, no doubt conjecturally, under the year 694.

Another edition of the document, in Latin, is preserved in Lambeth MS., 1212, p. 307, of the thirteenth century, and the Register of Canterbury, A, p. 8, of the fourteenth century, and also by Thorn, Twysden, col. 2208. It is printed in Kemble, 996; Birch, 92; Haddan and Stubbs, iii. 242. This document represents the Latin text of MS. F after it had been interpolated, and was doubtless dated by the entry in the church, as the date, 694, is here calculated by the year of the Incarnation, proving how far it was from being an original document. While this MS. generally follows the Latin of F as we have it, it contains one or two very notable small changes. Instead of being limited in its operation to the churches of Kent, where alone King Wihtried had authority, it is extended in two specific cases to the whole Church in England (*in Anglia*)—a fact which further damns it. This alteration also occurs in what is doubtless a translation of this copy into Norman French, preserved in the fourteenth-century Harleian MS. 636, p. 36. It is given by Birch, 93.

We will now turn to a third form of the same document, preserved among the Stowe MSS. (2) in the British Museum, and in MS. Cott., Claudius D, ix., fol. 25, based on the last-

named extended edition of the Latin text in MS. F. It is numbered 91 by Birch. Here it has further blossomed into further extravagance, and it contains considerable additional matter, and the language is often a paraphrase rather than a copy. The first notable change in it is in regard to the filling of certain ecclesiastical positions. Bishops are here excluded from the operative clause in regard to the method of filling vacant offices, which is limited to abbot and abbesses. They are also excluded from the clause defining the disciplinary power of Metropolitans, which is limited to abbots, abbesses, presbyters, and deacons.

A clause is then inserted, which is interesting, as professing to define the monasteries to which the deed was to apply, since it gives a list of the early Kent foundations. It includes St. Peter's in Thanet or Upminster, Raculf or Reculver, South Minster, Dover, Folkestone, Lyminge, Sheppey, and "Æt Hoe."

While the other copies of the document are signed by the King and Archbishop only, this one has a long list of signatures. Thus, it is signed by King Wihtred for himself, his wife Uerburga (*sic*), and his son Alric, by Archbishop Berhtwald, by (King) Æthelberht for himself and his brother Eadberth, by Tobias the Bishop, by the "Abbesses Myldryðe, Æþeldryðe, Ætte, Wilnoðe, and Hereswyðe," and by some priests.

It is followed by what professes to be a confirmation made at a Synod at Clovesho in July of the year of the Incarnation 716.

While the analysis of the various forms of this document shows clearly that it is quite a spurious late concoction, which was gradually altered and made more irrational in successive editions, it is curious that in the well-known and deservedly appreciated work of Haddan and Stubbs on *Councils and Ecclesiastical Documents* it should be treated as probably sound in substance, and that excuses should be made for its lapses. The two learned editors do, however, close their friendly comments with the words: "The source, however, whence the document comes—St. Saviour's, Canterbury—is not above suspicion, and the variety of forms, some of them manifest fictions, under which it appears throws a doubt upon all of them."¹ They then add the postscript: "That there really was such a privilege may appear to be proved by the reference made to it in the Acts of Councils of Clovesho of 716 and 742." Surely

¹ *Op. cit.* iii. 242.

this is not very illuminating. There is no evidence of any kind of a Council having been held at Clovesho in 716, except the confirmation just quoted of the doings of the Council at Baccanhelde, which last we have shown to be spurious. No such Council is mentioned in Bede or the *Chronicle*, or by Florence of Worcester. In regard to the confirmation itself, it exists in only one copy of Wihtréd's grant, and was first printed by Haddan and Stubbs themselves,¹ who, after occupying two pages with it, and the charter to which it is appended, as they occupy many pages with other universally admitted forgeries (thus misleading the unwary), say: "Of course its authenticity stands or falls with that of the Privilege, and there are one or two suspicious marks about the Act itself independently of the connection." The Indiction is made "xiii." instead of "xiv." This seems to me not a trivial but a very critical error. Two successive Bishops of Lichfield both sign the document, namely, Haedde and Wor, which is most unlikely. The presence of Bishop Acca at a Southumbrian Conference is also most unlikely. Our authors suggest that this might be accounted for by this being the first Council in the reign of Æthelbald; but Acca had nothing to do with Æthelbald or his kingdom. He was Bishop of York, in Northumbria, where in Church matters the rulers were most independent.

This is not all. In a later, and admittedly fictitious, second Council, said to have met at Baccanhelde,² attributed to the year 798, and probably the handiwork of the author of the spurious documents we have been considering, the same list of witnesses which are claimed to have attested the acts of the spurious Council of Clovesho in 716 are repeated.

The next document I have to quote is from Malmesbury's *Gesta Pontificum*. The first charter in this work that concerns us³ professes to be a grant by Cenfrith, "*comes*" of the Mercians, made with the consent of King "Ethelred," of certain lands at Wdetun, *i.e.* Woolton in Wiltshire, to Abbot Aldhelm.⁴ This charter is omitted by Kemble. Its style is the only thing that might tempt some people to treat it as genuine, since it follows the inflated language to which Aldhelm was so prone. I cannot resist

¹ *Op. cit.* iii. 300 and 301.

² No such place as Baccanhelde is known, and the suggestion that it was identical with Bapchild, near Sittingbourne, in Kent, made by Birch, seems quite arbitrary; the names have nothing in common.

³ *Op. cit.* p. 349.

⁴ Birch, 54.

quoting a clause. "*Fortuna fallentis seculi procax, non lacteo immarcescibilium liliorum candore amabilis, sed fellita ejulandae corruptionis amaritudine odibilis, filios in valle lacrimarum fetentis carnis rictibus venenosis mordaciter dilacerat; quae quamvis arri-dendo sit infelicibus attractabilis, Acherontici tamen ad ima Cociti, ni Satus alti subvenita boantis, impudenter est declivis,*" etc. It is a singular and sinister fact that in two charters of King Athelstan granting two different properties to Malmesbury Abbey, also cited by William of Malmesbury, and dated as late as 937, the extravagant phraseology here referred to is in a large measure repeated verbatim, while in a third and compound charter, doubtless made up by Malmesbury himself, in which preceding grants are incorporated, the same phraseology is again repeated, and the quotation of the charter is preceded by him by the phrase: "*Sed jam inditia praediorum, quae rex cenobio contulit, subitinda video, quae multis quidem cartis sed unam scripturam praeferentibus intexuit hoc modo,*" etc.¹

The first charter of Athelstan above cited is numbered 367 by Kemble, who marks it as spurious, and there seems to me the gravest doubt in reference also to the earlier charters.² The spuriousness of the charter of Kenfrith we have been discussing is also proved by its being dated by the Incarnation in the year 680, when that method of dating was unknown.

In the year 681 Malmesbury cites a charter in which Æthelred, King of the Mercians, at the request of his patrician and relative Cenfrith, *i.e.* the *comes* above referred to, for the good of his soul and to secure the prayers of the brethren at Malmesbury (Meldulfesbirg), gave certain lands to the west of the public street (*stratae publicae*) at Niuentum, and near to the monastery of Tettan (*i.e.* Tetbury), to Abbot Aldhelm and his successors. The document is dated in the year *680 of the Incarnation*, which is impossible, and it is marked as spurious by Kemble.³ He similarly marks another edition of it, somewhat mutilated, which is preserved in the Malmesbury Register.⁴ Kemble does not notice an appendix attached to the printed text of the latter charter in the Malmesbury copy of a clause in the vernacular, headed "Cherleton," and containing a description

¹ William of Malmesbury, *op. cit.* p. 401; see Birch, Nos. 716, 717, 718, and 719.

² See also Kemble, 1112.

³ He numbers it 22, and Birch, 58.

⁴ Kemble, 23; Birch, 59.

of "the parcels," but having, so far as I can see, nothing to do with either deed.

The next charter from the same work is a grant from Berhwald (*sub-regulus*) to Abbot Aldhelm and his monastery at Malmesbury, of lands near the ford on the Temis (*i.e.* the Thames), called Sumerford, in Wiltshire. Birch (No. 65) argues that Kemble's (No. 26) doubt in regard to this charter is due to a mistake in the date in what he calls the very faulty MS. Lansdowne, 417. It is there given as 635, but in Malmesbury it is correctly given as 685. A more fatal blot, however, consists in its being dated by the Incarnation, which in the year 685 is impossible. It was attested *publice in Sinodo* near the ford of "Bregford." The operative clause in the deed begins with the words: "*Ego, Berhtwald, regnante domino rex*"; which is corrected in Malmesbury's text, where he says: "*Non quidem rex potestate, sed sub-regulus in regni parte.*"

The next document in Malmesbury's *Gesta Pontificum* professes to be a grant by way of exchange by Baldred, who is given no title, to Aldhelm the Abbot, of land near the river Avon. It is dated by the Incarnation in 688, which is fatal. Kemble marks it as spurious, and says the name Kentwine used in it is suspicious. He was no longer king in 688, nor does his name appear among the witnesses, although that of Caedwalla¹ does.² Malmesbury says that this exchange was cancelled after a few years by Caedwalla. His words are: "*Enim vero nescio quo eventu Ceduallae munere rato manente—commutatio post aliquot annos irrita fuit*"—which adds to our doubts, since Caedwalla's diplomatic acts are most shadowy. The Baldred of this document was apparently, however, a real person, and Malmesbury, page 355, quotes a letter from Aldhelm to Winberht, which is written in Aldhelm's very inflated style, in which he speaks of some lands he had obtained at a price from the venerable patrician Baldred, which formed a very suitable place for the capture of fish, and which had fallen into the hands of the King (*dum in vestri regis potestate data et collata videtur*), and asks him to receive them on behalf of the monastery (*i.e.* Malmesbury). This last grant is omitted by Kemble and Birch. Baldred is also referred to in a grant of King Ini under the year 725, which, although dubious as it stands, and so

¹ The name is there written Cadwellanus.

² See Kemble, 28; Birch, 71.

marked by Kemble, may be based on older materials. In this grant of Ini, Baldred and Adelard are styled sub-reguli, the former makes a gift of six hides at Pennard, and the latter of sixty hides at Poelt, both doubtless in Somersetshire, to Glastonbury. Of this latter document Baldred was also an attesting witness.¹ This is contained in Malmesbury's *Gesta Regum*.

The next charter in the *Gesta Pontificum*, page 352, is numbered 29 by Kemble and 70 by Birch. It is a grant by King Caedwalla, *inter alia*, of lands situated on each side of the wood called Cemele, *i.e.* Kemble, on the famous river (*famosum amnem*) called Temis. The deed is signed by "Hæddi" the Bishop, and by two kings, Centwine and Caedwalla (which is very suspicious). It is dated the 19th of August 688, by the Incarnation, which decides that it is a much later product. Kemble marks it as spurious. It is apparently an enlarged form of No. 24 in Kemble and 63 in Birch, and contained in the Malmesbury Register.²

The next charter from the *Gesta Pontificum* is a grant by Ini, King of the Saxons (*Rex Saxonum*), which is in a curiously indefinite style, to Abbot Aldhelm of land at Iserdon, at the source of the brook Corsahurna. It is dated in 701 by the Incarnation, which is fatal.³ Kemble condemns it. Malmesbury says of one of the signatures: "*Umberhtus clericus regis, qui et hanc et ceteras Ceduallam donationes dictaverat.*"⁴ Another signature which follows that of King Ini and precedes those of the bishops is Oshelm, and, therefore, doubtless a prince, is otherwise unknown.

The next Malmesbury deed is a grant of privileges by King Ini to certain churches at the instance of Aldhelm and the priests and monks of the diocese of the Saxons (*parrochia Saxonum*), dated the 28th of May 704. It was made "*Actum publice et confirmatum in loco qui appellatur Eburleagh*" (Everley, Co. Wilts).⁵ It is marked as spurious by Kemble.⁶ The copy in the *Registrum Malmesburiensis* is signed by "Ini the King"; by Aldhelm, "*servus servorum*"; by ten abbots and nine laymen.

The last document from the *Gesta Pontificum* which comes within our period is a deed by which Aldhelm gave to the monasteries which he had founded at Malmesbury, Frome, and

¹ See Kemble, No. 73; Birch, No. 142.

² *Vide infra.*

³ Kemble, 48; Birch, 103.

⁴ See Birch, i. p. 150, note 2.

⁵ *Gesta Pont.*, 381.

⁶ Kemble, 50; Birch, 108.

Bradford the right to elect their own abbots. He had wished when he became bishop to retain the right of such election during his own lifetime, but was opposed by the monks, and this document endorsed their wish. The deed was professedly signed at the Monastery of Wimborne, over which St. Cuthburga, sister of King "Ini," presided, and it had the consent of the King and of Aldhelm's co-bishop (*coepiscopus meus*) Danihel, and was ratified by a Holy Council (*in sacrosancto consilio*) held near the river Nodz, in Wilts, with the concurrence of all the "Archimandrites" of the Saxon people (*cum regalis potentatus assensu et pontificalis prioratus nutu consensu et auctoritas*).¹ Kemble marks it as spurious, and it is in addition fatally dated by the Incarnation in so early a year as 705.

We will now turn to the register of Abingdon Abbey, where we find several charters the character of which is most suspicious, and which Mr. J. Stevenson made a very futile effort to defend in his edition of that *Chronicle*. In this attempt very fantastic methods of criticism were employed.² The *Abingdon Chronicle* is extant in two MSS., both of them late; they are numbered Claudius B, vi., and Claudius B, ix., in the Cotton Collection, and are both of the thirteenth century.

The documents relating to this abbey are printed in most disorderly fashion by Birch. The first one is a fine specimen of the utter confusion sometimes involved in the art of sophisticating documents. In the two MSS. of the *Abingdon Chronicle* the King's name making this grant is quite different. In MS. Claudius C, ix., the distinction is given to Caedwalla; in MS. Claudius B, vi., it is given to Ini. Mr. Stevenson in his elaborate special pleading tries to reconcile the documents by claiming that Caedwalla was right. Caedwalla—who only reigned a few months, and all whose alleged charters, as we now know, were almost certainly spurious, for he was a pagan, and not a Christian till he left England—was quite unlikely to grant charters; nor was Abingdon Abbey, in fact, founded till after his death.

This document is marked as spurious by Kemble, and assuredly on good grounds. It is also dated by the Incarnation some time before that method of dating was introduced. While dated in 699, it is attested by Danihel, who did not become

¹ *Gesta Pont.*, 379-380; Kemble, 54; Birch, 114.

² Vide *Chronicle of Abingdon*, ii. 495, etc.

bishop till 705. Again, as Mr. Stevenson confesses, Ini, the grantor, is introduced as speaking of himself at one time in the first and at another in the third person, while the language used by the King could not consistently have been employed by any one save a bishop or an abbot. It is numbered 46 by Kemble and 101 by Birch. Although a mass of confusion and contradiction, the contents of the charter may still preserve a true tradition, and are worth quoting. According to MS. Claudius B, vi., King Ini restored to the common folcland (*rei publicae*) 173 cassati of land near "Abbindun" which his predecessor King Cissa had conveyed to the patrician Hean and his sister Cillan. It is stated in the document that this was because no abbey nor even a chapel had been built on the lands in question, as was intended by the original donors. Presently, however, Hean, having given an undertaking that the abbey should be built, the property was again restored to him and his sister Cillan, and the former took monkish vows and was, in fact, elected first Abbot of Abingdon. At this point the document seems to end. It at once begins again with an additional grant from Hean of 20 cassati on the east of the Thames, which the sub-regulus Cuthred, Ethelred, King of the Mercians, and Ini, King of the Saxons, had given him, together with lands at Bestlesford and Bradenfeld, where he had built the monastery which King Ini and Coenred had jointly given him, making 274 cassati in all.

In regard to the dealings with the lands by Hean and his sister, we have another document, namely, an alleged testament of his.¹ In it Hean professes to convey certain property at Bradenfeld, Escesdum, and Earmundeslea, which he had obtained by the munificence of his parents (*parentum meorum qui regni gubernacula potiri noscuntur*) to his sister Cillan for life, on condition that if she died before him she was to return it to him, and if not to leave it "to that monastery" (*ad istud monasterium*). This is not given a name, but it has perhaps in view the contemplated monastery at Abingdon, or perhaps rather it refers to a contemplated monastery at Bradenfeld. This document is confirmed by King Ini and Bishop Danihel, and must therefore have been drawn up after 705, when Danihel first became bishop, although it is headed "*Testamentum Hean antequam Abbas efficeretur.*"

¹ Birch, 29 ; Kemble, 998.

The next of these dubious documents from Abingdon (Kemble, 32; Birch, 74) is a grant from King Ini to Hean "the patrician" and Ceolswiðe (who Stevenson identifies with the Cilla of other accounts), of 45 cassati of land at Bradenfeld, Bestlesford, and Stretlea, for the building of a monastery. The deed is also assented to by Theodore, who styles himself "*servus Dei, archiepiscopus.*" The operative word in the clause naming Ini is omitted. The charter is not dated, but as it names Theodore as archbishop it must have been made after 669 and before the 29th September 690. It is condemned by the mention of a quite mythical Bishop Germanus, while Bishop Cedde, who is named in it, died of the plague in 664. Again, Bishop Winfrid, who is also named in it, was not an English bishop, but the name of Archbishop Boniface before he became bishop. Kemble naturally marks the deed as spurious.

Our next visit is to Chertsey Abbey and its charters. The monastery at Chertsey was destroyed by the Danes, where, as elsewhere, the charters of the house were no doubt burnt. In this case we have evidence as to the time when they were replaced, namely, the reign of King Eadgar. This we read in the *Gesta Pontificum* of William of Malmesbury. Speaking of the abbey, he says: "*Splenduit ibi religio nec defuit, necessariorum copia, usque ad Danos, qui ut cetera locum illum pessundedere, ecclesia succensa cum monachis et abbate . . . at vero Rex Edgarus . . . illud refecit in solidum, undique veteribus cartis conquisitis, quarum testimonio praedia revocaret ad locum, quae quidam ex magnatibus seu vi, seu vetustatis auctoritate occuparent ad jus suum.*"¹

This is confirmed by the internal evidence of the documents claiming to belong to the abbey, which are contained in the Chertsey Register, Cott. MSS., Vitellius A, xiii. I shall not analyse these documents at length, but content myself with the judgment of earlier writers. They comprise the charters numbered Kemble, 986, 987, and 988, and Birch, 33, 34, and 39. Kemble marks all of them as spurious, and Plummer says curtly of them: "They are all forgeries."²

Although deliberately recomposed in the time of Eadgar after the originals had been destroyed, Eadgar's reign is a long way off, and there is no reason to believe they were rewritten with any sinister intention. They may well contain a good tradition about the foundation of the monastery.

¹ *Op. cit.* ed. Hamilton, lib. ii. 73; Plummer, ii. 217. ² *Bede*, ii. 217.

The first deed is a confirmation by Wulfhere, King of the Mercians, of lands to the Church of "Certeseye," of a grant by Fritheuwald (*sub-regulus*) and Saint Erkenwald (*beatus Erkenwaldus*). It is undated, nor are the estates or witnesses mentioned. Erkenwald is not styled Bishop, but "Beatus," and he joins in the grant instead of assenting to it; all of which prove the document to be no original.

The next deed is a grant by the same Fritheuwald, here styled sub-regulus of the province of the Surriani, or men of Surrey, with the consent of Wulfhere, King of the Mercians, of lands to Abbot Erkenwald, whom he styles "*filium meum in obedienciam*," for increasing the patrimony of the abbey of "Cirotsege," which had first been built by King Ecgbert, of lands for the building of the monastery. Parts of these lands, we are told in the deed, were near the port of London on the Thames, "where ships consort," and to the south of the public road. It is signed by Fritheuwald, by Abbot Erkenwald, and by Bishop Humfrid (I have sometimes thought, from his being named elsewhere, that the latter may have been an unrecorded bishop holding the see of London before Earconweld), and the following sub-reguli: Fritheuwald, Osric, Wigherd, and Æthelwold; and by King Wulfere, who placed the deed on the altar in the villa called Thamu (*i.e.* Tamworth). It was attested at Fritheuwald's villa, near the dyke called Fullingadich. The deed is followed by a long description of the possessions of the abbey acquired in later times, written in Anglo-Saxon. That the deed was a later reconstruction is strongly pointed at by the way it is dated, namely, "*circa k(a)l(endas) Martias*," without the year.

A third deed from the same register is a grant from Fritheuwald (who here styles himself as in the last document), jointly with "Erkenwald," who is styled not abbot but "*venerabile patre*," of a large number of estates at Moulsey, in Surrey, etc., for augmenting the possessions of the abbey called "Certeseg." This is also signed *inter alia* by Bishop Humfrid "at the request of Erkenwald." It is dated in 727, which is impossible, since Wulfhere died in 675; while the latter date is inconsistent with the document, being dated by the year of the Incarnation, both facts making it most dubious in its present form.

Turning to Chichester and its satellite Selsey, we find that in two registers of its documents in the custody of the Dean and Chapter there is a charter numbered 64 by Birch and 992 by

Kemble. In this King Caedwalla, at the request of Bishop Wilfrid, conveys lands at Seolesige (*i.e.* Selsey), etc., in order to build a monastery. In a later sentence in the document, Wilfrid, who is styled Archbishop (a title he was not entitled to bear), is associated with Æthuwald, the sub-regulus, in making the gift. It is witnessed twice over by Wilfrid both as bishop and archbishop, also by "Birhtwald," Archbishop, although he was not consecrated till 23rd June 693, ten years after the deed is dated; by Bishop Eadberht of Selsey, who was not consecrated till about 709;¹ by Bishop Egwald, who must have been the Bishop of Winchester (for no other of the same name is known), and who occupied the see from 768–783—he is omitted in the copy in Register B.; lastly, by Ealdulf, duke of the South Saxons. The document is marked as spurious by Kemble. It is dated 3rd August 683 by the Incarnation, which alone stamps it as false.

The boundaries of the property are interesting enough to quote for other reasons, even if the charter be of later production. These boundaries (*limites et bundae*, as the document calls them) are as follows: "*Ab introitu portus qui appellatur Anglice Wynderynge post retractum mare in Cumeneshora; sic versus occidentalem plagam juxta mare usque Rumbruge in ante juxta litus maris usque Chenestone; inde in ante juxta littus usque Heremuðe; et inde versus septentrionalem plagam in longum fluvii usque Wialesflet; sursum (a Wialesflet) usque quo Brimesdik exit; inde versus orientem in longum praedicti fossati in Woflet; inde versus orientem in longum fluvii; et sic versus australem plagam usque Wuderingemuðe.*" These boundaries occur both in the Latin and Saxon, and doubtless accurately define the original Church lands at Selsey.

The Chichester Cathedral register also contains a grant² by Noðelm, styled King of the South Saxons, to his sister Noðgiðe, of lands at Lydesige, Aldingburne, etc., on which to found a monastery and a basilica. It is dated in the year 692 of the Incarnation, which damns it, as do several other facts. The assenting witnesses include Nunna, King of the South Saxons; King Wattus; Coenred, King of the West Saxons; Ini (not qualified as King); Bishop Eadberht (he did not become so till 709); Abbot Aldhelm, and Abbot Haguna. This is a very fantastic list. Who is King Noðelm? He is not heard of elsewhere, and his name has apparently been

¹ Plummer, ii. 313.

² Kemble, 995; and Birch, 78.

borrowed from that of Bede's correspondent at Canterbury. Who, again, but fanciful people, are King Wattus and King Nunna (also written Numa)? There never was a Coenred, King of the West Saxons; there were Mercian and Northumbrian Kings of the name,—the former reigned from 704–709, and the latter from 716–718,—but not a West Saxon one. Surely no document could be more clearly spurious. Yet it is passed by Kemble. A third document¹ in the same register professes to be a grant from Noðgiðe (just named), styled *famula Christi*, to the most reverend Bishop Wilfrid (at whose instance she adopted the vocation of a nun (*meque ei monacham facio*)), of lands she had received from her relations (*consanguineorum meorum*). The lands are those mentioned in the previous charter, and we are told supported 33 tenants or *tributarii*. The document is undated and unwitnessed. At the foot of the same page (*in alia parte hujus paginulae*) Offa, King of the Mercians, and “Eðelwulf,” King of the West Saxons, confirm the grant; so does “Eolwulf,” King of the Mercians (who was he?)—“Eolwulf” signs, at the request of Bishop Renired (?), who also signs as a witness. The king released the lands from all secular taxes, apparently, on the payment of 100 mancuses. It is professedly attested at Deaniton. This document is as fantastic, therefore, as the previous one, of which it is, in fact, a supplement, and must bear the same burden of doubt. It is given in Dugdale, vi. 1163, but apparently not by Kemble. The fact of its not being witnessed is itself most suspicious.

There is another document in the same register perhaps more impossible still, and also dealing with mythical personages. It professes to be a grant of lands at Hilugh (Highley), in Selsey, given by a certain Bruny, Duke of the South Saxons, otherwise quite unknown, and is signed by the fantastic Kings Nunna (here called Numa, and is also undated) and King Wattus. It is printed in Dugdale's *Monasticon*, vi. 1163, and by Birch, No. 80, but is not in Kemble.

Lastly, we have two or three more documents associated with the name of Nunna, King of the South Saxons, also preserved in the Chichester register. In the first this king (unknown, except in dubious charters) grants certain lands to Abbot Beadufrið and the brethren living at Selsey (Seolesige) Abbey, where he hoped his own body would lie. The grant says it

¹ Birch, 79.

was made in the presence of the Reverend Bishop Eolla, and of "my abbots and counts there assembled." The document is dated in the year of the Incarnation 714, which is before that method of dating was introduced, and therefore damns it. It is attested with the names of King Æthelstan and Ædildrytha the Queen. Who this king and queen were at the time is as great a puzzle as who King Nunna was! The deed is numbered 999 in Kemble, who accepts it, and 132 in Birch.

A second grant is of lands at Hugabeorg and Dene, from King Nunna to Bishop Eadberht of Selsey, and is numbered 1000 in Kemble and 144 in Birch. It is dated by the Incarnation in 775. This Birch in the heading quite arbitrarily changes to 725, which makes it quite inconsistent with the date of the previous grant. It is signed by Kings Nunna and Wattus, by Coenred, King of the West Saxons, by Eadberht the bishop, and by Ini; which are quite impossible names in 775, while as it is dated by the Incarnation the year 725 is most suspicious.

There is still a third document (Kemble, 1001; Birch, 145) from the same king conveying land at Piperings, near the river Darent (Tarente), to Behrfrid (styled *fanulus Dei*), on condition of prayers being said day and night for him, which land Eolla (*i.e.* the bishop) re-conveys for a sum of money to Wulfhere, styled brother of Nunna. The deed is not dated, and is signed by King Nunna, by Osric, Eadberht, and Eolla, none of which names are qualified with any title, though the last two were bishops; the deed is also undated. It is also signed by Osmund the King and Bishop Osa (who were these people?).

In regard to these three grants by King Nunna, Stubbs says: "In their present condition they are of uncertain date and questionable authenticity."¹ This is a gentle way of putting it. They seem to me, like the other early Chichester documents, to be patent fabrications.

We will now turn to another hotbed of forgeries, namely, the Abbey of Glastonbury. The documents in question are contained in a Glastonbury chartulary once belonging to Anthony A. Wood, and now preserved in his collection at the Bodleian. It is quoted by Birch as the Wood MS.

The first of them closes with the words, *Scripta est haec cartula privilegii anno incarnationis Christi DCLXX.*, which at once marks it as spurious. In the text of the charter it professes

¹ *Dict. of Chr. Biog.*, ii. 5.

to be a grant of lands at Ferramere by Caedwalla to Abbot Beorhtwald. It is signed, however, as donor by Coenwalla, that is by Coenwald, who styles himself *basileos West Saxonum*. The grantee is Abbot Beorhtwald, *i.e.* the Abbot of Glastonbury of that name who did not become abbot till thirty years after the year 670. The charter is marked as spurious by Kemble and is called a forged charter by Bright, 353, note 5, and by Haddan and Stubbs, iii. 164. It is numbered 7 by Kemble and 25 by Birch.

The next Glastonbury deed comes from the same collection, and professes to be a grant of lands at Lantocal and of others in the marshy district of Ferramere: “. . . *hoc est in insula quae giro cingitur hinc atque illinc pallude cujus vocabulum est Ferramere*”—to Abbot Hemgisl (*i.e.* the Abbot of Glastonbury so-called) from Bishop Eddi (*sic*). *Prima facie*, a grant of lands by a bishop to an abbot is not a usual thing. In this case the deed is unwitnessed. It is, further, dated by the Incarnation in 680, which is a clear proof that it is not trustworthy. It is numbered 19 in Kemble, who does not mark it as doubtful, and 47 in Birch.

The next document, also from Wood's MS., exists also in charter-form among the documents at Longleat, and was published in facsimile by the Ordnance Survey Commission. It professes to be a grant of lands on the summit of a mountain at Pengerd, now Penward, in Somersetshire, to Abbot Hamgisl (of Glastonbury), by King “Balred,” to enlarge the possessions of the Church of St. Mary and St. Patrick, and is made with the consent of Bishop Hæddi, who, with the approval of King Centwini, had appointed him abbot. It is dated by the Incarnation in 681, which proves it to be spurious, and is marked so by Kemble, doubtless on other grounds, for he did not make this method of dating a criterion of the validity of charters. It is numbered 20 by him and 61 by Birch.

A second deed, also at Longleat, professes to be a grant to Abbot Hamgisl for the support of the community of “Glastingaburg” made by King Centwyn (*sic*) of a famous wood called Cantucuudu (*i.e.* Quantock Wood), south of the river Tan. It is described in the charter as *Nunc Westmonkton juxta Tantounam* (*i.e.* Taunton) (this phrase points to a considerable difference in date between the grant and the writing of the charter), with other lands, of one of which the charter says it

was situated south of the river Tan on an island "*juxta collem qui dicitur brittannica lingua Cructan apud nos Crycbeorh.*" The document is signed by Bishop Hæddi, by King Centwini, and by Aldhelm. It is dated in 672 by the Incarnation, which is a proof of its not being of the date alleged. Again, Hæddi was not bishop in 672, and Aldhelm was then too young to be an abbot. It is numbered 62 in Birch.

The next deed in Wood's MS. professes to be a grant of privileges from King Ini, by the advice and decree of Bishop Aldhelm (*simulque cunctorum sacerdotum suggestionem et monachorum petitionem qui in parochia West Saxonum conversantur*) to Hemgisil, abbot of "Glastingæa" and the Church of St. Mary and St. Patrick, and to have been signed in the wooden church (*in lignea basilica*). Although we read in it "*Pro ampliori firmitatis testamento, principes et senatores, judices et patricos subscribere fecimus,*" it is only signed by Aldhelm, showing that it has been tampered with. It is dated in one MS. in 704 of the Incarnation, and in another (B.M. Add., 22934, p. 13) in 702. In either case this mode of dating destroys its character. Apart from this, it is marked as spurious by Kemble (see No. 51; Birch, 109).

We next have in the same MS. a grant in two forms by Ini, King of the Saxons, of certain lands on each side of the river Doulting to Abbot Beorhwald and the monastery of "Glastingaburghæ." It is signed by King Ini, by Archbishop Beorthwald, and by Hedda, the bishop. The presence of the archbishop's signature is almost incredible in a document referring to a place so far from Canterbury, and it has been inserted probably in mistake for that of the abbot and grantee, which was so like it. It is dated in the year 702 of the Incarnation in one MS., and in 705 in another, but the corresponding indiction is given as 4, which answers to A.D. 706. The dating by the Incarnation proves it is not contemporary. Kemble marks it as spurious (*vide* No. 49; Birch, 112).

In a companion charter from the same King to the same abbot, which occurs in charter-form in the Taunton Museum, (Birch, 113), and was printed in facsimile by the Ordnance Survey Commissioners, the name of the estate is given as Pouelt, and is said to be on each side of the river "Duluting," *i.e.* Doulting. The charter is dated June 702 by the Incarnation, a sure test of its being considerably later and therefore not reliable. We have the attesting names of eight bishops, besides that of Archbishop

Bercuuald (*sic*), namely, Headda, Ecce, Tyrctil, Waldar, Eggwin, Elwin, and Aldhelm. Daniel also signs, but not as bishop: "*Ego Daniel plebi Dei ministrans subscripsi.*" Here Hædda and his successor Aldhelm are both made to sign for the western see, which is fatal. How, again, come the archbishop and such far-off bishops as Acca of York, Ecgwin of Worcester, Waldhere of London, and Tyrtil of Hereford to sign the deed? Lastly, who was Bishop Elwin? Surely this deed must go the way of all the early deeds of Glastonbury!

The next deed in Wood's MS. is a grant of lands at Brente (*i.e.* East Brent in Somerset) by Ini, King of the Saxons, to Abbot Hengisl (*sic*), with the assent of Bishop Hæddi, "*consentiente Baldredo qui hanc terram donavit ei per petitionem Sergheris*" (?). It is signed by Hæddi the bishop, by Baldred and Æthelbald the kings, and by Herewald, "*speculator ecclesiae Dei.*" It is dated in the year 663 of the Incarnation, which is impossible, since this method of dating was not introduced till sixty or more years after this. To this date Kemble has the following note: "This charter, which is not of 663, may well be of 723. It bears marks of authenticity, but the year of the Incarnation has been interpolated and falsely calculated from the indiction."¹ But how could Bishop Hæddi, who died in 705, attest a document of 723? Birch says quite rightly that "the dates of the witnesses cannot be reconciled with any period," and he accordingly (see No. 121) puts the date thus: "A.D. 663 (? for 693 or 708)." This is merely trifling. The fact is that, like the other Glastonbury charters, this one is spurious.

Our next document from Wood's MS. (Kemble, 63; Birch, 128) is an alleged grant by Fortheri, Bishop of Sherborne, of land at Bledeneye or Bledenhithe, a port on the Æsce or Exe, to Abbot Aldbert and the Church of St. Martin the Confessor. The deed, which is only signed by Fortere, has no witnesses, and is dated in 712, but without day or month. Kemble does not mark this document as spurious. Birch calls Aldbert, Abbot of Glastonbury, but he is not so called in the deed. An Abbot Aldberht, however, is mentioned among the Glastonbury abbots given by William of Malmesbury, iii. 28, perhaps from this deed. In Ini's forged charter to the churches of Wessex, already discussed, we have the name Adbert or Ædbert, which may mean the same person.² The chief difficulty about this

¹ C.D., i. 83, note.

² See Birch, 108.

charter is the very bad company it is in among the Glastonbury group.

The next deed in Wood's MS. is a confirmation by King Ini, with the advice of his wife Sexburga, the consent of Archbishop Beorþald, and by the request of the sub-reguli Baldred and Adelard, to the old church (*vetustae ecclesiae*), which is called Glasteie, of the lands given by his predecessors Chenewalch and Chentwini (*sic*), who was wont to call "Glastingeie" the Mother of the Saints, and who gave the monks there the right to elect their abbot (*juxta regulam sancti Benedicti*). The deed apostrophises the Virgin Mary "*sicut in regno Britanniae prima et fons et origo totius religionis, etc. etc. etc. Igitur summo pontifice Gregoris annuente et ut matrem Domini sui in serium et protectionem Romanae ecclesiae, meque licet indignum cum ipsa suscipiente, consentientibus etiam omnibus Britanniae regibus, archiepiscopis, episcopis, ducibus alque abbatibus statuo ego et confirmo.*"

This outburst, the unmistakable product of a much later century, is followed by a grant of wide-reaching and most extravagant privileges and exemptions to the abbey and its daughter church, which are enumerated as being at Soweie, Brente, Merlinch, Sapwic, Stret, Budecalech, and Piltun. It recites that the monastery possessed two guest-houses, one at Piltun and the other at Poelt, where they expected visitors to stay, but that any bishop visiting the houses should not sleep there unless invited by the abbot or be detained by bad weather or by danger of ill-usage, nor be accompanied by more than three or four clerics.

I have quoted these paragraphs as samples of the extraordinary way in which the later monks made use of the names of the eighth-century kings and of forged documents for pressing the extravagances both of dogma and of exemption from episcopal control which marked the post-Norman English Church. The document is professedly dated in the year 725 by the Incarnation. This was before that method of dating had become customary. It is marked as spurious by Kemble, who numbers it 73; Birch, 142. The document professes to be signed by Ini the King, by "Ethelburga" the Queen (she is called Sexburga in the body of the document), by Æthelhard the Queen's brother, by Beorhtwald the archbishop, and by Bishops Daniel, Fordred (*sic*), and Waldhere, etc. etc.

The next deed from the Glastonbury register is a grant from Ini, "King of the West Saxons," and his wife Æthelburga, of a small portion of land (*porciucula terrae*) called Sowey (now Middlezoy), in Somerset, to the abbey of Glastingburi, with the consent of Bishop Fortheri. It is signed by Ini and Fortheri the bishop, and is dated in the year 725 by the Incarnation, which condemns it, and is without day or month. It is otherwise marked as spurious by Kemble.¹

The last document from the Glastonbury register which comes within our period is a deed from Æthelhard, King of West Saxony (West Saxona), by which he, together with his wife Fridogīþa, conveys a piece of land called Pouholt, with the consent of his bishops, Daniel and Fortheri, to the monastery of Glastingaburi and its Abbot Cengisl (*sic*). It is dated in the year 729 of the Incarnation, without day or month. It is signed by Æthelhard the King, Fridogith the Queen, Beornfrith the abbot (not Cengisl), and by Bishops Daniel and Fortheri, and it is marked as spurious by Kemble, No. 76; Birch, 146. This completes our analysis of the very disreputable products of the Scriptorium at Glastonbury in later times.

Generally a very gentle critic, Mr. Plummer, in referring to the aptitude of the Glastonbury monks in the sophistication of relics, speaks of it as an instance of that huge system of monastic lying for which Glastonbury had pre-eminence.²

We will now turn to a series of forged documents which are very notorious and are known as the Evesham charters. They are contained in the Evesham and Worcester chartularies and the chronicle of Evesham Abbey. Speaking of these charters, Haddan and Stubbs say: "A mass of fiction has been raised upon one fact. All that is certain is that this monastery was founded about this time by Ecgwin, Bishop of Worcester."³

I have given the further conclusions of these authors upon this series of charters on a later page. They give a list of ten of them, which they head: "List of the spurious charters granted to Evesham Abbey." They answer to the following series in Kemble's *Codex Diplomaticus*, 33, 57, 58, 59, 60, 61, 62, 64, 65, and 68; Birch, 76, 117, 118, 120, 124, 125, 127, 130, 134, 138. All these are marked as spurious by Kemble.

Let us now turn to Worcester. The first of the Worcester

¹ See No. 74; Birch, No. 143.

² *Op. cit.* ii. 167.

³ *Op. cit.* iii. 279.

charters—Kemble, 32 ; Birch, 75—is a grant by Æthelred, King of “the Mercensi” (*sic*), of a piece of land which bore the ancient name (*qui vetusto vocabulo nuncupatur*) of Heanburg, and of another property in a place called Aet-Austin, to Oftfor, whom he calls his venerable bishop, and for the Church of St. Peter at Wueogorna (*i.e.* Worcester), with a fishery, “*et cum omnibus utilitatibus campo, vel in silva, vel in flumine.*” It is signed by Æthelred the king, by Bishops Headda and Oftfor, and a number of other names ; among them is that of Guthlac. It is not dated, however. Kemble accepts it as genuine ; he numbers it 32, and Birch 75, and it is quoted in Hickeys’ *Thesaurus*, i. 169, and Dugdale’s *Mon. Angl.*, i. 584, and is taken from MS. Harleian, 4660, page 1, where it is labelled “*ex autogr. in archivis Wigorn.*” Its only apparent weakness is the absence of the date and the presence of an initiatory clause framed in language more suited to a homily than a conveyance of land. This clause is also the heading to the next deed, which Kemble rejects, and I cannot avoid the conclusion that the two must stand or fall together.

A second charter from the same king to the same bishop exists. The former makes the grant “for the good of the soul of himself and his wife Osthrytha.” It professes to convey some property called Fledanburg, to Oftfor. It is not dated. It is rejected by Kemble on very substantial grounds, namely, that Oftfor, the grantee, became Bishop of Worcester in 691 and died in 692, so that the document cannot be later than the latter date, but in it King Æthelred speaks of Osthrytha as “*conjugis quondam meae,*” thus definitely speaking of her as being dead before 692, while we know she was living in 697, an anachronism which is fatal to the document. Kemble numbers it 33, and it is 76 of Birch. It is one of the Evesham charters named in the penultimate paragraph.

Another deed from the same Worcester MS. is a grant from King Æthelred of the Mercians to Worcester Cathedral, of land at Wichold, near the river Salwerpe, Co. Worcester (Wuegernacester), in reversion. It is dated by the Incarnation in the year 692, which is fatal to it, and it is signed by “Berhtwald” as archbishop, although he was not consecrated till 29th June 693. It is numbered 34 by Kemble, who marks it as spurious ; and 77 by Birch.

Another document is contained in two forms in this MS., and

in a third shape in MS. Nero E., i., none of which are dated. It is a grant from King Offa of certain lands on the Avon called Scottarit (*i.e.* Shottery, in the county of Warwick), etc., and of a wood called Nuthurst, to Worcester Cathedral. It is signed, *inter alia*, by King Offa and Bishop Ecgwyn, and is marked as spurious by Kemble, No. 55 and note; Birch, 123, 123*a*, and 123*b*.

The next document comes from Heming's Register of Worcester Priory. By it Æthelbald, King of the Mercians, makes an exchange of saltworks on the Salwerpe with the Monastery of Worcester. He gives them land for three sheds and six furnaces on the south side of the river, and receives as an equivalent six furnaces and two sheds on the north side of the river, and affirms that the exchange was effected because it involved a convenience to both parties. In his edition of this Register for the Camden Society, Archdeacon Hale says that this is the earliest notice of the Monastery of Worcester possessing property in Droitwich, and that at the time of the Domesday Survey the monastery had eight *salinae* in Droitwich. He also notes the conventionality of the profession, "*pro redemptione animae meae*," in a contract avowedly based upon mutual convenience.¹ This charter is accepted by Kemble, who numbers it 67.² Its only suspicious marks are the fact that it is not dated, and the names of some of the witnesses. It was probably put together from tradition or memory, but is substantially reliable.

Another deed in Heming's Register professes to be a grant from Æthelbald, King of the Mercenses, of some lands near the river Bladæn, near the ford called Dæglesford (*i.e.* Daylesford, in Worcester), to the servant of God (*servo Dei*), "whom they call Bægia," "*in possessionem juris ecclesiastici libertatisque tradidi ita ut in ea monasterium constructur et servorum Dei habitaculum fieret*," etc. It is signed by Æthelbald the king, Wilfrid the bishop, and some other people not otherwise qualified by titles. The document is dated in the year 718, by the Incarnation, which destroys its character, nor is there any mention of a day or month in the date. It is accepted by Kemble, No. 69; Birch, 139. The description of the boundaries is interesting: "*Hec (sic) sunt confinia hujus ante nominati agelluli hoc est primum of (sic) Bladene on Baeganvellan, inde in montem susibre urbs antiqua et postea bi þære aldan cestelbyrig on Nunnena*

¹ See Earle, *Handbook of Land Charters*, 19.

² Birch, 137.

beorges ac deinde on fearhom et of (sic) fearhom neoðveardum iterum on bleadene."

We will now turn to the foundation charter of Gloucester.¹ It is at once condemned by the fact that, although dated in the year 671, this is calculated by the Incarnation—that is, long before that method of dating had been introduced. Not only so, but the document states it was granted in the fifth year of Æthelred, which answers not to 671 but to 680 of the Incarnation, otherwise it seems to preserve a generally accurate tradition. It is not contained in Kemble, and is No. 60 in Birch. It recites how Æthelred, King of the Mercians, conveyed to two of his officers of noble rank (*donato duobus ministris meis nobilis generis*) in the province of the Hwicccians, namely, Osric and his brother Oswald (*in vicarium*), a certain property containing three hundred *tributarii* at Gloucester to Osric, and three hundred *cassati* at Pershore to Oswald. Having afterwards been requested by the said Osric for permission to build a monastery in that city and to endow it with his lands, "*cum uno 'suleaurea' (al. 'sulinga') in quo fuit xxx milia,*" this was carried out in the fifth year of King Æthelred, when Deusdedit the Archbishop, and "Saxulph" the Bishop, the Mercian people, and the synod were assembled in the famous place called Ethcealchy (? Chelsea).

Let us now turn to the Hwiccas, connected with whom we have a series of documents, some of which have been accepted as genuine on very insufficient grounds, and in which the grantors are certain alleged *sub-reguli* or dependent rulers named Oshere and his sons. No such name as Oshere occurs in this connection either in Bede or the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle*, and the first early chronicler who thus names him was Florence of Worcester, who did not publish his work until the year 1116, more than four hundred years after Oshere's alleged career. He mentions him in two places in his *Chronicle*. In one of them the passage is taken verbatim from the charter to which we will now turn.

It occurs in Heming's Register, Cott. MSS., Tiberius A, viii. p. 20, and in it we have a professed grant from Oshere, who speaks of himself and his patron in a strange fashion as "*rex Catholicam regulam majorum meorum humili qua valeo imitatione subsecutus praeditus etiam ad majorem,*" and tells us his act was confirmed by Ædilred "*praestantissimi regis Britanniae domini mei nomine.*" He professes to convey certain lands at Rippell to

¹ See *The Gloucester Chronicle and Chartulary*, Rolls Series, i. lxxii.

the monk Fridovald. The deed is dated "*anno recapitulationis Dionisi, id est ab incarnatione Christi sexcentesimo octuaogesimo indictione sexta,*" i.e. 680, which is many years before one of these methods of dating was used, proving the document, which is also unwitnessed, to be spurious. It is, in fact, so marked by Kemble, No. 17,¹ and Plummer calls it "the spurious charter." It is nevertheless quoted by Florence of Worcester as if it were all right.

Under the year 680 we find him extracting a sentence from this deed in the words: Oshere "*licentia praestantissimi regis Mercionum Domini sui Æthelredi, terram . . . maneutium, in loco qui dicitur Rippel, Friðewaldo monacho Winfridi episcopi.*"² This passage follows the words of the charter just quoted verbatim, and they were no doubt derived from it. They prove that it was in existence and accessible to Florence of Worcester about the year 1116, but give it no more authority than it intrinsically possesses, which, as we have seen, is none at all. Mr. Plummer, ii. 247, says expressly: "Florence, in his *Chronicle*, i. 37, places a grant by Oshere under the year 680, but this entry seems taken from the spurious charter."

It is plain, therefore, that on one of the two occasions in which Florence mentions Oshere, his statement is based on a forged document and therefore worthless. Let us now turn to the second notice in Florence, which must necessarily suffer in reputation from the character just attached to the first one. In a paragraph in his appendix devoted to the Hwiccas, Oshere's name is associated with the building of the cathedral at Worcester. He tells us that "the glorious and holy King Æthelred having succeeded his brother Wulfhere as King of the Mercians (*i.e.* about 675), Oshere, the 'sub-regulus' of the Hwiccas, a most praiseworthy man, desirous that Hwiccia, over which he presided with regal authority, should be dignified and ennobled by the possession of a bishop of its own, counselled and earnestly entreated him that he would beautify and establish his kingdom, which was the chief kingdom in England, with more bishops than one. The King, having already wished to do this, summoned Archbishop Theodore and asked him to divide the kingdom into a number of dioceses, and appoint bishops in convenient places."³

It is assuredly extraordinary that Bede, who describes this division of the Mercian diocese in some detail, should not have

¹ Birch, 51.

² *M.H.B.*, p. 536.

³ *Ib.* 622.

a single word to say of Oshere's share in it, but should, with much greater probability, have attributed the whole purpose and plan of the division to Theodore, with whom, as Bede points out, it was a particularly keen subject of anxiety and solicitude. Perhaps the Worcester chronicler had some motive for minimising the career of Theodore, of whom he only has a very few dry phrases. At all events, it seems to me a dangerous thing to accept Florence of Worcester's statement for a fact ignored by any known authority before himself, and on which he was writing more than four centuries after the event.

Let us now turn to a second charter in which Oshere's name occurs. This was accepted by Kemble, and is called a genuine charter by Mr. Plummer, on what I cannot but think very insufficient grounds. It was published by Hickes in his *Thesaurus*, i. 169, and by Dugdale, i. 585, and is preserved in the Harleian MS., 4660, p. 3. It professes to be a grant from Oshere, King of the Hwiccas, and his son Ædilheard, with the consent of his *gesyth* (*meo comite*) Cuthberht, to the Abbess Cutswida of certain lands called Penitanham, on which to build a monastery. It is undated, which is of course most suspicious, and the date 693 given to it by Kemble and Birch is a calculated date from the names of the signatories. It is signed by Oshere the donor, and by Ædilard, Ediluard, Ædilberht, Edilric, and Oswido (*i.e.* by Oshere's reputed sons), by Edilred, who is not styled King, a most strange omission, and is also signed by Bishop Oftfor, by Archbishop "Berchtwald," and Bishops Headda, Tyrthil, Bedwin, Gebmund, and Alric, by another bishop with a name erased except the last syllable, and others. It is numbered 36 by Kemble and 85 by Birch. It will be noticed as extraordinary that the signatures of the under-king *and his sons* all precede those of King Edilred, the over-king of Mercia, who was their suzerain, and that that of Archbishop Berchtwald is preceded by the name of his suffragan Oftfor, which is quite irregular and contrary to precedent.

In addition to this, it has the *prima facie* suspicion attaching to it that, although relating to only a small grant in a remote corner of England by a mere provincial ruler, it professes to be signed by an archbishop and eight bishops, which is what might well be done by some forger who got together all the bishops' names he could find at this time. I confess to feeling the gravest doubts about it.

Oshere is named in a third charter, which professes to be a confirmation of a former deed by Archbishop Nothelm and five bishops. This is equally marked by ambiguity. It begins with a kind of recital to the effect that the most glorious King of the Mercenses, Æthelred, with his count-sub-regulus (*cum comite suo subregula*) (*sic*), Oshere of the Hwiccii (*Hwicciorum Osheri*), asked by the latter (*rogatus ab eo*), granted some lands near the river Tillath to two nuns (*duabus sanctimonialibus*), called Dunne and Bucga, on which to build a monastery. The same Dunne having built a monastery there, gave it to the daughter of her daughter (*filiae nimirum filiae suae*), who was then a child (*parvula*), and the monastery, together with the charter, were placed in the custody of her mother until she was of age. The latter ordered the whole matter to be brought before a synod presided over by Archbishop Nothelm, which assured the monastery to the before-mentioned (*prefatae abbatissae*) Abbess Hrotuuari—as the latter is not mentioned (*eo nomine*) before, it is clear this means the child above mentioned. It confirmed the grant already mentioned, and decreed that after her death it was to be made over to the bishop “whose see was in the fortress of Uueogernensis castrum,” *i.e.* Worcester. The confirmation is signed by Archbishop Nothelm and Bishops Daniel, Uuor, Incguuald, Wilfrid, and Aldwulf, Aluuni, Forthere, Cuðberht, and Hereuuald. The document is numbered 82 by Kemble and 156 by Birch.

This deed is a very puzzling one. The curious syntax of the phrases makes it clear that, whatever the original may have said, it is a copy by an ignorant scribe. It is undated, but the collocation of the bishops named in it could only have occurred, as Haddan and Stubbs argue, in 736 or 737;¹ Wor, Bishop of Lichfield, died in 737,² while Forthere went to Rome in 737, and Herewald his successor could not have been consecrated before 736. The fact of the two last bishops, who were both bishops of Sherborne, signing the decree together is very singular. By Incguuald no doubt is meant Inguuald, who became Bishop of London in 731. There is again a divergence in the MSS. as to the signatory bishops. The list here printed is that given by Kemble and by Haddan and Stubbs, and is supported by the majority of MSS. Birch prefers to follow MS. Tib. A, xiii. p. 25, and omits four of the names.

It is a notable thing that Florence of Worcester, who

¹ *Op. cit.* 338.

² Sym. of Durham, *G.N.*, *sub an.*

specially mentions the previous charter, which is an unmistakable forgery, should not mention this one which, if genuine, is of much greater importance. It makes it almost certain that it was not in existence when he wrote.

The monastery referred to in the very shaky document was apparently that of Uuidiandum, *i.e.* Withington, in Gloucestershire, since in a subsequent charter (Birch, 247, also preserved in Heming's register) we are told that that monastery was the owner of the lands conveyed by Oshere, sub-regulus of the Hwiccii, with the consent of Æthelred, King of the Mercians, to Dunne, the servant of God (*famula Dei*), which she presently gave to the daughter of her daughter, the Abbess Hroðuar (*sic*), with the consent of Bishop Ecgwin. It had meanwhile fallen into the hands of the Bishop of Worcester. Milred, who was now bishop, conveyed the property to the Abbess "Æðelburga," daughter of Ælfred, for her life, with the condition that on her death she should reconvey it to the Church of St. Peter in Worcester, which was "the pontifical see (*pontificalis cathedra*) of the Hwiccii." The deed is dated in the year 774, and signed by Milred the Bishop and "Æþelburga" the Abbess.

Although the two charters last discussed are in my view late sophistications, they do afford a fairly early witness to, and commentary on, Bede's complaint in his letter to Ecgberht as to the misuse of monastic privileges for secular purposes. The verbal coincidences even are remarkable.¹

Those who were responsible for the invention of Oshere were also apparently responsible for his sons, who are, like himself, quite unknown to any contemporary authority and only occur in very suspicious charters. We will now turn to them.

While Haddan and Stubbs are emphatically of opinion that all the Evesham charters I have referred to above are spurious, they make an exception in favour of one, namely, that which they call the great foundation charter of Evesham, in which they are apparently in agreement with Kemble.²

I cannot understand on what ground this exception has been made. The document comes from the same tainted source as the others. It is numbered 56 by Kemble and 116 by Birch, and professes to be a grant of lands at Ambreslege³ by Æðelweard,

¹ See Haddan and Stubbs, iii. 338.

² *Ib.* 278 and 281.

³ In this professed grant two fisheries are conveyed at two weirs "*ubi sunt duo quod nostratim dicitur Weris id est alter ubi fontanus qui nominatur Ombreswelle derivatur in fluvium qui dicitur Saberna, alter qui est ad vadum qui nuncupatur Leverford.*"

the sub-regulus, son of Oshere formerly King of the Hwiccii, and made with the consent of Coenred, King of Mercia, in favour of Ecgwin, Bishop of Worcester, for the foundation of a monastery at Cronuchomme. Its contents are most dubious; thus, Æthelweard, in signing the document, merely styles himself sub-regulus, without mentioning over whom he ruled; secondly, he signs it before his overlord Coenred, the Mercian King; thirdly, it is dated in 706 by the Incarnation, which is more than a quarter of a century earlier than is possible for that method of dating. Being thus dated it is signed by Bishop Eadda, *i.e.* Hæddi, who died in 705. Another of the attesting witnesses, *Cuthberht, comes Hwicciorum*, signs twice over, once in that way, and secondly merely as *comes*. The two abbots who also sign the charter are quite unknown.

These facts combine to discredit the document, the style of which is also most suspicious. One sentence in it has a certain grace, however, although not redeeming its spuriousness. Referring to the patrimony of the abbey, it says: "*Si quis autem benivolo animo augere voluerit, augeat Deus partem illius cum fideli latrone qui meruit audire: 'Hodie mecum eris in paradiso.'*"

In MS. Harleian, 4660, p. 2 (Kemble, 53; Birch, 122), is a short deed professing to be a grant by Ædilheard and Ædilweard (not otherwise qualified, but meaning no doubt two sons of Oshere), to a certain Cudsuida of certain lands at Ingin, for a payment of sixty solidi. The document is not dated, and is signed by five names, none of which is qualified by rank or style, namely, Coenred (*i.e.* the King of Mercia, 704-709), who is not named in the text of the document, and only occurs as a witness; Ecgwin (doubtless the Bishop of Worcester, 693-717); Ædilheard, Ædilweard, and Cuthbert. Although not marked as doubtful by Kemble, I cannot believe this utterly bald document can be genuine. The names of the two grantors apparently only occur otherwise in suspicious charters in a twelfth-century chartulary, MS. Cott., Vespasian B, 24, fol. 23, and in the very sinister Evesham chartulary, MS. Harl., 3769, fol. 65.¹

Another charter in the Evesham chartulary (Birch, 117) also professes to be a grant from Ailric, a son of Oshere the king (king, not *sub-regulus*), who conveys a piece of land at Childeswicwon to Evesham Abbey. He conveys the land with the consent of

¹ Kemble, 56; Birch, 116.

Kenred the King. The document, which is called a *syngrapha caraxata*, *i.e.* a written charter, is dated in the year 706 of the Incarnation, which is fatal, and is signed, *inter alia*, by Kenred (whose genuine signatures are written Coenred), by "Brihtwald" the Archbishop, and Ecgwin the Bishop. Kemble marks it as spurious.¹

In addition to these two documents there are some others in which the alleged sons of Oshere occur as witnesses, namely:—

I. Kemble, 33; Birch, 76; one of the condemned Evesham charters of Æthelred of Mercia, marked spurious by Kemble, is signed in a detached place as confirming the gift by Æthelric, Æthelweard, Æthelberht, and Omolingc the Abbot.

II. A second charter of Æthelred, also marked as spurious by Kemble, No. 34; Birch 77; is signed by Æðilheard, Æðilweard, Æðelberht, Æðelric, and Osuud.

III. A grant by Offa, King of the Mercians (Kemble, 55; Birch, 123), signed by Æþelward, Æþelmund (*sic*), Æþelberht, and Æþelric. It also is marked as spurious by Kemble. In a second form of the same document is the additional name of Oswud; while a third form is signed by Æþelward, Æþelmud (*sic*), Æþelberht, and Æþelric. The three copies are united in the same condemnation by Kemble.

IV. A grant by Kenred (*sic*), King of the Mercians, and dated in 709, to Bishop Ecgwin of Worcester (Kemble, No. 60, who marks it as spurious; Birch, 124). It is signed by Æilbald (*sic*), *rex*, Æhilhardus (*sic*), *rex*, Æhilwardus (*sic*), and Eþelscic (probably a mistake for Æthelric), Osweda, and Æþilmund.

V. A grant from Æthelbald, King of the Mercians (Kemble, 67; Birch, 137), and which I have elsewhere shown reason to doubt, is signed by Wilfred *dux*, Æþelward *dux*, and Stronglic *dux*.

A second grant of other lands from the same King to Cronuchomme (*i.e.* Evesham) (Kemble, 68; Birch, 138) is marked as spurious by Kemble, and is signed by Aðelward and Ædeluch (Kemble corrects this to Æthelric).

Another grant from the same King (Kemble, 69; Birch, 139, which is accepted by Kemble) is signed by Ægelric. I have discussed and condemned it elsewhere.

We will now turn to the Codex numbered CXI. at C.C., Cambridge, which, according to Kemble, chiefly contains documents relating to Bath. The first of them, numbered 13, is

¹ See No. 57; Birch, 117.

a grant from a certain Uighard of lands at Slæpi to the venerable Abbess Bernguid and her monastery, made with the consent of King Wulfhere, and is dated in October 672, without the mention of any day. It is signed by Archbishop Theodore and Bishops Putta and Bosil, and also by Æthelred, *rex*. This last signature seems to damn the document, for Æthelred was the successor of Wulfhere, who makes the grant, and did not become King till 675, whereas the document is dated 672. This is probably the reason why Kemble marks it as spurious. It is numbered 13 in Kemble and 28 in Birch.

Another charter from the same MS. (Kemble, 12; Birch, 43) professes to be a grant of a hundred manentes of land at a place called Hat Bathu, *i.e.* Bath, to Bertana the Abbess by Osric, King of the Hwiccas, and perhaps her brother, with the consent of King Æthelred. It is also signed by Archbishop Theodore and Bishops Chlothaire (*Leutheris*), Wilfrid, Hedda, and Frignwaldus (probably Erconwald, says Kemble), and is not marked as doubtful by Kemble. Inasmuch as the dating clause is as follows—“*anno recapitulationis Dionysii id est ab incarnatione Domini nostri Jesu Christi sexcentesimo septuagesimo sexto*”—it cannot have been written till at least sixty years after its professed date. Its other contents, however, seem to be reasonable, and it was accepted by Kemble. In it Osric, who speaks of himself as “*Regnante ac gubernanti regimonia regni Osrici regis*,” explains the origin of the monastery in the following words: “*Cum nobis evangelica et apostolica dogmata post baptismi sacramentum, Deo suffragante, fuissent delata, et omnia simulacrorum figmenta ridiculosa funditus diruta, tum primitus ad augmentum catholice et orthodoxe fidei pontificalem dumtaxat cathedram erigentes, juxta synodalia decreta construere censuimus. At vero nunc cum gratia superna longe lateque profusius enitesceret coenobialia etiam loca sparsim virorum, sparsimque virginum Deo famulancium, erigenda statuimus, ut ubi truculentus et nefandus prius draco errorum deceptionibus serviebat, nunc versa vice ecclesiasticus ordo in clero conversantium domino patrocinate, gaudens tripudiet.*”

The deed is witnessed by Kings Osric and Æthelred, by Archbishop Theodore, by Bishops Chlothaire, Wilfrid, Hedda, Frignwald (probably Erconwald is meant), and Saxwulf, and by the three lay names of Baldred, Gadfred, and Æthelmod. The

document, if genuine, would appear, as Haddan and Stubbs say, to have been ratified and signed at a witenagemot or an ecclesiastical assembly.¹ Osric, King of the Hwicccians, was a real person, and we shall have a good deal to say about him further on. He is mentioned by Bede, *H.E.*, iv. 23, as reigning about the year 690.

Another document (Kemble, 21; Birch, 57) from the same MS. professes to convey twenty manentes of land near the river Ceruelle (Cherwell), from Æthelmod, with the consent of King Æthelred, to the venerable Abbesses Bernguidis and Folcburgis. It is dated in October 681, and signed by Æthelmod, King Æthelred, Archbishop Theodore, and Bishops Putta and Bosil. Kemble, 21, marks it as spurious. It is numbered 57 in Birch.

Another document containing charters of this period is a Winchester Codex once belonging to the Monastery of St. Peter and St. Paul at Winchester, and dating from the twelfth century. It is now in the Cottonian Collection and numbered Add. MS. 15350. The first of these documents is a professed grant from "Cynewalch," who styles himself quite fantastically "*Alti throni annuente moderatoris imperio rex Occidentalium Saxonum*," of lands at Duntun (which he refers to as *quandam ruris partem mei proprii juris*) to the church at Winchester above named (Kemble, 985; Birch, 27). It is undated, and does not mention the name of any grantee in the body of the document, while it is signed by a number of quite mythical people, or people living much later, such as Archbishop Æthelheard and Hygebeorht, Bishops Ceolwulf, Haþored, and Unwana, Brord the dux, Lulling the præfect, and Vibald the *comes*. It will be remembered that King Cenwalch or Coenwalch died in 672, and that Archbishop Æthelheard did not become archbishop till 791. If the deed had been genuine it would have been the first to have its "parcels" set out in the vernacular. Kemble marks it as spurious.

From the same source comes a well-known document. It professes to be a decree of Archbishop Theodore for the division of dioceses. It is dated in the year 680 by the Incarnation, which is fatal to its character. It was made with the consent of the "Bishops of all England" and of the Kings Ægfrid of the Humbrontii (*sic*), Æthelred of the Marcentii, Halduulf of the

¹ See Kemble, 12, and Birch, 43; and Stubbs' *Dict. of Chr. Biog.*, iv. 162.

Æster Angli, and Clother of the Cantuari, and provides for twelve bishops being appointed south of the Northumbrians, and in the diocese of Canterbury, and twelve in the north under the primacy of York. It is numbered 991 in Kemble, who marks it as false, and 53 by Birch.

In the same volume we have a charter granting lands by "Ceadwal," King of the Saxons, at Farnham, in Surrey, in order to found a monastery there. It was ratified at a place called Be singa hearh. It is dated in 688 by the Incarnation, which is fatal. Among the signatories, instead of Ceadwal we have Cenwal, King and Grantor (*regis et donatoris*), Bishops Wilfrid, "Herconwald," and Hedda, and the Abbots Aldhelm, Hugon, and Eadberht. It is clearly spurious, and is so marked by Kemble, 994; Birch, 72.

In another deed from the same book, Ini is made to grant land at Alresford, in Hants, to Winchester Cathedral. The document is dated in the year 701 of the Incarnation, but with no mention of day or month. This is much too early for that mode of dating. Daniel signs as bishop, whereas he only became so in 705. Aldhelm also signs as abbot, and both Ini and Cuthred as kings.¹

We will now turn to a collection of charters in the Cottonian Collection, and contained in a portfolio labelled Augustus, ii. It is described by Kemble as "an invaluable collection of autograph and original charters, or single sheets of vellum, and in admirable preservation—the spoils of many a cathedral library."² The first of them, No. 2 in this collection (Kemble, 16; Birch, 45), has acquired considerable prestige and authority. It forms No. 2 of the second volume of British Museum facsimiles of MSS., and is a grant by Hlothaire, King of Kent, to Abbot Bercuald (he was Abbot of Reculver and afterwards Archbishop) of an estate called Westanæ. The King quotes the approval of Archbishop Theodore, and of his own nephew Eadric. To this Hlothaire added another property at Sturia, of which he had sent his procurators to set out the boundaries. It was ratified at Recuulf (*i.e.* Reculver) "*in mense maio indictione septima.*" Kemble raises no question about its authenticity.

In the same portfolio is a charter, No. 86, which is also published among the B.M. facsimiles, iv. 2 (Kemble, 18; Birch,

¹ See Kemble, 997, who marks it as spurious; Birch, 102.

² *C.D.*, Preface, vi and xii.

50). It is marked as spurious by Kemble, and is condemned by being dated in the year 680 of the Incarnation. It professes to be a grant by King Caedualla of lands at Peganham, etc., to Bishop Wilfrid, with the consent and confirmation of the sub-regulus Ecgwald; and, further, of a property called Tangmere to the brethren of the Church of St. Andrew, at the mouth of the Uedring (*super ripam positum orientalem portus qui dicitur Wedring mutha*). Caedualla also released the grantees from the charge of *triinoda* (*trimoda* in MS. Lambeth, 1212, fol. 304) *necessitas*. It is signed by Ecgwald, sub-regulus, by King Æthelred, Bishop Hæddi, Bishop Ercenuald, and, what is most curious, professes to be also signed by Aldhelm in the following fantastic terms: "*Ego Aldhelmus scholasticus Archiepiscopi Theodori hanc cartulam dictitans prout regis majorumque imperia statuerunt scribere jussi, illisque sancientibus constitutum est, ut beato viro Uuilfrido liberum remanerat arbitrium in vita sua de hac ruris possessiuncula, et post obitum cuicumque voluerit in aeternam possessionem jure hereditario derelinqueret.*"

*Pax cunctis legentibus
Consensumque prebentibus
Sitque laus utentibus
Luxque perpes credentibus
Virtus vita faventibus
Anglorum atque cetibus
Qui dona firment nutibus."*

In the same portfolio is a document, No. 29, also published in facsimile by the British Museum, i. 2 (Kemble, No. 35; Birch, 81). It is not rejected by the former. It is a grant by Hodilred, or CEdilred, a relation (*parens*) of Sebbi, King of the East Saxons, and was made with the latter's consent, of certain lands at Ricingahaam, Budinhaam, Dæccanhaam, Angenlabeshaam, and a pasture in a wood called Uuidmundesfelt, to Hedilburga, abbess of the monastery at Beddanhaam. It is signed, *inter alia*, by Sebbi, King of the East Saxons; by the grantor, "CEdelræd"; by Bishops Ercnuwald, Wilfrid, and Hæddi; and by the abbots Guda, Ecgbuld, Hagona, and Hooc, and concludes with a second signature by King Sebbi, and others by Kings Sigiheard and Suebred. Although Kemble does not object to this deed, and it may be substantially truthful, it is a curious fact that it should not be completely dated, the year and day being omitted, and only the month (*i.e.* March) given, while the names have a

very irregular orthography—facts which raise grave doubts about it.

Another deed, numbered 88, from the same portfolio, is apparently an original charter. It is 47 of Kemble and 98 of Birch, and professes to be a conveyance from Wihtred, King of the Cantuarii, of certain lands at Pleghelmestun, together with a small property called Rumining Seta, situated at the mouth of the river Liminaea, *i.e.* the Lyminge, capable of pasturing 300 sheep, and of which the donor says he does not give the boundaries since they were so well known by the natives (*ab accolis*). This property was conveyed to the basilica of the Virgin Mary at Liminge. It is signed by Berhtuuald the Archbishop, Wihtred the King, Æthilburga the Queen, and a number of other people whose condition is not specified. It is dated "*in mense Julio Indictione XIIIma*," which Kemble translates by the "years 700 or 715." Birch says the indiction is clearly an error from misreading the letter M in another document, and he dates it accordingly in 697. It is printed among the Museum facsimiles 1-4, and is accepted by Kemble.

There is another document identical with the one last described, except that the lands at Rumining Seta are not mentioned, and the name (Pleghelmestun) is spelt Vieghelmestun, which is doubtless right. It is signed by the same witnesses and is dated "*in mense Julio Indictione Xma*," and justifies Birch in putting both charters in the year 697. This last document is among the Stowe charters in the British Museum, No. 1. It is accepted by Kemble, who numbers it 43.¹

Another document from the portfolio Augustus, ii., also exists in the form of an original charter, and was published among the British Museum facsimiles.² It is accepted by Kemble, and is a grant from Sueabræd, King of the East Saxons, and "Peogthath, comes," with the consent of King Ædelred, to Bishop Uualdhere, of certain lands at Tuicanhom, *i.e.* Twickenham, in the province (*provincia*) called Middelseaxan, having the Thames to the east and south and bounded on the north by the brook (*torrente*) called Fischesburna. It is dated on the 3rd of June 704 by the Incarnation, which condemns it. King Æthelred does not sign it as a witness, but it is signed at Twickenham by King Coenred (a suspicious fact), by Bishop Headda, Cotta the Abbot, by Suebræd (*sic*), King of the East Saxons, Peothat, and a number

¹ Birch, 97.

² i. 3. Kemble, 52; Birch, 111.

of others. It was confirmed later at a place called Arcencale by King Ciolred, who speaks of Coenred as the donor (*Quam ante donavit propinquus meus Coenraedus rex*), and a number of unknown people.

Another document from the same very reputable source is that numbered 18. It is not given by Kemble, and is No. 115 in Birch. It is printed by Haddan and Stubbs, iii. 274. It is also preserved in an original charter and seems quite genuine. It consists of a letter written by Waldhere, Bishop of London, to Archbishop Berhtwald, *totius Britanniae gubernacula regenti*, and refers to a feud which had arisen between the kings of the West Saxons and the rulers of the East Saxons, in which the clergy had been embroiled, and which related apparently to the shelter given by the men of Essex to fugitives from Wessex. To settle the dispute conferences on either side had met, but the matter had not been finally settled; but it had recently been arranged that on a certain day (*in idus Kalendarum Octobrium*) a great meeting should be held at Breguntford or Brentford, where the kings, bishops, abbots, judges, and others should meet and the matter should be finally arranged. "It is right and seemly," says Waldhere, "that, having been invited to attend it, I should do so, being their bishop." He therefore asked for the archbishop's consent and also for his instructions as to what policy he should adopt there. He explained further that he had not attended the convention recently held by King Coenred and his bishops about the reconciliation of Ælfdrytha:¹ she was probably the abbess of Repton, so-called. This was because he did not know what the archbishop's views were on the matter, and he always wished to act in unison with him. Haddan and Stubbs point out that this letter was written before the bishopric of Wessex was divided (A.D. 705), and after Coenred had succeeded to the throne of Mercia (A.D. 704), probably, therefore, in the middle of A.D. 705, but before the death of Headda on 7th July. It is curious that it is neither specifically dated nor signed by the parties to it.

We next come to an undated deed from a Shaftesbury chartulary of the fourteenth century,² in which King Coenred conveys lands on the north bank of the river Funtamel (Fontmell, near Shaftesbury), and having, on the south, lands of "Bishop

¹ We are not told what the feud in this case had been.

² MS. Harl. 61, fol. 19; styled a very ill-executed register by Kemble.

Leother (*sic*), of blessed memory," to the Abbot Bectune. Although Hlothaire was dead, as the above phrase makes clear, he is yet made to sign the document, which is also signed by King "Coinred," the Abbots Cunibert and Haddi, and the priest Wimbert, who wrote the document, "*qui hanc cartulam . . . scripsi et subscripsi.*" It is dated about 704 by Birch, which would make Hlothaire's signature still more singular, since he had been dead thirty years. The deed is 104 of Kemble and 107 of Birch. It is professedly confirmed by another deed of King Cynewulf dated in 759.¹ This confirmation is an interesting document, but does not come within the period to which this work is confined.

We will now turn to the register of Sherborne Abbey, where we meet with a charter of King Cenuualch professing to grant privileges to "the pontifical see of Sherborne" (*pontificali Særeburnensis ecclesiae*), with the consent of Archbishop Lawrence, Wulfhere, King of Mercia, and others. It is dated in 671 by the Incarnation, which, as we have seen, is impossible in a genuine document. Apart from this, the see of Sherborne was not founded till after the death of Bishop Hæddi of Wessex in 705. Archbishop Lawrence died in 619, and Theodore was Archbishop in 671. These facts are conclusive against the document, which was unknown to Kemble. It was first published by Thorpe in his *Diplomatorium*, p. 6. Birch numbers it 26.

Our next document is a charter of King Wulfhere professing to grant certain lands at Dilington to Berhferð, whom he calls his kinsman (*proquinquus meus*). It is dated in 624, which is quite impossible under any circumstances, and especially so since it is dated by the Incarnation. Birch arbitrarily suggests the date should be 674, which is equally impossible, since the formal words are, "*Acta est autem hæc donatio anno ab incarnatione domini. D.C. XXIII.*" The witnesses are quite fanciful people—"Bishops Wita and Totta; *principes*, Ofa, Eadbriht, Tepra, and Cynred; *ministri*, Eadbald and Hearnbriht," etc. This document is among the Br. Mus. Add. Charters, 19788, and is printed among the facsimiles of ancient charters, iv., fol. 1. It is not given by Kemble, and is 32 in Birch.

The next charter we will turn to is contained in a MS. at Lambeth, 1212, p. 305, and is quoted in Twysden, *Dec. Scriptores*, col. 2208, where it is put among the diplomata of Christ Church, Canterbury. It professes to be a grant from King Cedualla

¹ See Kemble, 104; Birch, 186.

and his wife Kenedriða (*sic*) to the Archbishop Theodore and the family of Christ Church at Canterbury of certain lands at Geddinge and Uudetun, which gift was confirmed by King "Cenuualh." The deed is unwitnessed, and is dated in the year of the Incarnation 687, which makes it impossible.¹ Charter 296 in Birch seems to be an enlarged edition of this document, with the names altered.

We will next turn to a deed in the possession of the Dean and Chapter at Westminster, professing to be a grant of lands at Batrices ege (Battersea), in the vill of Watsingaham, and at Hidaburn on the western side (*occidentali plaga*) of the river (*i.e.* the Thames). We are not told who granted it, the name being erased, but that it was received (*acceptum*) by King "Ceduualla" with the consent of King Æthelred. It is dated by the Incarnation on the 13th of June 693, which condemns it. The first name among the witnesses is erased. The other signatories are a sad medley, being much mixed up. They include Bishops Wilfrid and Hædde, another Bishop "Headda" and Tirtil, Archbishop Brihtwald, who was only consecrated at Lyons on the 29th of June 693, and enthroned in August of that year; Bishops Brihtmaer and Waldhere; Kings Æthelred and "Ceduualla"; Abbots Hagona, Tidbald, Wynberht, and Cotta, etc. etc. The royal names are placed at hazard among the others, and the archbishop's name occurs half-way down the list; apart from all this, Caedwalla was dead at this time. The charter was unknown to Kemble. It is 82 in Birch, and is a patent forgery.

The next deed comes from the MS. Cott., Vesp. A, ix. fol. 142, and is a late copy on paper.² It is a professed grant from Ercnuuald (*sic*), Bishop of the East Saxons, to the Sisters in the Abbey of Berecingas (*i.e.* Barking), which he, God helping, had built, and granting them extravagant exemptions from episcopal visitation and control. It recites other deeds which are spurious, *i.e.* a grant of King Suidfrid (*sic*) of lands at Berecingas and Beddanhaam; another of Ædilred of lands at Ricinghaam, etc.; a second grant from the same Ædilred of lands at Celta; another from King Ædilred of lands at Gishheresuuyrth; another from Caeduualla at Badoricesheah, near Hydaburn; another gift by King Wulfhere of lands near "Lundonia"; another by Quœnguyda (*sic*), wife of . . .; and lastly, a gift by King Ædilred of 40 cassati at Swanescamp and Earhyð.

¹ See Kemble, 993; Birch, 69.

² See another deed in Kemble.

This extravagant deed, which is dated by the Incarnation in the year 695 (a patent mark of its falsity), is signed by "Ercnuuald," "bishop donator," by Bishops Wilfrid and Hædde, by the abbots and priests Guda, Egghald, Hagona, and Hooç, by Sebbi, King of the East Saxons, and by Kings Sigiheard and Suebred, who sign last. It concludes with an extraordinary sentence invoking terrible penalties in this world, on bishops or great laymen who should traverse the provisions of the charter, and in the next world the closing of the gates of heaven against them by St. Peter, the key-bearer (*clavicolarius*) of the celestial realm, and continues: "*a quo mihi licentia hujus privilegii data et permissa fuerat per os beatissimi Agathonis apostolicae sedis praesulis, cum Romam adii ante annos XVIII. anno ab incarnatione domini 677.*" The document is 38 of Kemble and 87 of Birch. Kemble marks it as spurious.

Our next document is from a register of Peterborough Abbey preserved at the Society of Antiquaries, lx. fol. 36. It begins by a professed grant by King "Caeduuala" of certain lands at Hogh or Hoo, near the island of "Hebureahg," to Abbot Egbalth (*i.e.* Abbot of Peterborough) and his brethren. The deed is not dated specifically, and was executed professedly "*cum dispensanti domino Cantuariorum regimina nostro obtemperarent imperio.*" As Dr. Bright says, this deed seems to be the foundation of the statement in the *Peterborough Chronicle* (MS. D), *sub an.* 686. He adds (quoting *Mon. Angl.*, i. 346) that Egbalt only became abbot in 709, while Caedwala died in 689. This in itself proves the deed to be spurious.¹ It is attested by Ceaduuala (*sic*), Theodore the Archbishop, Bishop Erconuuald, and Berhtuald and Hagona, abbots, and professes to be confirmed by "Sigheri, King of the Saxons," and by Suebeard when King of Kent (*regiae utique status lectissimus flos . . . dum sibimet dominus mundi monarchia mirabiliter disponens regna praedicta Cantiae concessit*), who added certain other lands, including some woods at Fercanhamstede. It is also attested by Sebbi, who is styled bishop, but who was a King, Adrian the abbot, and others. Lastly, it is confirmed by King Wihtred, who, strangely enough, is also named in the body of the deed, Bishop Gemmund (*sic*), and Abbot Berhtuald, and lastly by King Æthelred; it claims to be confirmed "*coram Aethelredo regi Christianissimo Merciorum inmo ut ita dixerim totius insulis Britanniae,*" and whose confirmation had been

¹ Bright, *op. cit.* 395, note.

sought by Abbot Egbalt in the monastery of Medeshamstede. This last confirmation is signed, *inter alia*, by "Haddan," abbot of Medeshamstede. The document, which is a mere mass of incoherent confusion, is numbered 40 by Kemble, who marks it as spurious, and 89 by Birch.

The next document is preserved among the Dodswell MSS., ix. fol. 8, and professes to be a grant by Ecgfrid, King of the Northumbrians, of Crec (*i.e.* Craike) and Lugubalia (*i.e.* Carlisle). It does not expressly say to whom the gift was made, but declares that it was ratified at the Synod of Twyford (Aet-Tuiford), which was presided over by Archbishop Theodore "*cum Cuthbertus legatariis ac literis ad se praemissis nequaquam sua insula posset erui;*" and recites how Ecgfrid and Bishop Trumwine went to the island of Farne to offer Cuthberht the bishopric. It is signed by Archbishop Theodore, by Bishops Cedde, Bosa, Saxulf, Eata, Trumwine, Ceadda, and Eadbald, an impossible collection of names. It is, further, dated in the year 685 of the Incarnation, which is another critical difficulty, and is rejected by Kemble.¹

Another charter comes from a fourteenth-century copy of Ingulf's *Chronicle*, Arundel MS., B.M., No. 178, fol. 1b, a well-known spurious document, and professes to be the conveyance of the whole island of Crowland for the foundation of the abbey of the same name. This estate was bounded, we are told, by the water called Schepishe towards the east, by the water called Nene on the west, by that called Southee on the south, and by that called Asendick on the north, the latter forming the common conduit or main ditch (*communis seweræ*) between Crowland and Spalding. The document describes various other possessions of the abbey and their boundaries. Among the marshes and islands, we are told, there dwelt a certain cœnobite from Evesham called Kenulph, who built an abbey and collected monks there. Towards the erection of this the King claims to have contributed 300 pounds of legal money, with a further annual subscription of 100 pounds a year, with permission to build a "villa." The deed puts the foundation in 716 of the Incarnation (which is too early for the method of dating), without giving month or day, and among the signatories are Ethelbald the Mercian King; Brihtwald, Archbishop of Canterbury; Wynfrid, Bishop of the Mercians; Ingulf, Bishop of London; Aldwin, Bishop of Lichfield; Tobias of

¹ No. 25; Birch, 66.

Rochester; Ethelred, Abbot of Bardney; Egbalt, Abbot of Medeshamstede; Eggo, Count (*comes*) of Lincoln; Levicus, Count of Leicestre; Saxulph, son of Saxulf the Count; Ingulph the priest (*presbiter et humilis minister vocatus*). The deed is a clear forgery, and is of course so marked by Kemble, No. 66; Birch, 135; but its contents doubtless describe the emplacement and surroundings of the later abbey fairly accurately.

I will now condense shortly my obligations to modern writers to whom I am indebted for help in illustrating this period of our history. First, I must place my friend Mr. Plummer, whose name occurs very frequently in the book and appears also in the dedication. His edition of Bede's *Ecclesiastical History*, of his *History of the Abbots*, and of his letter to Archbishop Ecgberht, with its multifarious notes, all showing very wide reading, research, judgment, and learning, will for a long time form the definite editions of those works, especially of the incomparable *Historia Ecclesiastica*. I have had it by me constantly, as I have also had the great folio in which G. Smith as early as 1722 published his quite remarkable edition of the same works, which is also accompanied by most useful appendices and notes, and contains, in addition to the works published by Plummer, Bede's Lives of St. Cuthberht in prose and verse, his tract *De locis sanctis*, his *Martyrologium*, and his Life of St. Felix of Nola, together with the Anglo-Saxon version of the *Historia Ecclesiastica*. I have also continually had by me the translation of Bede by the Rev. J. Stevenson, published in the collection known as the *Church Historians of England*. I have not failed to use some of his happy renderings of the sometimes difficult Latin, and some of his excellent notes. The edition by Giles, of all Bede's works, is the best source for his minor works. It is the work of a painstaking scholar, but a new edition is much wanted with a proper collation of the authorities. For those to whom Giles' work is not easily accessible, the edition in Migne's *Patrologia* will be found most useful. Of the Anglo-Saxon translation of the *Historia Ecclesiastica*, an excellent edition was published by the Early English Text Society under the editorship of Dr. Miller.

In regard to the criticism of the "fontes" of Bede's works, I have found the German writer Manitius, in his *Gesch. der Lat. Lit. des Mittelalters* in Ivan Müller's Handbook, and Karl Werner's *Beda der Ehrwürdige und seine Zeit* most useful.

For the works of Aldhelm I have had recourse to Dr. Giles'

edition, where they are all collected. For Cædmon's poems I have gone to Thorpe's edition, and also to Stevens in his *Runic Monuments*, and have always had by me the discussions of their text and of what has been said by other German writers on them by Wulcker.

Among those works which I have occasionally profitably consulted I must mention Lingard's most useful and learned *History of the Anglo-Saxon Church*, and Thomas Wright's *Biographia Britannica*. For the lives of the saints I have constantly consulted the great collection of the *Acta Sanctorum*, and the admirable biographies in the *Dictionary of Christian Biography* which were contributed by Stubbs (*Magister meus dilectissimus*), Raine, Hole, Gammack, Venables, and others; the notes by Dr. Reeves and Canon Fowler on Adamnan's Life of St. Columba, the monographs on St. Cuthberht by Archbishop Eyre, on St. Aldhelm by Bishop Browne and Mr. Wildman of Sherbourne, and on St. Basil by Morison. The life of the Saint by Mr. Clarke came out too late for me to avail myself of it.

I have found considerable help from Bishop Forbes' *Kalendars of the Scottish Saints*, Miss Arnold-Forster's work on the dedication of English churches, and the late Miss Stokes' delightful book in search of traces of Celtic monks, entitled *Three Months in the Forests of France*. She was an attractive member of an accomplished family, and did much to illuminate early Irish history and archæology, and in the book just mentioned has thrown considerable light on the continental life of St. Fursey. In discussing Cædmon's poetry I have found much help from Dr. Sweet's ideal works, from those of the late Professor Stevens, from Dr. Wulcker and other German writers who have analysed the text, and notably from the *History of English Poetry* by Courthope, and the *History of Early English Literature* by Stopford Brooke, who have illustrated their æsthetic and literary features.

I have had continually by me the third edition of the quite admirable work by Canon Bright entitled *Early English Church History*, which I apostrophised in my *Life of St. Augustine*, and also the volumes in which Bishop Browne has thrown much light on the period I have traversed, not only on its literary side but more especially on the archæological one. I refer to his works on St. Aldhelm, the *Conversion of the Heptarchy*, and *Theodore and Wilfrith*, published by the Society for the Promotion of Christian Knowledge. I am also indebted to him for allowing me to

use some of the illustrations in those works. I cannot here forget the Bishop's forerunner in using the epigraphic evidence for illustrating our early history both from stones and coins, in which he shows so much ingenuity and acumen. I mean Father Haigh, a delightful Catholic priest. He is often quoted in the following pages.

Three much older writers have sometimes lent me their aid : Leland, the author of the *Itinerary* and the *Collectanea*, who at a critical and destructive period in our history traversed these realms and reports many facts from documents no longer extant ; Dugdale, in his *Monasticon* ; and Hickes, in his *Thesaurus*. They worked with greater difficulties than we do, for they were the pioneers of our studies, and we stand on their shoulders.

I have again to express obligations to my friends the late Mr. Micklethwaite, Sir W. H. St. John Hope, Dr. Baldwin Brown, Mr. C. Peers, Mr. Hodges of Hexham, and others for their discussions of Anglo-Saxon architecture during the first century and a half of its history. In regard to the minor ecclesiastical arts of the seventh and eighth centuries, I have had the advantage of close intercourse with my accomplished friends Dalton, the author of the monograph on Byzantine Art, Professor Lethaby, and Sir Martin Conway, the ever-fresh and ever-inspiring author of many memoirs on many subjects from Thibet to Chili, if not from China to Peru.

I have gathered some happy phrases from Montalembert's *Monks of the West*, and a few suggestive thoughts from Palgrave's *History of the English Commonwealth*, a magazine of curious information and erratic views.

Others who have written special papers or short memoirs on smaller issues in the Transactions of Archæological Societies and elsewhere, and whose works I have used, will, I hope, find them duly recorded in my references.

In regard to the foreign illustrations of my subject, I have sought and found the best and latest wisdom on Byzantine history in the notes of my many-sided friend Professor Bury in his edition of Gibbon, but above all in his two notable monographs, *The History of the Eastern Roman Empire* and that of *The Latin Roman Empire* ; nor have I failed to profit from the text and the learned notes in the last edition of Lebeau's *Byzantine History*, by C. Martin.

In dealing with the contemporary history of the Papacy, I have relied much on the *Liber Pontificalis*, the prime document on the subject, in its two critical editions, one by Duchesne and the other by Mommsen; and on the works of Grisar and Gregorovius.

In regard to Spain, I have trusted to the contemporary chronicle of John of Biclaro and to the French monographs *L'Espagne Chrétienne*, by Dom Leclerc, and *L'Eglise Wisigothique*, by Père Magnin.

Turning to Gaul (or Francia, as it began to be now called), I have followed Fredegar and the *Liber Historie Francorum*, both edited by Bruno Krusch in vol. ii. of the *Scriptores Rerum Merovingicarum*, in the *Mon. Germ. Scriptores*, and the admirable and up-to-date French history of M. Lavissee.

Matters involving longer polemics, historical or archæological, I have remitted to five Appendices, in which I may be allowed to hope that if my conclusions are not convincing they may be thought to have treated the issues with fairness and with some degree of scientific method. They have, at all events, cost me a good many hours' work and have cleared my own thoughts. These Appendices are: I. An account of the lives of the royal and noble nuns who were such an important element of Church life in England at this period; II. A translation of the *Penitential* of Archbishop Theodore; III. A criticism with examples of Cædmon and his poems, and of the theories about him; IV. A discussion of the dates and meaning of the great northern memorial crosses of the seventh and early eighth centuries; V. A discussion of the issues raised by the *Codex Amiatinus*, with some new suggestions.

In using my authorities I have not scrupled betimes to take over from my predecessors occasional pieces of translation which I felt I could not improve upon. These, with the other materials I have borrowed, will, I hope, be found amply acknowledged in the notes. When I have taken the words I have placed them in inverted commas, and have only added the Latin or other foreign equivalents when I thought there was an ambiguity in the meaning of the original phrases.

I have to thank the President and Council of the S.P.C.K. for letting me use several illustrations. The same favour has been extended to me by the editor of the *Burlington Fine Arts Magazine*; by Messrs. G. Bell & Co., the publishers of Miss Stokes'

book above quoted ; by Bishop Browne and Mr. White, who have lent me photographs from MSS. ; and by others whose names appear in the List of Plates.

In one matter I have no doubt laid myself open to considerable criticism, namely, in the spelling of names, in which I shall be charged with some want of uniformity. This apparent inconsistency I have found it impossible to avoid altogether. The fact is, the dialects of the north and the south of England in the seventh-century period differed so greatly in their phonology that the indigenous writers themselves spelt the names differently in north and south. Not only so, but they are themselves inconsistent in their method of spelling and in the vowels they use in the same name. Especially does this difficulty overtake us in quoting *verbatim* from different scribes.

In conclusion, let me put in a plea, if I may, for the too many lapses which I feel sure will be found by my critics in this bulky work, based on a great range of authorities and of reading, lapses due sometimes to listlessness and bad health, and sometimes to carelessness and bad eyesight. I trust that those who notice the book will be more patient with my tripping than Job's friends were with his human frailties, and that they will not converge all their adjectives upon the blurs which are to be found on everybody's pages who writes on difficult and intricate subjects, and which worry their authors more than any one else. I shall be satisfied if they conclude that the book is generally written according to the better standards of composing history now in vogue, and that it is a substantial addition to the world's knowledge.

Lastly, I would take off my hat in all humility and gratitude to those on whose crutches I have often hobbled along. Most of them are beyond the clouds, but their works have remained to help their lagging scholar ; others are still here, and will not be displeased at being remembered by a grateful friend. Among these helpers I cannot forget those of "mine own household," where the sunshine has ever been, especially my gentle wife and my gifted sons, one of whom, Rupert, jointly edits the *Archaeological Journal*, and has greatly helped me by reading my proofs. Let me add to these my old friend the publisher, who has deserved and secured my undying affection. He has done me the very exceptional favour of himself reading my proofs. C. E. Lawrence, who has helped a tiresome person in business

matters over many stiles with patience and urbanity; the printer, the reader, and notably the author of the Index, the son of a picturesque and gifted literary friend of mine who has himself written books—E. Axon.

To all I would say, in the words of a fine scholar, Bede's first scientific editor: "*Si quod a nobis est profectum, libenti animo excipiatis, id grato atque memori prosequemur.*"

THE EMPERORS AND POPES, AND THE KINGS
OF THE FRANKS AND VISIGOTHS,
FROM 665 TO 725

	EMPERORS OF BYZANTIUM.	POPES OF ROME.	KINGS OF THE FRANKS.	KINGS OF THE VISIGOTHS.
665	25th year of Constans II.	8th year of St. Vitalian.	5th year of Childeric of Austrasia, and 9th of Chlothaire II. of Neus- tria.	12th year of Recceswintha.
666	"	"	"	"
667	"	"	"	"
668	Constantine IV. or V. (Pogonatos).	"	"	"
669	"	"	"	"
670	"	"	Death of Chlothaire, when Childeric reunited the Frank Empire.	"
671	"	"	"	"
672	"	Adeodatus.	"	Wamba.
673	"	"	Dagobert II., King of Aus- trasia, and Theodoric III. of Neustria.	"
674	"	"	"	"
675	"	"	"	"
676	"	Donus or Domnus.	"	"
677	"	"	"	"
678	"	St. Agatho.	Theodoric III. sole King of the Franks.	"
679	"	"	"	"
680	"	"	"	Erwig.
681	"	"	"	"
682	"	St. Leo II.	"	"
683	"	"	"	"
684	"	St. Benedict II.	"	"
685	Justinian II. (Rhinotmetus).	John V.	"	"
686	"	Conon.	"	"
687	"	St. Sergius I.	"	Egica.
688	"	"	"	"
689	"	"	"	"
690	"	"	"	"
691	"	"	Chlovis III.	"
692	"	"	"	"
693	"	"	"	"
694	"	"	"	"
695	(Exile of Justinian.) Leontius I.	"	Childebert III.	"
696	"	"	"	"
697	"	"	"	"
698	Tiberius III. (Apsinarus).	"	"	Egica and his son Wittiza.
699	"	"	"	"
700	"	"	"	Wittiza alone.
701	"	John VI.	"	"
702	"	"	"	"
703	"	"	"	"
704	"	"	"	"
705	Restoration of Justinian II.	John VII.	"	"
706	"	"	"	"
707 or 8	"	Sisinnius I.	"	"

THE EMPERORS AND POPES, AND THE KINGS OF THE
FRANKS AND VISIGOTHS—*continued*

	EMPERORS OF BYZANTIUM.	POPES OF ROME.	KINGS OF THE FRANKS.	KINGS OF THE VISIGOTHS.
708	Justinian II.	Constantine I.	Childbert III.	Wittiza alone.
709	"	"	"	"
710	"	"	"	"
711	Philippicus (Bardanes).	"	Dagobert III.	Roderic, last King of the Visigoths in Spain, who were con- quered by the Arabs in 711.
712	"	"	"	
713	Anastasius II. (Artemius).	"	"	
714	"	"	"	
715	"	St. Gregory II.	Chilperic II.	
716	Theodosius III. (of Adramyctium).	"	"	
717	Leo III., the Isaurian.	"	Clothaire IV., King of Austrasia.	
718	"	"	"	
719	"	"	Death of Chlothaire. Chilperic again sole King. He dies in the end of 720.	
720	"	"	"	
721	"	"	Theodoric IV. sole King, who reigned till his death in 737.	
722	"	"	"	
723	"	"	"	
724	"	"	"	
725	"	"	"	

THE SAXON AND ANGLIAN KINGDOMS

	NORTHUM- BRIA.	MERCIA.	EAST ANGLIA.	ESSEX.	KENT.	WESSEX.
633	Death of Ædwin. Eanfrid, King of Bernicia, and Osríc of Deira.	7th year of Penda.	2nd year of Sigeberht the Learned.	We have no means of re- covering the chronology of the early Essex Kings. Sabercht died about 616-617 (see Plummer, ii. 88), and was succeeded by his sons, Sexred and Seward.	17th year of Eadbald.	22nd year of Cynegils.
634	Oswald sole King.	"	Egric.	"	"	"
635	"	"	"	"	"	"
636	"	"	Anna.	"	"	"
637	"	"	"	"	"	"
638	"	"	"	"	"	"
639	"	"	"	"	"	"
640	"	"	"	"	Earconberht	"
641	"	"	"	"	"	"
642	Oswy, with Oswin as sub-King of Deira.	"	"	"	"	"
643	"	"	"	"	"	Cenwalch.
644	"	"	"	"	"	"
645	"	"	"	"	"	"
646	"	"	"	"	"	"
647	"	"	"	"	"	"
648	"	"	"	"	"	"
649	"	"	"	"	"	"
650	"	"	"	"	"	"

THE SAXON AND ANGLIAN KINGDOMS—*continued*

	NORTHUMBRIA.	MERCIA.	EAST ANGLIA.	ESSEX.	KENT.	WESSEX.
651	(Death of	Penda.	Anna.	Sigberht.	Swithelm.	Kenwalch.
652	Oswin,	"	"	"	"	"
653	succeeded	"	"	"	"	"
654	by Oidil- wald in Deira.)	Mercia conquered by Oswy.	Æthelhere.	Sigberht the Good, nephew of Saberht.	"	"
655	(Death of	"	Æthelwald.	"	"	"
656	Oidil-	"	"	"	"	"
657	wald,	"	"	"	"	"
658	who was	Wulfhere.	"	"	"	"
659	succeed-	"	"	"	"	"
660	ed as sub-	"	"	"	"	"
661	King by	"	"	"	"	"
662	Alchfrid.)	"	"	"	"	"
663	"	"	Aldwulf.	"	"	"
664	"	"	"	Sebbi and	Ecgrberht.	"
665	"	"	"	Sighere,	"	"
666	(Death of	"	"	sons of	"	"
667	Alchfrid,	"	"	Swithelm.	"	"
668	sub-King	"	"	"	"	"
669	of Deira.)	"	"	"	"	"
670	"	"	"	"	"	"
671	Ecgrfrid.	"	"	"	"	"
672	"	"	"	"	"	Sexburga.
673	"	"	"	"	"	"
674	"	"	"	"	Llothaire.	Æscwine.
675	"	Æthelred.	"	"	"	"
676	"	"	"	"	"	Centwine.
677	"	"	"	"	"	"
678	"	"	"	"	"	"
679	"	"	"	"	"	"
680	"	"	"	"	"	"
681	"	"	"	"	"	"
682	"	"	"	"	"	"
683	"	"	"	"	"	"
684	"	"	"	"	Eadric.	"
685	Aldfrid.	"	"	"	"	Caedwalla.
686	"	"	"	"	"	"
687	"	"	"	"	"	"
688	"	"	"	"	"	Ini.
689	"	"	"	"	"	"
690	"	"	"	"	Wihtried.	"
691	"	"	"	"	"	"
692	"	"	"	"	"	"
693	"	"	"	"	"	"
694	"	"	"	Sighard and	"	"
695	"	"	"	Swæfred,	"	"
696	"	"	"	<i>circa 694.</i>	"	"
697	"	"	"	"	"	"
698	"	"	"	"	"	"
699	"	"	"	"	"	"
700	"	"	"	"	"	"
701	"	"	"	"	"	"
702	"	"	"	"	"	"
703	"	"	"	"	"	"
704	"	Coenred.	"	"	"	"
705	Eadwulf.	"	"	"	"	"
706	Osred.	"	"	"	"	"
707	"	"	"	"	"	"
708	"	"	"	"	"	"
709	"	Ceolred.	"	Offa (?).	"	"
710	"	"	"	"	"	"
711	"	"	"	"	"	"
712	"	"	"	"	"	"
713	"	"	Alfwold.	"	"	"
714	"	"	"	Selred (?).	"	"
715	"	"	"	"	"	"
716	Coenred.	Æthelbald.	"	"	"	"
717	"	"	"	"	"	"
718	Osric.	"	"	"	"	"

THE SAXON AND ANGLIAN KINGDOMS—continued

	NORTHUMBRIA.	MERCIA.	EAST ANGLIA.	ESSEX.	KENT.	WESSEX.
719	Osric.	Æthelald.	Alfwold.	Selred (?).	Wihtred.	Ini.
720	"	"	"	"	"	"
721	"	"	"	"	"	"
722	"	"	"	"	"	"
723	"	"	"	"	"	"
724	"	"	"	"	"	"
725	"	"	"	"	Æthelberht II.	"

THE SAXON AND ANGLIAN SEES

	EAST KENT. (Canterbury.)	WEST KENT. (Rochester.)	ESSEX. (London.)	WESSEX. (Dorchester.)	DUNWICH.
650	The 23rd year of Honorius.	The 6th year of Ithamar.	<i>Sede. vac.</i>	Agilberht.	The 3rd year of Thomas.
651	"	"	"	"	Boniface.
652	"	"	"	"	"
653	"	"	"	"	"
654	<i>Sede. vac.</i>	"	St. Cedde.	"	"
655	Deusdedit.	Damian.	"	"	"
656	"	"	"	"	"
657	"	"	"	"	"
658	"	"	"	"	"
659	"	"	"	"	"
660	"	"	"	"	"
661	"	"	"	"	"
662	"	"	"	"	"
663	"	"	"	"	"
664	<i>Sede. vac.</i>	<i>Sede. vac.</i>	"	Wini.	"
665	"	"	"	"	"
666	"	"	Wini.	"	"
667	"	"	"	<i>Sede. vac.</i>	"
668	"	"	"	"	"
669	Theodore arrives in England.	Putta.	"	"	Bosi.
670	"	"	"	Chlothaire.	"
671	"	"	"	"	"
672	"	"	"	"	"
673	"	"	"	"	Æcci, Baeduine,
674	"	"	"	"	Bishop of Dunwich.
675	"	"	Earconwald.	"	Elmham.
676	"	Cwichelm.	"	"	"
677	"	Gebmund.	"	Hæddi.	"
678	"	"	"	"	"
679	"	"	"	"	"
680	"	"	"	"	"
681	"	"	"	"	"
682	"	"	"	"	"
683	"	"	"	"	"
684	"	"	"	"	"
685	"	"	"	"	"
686	"	"	"	"	"
687	"	"	"	"	"
688	"	"	"	"	"
689	"	"	"	"	"
690	"	"	"	"	"
691	<i>Sede. vac.</i>	"	"	"	"
692	"	"	"	"	"
693	Beorhtwald.	Tobias.	Waldhere.	"	"
694	"	"	"	"	"
695	"	"	"	"	"
696	"	"	"	"	"
697	"	"	"	"	"
698	"	"	"	"	"

THE SAXON AND ANGLIAN SEES—*continued*

	EAST KENT. (Canterbury.)	WEST KENT. (Rochester.)	ESSEX. (London.)	WESSEX.	
699	Beorhtwald.	Tobias.	Waldhere.	Hæddi.	
700	"	"	"	"	
701	"	"	"	"	
702	"	"	"	"	
703	"	"	"	"	
704	"	"	"	"	
705	"	"	Waldhere	(Winchester.)	(Sherborne.)
706	"	"	wrote a		
707	"	"	letter to	"	"
708	"	"	the Arch-	"	"
709	"	"	bishop in	"	Forthere.
710	"	"	705. We	"	"
711	"	"	know no-	"	"
712	"	"	thing more	"	"
713	"	"	of the see	"	"
714	"	"	from Bede	"	"
715	"	"	e x c e p t	"	"
716	"	"	that in 731,	"	"
717	"	"	when he	"	"
718	"	"	wrote his	"	"
719	"	"	history,	"	"
720	"	"	In g u a l d	"	"
721	"	"	was Bishop	"	"
722	"	"	of London.	"	"
723	"	"	..	"	"
724	"	"	..	"	"
725	"	"	..	"	"
726	"	Aldwulf.	..	"	"
727	"	"	..	"	"
728	"	"	..	"	"
729	"	"	..	"	"
730	"	"	..	"	"
731	Tatwine.	"	..	"	"

THE SAXON AND ANGLIAN SEES

NORTHUMBRIA.					
651	Death of St. Aidan,				
652	and succession of St.				
653	Finan.		MERCIA.		
654	"				
655	"				
656	"		Diuma, first		
657	"		Bishop.		
658	"		Ceollach.		
659	"		Trumhere.		
660	"		"		
661	St. Colman.		"		
662	"		"		
663	"		"		
664	Tuda, who died the		Jaruman.		
665	same year of the		"		
666	plague, and was suc-		"		
667	ceeded by St. Chad,		"		
668	with his seat at York.		"		
669	St. Chad transferred to		St. Cedde.		
670	Lichfield, and Wil-		"		
671	frid became Bishop		"		
672	of York.		Wynfrith.		
673	"		"		
674	"		"		

THE SAXON AND ANGLIAN SEES—continued

	NORTHUMBRIA.			MERCIA.	
675	Wilfrid.			Saxwulf.	
676	"			"	
677	"			"	(677) Lindsey
678	Wilfrid expelled.			"	detached
	Bosa, Bishop of Deira, with his seat at York.	Eata, Bishop of Bernicia, with his seat at Lindisfarne.			from
					Mercia by
					Ecgfrid of
					Northum-
					bria, who
					appointed
					Eadhaed
					as Bishop.
679	"		Separation	"	It was re-
680	"		of Hexham.	"	conquered
681	"		Trunberht,	"	by Æthel-
682	"		first Bishop.	"	red of
683	"			"	Mercia,
684	"			"	who drove
685	"	Cuthberht.	Eata.	"	Eadhaed
686	"		John.	"	out and
687	"	Eadberht.		"	appointed
688	"			"	Æthelwine.
689	"			"	
690	"			Headda.	
691	"			(We do not	
692	"			know how	Offfor.
693	"			long he	
694	"			ruled the	Ecgwine.
695	"			diocese,	
696	"			and the	
697	"			next time	
698	"	Eadfrith.		we read of	
699	"			it is in	
700	"			731, when	
701	"			Aldwin	
702	"			is men-	
703	"			tioned as	
704	"			Bishop by	
705	John.		Acca.	Bede.)	
706	"				
707	"				
708	"				
709	"				
710	"				
711	"				
712	"				
713	"				
714	"				
715	"				
716	"				
717	"				
718	"				
719	"				Wilfrid.
720	"	Oidilwald			
721	Wilfrid II.	or			
722	"	Edilwald.			
723	"				
724	"				
725	"				
726	"				
727	"				
728	"				
729	"				
730	"				
731	"		Acca expelled		
			from his		
			see.		

NOTES ON THE FOREGOING TABLES

THE uncertainty of some of these entries makes it necessary to annotate the lists.

For the Archbishops of Canterbury we have in each case the irrefragable evidence of Bede. For Rochester the date of the death of Ithamar (*an.* 665) is only a probable inference from Bede, iii. 20. The date of Damian's accession is dependent on the same evidence. For the date of Damian's death we only have Bede's words that the see had been vacant some time (*episcopatus jam diu cessaverat*) before Putta was appointed by Theodore in 669. As Bede says, Putta fled when Æthelred of Mercia took Rochester in 676. Of his successor, Cwichelm, we are told that he abandoned the see on account of its poverty after a very short tenure (*post non multum temporis*). Bede does not mention the date of Gebmund's death, but implies that his successor Tobias was consecrated in 693 by Archbishop Beorhtwald,¹ in which year it is put by the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle* and Florence of Worcester. Bede says Tobias died in 726,² after which there was a vacancy in the see till 731, when his successor Aldwulf was consecrated by Archbishop Tatwine.

Turning to London, the date of St. Cedde's appointment is not definitely fixed by Bede, and it is only a probable conjecture. Florence of Worcester dates his death on the 26th of October 664, which may be confidently accepted. The same respectable author puts Wini's expulsion from Wessex in 666, so that the see of London was vacant for two years after Cedde's death. How long Wini lived we do not know. Bede merely says that Earconwald (who was Wini's successor) was appointed during the reigns of Sebba and Sighere, kings of the East Saxons. This is repeated by Florence of Worcester, who puts his accession under the year 675. Neither Bede nor Florence of Worcester tell us when he died. Mr. Plummer says he certainly lived till

¹ *Bede*, v. 8.

² *Op. cit.* v. 23.

692, if not 693.¹ This conclusion is based on a charter (*K. C. B.*, 35; Birch, i. 115), which is doubtful. We have no better support, however. He was commemorated on the 30th of April, and was succeeded by Waldhere, as Bede tells us.² Waldhere wrote a letter to Archbishop Beorhtwald in 705. We have no evidence as to how long after this he lived, and all we know is that his successor, Inguald, was Bishop of London in 731, when Bede wrote his history.

In regard to Wessex, Bede does not tell us when its protopostle arrived. He merely puts his mission in the reign of King Cynegils. The *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle* and Florence of Worcester put it in 634, for which there is no real authority. Nor does Bede directly mention the death of Birinus. The *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle* and Florence merely say under the year 656 that "Agilberht the Frenchman obtained the bishopric of the West Saxons, Birin being then dead." Bede gives no hint on the subject of the date; nor does he tell us when Agilberht resigned the see, but it was clearly some time before or in 664, when he describes Agilberht's presence at the Council of Whitby, he having then resigned.³ He did not become Bishop of Paris till 666, when his predecessor, Importunus, signs a document. His successor's departure from Wessex and acceptance of the see of London was probably in 666, when Florence of Worcester puts it. The date given for this in the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle*—namely, 663—is impossible, as Mr. Plummer shows.⁴ The *Chronicle*, which at this period is a mere succession of blunders, puts Wini's accession in 660. Wini's departure was followed by a vacancy of several years. His successor was Chlothaire, who was consecrated by Theodore, and therefore after 669, when the latter first came to England. Bede does not say in which year, but the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle* and Florence of Worcester put it in 670. They both say he reigned seven years, which would put his death in 677. He was succeeded by Hæddi, who, according to Bede,⁵ died at the beginning of Osred's reign—that is, in 705.

On his death the see was divided into two: the seat of one, at Winchester, being occupied by Danihel, and that of the other, at Sherborne, held by St. Aldhelm. The former was still bishop when Bede was writing in 731, but Aldhelm died much earlier. Bede does not give the date, but the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle* and

¹ *Op. cit.* ii. 177.

² iv. ch. xi.

³ *Op. cit.* iii. 25.

⁴ *H. E.*, ii. 145.

⁵ *Ib.* v. 18.

Florence both put his death in 709, his death-day being May the 25th. Bede says he was succeeded by Forthere, who was bishop when he was writing, *i.e.* in 731.¹

Turning to Northumbria, our dates are much more satisfactory. Bede says that St. Aidan died on August 11, 651.² He elsewhere tells us that he had been a bishop seventeen years, which puts his accession in 634.³ St. Finan, who succeeded him, reigned ten years, *i.e.* till 661; St. Colman, who followed, three years, *i.e.* till 664.⁴ Tuda, who succeeded, died the same year, of the plague,⁵ and was succeeded in the same year by Ceadda, better known as St. Chad. He was deposed by Archbishop Theodore in 669, St. Wilfrid being put in his place.⁶ In 678 Wilfrid was driven out by King Ecgfrid,⁷ and the diocese of the Northumbrians was divided into three parts: Lindisfarne, York, and Lindsey, presided over respectively by Eata, Bosa, and Eadhaed.⁸

We will examine them in turn. In 681 Eata's diocese was divided in two, the see of one of which remained at Lindisfarne under himself, while that of the other was fixed at Hexham, and to it Trunberht was appointed.⁹ Presently Trunberht was deposed.¹⁰ This is dated in 685 in MS. E of the *Chronicle*, the only copy that names it. Thereupon Cuthberht was elected in his place as Bishop of Hexham; but as Lindisfarne was more suitable and acceptable to him, he and Eata exchanged sees.¹¹ Cuthberht died two years after his appointment, *i.e.* in 687, and was succeeded by Eadberht,¹² who died May 5, 698.¹³ He was succeeded by Eadfrid, who, according to Florence of Worcester, died in 721, and was succeeded by Oidilwald or Edilwald,¹⁴ who was bishop when Bede wrote in 731. In the year 685 King Ecgfrid of Northumbria died, and was succeeded by his brother Aldfrid. Bede tells us that in the beginning of the latter's reign Bishop Eata died, and was succeeded as Bishop of Hexham by John. He says that John died in 721, after an episcopate of thirty-three years.¹⁵ This would put his consecration in 688. Mr. Plummer argues strongly that his consecration was in fact in August 687. Florence of Worcester tells us his death-day was May 7, and it was on that day he was commemorated at Beverley.

¹ *Op. cit.* v. 19.

² *H.E.*, iv. 14.

³ *Ib.* iii. 26.

⁴ *Ib.* iii. 26.

⁵ *Ib.* 27.

⁶ *Ib.* iv. 2.

⁷ *Ib.* v. 24.

⁸ *Ib.*

⁹ *Ib.* iv. 12 and 26.

¹⁰ *Ib.* iv. 28.

¹¹ *Ib.*

¹² *Ib.* iv. 29.

¹³ *Ib.* iv. 30.

¹⁴ *Ib.*

¹⁵ *Ib.* v. 6.

In the year 705 John was translated to York, and succeeded at Hexham by Acca, who continued to be Bishop of Hexham until 731, when Bede was writing his history, but was expelled in the same year.¹

Let us now return to York, the story of which I had carried down to the expulsion of Wilfrid in 678, when Bosa was given the see.² On his death John was translated to York.³ This was in 705.⁴ Bede tells us he died in the year 721, but, having felt the burdens of age upon him, had already resigned the see and ordained to it his priest Wilfrid.⁵

When the Northumbrian see was divided in 678, Ecgfrid created a new see for Lindsey, of which he was then in possession, and placed Eadhaed there.⁶ Ecgfrid having almost immediately been driven out of Lindsey by Ethelred of Mercia, Eadhaed withdrew and a new see was created for him at Ripon, and only lasted until his death, to be revived again in much later days, while Ethelred put Edelwine or Æthelwine in his place.⁷ Bede says he was succeeded by Eadgar, and he by Cyneberht. As Mr. Plummer says, we have no means of dating the accession of either of these two bishops.⁸ Cyneberht held the see in 731 when Bede was writing.

Turning to Mercia. The undivided see was occupied successively by Diama, Ceollach, Trumhere, Jaruman, Ceadda, and Wynfrid.⁹ When we come to details, we find a great dearth of information. Wharton says of them: "*Nusquam crassiores tenebrae, nusquam plures nodi quam in successione episcoporum Merciensum.*" Mr. Plummer has made the best use of such materials as we have, and I will condense his statement. Diama was appointed after King Penda's death (Nov. 15, 655),¹⁰ and probably before Peada's murder in 656. Ceollach's retirement was probably connected with Wulfhere's successful rebellion against Oswy in 658. Diama must therefore have died in or before 658, and Bede says that he only laboured in his episcopate *tempore sub pauco*. He also says that Ceollach's retirement was not long after (*non multo post*) his appointment, while Trumhere was appointed *temporibus Wulfheri regis*.¹¹ There is therefore nothing in Bede inconsistent with the dates given by Thomas Chesterfield,

¹ See Bede, Continuation, *sub an.* 731.

² See Bede, *H.E.*, v. 24.

³ *Ib.* v. 3.

⁴ See Plummer, ii. 274.

⁵ *Op. cit.* v. 6.

⁶ Bede, *H.E.*, iv. 12.

⁷ *Ib.*

⁸ *Op. cit.* ii. 22.

⁹ Bede, iii. 24.

¹⁰ *Ib.* 21.

¹¹ *Ib.*

Canon of Lichfield in the fourteenth century, in his history of the see, namely, Diuma, 656; Ceollach, 658; Trumhere, 659.¹

Trumhere was succeeded by Jaruman, who was bishop at the time of the apostasy of the kings of the East Saxons,² which was a result of the plague in 664. Trumhere, in fact, probably died from the plague. On the death of Jaruman the Mercian king asked Theodore to fill the vacancy, and he accordingly appointed Ceadda (St. Chad),³ who had been displaced from York and was living in his monastery at Lastingham. This, as we have shown, was probably in 669, so that there was a vacancy in the Mercian see for a few years. Ceadda was the first Mercian bishop to fix his see at Lichfield. Bede says his death-day was March 2nd, but he does not tell us the year. Florence of Worcester puts it with great probability in 672. Bede says he was succeeded by Wynfrid.⁴ He was deposed, and Saxwulf, the Abbot of Peterborough, put in his place.⁵ According to Florence of Worcester, Saxwulf's accession took place in 675. During his tenure of the see the very large diocese of Mercia was divided. Thus in the year 676, when Æthelred of Mercia sacked Rochester, its Bishop Putta was a fugitive and took shelter with Saxwulf,⁶ who entrusted him with the care of a district, and he is generally treated as the founder of the see of Hereford in the country of the Magasaetas.

In 679 Lindsey, as we have seen, was constituted a separate diocese, while in 678 or 679 two other dioceses were cut out of Lichfield—namely, that of the South Angles at Leicester, of which Cuthwine was made bishop, while Tatfrid was appointed the first bishop of Worcester.⁷

Returning to the Lichfield see. Saxwulf's death is not mentioned by Bede, but Æddi in his Life of St. Wilfrid says that in the latter's quarrel with King Aldfrid, *i.e.* in 692, the bishop repaired to Æthelred, King of Mercia, who, Saxwulf being dead, gave him charge of his bishopric.⁸ This has been accepted as

¹ See *Aug. Sac.*, v. 423-425, with Wharton's notes. Cp. Plummer, ii. 186.

² Bede, *H.E.*, iii. 30.

³ *Ib.* iv. 3.

⁴ *Ib.* iii. 24, iv. 3.

⁵ *Ib.* iv. 6.

⁶ *Ib.* iv. 12.

⁷ *Ib.* iv. 23. This is only mentioned by Florence of Worcester; see *M.A.B.*, 622. He also says that at the same time Ætla (? Haedda), a protégé of Abbess Hilda, was appointed to the see of Dorchester.

⁸ *Op. cit.* ch. 45.

decisive by Dr. Stubbs.¹ I do not wish to contest his judgment, but it implies a grave default in the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle* and in Florence of Worcester, who here copies it. Both put Saxwulf's death in 705.

At this point it is curious that all reference to the see of Mercia and its bishop ceases in Bede and in the two Chronicles just named, until we reach the year 731, when the former mentions that in that year, when he was writing his great book, Aldwin was bishop.

The only document except doubtful charters in which the see is mentioned in the interval is in the lists of kings and bishops appended to Florence of Worcester's Chronicle, and of which the earliest recension is that contained in the Cotton MS., Vespasian B, 6, fol. 108, written, according to Professor Sweet, between 811 and 814. I will copy the particular passage about the Mercian see from Sweet's text. It reads: "*post Saexuulfum provinciae Merciorum duos episcopos habuit Headdan et Wilfridum. Postea Uuilfridus ejectus et Headda praefatus regebat ambos parrochias, deinde Alduine qui et Uor nominabatur.*"² Wilfrid had nothing to do with the Mercian see at Lichfield, but was given a new one at Leicester. The Lichfield see, according to the notice just named, passed from Saxwulf to Headda. It is most curious that Bede does not mention this Headda at all, nor does the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle*, nor yet is he named in the text of Florence of Worcester. We can hardly doubt his actuality, however. On the other hand, as we have seen, every charter in which his name occurs is spurious, and we have no means of knowing how long he held the see.

Let us return to the see afterwards called Hereford. The names of its early bishops are preserved, but not their dates. They are recorded in two excellent documents. The list is given in the Cotton MS., Vespasian B, 6, already cited, where it is headed, "Nomina episcoporum uest. r. Putta. Tyrhtel. Torththere. Walkston. Cuðberht." In the appendix to Florence of Worcester the same list is headed

"HECANA

Nomina praesulum Magesetensium sive Herefordensium."

An older witness to these early names occurs in the inscription written in verse and inscribed on a cross by the Bishop Cuthberht just named, and recorded by William of

¹ *Dict. of Chr. Biog.*, iv. 591.

² Sweet, *Oldest English Texts*, 168.

Malmesbury. In this the name Putta is omitted, and the other names are written Torhtil, Torthere, Wallstod, and Cudberht.

Bede speaks of the people of this diocese as "*eis populis, qui ultra amnem Sabrinam ad occidentem habitant,*" and names Walchstod as their bishop when he was writing in 731.¹ Of the earlier names he only mentions Putta.

Turning to Worcester, it was founded, as we have seen, about the year 680, Tatfrid being its first bishop. Bede does not give us the date, but Florence of Worcester puts it in 680. Tatfrid died before his consecration, and was succeeded by Bosel.² Florence says he resigned his position on account of illness in 691, and was succeeded by Oftfor, who, he adds, died in 692 and was succeeded by St. Ecgwine. Florence puts his death on December 30, 717. He was succeeded by Wilfrid, who was bishop there in 731.³

In addition to these more or less continuous bishoprics, we have several instances of a temporary and sporadic creation of sees which only lasted during the life of one or two tenants. Thus (I.) the very transient see of Abercorn, founded by King Ecgfrid, which only lasted from 681 to 686, when it was destroyed and its only bishop, Trumwini, was driven out by the Picts. (II.) Ripon, to which Eadhaed, who had been appointed Bishop of Lindsey by Ecgfrid in 678, was nominated to a new see at Ripon by the Northumbrian king, and was the only Bishop of Ripon until the see was revived in the last century. (III.) Leicester, to which Cuthwine was appointed in 679. For a short time it was governed by Wilfrid. It again merged in Mercia, and the see was not revived again till after Bede's time. (IV.) The Oxfordshire Dorchester was also the initial see of Wessex, and the seat of Bishops Birinus, Agilberht, and probably also of Wini, and was removed to Winchester by Wini's successor Haedde. (V.) The South Angles also had an intermittent see at Leicester. The first mention of it involves a difficulty. In the appendix to Florence of Worcester, under the heading "*Hwiccia. De pontificali sede quomodo primitus statuta sit Wigorniae,*" we read how in the year 701 according to the Incarnation, and 679 "according to Dionysius, whose error the Church had hitherto followed," Saxwulf, with the consent of King Osric of the Hwiccians and his chief, *i.e.* Æthelred, the King of the Mercians, divided his see into five others. The author then proceeds to make two astonishing

¹ *Op. cit.* v. 23.

² *Bede*, iv. 23.

³ *Ib.* v. 23.

statements. We are told that over the second of these sees—that is, the see of Lichfield (*ad episcopatum Licetfeldensem*)—the religious and modest man Cuthwine presided. The third see, we further read, was that of Southern Anglia (*Mediterraneam Angliam*). In this was placed Saxwulf according to his wish, and he fixed his pontifical seat at Leogera, *i.e.* Leicester. This is sheer nonsense and at once contradicted by the appended lists of bishops. One of these tells us that Saxwulf was the seventh bishop of Lichfield, while another makes Cuthwine the first bishop of Leicester. This shows that the epitomes of the history of the various sees given as an appendix to Florence are not here to be trusted, which is further shown by the story there reported about the creation of the five sees, which is not mentioned at all in the text of Florence. This is not all. The lists of bishops which forms part of the appendix to Florence have been preserved in a much older document already named, dating from the ninth century, namely, in the MS. *Vespasian B*, 6. Now in this document the name of Cuthwine does not occur at all, nor does the name occur anywhere else than in the appendix already mentioned. It seems to be conclusive, in fact, that the name Cuthwine as a bishop of Leicester must be treated as a falsification. The only bishop at this time at Leicester was Wilfrid, who was placed there for a short time by King Æthelred on the death of Saxwulf, Haedda, as we have seen, succeeding to the Lichfield see. This must have been for a short time only, as the ninth-century document already quoted from, MS. *Vespasian B*, 6, says: “*postea Wilfridus ejectus, et Haedda praefatus regebat ambos parochias, deinde Alduini qui et Uor nominabatur.*” Aldwini held both places in 731 when Bede was writing.

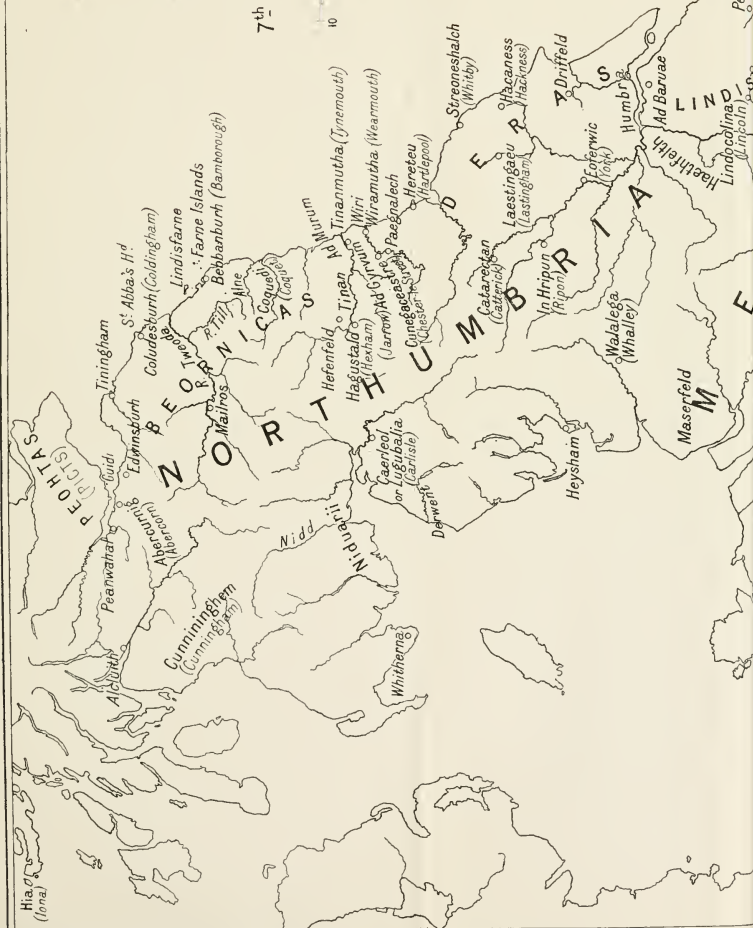
Another see with a precarious life at this time was that of Selsey. Bede tells us that with the death of St. Aldhelm (*i.e.* after 709) the diocese of Winchester, then under Daniel, was by synodical decree divided, and the province of the South Saxons was constituted a see under Eadberht, on whose death, about the date of which we are not told anything, he was succeeded by Eolla, and on his death after some years the see was vacant until now (*usque hodie cessat*).¹ It was again joined to Winchester for a while: “*Provincia Australium Saxonum iam aliquot annis absque episcopo manens, ministerium sibi episcopale ab Occidentalium Saxonum antistite quaerit.*”²

¹ *Bede*, v. 19.

² *Ib.* v. 23.

ENGLAND

in the
7th and early 8th centuries.



THE GOLDEN DAYS

OF THE

EARLY ENGLISH CHURCH

CHAPTER I

ST. OSWALD AND ST. AIDAN IN NORTHUMBRIA AND ST. BIRIN IN WESSEX

IN a previous volume I have endeavoured to give a fairly complete account of the famous missionary venture of Pope Gregory the Great under the leadership of St. Augustine and his companions, and have tried to treat it, not merely as a local incident, but as part of the history of the Latin Church. I followed the fortunes of the mission until they became much qualified and seriously paralysed, and until the line of bishops initiated by St. Augustine was exhausted. The story is not a cheerful one, but rather that of a gallant effort which failed, and was perhaps doomed to fail. The seed was planted, the soil was in a measure tilled, but the harvest that was gathered was a scanty one, and it needed a fresh plough and a fresh type of

husbandmen with a wider experience of the world and larger ideas to secure a worthy crop.

The next venture that was made in this behalf was not initiated by missionaries from Rome. It was part of an extraordinary movement, which must always fill the student with wonder. It was inspired by the fervour and the burning zeal of the Irish Celts, and displayed itself in two different ways. In one by the determination of large numbers of those of good birth and of worldly position among them to cast everything away which men had hitherto deemed worth fighting for, and to retire from the crowded world and its pleasures into the anchorite's cell, each individual searching out a more and more rigid seclusion, with more and more desolate surroundings, and a more and more painful trial for the passions, emotions, and pleasures of life. They thus sought mental and bodily suicide in pursuit of a moral idea, based on self-martyrdom. The cherished fruit of this was the filling of the minds of the votaries with visions, dreams and phantasms which they interpreted as a foretaste of an everlasting life beyond the grave, in which this world and its ways should have as little part as possible.

Another section of these devotees, or rather another side of the life of some of them, betrayed an extraordinary passion for covering the world with their propaganda. We find them continually wandering with books and bells and preaching on the gloomy and monotonous text of the great Jewish preacher, namely, the vanity of all worldly

things; building churches, founding schools, working, praying and fasting, and by their extraordinary earnestness and reality compelling the homage of all ranks and of all types of men. It was by these Irish missionaries that the work of evangelising England was restarted, and it began not in the south but in the north, which for many a day became the real source of the revived Christianity of the Anglian race.

As we saw, the Roman missionaries did not entirely neglect this northern region. They sent one of their number, Paulinus, who had a short and qualified success there so long as he was supported by the strong arm of King Ædwin. With his death it really came to an end, and the unseemly and unheroic flight of the missionary from a threatened martyrdom proved how very nominal his huge "conversions" had really been. In a previous volume I described the gathering of a few fragments of the fugitive Bishop's handiwork by the Deacon James. These must have been very small, and were, doubtless, limited to the villages of Richmondshire and North Yorkshire. Neither the man Paulinus nor his foreign ways and speech had been very inviting or inspiring to the rude Northumbrian folk, and any welcome or success he got was in fact due to the personal effort of the king and of his Kentish wife.

Let us now try and shortly trace the political results of Ædwin's death. We may gather from Bede's language that the real head and front of the

forces which overwhelmed him was Caedwalla the King of the Britons. He and his people had no doubt accumulated a long score of antipathies against the Northumbrians, who had appropriated so much of their country, ravaged their border, and made such a terrible slaughter of their religious teachers. Bede treats Caedwalla (the Cadwallon of the Welsh writers) as the principal leader in the coalition. Penda, the other leader, the ruler of the newly founded state of Mercia, was clearly an auxiliary and ally of the Celtic chief.¹ It may be that both of them were incited to their work by the expropriated royal family of Bernicia which Ædwin had driven out. Some of the Welsh pedigrees, says Mr. J. E. Lloyd, made Cadwallon marry Penda's sister.²

The result of the battle of Haethfeld was terrible. As Bede tersely puts it, "a great slaughter was made of the church and people of the Northumbrians, the more so because one of the commanders by whom it was done was a pagan and the other a barbarian more cruel than a pagan; for Penda, with all the nation of the Mercians, was an idolater, but Caedwalla, although he bore the name and professed himself a Christian, was so barbarous in his disposition and behaviour, that he spared neither the female sex, nor the innocent age of children, but with savage cruelty put the whole of them to tormenting deaths, ravaging all their country for a long time, and resolving to cut off all

¹ *Bede*, ii. 20.

² *History of Wales*, i. 185, note 100.

the race of the English within the borders of Britain. Nor did he pay any respect to the Christian religion which had newly taken root among them." It is plain that Bede is here describing a Celtic ruler, possessed by all the bitter hatred towards the English race which then dominated his countrymen. He adds how down to his own day (he was writing about 731-4 A.D.) it was the custom of the Britons not to pay any respect to the faith and religion of the English, nor to communicate with them any more than with pagans.¹

On the death of Ædwin, his kingdom was again divided into its two original sections. The southern part, Deira (roughly Yorkshire), the real heritage of his house, fell to his cousin Osric (the son of his uncle Ælfric), who had been converted and had received the sacraments from Paulinus. The northern part, Bernicia, was recovered by the family of Æthelfrid. Bede tells us that during the reign of Ædwin, Eanfrid and Oswald, the two sons of Æthelfrid (he might have added a third son, Oswy), with many of the youth of the nobility had lived in banishment among the Scots and Picts, and had been there catechised (*i.e.* taught the faith) according to the doctrine of the Scots, and baptized. Their exile had lasted for seventeen years. They almost certainly spent a part of this time, as Zimmer has argued, in Ireland, and travelling to and fro there, they doubtless

¹ *Bede*, ii. 20. See also Howorth, *Augustine the Missionary*, 209 and 210.

became well acquainted with the ways of the Irish as well as with their language.

The elder of the two brothers, Eanfrid, married the daughter of the king of the Picts, and their son, Talorcan (or Tolarcain), presently succeeded to the Pictish throne in right of his mother, as was the custom of the race. It is important to remember, however, that Talorcan was the son of Eanfrid and the nephew of Oswald and Oswy, kings of Northumbria; Tighernach, who puts his death in 657, distinctly calls him *Tolarcain Mac Ainfrith Ri Cruithne*.¹ On the death of Ædwin, and probably after an interval, Eanfrid returned to Northumbria and took possession of Bernicia, while Osric, as I have said, held Deira. Both sovereigns apostatised, or, as Bede puts it, "betrayed and renounced the sacrament of the heavenly kingdom in which they had been initiated, and again delivered themselves up to be defiled and destroyed by the abomination of their former idols." This action was in all probability political, and meant to conciliate their people, the vast majority of whom were, no doubt, still pagans. It shows how very lightly the new faith sat upon the shoulders of the converts, when two of their kings could thus revert to their pagan faith. Similar defections took place elsewhere presently, as we shall see. Neither of the two chiefs survived long. They were both killed by the British king Caedwalla. Bede grimly and characteristically says that their fate came to them through the rightful

¹ Skene's *Celtic Scotland*, i. 257.

vengeance of heaven on their base act. *Impia manu, sed justa ultione peremit.* Osric was the first to meet his fate. Caedwalla, after his victory, had, it would seem, taken possession of York, and was there besieged by Osric. Bede does not expressly name York, but he says that he was attacked in a municipal town (*in oppido municipio*; in the Anglo-Saxon version, *in Municep þære byrig*). York is called a municipium by Aurelius Victor, and Bede can only mean York here. Caedwalla made a vigorous sally, and surprised and destroyed Osric and his army. According to the twelfth-century Life of St. Oswin, the son of Osric, the former was carried off to Wessex for safety by his father's people, where he remained ten years.¹

The fate of Osric had an immediate effect upon the king of Bernicia. Bede says that Eanfrid appeared before Caedwalla with twelve chosen soldiers to sue for peace, whereupon the latter treacherously slew him. "To this day," he adds, "that year is looked upon as unhappy and hateful to all good men; as well on the account of the apostasy of the English kings, who had renounced the sacraments of their faith, as of the outrageous tyranny of the British king." "The names of the two Anglian chiefs," he says, "were erased from the list of kings of Northumbria, and the year in which they ruled was added to the reign of the following king," that is of Oswald, the brother of Eanfrid. Caedwalla now became technically

¹ *Vit. Oswini*, ed. Surtees, ch. 1.

“Guledig,” or, as the Anglians called it, “Bretwalda,” *i.e.* overlord of Britain, which position was generally passed on to the ruler who had defeated a previous holder of the post. In addition to being king of the Britons, he thus also became the actual sovereign of the Northumbrian realm, which then meant much the largest part of Britain. This, however, as we shall see, was only a transient and temporary glory, but it was notable nevertheless since it meant the recovery by a British chief of the dominant position in this island, which had been lost to that race for a long time.

Bishop Browne says: “I am not sure that English people realise the fact, that for parts of the years 633, 634, and 635, two hundred years after the coming of the English as conquerers, and many years after the complete establishment of all the seven kingdoms of the English, the Britons reconquered the largest kingdom of all, Northumbria, and that kingdom was actually ruled over by a Christian king, representing the Christianity of the British church. The ancient race and church which the pagan English had hemmed in among the mountain fastnesses of Wales and Cumbria, had now broken its bonds. Its warriors covered once more the plains of Yorkshire, the hill country of Durham and Northumberland, and the fertile country of the Lothians, where for so long the Britons had flourished before the Angles came and carved out the kingdoms of Bernicia and Deira. A British king was once more seated in the great

natural fortresses of Dunedin and Dungleirn, Edinburgh and Bamborough.”¹

Meanwhile, Oswald, the brother of Eanfrid, who was born about 608 A.D., appeared on the scene. Symeon of Durham speaks in hyperbolic terms of him. He begins with what he calls “his hereditary nobility.” “Both his father and grandfather were kings,” he says, “while two of his brothers occupied his throne, one before and the other after him. . . . His pedigree was no less illustrious on his mother’s side, for she was the sister of King Ædwin.” He adds that, “as these ancestors of his were unacquainted with the faith of Christ, he sprang up like a rose among thorns.”² Reginald of Durham, in his *Life of St. Oswald*, describes his appearance. He says he had a noble presence, blue eyes, yellow hair, a long face and thin beard. He had rather thin lips, and a kindly smile. His hands and arms were both long and strong.³

For many years, as we have seen, Oswald had been a fugitive among the Scots, by whom he had been converted, but, unlike his elder brother who had apostatised, Oswald remained staunch to his new faith. On the death of Eanfrid, or perhaps before, he had returned from exile and found shelter and protection in the wild country of the Northumberland moors, where he collected a body of supporters, who, as Bede says, were “small in

¹ Browne, *Conversion of the Heptarchy*, 15 and 16.

² “*Ille ut rosa de spinis effloruit*,” *Hist. Eccl. Dun.*, 1.

³ *Op. cit.* in Arnold’s edition of *Symeon of Durham*, ii. 378. Reginald claims to derive it from an old MS. written in Anglian and found at York.

number but strong in their attachment to the Christian faith," and he determined to strike a blow for the recovery of his father's heritage. Adamnan relates a story in reference to the struggle which followed, which his predecessor had heard from the Abbot of Iona, who claimed that he had again heard it from the king himself. The night before the battle, while Oswald was sleeping on the ground, in his tent, St. Columba appeared to him, radiant with angelic beauty, and his stately height seemed to reach the sky. The Saint stood in the midst of the camp, announced himself, and stretched his resplendent robe over the little army of exiles, as if to protect them. He promised to secure them victory over their enemies. The king told the useful story to his people, who thereupon promised that they would accept baptism after their victory. At that time there were only twelve of his companions who were Christians, having been baptized with him among the Scots.¹ The rest of his army was composed of pagan Anglians. At dawn they duly marched out to meet their enemy. Bede tells us, that, before the actual struggle, Oswald had a large wooden cross made in haste and fixed it in a hole. The king himself held it up with both hands, while it was made fast by the soldiers who piled earth about it. He and his men then knelt there, and prayed to God for victory. Bede adds that people were afterwards accustomed to cut off small chips from the wood of this cross.

¹ *Ad. Vit. St. Columbae*, i. 1.

These were put into water, which was then used to sprinkle sick men or cattle, and was also given them to drink. In after times the brethren at Hexham used to go to the cross (which still existed when Bede wrote) on the night before Oswald's death-day, to sing psalms, and in the morning to offer "the sacrifice of the holy oblation," and presently a church was built at the place, now known as St. Oswald's. Bede adds that this cross was the first sign of the Christian faith set up in Bernicia, and that neither church nor Christian altar had been previously built there.¹

Canon Raine tells the story of what followed in some graphic phrases which I shall abstract. In them he illustrates Bede's narrative by his very special local knowledge. "Oswald," he says, "resolved to attack Caedwalla."² It was necessary

¹ *Bede*, iii. 2.

² It has been almost universally thought that in the struggle that followed Oswald was opposed by Caedwalla, *i.e.* Cadwallon, son of Cadvan. Mr. Skene, in his *Celtic Scotland*, has suggested for several reasons that he was another person, first because Bede does not give Cadwallon's name in his account of the great fight, but merely calls him "infandus Brettonum dux." Adamnan, again, who was ten years old when the battle was fought, calls him Catlon and not Cadwallon (*Vit. Col.* i. ch. 1). This name is also given him by Tighernach, while the latter calls the opponent of Ædwin, Chon (see *Chronicles of the Picts and Scots*, p. 70). Again, in the genealogies in Nennius, the opponent of Ædwin is called Catguollaun, king of Gwenedotia, while Oswald's opponent is called Catgublaun (*op. cit.*, ed. Mommsen, 204 and 207). In the *Ann. Camb.* the former is called Catgus and the latter Catgublaun. These reasons, he urges, create doubt as to the usual theory (*Celtic Scotland*, i. 245 and 246), and he suggests, on the authority of the Welsh records, that the life of Cadwallon was prolonged to 659, and that it was Cadvan, the father of Cadwallon, who was the Catgublaun who fell "in the fight at Catscaul" (The four ancient books of Wales, i. 71). Bright, 152, note 3, and Plummer, *Bede*, ii. 122, give conclusive reasons for rejecting this view and maintaining the traditional one.

for the assailant to be extremely cautious, and on that account he drew up his forces in a position of great natural strength, some seven or eight miles to the north of Hexham, "then called Halgutstad, and also Hextildesham, or Hextoldesham, from the two brooks the Halgut or Hallgarth and the Hestild."¹ "Here," says Raine, "there is a plateau of very considerable altitude, which now (without any artificial appliances) presents the appearance and the advantages of a vast fortified camp. The ground on the summit is tolerably even, and must in Oswald's time have been covered entirely with heather. The place which, in honour of the vanquisher in the fight, has for many centuries been called St. Oswald's, bore previous to the struggle the name of Heavenfield, an allusion, no doubt, to its lofty and exposed position. Oswald could not have drawn up his forces on a better plan. Along the whole of the western side the platform was unassailable, for it is protected by steep rocky banks which descend abruptly to the river of North Tyne, and overlook Walwick Grange and Chesters, with its Roman Bridge and Camp. Towards the south also, and on a portion of the eastern side, there are hills and fells of no mean altitude. Across the upper end of this great natural fortification ran the Roman wall, but between it and the northern side of the plateau there is a space left on which a small army might be drawn up in a most advantageous position for repelling any attack. A scanty force

¹ Raine, *Annals of Hexham*, Surtees Soc., i. p. ix.

in the rear would be able to guard the western, southern and eastern sides so well that no assailing body would carry those heights, and if it could, the Roman wall, a stout barrier in many places at least six feet in height, would still protect the greater part of Oswald's troops. Oswald, therefore, never fearing any onset from the rear, took up a position at the north-west corner of the plateau, behind the wall. In that angle, protected in one way by the wall, and in another by natural rocks, there is a clear space of nearly a hundred yards, and there, probably on the mound that the Chapel now occupies, Oswald set up the famous cross to be the standard of his men. With rocks in front and the wall behind, it would be difficult to capture it, and its defenders, who cannot have been very numerous, would be conscious of their security. We may be sure also that Caedwalla would make his great effort at this point, for the loss of the standard was considered equivalent to the ruin of an army.

“To the north-west there is a long stretch of pasture land, and the eye passes on to Swinburn and Humshaugh, and far up the river in the direction of the Cumbrian hills. Over this ground it is probable that Caedwalla brought his men, and the opposing armies could see each other for miles before they closed. The troops of Caedwalla would break like a wave against the rockbound corner in which the cross was standing, to be cast back again with little or no difficulty by its defenders. The assailants, foiled as they must

have been at this point, would naturally move towards the east, where the ground is less steep and more open, and in that direction the battle seems to have been decided. 'There is a fame,' as Leland tells us,¹ 'that Oswald won the batelle at Halydene, a two-miles est from St. Oswalde's asche, and men thereabout e yet finde smaule wod crossis in the grounde.' There is a place called Hallington in the direction mentioned, and it was here probably that the battle was fully won. Caedwalla would be thus cut off from his retreat, and the defeated chieftain crossed somehow or other the Roman wall, and hastened towards the south across the wild moor with the pursuers after him. Over the heather he would go; down to the green banks below it; through the Tyne; and at a distance of eight or nine miles from the battlefield he was caught and killed at a little beck then called Denisesburn, a tributary of the Rowley-water."²

¹ *It.* vii. 61, ed. 1769.

² Raine, *Annals of Hexham*, Surtees Soc., xi.-xiii., and Appendix i.-iv.

In a metrical Life of St. Oswald quoted by Gibson in his edition of Camden, p. 1082, we read:

"Tunc primum, scivit causam cur nomen haberet
 Heavenfeld, hoc est caelestis campus, et illi
 Nomen ab antiquo, dedit appellatio gentis.
 Praeteritae, tanquam belli praesaga futuri;
 Nominis et causam, mox assignavit ibidem
 Coelitus expugnans coelestis turba scelestam
 Neve senectentis ignavia posset honorem
 Tam celebris delere loci, tantique triumphi
 Ecclesiae fratres Haugustaldensis adesse
 Devoti, Christumque solent celebrare quotannis
 Quoque loci persistat honos, in honore beati
 Oswaldi regis ibi construxere capellam" (*Ib.*, App., p. ii.).

Thus ended the short and transient revival of the British rule over North Britain. Bates remarks on the fact that in the one battle in which the wall plays a part, its site seems occupied as a position against a southern attack. Nennius in his notice of this fight calls it Catscaul, while the *Cambrian Annals*, which date it wrongly in 631, call it Cantcaul, both probably corruptions of Cath ys gwaul, "the fight within the wall." Dr. Bright argues that the battle was fought in 634, as the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle* says, and not in 635 as is generally thought.¹ It is curious that we do not hear of Penda having taken part in this struggle, which Adamnan says was an easy victory for the conqueror, *felix et facilis . . . victoria*.

Although Oswald's victory was a brilliant one, it was not absolutely crushing for the Britons. It is true they ceased for ever to have any dominion in eastern England, which from the Forth to the Thames now definitely became English territory, but they still held the country west of the English Apennines, while the maritime district, from the Clyde to the Isle of Anglesea, still apparently obeyed the king of Gwynedd, or North Wales. Caedwalla left a son named Caedwalader. Mr. J. E. Lloyd says of him that he was of tender years at his father's death, and seems to have had to wait a considerable period for his crown, and Caedwalla was really succeeded as king of Gwynedd by Cadafael, the son of Cynfedw, who was not of

¹ *Op. cit.* 151, note 4. See also Plummer's *Bede*, ii. 121.

the stock of Maelgwyn, but is reckoned by the Triads among the three peasant kings of Britain.¹

When Oswald had mounted the throne he sent to the elders of the Scots (*ad majores natu Scottorum*), among whom he and his companions had been baptized when in banishment, asking that they would send a bishop to teach his Anglian people, so that they might be instructed and receive the sacraments.² They readily did this. Bede tells us that they in the first instance sent an austere person, quite unsuited from his rigid and unsympathetic ways to be an evangelist among the rough soldiers of Northumbria. He had indeed a very slight success and returned home. In reporting his failure to the Synod at Iona, he attributed it to the stubborn and barbarous spirit of the English. At the discussion which followed this statement, one of the monks, named Aidan, bluntly said that the failure was due to their brother's want of pliability and adaptability in dealing with unlearned simple men. "You did not," he said, "after the Apostolic precept, first offer them the milk of gentle doctrine until by degrees through

¹ *Op. cit.* i. 190.

² *Bede*, iii. 3. The elders of the Scots here mentioned were the elder monks at Iona. I call it Iona because the name has been so written for a long time, but it originated, as was shown by Dr. Reeves, in a misreading of the real name, *Ioua insula* as it is given by Adamnan. Ioua is an adjectival form of the actual name, which was written I, Ii, Ia, Eo, and sometimes occurs with a prefixed h as is often the case in Irish. Thus Bede calls it Hii, of which Hiensis is the adjectival form as used by him. Here, as on many occasions, I am indebted to a note of my friend Mr. Plummer for the facts I quote (vide *Bede*, vol. ii. 127).

the nourishment of God's Word, they were strong enough to receive and to practise his more exalted and perfect counsel." These wise words convinced the Synod that Aidan himself was in fact the right man for the post, and was possessed of that discretion which is the mother of the other virtues, and they consequently consecrated him as bishop.¹

The name generally given to the unsuccessful evangelist is Cormac. It is not mentioned by Bede, and is first reported by Hector Boece, 1469–1536 (on what authority we do not know). It, however, appears in late calendars, and his obit is variously given as the 12th and 20th March.² Bede tells us that at this time Segeni (rightly Seghine) was abbot of Iona. He presided over the monastery there from 623 to 652, and is mentioned both by Cumian and Adamnan. He was not only the master of all the brotherhood, but, as Bede seems to think most strange, he was, although only in priest's orders and an abbot, also master of the bishops who lived in his own monastery and its daughter houses. *Habere autem solet ipsa insula rectorem semper abbatem presbyterum, cujus juri et omnis provincia, et ipsi etiam episcopi, ordine inusitato, debeant esse subjecti, juxta exemplum primi doctoris illius, qui non episcopus, sed presbyter extitit et monachus.*³ This was the normal Celtic plan.

Bede's narrative is ambiguous at this point, and it is difficult to separate what he says of Seghine

¹ *Bede*, iii. 3 and 5.

² *Dict. of Chr. Biog.*, i. 689.

³ *Bede*, iii. 4.

from what he says of Aidan. It is safer, perhaps, to attribute his compliments to the latter. He speaks of his devotion, abstinence, and continence. "His teaching," he adds, "and his conduct and mode of living, were consistent with each other. He was entirely devoted to his monastic rôle, and cared for nothing else in life. Whatever presents were given him by kings and other great men, he distributed among the poor, or in the ransom of slaves, many of whom he made his disciples and afterwards ordained. He used to travel about the country in the performance of his evangelising work on foot, never on horseback, unless pressed by some urgent cause. His companions were constantly occupied in reading the Scripture, learning the psalms and meditation, and when it happened, which was seldom, that he dined with the king, he took with him one or two clerks, had a scanty meal, and got away as quickly as he could, either to read or pray. Following his example, many serious people adopted the custom, which was a stringent one, of fasting rigidly on the fourth and sixth days of the week till the ninth hour all the year round, except during the fifty days after Easter. He never spared the wealthy in his rebukes, and he never gave money to the powerful men of the world, but only meat, and all the money he received he spent in alms."¹

Aidan, like most notable members of other Irish communities, was of good birth, a fact which

¹ *Bede*, iii. 3 and 5.

had doubtless a good deal to do with the power which they acquired in days when caste-notions were very rife, and when it was not according to the theories of the times for kings and nobles to associate on equal terms with cowed peasants. He was the son of Lugair, an Irish Saint commemorated on 11th May, and of the same lineage as St. Brigid.¹ Another of his name was a monk at Iona in Columba's time. In the index to the *Ulster Annals* are the names of a large number of other worthies who were called Aidan, including two kings and several bishops and abbots.

Aidan was accompanied to Northumbria by several of the brethren from Iona, who doubtless increased in number with the work imposed on the community. He became renowned for his meekness, piety, moderation, and zeal in the cause of God, "though not" (says the very orthodox Roman Bede) "according to knowledge, for he was accustomed to keep Easter according to the custom prevailing among the Picts and the Northern Scots, believing that in doing so he was following the writings of the holy and praiseworthy Father Anatolius."²

When Aidan arrived in Northumbria, Oswald appointed him according to his own wish to the see of Lindisfarne, which was then founded for the

¹ Reeves, *Adamnan*, 374; Bright, 157, note 5.

² Anatolius, Bishop of Laodicæa, flourished about 270 A.D., and wrote a treatise on the *Paschal Canon*.

first time. Tighernach records this under the year 632, but, says Skene, he antedates Anglic events three years. His words are curious, *Inis Metgoit fundata est*,—Metgoit being the Irish form of the Celtic name for Lindisfarne (see *Celtic Scotland*, i. 251, note 37). “Lindisfarne,” says William of Malmesbury, “is a small island which is now called Hali eland (*i.e.* Holy Island) by the natives, and which the most holy Aidan, who was devoted to silence and sacred poverty, selected as the seat of his bishopric.” “The saints,” he elsewhere says, “prefer to hide themselves in marshes rather than to live in fine cities.” “It was not the mode of Celtic bishops,” adds Bright, “to regard practical and administrative convenience in the selection of their seats, thus St. David chose the remote and lonely Menevia, doubtless for the sake of ascetic seclusion.” Aidan carried with him the perpetual remembrance of his old home in what was emphatically termed by its people “the Island,” and he found an irresistible attraction in the resemblance between Hy or Iona and Lindisfarne, so called from the little river Lindis, which separated it from the mainland. It is about eight miles round, and was called Medcaut by the Britons. Bede tells us that as the tide ebbed and flowed it was twice daily enclosed by the waves of the sea like an island, and twice a day by the drying of the shore it was united to the adjoining land.¹ It thus resembled in a way Mont

¹ *Bede*, iii. 4.

St. Michel in Brittany, and St. Michael's Mount in Cornwall.¹ Scott neatly describes it in *Marmion*, ii. 9—

“For with the flow and ebb, its style
Varies from continent to isle.

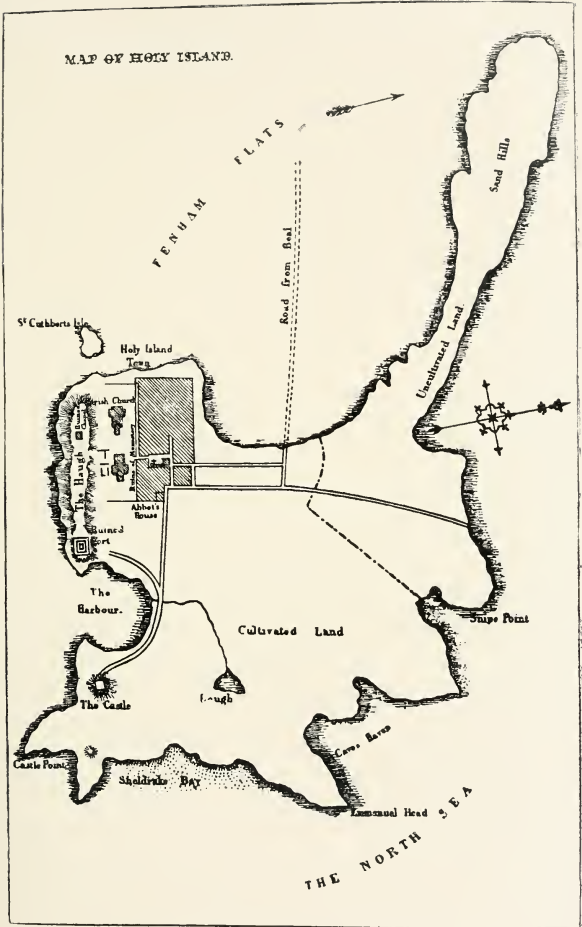
“Dry shod o'er sands twice every day,
The pilgrims to the shrine make way.
Twice every day the waves efface
Of staves and sandled feet the trace.”

The picturesque pen of Montalembert has also painted the site with his usual felicity. “Among the waves of the North Sea,” he says, “opposite the green hills of Northumberland and the sandy beach which extends between the border town of Berwick on the north, and the imposing ruins of

¹ The Rev. James Raine thus describes the island :—“It took its name from the Lindis, a brook not more than two feet in breadth, which emptied itself into the sea from the opposite shore” (it may be seen at low tide meandering through the sands). “Farne, the concluding syllable of the name, is, according to Grose, the Celtic *Fahren*, a place of retreat. The more modern name of Holy Island was given at the re-foundation of the church by the monks of Durham soon after the Conquest. . . . Holy Island is twice a day separated from the mainland by a depth of five, and in springtides of seven, feet of water, and twice a day it is accessible on dry ground. Its greatest distance from the coast scarcely exceeds two miles ; but the pathway is at all times a precarious one, and is considerably lengthened by pools and quicksands which have upon too many occasions proved fatal even to the experienced traveller.” (Mr. Raine gives a list of such accidents from 1584 to 1802.) “During low-water the intervening space presents a flat and dreary appearance, and with the exception of the occasional whistle of a curlew, or the silver wing of a sea-mew sparkling in the sun, there is nothing to amuse either the ear or the eye. But reach the island and recollect that here stood the first church between the Tees and the Firth of Forth—that of this church, the seat of sixteen bishops in succession, not a vestige remains, and that a second structure reared upon its foundations is almost level with the ground—and there is enough to engage both the eye and mind” (*St. Cuthbert and his Tomb* pp. 5 and 6).

the feudal fortress of Bamborough on the south, lies a low island, flat and sombre, girt with basaltic rocks, forming a kind of square block which terminates to the north-west in a long point of land stretching towards the mouth of the Tweed and Scotland. This island bears the impress of melancholy and barrenness. It can never have produced anything but the sorriest crops and some meagre pasturage. There is not a tree, not an undulation, not one noticeable feature save a small conical hill to the south-west, now crowned by a strong castle of picturesque form, but recent construction. In this poor island was erected the first Christian church of the whole district, now so populous, rich and industrious, which extends from Hull to Edinburgh." This is an exaggeration. If Yorkshire is excluded it is true, but in Yorkshire Paulinus certainly put up some buildings. "This was Lindisfarne (afterwards known as Holy Island), the Mother Church, the religious capital of the north of England and south of Scotland, the residence of the first sixteen bishops of Northumbria, the sanctuary and monastic citadel of the whole country round—the Iona of the Anglo-Saxons. The resemblance of Lindisfarne to Iona, of the colony to the metropolis, the daughter to the mother, is striking. These two isles, one so celebrated, so renowned, so influential over two great and hostile races, have the same sombre and melancholy aspect, full of a wild and savage sadness. Religion only could people,

MAP OF HOLY ISLAND.



MAP OF LINDISFARNE OR HOLY ISLAND.

fertilise and tranquillise these arid and desolate shores.”¹

From this new abode Aidan, looking southward, could descry far off the rock and stronghold of Bamborough, where Oswald, like his grandfather Ida, had established his capital. At Lindisfarne Aidan planted his monastery, which was, of course, on the Scotie model, in which the bishop, so far as the discipline of the place was concerned, was subject to the abbot. The inmates consisted mainly, if not altogether, of the companions he had brought with him from Iona. The priests, deacons, choristers and other officials of the cathedral were all monks.

Such was the place where Aidan planted his lonely settlement which was to become a lighthouse for that larger part of England, from the Forth to the English Channel, that was still steeped in its primitive heathenism, or had reverted to it after the failure of the Italian missionaries. Thence it was to be again illuminated with the best that Christianity then had to give. It also rapidly became what the Italian mission had never hitherto been, or had the promise of becoming, a focus and centre where some of the highest art and the best literary culture of the period were cherished and cultivated.

It will be convenient and profitable to put together in a few sentences a picture of the kind of community presided over by Aidan, for the

¹ *Montalembert*, Eng. ed. 1867, iv. 20 and 21.

details of which I am chiefly indebted to my friend, Canon Fowler, who has very admirably condensed the subject in the Introduction to his edition of *Adamnan*. We must remember that the mission of Aidan in Northumbria had nothing to do directly with the Italian Church or its special ways. Its mother was the community founded by St. Columba at Iona, and, so far as we know, it followed the pattern of that mother in every respect.

First, in regard to the buildings. These were all made of wood and not of stone. Dr. Fowler reminds us that not a trace of St. Columba's monastery remains at Iona, and he explains this by its having been made of fragile materials—"wood, wattles, and clay." The same was no doubt the case at Lindisfarne, and it was considerably later that stone was used for buildings there. "Again, the brethren at Iona belonged to a more primitive type of Cœnobites than the monks who came with Augustine. They partook more of the original model, and were rather an aggregation of anchorites living together by rule than monks as we understand the word now. Their monastery consisted of scattered huts or cells, grouped round a church or oratory of humble character, surrounded probably by an earthen rampart with a ditch. On the top of the rampart was a palisade, and a quick hedge for seclusive enclosure, and for defence against robbers and wild beasts."¹

¹ Fowler, *op. cit.* xxxvii. and xxxviii.

“The little churches in this type of monastery were invariably oblong, without chancels, made of wood and wattles, bound with clay and thatched, as were the cells and the larger apartments. They were always small, twenty to forty feet in length, rarely sixty (the oratories about ten and a half feet). They had neither aisles nor apses or anything approaching the Basilican type, nor was there anything about them of the Roman form. They often, however, had a side-house, or sacristy (*erdamh*, *exedra* or *exedriola*). We also find mention in the case of the typical monasteries in Ireland, of a kitchen and of the ‘great house’ or refectory. There was also a guest-house for strangers, together with store-houses, drying kilns and mills, as well as workshops, and probably also rooms for study and writing.”¹

Each monastery seems to have had a Rule of its own, all of them largely, however, of a common type. The abbot was the head of the establishment, and of all its daughter houses. Sometimes the abbot was also a bishop, but more generally a simple priest, and he generally had one or more bishops under him to perform episcopal functions, who were treated with honour and deference as such. Abbesses took the place of abbots in female establishments, and sometimes in mixed communities also. There were episcopal chaplains to perform the necessary services of the office. Like all monks, those at Lindisfarne practised poverty,

¹ Fowler, *op. cit.* xxxix. and xli.

celibacy, and obedience. While the monks were strict celibates, the secular clergy, including bishops when they were seculars, were allowed to marry, and this was doubtless the case in the Northumbrian mission which had its see at Lindisfarne.

The chief distinction between the economy of the Irish monasteries and that at Lindisfarne, was that its abbot, at first, also continued to perform the function of the bishop, and was a kind of episcopal abbot. This union of the two offices was apparently only temporary, and in later days the functions and duties were separated there. Bede in his *Life of Cuthberht* says, that after him (*i.e.* Aidan), all the bishops of that place until his own day exercised the episcopal functions in such a way that the abbot, who was chosen by the bishop with the consent of the brethren, governed the monastery with all the priests, deacons, choristers, readers, and the other ecclesiastical orders, including the bishop himself. Every one observed in all things the monastic rule.¹ Every successor of Aidan down to the year 1072 was apparently a monk.

Hospitality was exercised towards strangers; in favour of whom the regular fasts were relaxed, but the usual fare of the "family" was very plain and simple.

The ordinary dress was a coarse woollen wrapper or cowl, probably with a cord or strap round the loins, over a tunic or under garment. The winter cowl made of thicker stuff was called

¹ *Vit. St. Cuthberht*, chap. xvi.

an amphibolus. The old Irish *casail*, often rendered *casula*, and "chasuble," was the ordinary outer garment worn by ecclesiastics; it had been similarly so worn by Druids and women. The monk slept in his clothes¹ on a straw mat, or something of the kind, in his cell, and with probably a rug or skin over him. While travelling, sandals were worn, otherwise the monks apparently went barefoot. The tonsure was made by shaving off all the hair in front of a line drawn from ear to ear, with long hair flowing down behind; this was known as the frontal tonsure to distinguish it from the coronal or Roman, and the total or Greek tonsure.

The solemn days were Sundays and the birth-days (*natales*) of Saints, when in addition to the "Hours" sung on all days, there was also a celebration of the Eucharist, rest from labour, and an allowance of better food. All the usual Hours were apparently observed, except that there is no mention of Compline, which, says Dr. Fowler, was evolved from the informal prayers at bedtime, in the sixth century, and seems not to have been adopted by the Celtic Church until a later period, if at all. Wine, water, and bread

¹ Apart from other evidence this is shown by an incident in a story reported by Bede. Bothelm, a monk of Hexham, having fallen on the ice, broke his arm. Having secured some of the moss from the wooden cross erected by Oswald at Heavenfield in order to ease his pain with it, he, while at table, having nowhere to lay it up, put it in his bosom, and, forgetting when he went to bed to put it by, he left it there. Awaking in the night and feeling something cold by his side, and putting his hand to feel, he found his broken arm quite sound again (*op. cit.* iii. 2).

were provided for the Eucharist, and at its celebration the priest stood before the altar (*ante altare*). Concelebration might be practised by two priests, but a bishop celebrated alone. The brethren communicated on special occasions (even in the dead of night). The abbot summoned the brethren at times by the sound of an iron handbell. This was formed of plates of iron, bent over and riveted together in a quadrilateral form with rounded angles. That of St. Patrick (still extant), after being riveted, was dipped in melted bronze, which not only coated it but ran into the joints. The handle was an iron loop let into holes on the top of the bell, and further secured outside by bronze attachments. These monks' handbells were made, in fact, in the same way as bells for camels, cattle, and sheep still are. Those which belonged to famous and saintly men were preserved with due reverence, as were their croziers, missals, and gospel books.

The chief festival was Easter, which lasted from Easter Day to Whitsuntide, and was marked by greater indulgence. Sunday was observed as a strict day of rest from work and travelling, Wednesdays and Fridays, except during the *Paschales dies*, *i.e.* Eastertide, were fast days. Wednesday was, in fact, called the first fast, and was so kept in memory of Christ's betrayal on that day. It will be remembered that Tertullian refers to the Wednesday fast. The fast on Fridays, says Plummer, was kept till the ninth hour, which had ancient

sanction, but it ultimately proved too rigorous a limit, and *noon* was moved backward till it meant mid-day, and was then called Nones.¹

Lent was kept as a preparation for Easter, while some kept the forty days before Christmas in the same way. The austerities of the Irish monks were proverbial, and Symeon of Durham² specially tells us how Abbot Ceolfred afterwards relaxed one of St. Aidan's rules, which prescribed milk and water as the only allowable drinks, and permitted the brethren to drink beer and wine. Public confession was made in the churches of the community (*coram omnibus*), and the abbot enjoined penance and gave absolution. There was also a system of personal direction, and the director was called the soul-friend. The use of the cross for the averting of evil or endowing objects with virtue, was a constant practice, and in St. Columba's time objects which he had blessed were regarded and used as charms. The burial of the dead was a religious office, following upon the *exequiae*, which commonly lasted till the third day after death; hence, saint's days were often on the third day after the death of the saint; the *depositio*, or burial, being in such cases commemorated rather than the death-day (*i.e.* the *natalis* or birthday into a future life).

The employments of the communities, apart from the church services and private devotion, were reading, writing, and labour. Holy scripture

¹ *Bede*, ii. 139.

² *Ib.* ii. 102.

was the principal subject of study; the psalms were commonly learnt by heart; Latin was still a *living* language in the monasteries. Lives of the Saints were both written and read; writing formed a large part of the occupation of monks and scholars, some of whom probably worked at little else. Mention is made of wax tablets for writing, "styles," skins, and inkhorns. Among the "school-books" in use were educational poems, forming class books to be learnt by heart, which were commented on or explained by the teachers. . . . The principal manual labours of the monks (beside writing) were the various branches of agriculture, including cow-keeping and the preparation of food.¹

The monks were also employed in teaching. Bede tells us that when Aidan settled in Northumbria he founded a school of twelve boys of the Anglian nation to be specially taught the Christian polity; one of them, Eata, became Abbot of Lindisfarne in 664;² another was the famous Abbot and Bishop, St. Chad; a third was the latter's equally famous brother, Bishop Cedde; Diuna, the first bishop of Mercia, was a fourth.

Dr. Bright reminds us that when St. Anskar began his missionary work in Denmark, he also founded a school of twelve or more boys to be educated for God's service.³

Bright was exercised by the question as to how

¹ *Bede*, xl. xli.

² *Ib.* iii. 326.

³ *Vit. St. Anskar*, 8; Bright, iii. note 9.

Aidan was ordained a bishop. It seems to me quite plain that he was ordained before he started from Iona, just as Cormac had been before he started. The ordination was the work of the bishop or bishops residing in the monastery at Iona, where, as in other Irish monasteries, a bishop was a necessary official to perform episcopal functions, and he was no less a bishop because he was subordinate to the abbot in matters of discipline. The ordaining of Aidan before he started on his mission, was a most proper and prudent course to pursue, and, as we have seen, it has been a matter of controversy that Pope Gregory should have sent Augustine to England without first ordaining him. It is probable that only one bishop was thought necessary by the Irish church to convey the succession, and it is further clear, as Dr. Bright says, that Bede, a Latin monk, accustomed to a strict system of episcopal administration, never doubted that Aidan had validly and canonically received the rank or degree of a bishop. He speaks of him just as he speaks of other prelates indisputably consecrated. He tells us further that Aidan was revered by Archbishop Honorius and by Bishop Felix.¹ Bede, in fact, calls Aidan an *antistes*² and a *pontifex*.³ What is more important is that the Church of Rome still acknowledges him as a legitimate and canonised bishop, and his death-day, 31st August, is in the calendar.

¹ *Op. cit.* 156.

³ iii. 3, 6, 17.

² iii. 14, 15, 16, and 17.

Dr. Bright has discussed the date of Aidan's arrival and concludes that it was in 635, which is the date given by Symeon of Durham.¹ This was ten years after Paulinus went to Northumbria.

The great advantage with which Aidan and his companions started was the sympathy and help of King Oswald, which was not merely sentimental, but very practical. The new bishop was only imperfectly acquainted with the Anglian tongue, and when he preached the gospel, it was delightful, says Bede, to see the king himself interpreting the Word of God to his own commanders and ministers, for he had completely acquired the language of the Scots during his long banishment. From that time we read that many from the land of the Scots came daily into Britain, and with great devotion preached the word of faith to Oswald's people, and those who were priests administered the sacrament. Churches were built in several places; the people joyfully flocked together to hear the Word, and lands were given by the king's bounty with which to build monasteries; the Scotie masters taught the younger Anglians, and regular discipline was practised.² Aidan was consecrated bishop of Lindisfarne in 664 or 665. The calculations do not enable us to say, however, which of the two years it was; A.D. 664 was said by Bede to have been the thirtieth year after the beginning of episcopal government of Northumbria by the Scots of Iona, that is of Aidan's consecration. This would put

¹ *Hist. Eccl. Dun.*, i. 2.

² *Bede*, iii. 3.

the year of the latter event in 634, but it may have been in 635, which is the date given by Symeon of Durham, and accepted by Dr. Bright. It depends on whether he was consecrated before the 31st of August or not.¹

Bede generally uses very gentle words when he refers to Bishop Aidan, who, like his master, Seghine, was no doubt a saintly and lovable man, and, like him, practised humility and asceticism. He tells us that in each of the royal villas or palaces he had his own chapel and private chamber where he was often wont to go and stay, and thence to make preaching excursions in the country round.² This was probably the immature stage out of which the parochial system in Northumbria arose.

Bede naïvely attributes to the influence of Aidan not only Oswald's great religious faith, but the fact that the latter obtained through him, by the favour of the Almighty, a larger earthly kingdom than any of his ancestors. "He brought under his dominion," says our author, "all the nations and provinces of Britain, which were divided amongst four languages, viz. : the Britons, the Picts, Scots, and Anglians, and yet when raised so high, he continued to be humble, kind, and generous to the poor and strangers." As an example of his humility, Bede quotes a story that when he was once sitting at dinner on Easter Day with Aidan, a silver dish with dainties was placed before him, and the company were just ready to stretch out their hands to bless

¹ *Bede*, iii. 5 ; Bright, 157.

² *Bede*, iii. 17.

the bread (*et jamjamque essent manus ad panem benedicendum missuri*), when his servant came in and said that a crowd of needy persons from all parts were sitting outside in the street begging alms of the king. He at once sent the choice food to be divided among them, and ordered the silver dish to be cut in pieces, and these to be similarly distributed. Upon this the bishop, who sat by him, took his hand and said, "May this hand never grow cold." "This," says the much-believing historian, "really happened, for when he was presently killed in battle, his arm and hand were cut off, and remain entire and uncorrupted to this day, and are kept in a silver shrine and venerated by all in St. Peter's Church in the royal town of Bamborough."¹ It was from this circumstance that Nennius called Oswald Lamnguin, or Fairhand.

The only recorded ecclesiastical monument with which Oswald had to do was the Minster at York, where Bede reports that he completed the church begun by Ædwin.²

By Oswald's zeal, the provinces of Bernicia and Deira, which were, according to Bede, formerly at variance, were peacefully united and moulded into one people. This was helped, no doubt, by his descent from the royal stocks of both kingdoms. Having secured Northumbria from the Forth to the Humber, he also dominated Western Britain from the Ribble to the Clyde, Cumbria being with little doubt under his supremacy, while the king of

¹ *Bede*, iii. 6,

² *Ib.* ii. 14 and 20,

the Picts was his nephew. Oswald then proceeded to appropriate the district of Lindissi, or Lincolnshire, and probably also that of the southern Angles from the Mercians. In regard to the former, we have the evidence of Bede, who, in the story to be presently related about the monks of Bardney, tells us they declined to receive Oswald's remains on the ground that he had appropriated their country. This, no doubt, also formed a serious grievance against him later on, on the part of the Mercian king, Penda.¹ Penda, however, was not at this time in a position to attack the great Bretwalda.

Another proof of Oswald's wide-reaching influence is that he is at this time found intervening in the affairs of Wessex, and it was he who was doubtless responsible for the first introduction of Christianity into that kingdom, to which we must now turn. Bede is again our sole authority. He gives us no dates, however, and merely tells us that the conversion of Wessex occurred in the time of Pope Honorius. As Honorius died on 13th October 638, it must have been before that year. Bede also tells us that Birin, the first apostle of Wessex, was consecrated as bishop by Asterius. He wrongly calls him bishop of Genoa, for he was really archbishop of Milan. There is no mention of a bishop of Genoa at this time in Ughelli's list. Since the year 568, when Lombardy was overwhelmed by the Lombards, the archbishops of Milan had taken refuge in Liguria, the capital of which

¹ *Vide infra*, p. 49.

was Genoa, and acted as bishops there. Asterius died at Genoa, on 4th June 638,¹ so that Birin must have been consecrated before that date. The *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle*, an indifferent authority, puts the arrival of Birin in Wessex in 634. The original home of the missionary himself has been disputed. Brompton, a very late and poor authority, calls him a Roman presbyter, while Rudborne and the Winchester annalists, also poor authorities, call him a monk of St. Andrew's at Rome, which is most unlikely.

His name, Birinus, or Birin, is clearly not a Roman one, and has been identified with considerable probability with the Irish name Byrne, and it may be that he came from the land of those Irish Scots who had settled in the west of Scotland. There, as the late Bishop Forbes of Brechin has suggested, it is possible that we have traces of him in the local nomenclature, as in the name of the parish of Kilbirnie in Ayrshire. The Bishop adds, "No fair, however, is held there on his day." This may, however, have been discontinued at the Reformation. He further says that a Kilbirnie loch at the west end of the parish of Beith, and also the parish of Dumbarney, in the most beautiful part of Strathearn, probably take their names from the Saint.² According to Dr. Bright, the name of Birin is also preserved in a spur of the Chilterns in Ipsden parish, called Berin's Hill.³

¹ Bright, 168, note 9.

² *Dict. of Chr. Biog.*, i. 318.

³ Bright, 183, note 2.

A remarkable thing about him overlooked by the earlier historians, but noticed by Dr. Bright, and after him by Dr. Hunt, is the fact of his having been sent to do missionary work in Britain by the Pope, apparently without any introduction to, or consideration for, the mission already working in these islands, namely, St. Augustine's mission in Kent, which was presided over by a regular archbishop. Yet we never hear of any communication between Birin and Archbishop Honorius and his church. Can it be that the matter had been well considered, and that it had been thought more likely that the mission would be more successful if it were kept entirely distinct, so as not to arouse the susceptibility of the West Saxons, a rival tribe to the Jutes of Kent?

Bede says that Birin had paid a visit to Pope Honorius, who sent him to Britain after securing his promise that "he would sow the seed of the Holy Faith in the inner parts beyond the Angles where no doctor had been before." By this phrase I think he merely meant the pagans beyond the kingdom of Kent, *i.e.* those of Wessex. This implies that the Pope did not wish him to interfere with the work of Augustine's followers. Thereupon, by direction of the Pope, he was consecrated a bishop by Asterius, and duly made his way to Britain. Later writers who reported his miracles tell of one about his journey, which I will quote as a sample. It is not mentioned by Bede, nor by any early writer, but it is a fair illustration

of the kind of story that was afterwards current and believed about him. It was said that the Pope had given Birin one of his "corporals" of linen cloth on which he used to consecrate at Mass. Birin wrapped a portion of the consecrated elements in it, and thus carried them around his neck as his viaticum. When he celebrated Mass he placed it on the altar.

On reaching the shores of the British Channel, he secured a passage across the water in a boat, and before starting began to offer Mass. But the crew were so anxious to start that they hurried him off, and it was only when on board with a strong wind blowing that the Saint to his grief realised he had left the precious object behind. He in vain asked the sailors to put back, and on their refusal he said a prayer, stepped out on the water, gained the shore, recovered his treasure, and then returned to the ship, which, according to some, had remained meanwhile still. When he reached the deck, without a drop of sea water on him, the sailors knelt and kissed his feet, and would have worshipped him if he had not stopped them. Many of the crew became Christians, and were the first-fruits of his mission. Such is the story told by the famous teller of sagas, Jocelyn, in his *Life of the Saint*, preserved in the Bodleian,¹ and by Brompton and others, and reported also by Father Goldie.

It is improbable that Birin landed in Kent. It would have been awkward for him to pass

¹ Digby, 39. See Hardy, *Cat.*, i. 235.

through the Canterbury diocese since he had apparently no intention of becoming a suffragan of Archbishop Honorius. It is more likely, therefore, that he landed at Porchester, or further west in Dorset or Devonshire. Having reached the country of the Gewissi (as Bede here calls the West Saxons), he found that they were all pagans, but he seems to have been well received. In explaining this we must remember that at this time Oswald, king of Northumberland, who was doubtless the overlord of Wessex, was on a visit to Cynegils, the king of Wessex. A marriage had been arranged between him and a daughter of Cynegils, which would doubtless be treated as a great alliance by the latter, and it was apparently under the influence of Oswald, who was very zealous for the faith, that Cynegils was persuaded to listen to the missionary. It may even be that the conversion of his daughter was a condition of her alliance with the Christian king of Northumbria, and that her father, Cynegils, was himself a willing recruit to the faith of his powerful friend. We at all events read that Cynegils consented to become a Christian, and after he had been put through a course of instruction (*rex ipse cathecizatus*), he was baptized, as were a number of his people. His sponsor was his future son-in-law, Oswald, who, to use a technical phrase, "raised him from the font" (*de lavacro exeuntem suscepisse*).¹ This, as Father

¹ *Bede*, iii. 7.

Goldie says, was contrary to the modern discipline of the church, which treats the relationship between a godfather and his godson as creating a prohibitory barrier to such an alliance as Oswald made with Cynegils' daughter. The *Vit. Oswaldi*, chap. xi. (we do not know on what authority), calls the princess who now became queen of Northumbria, Cyneburga. According to Murray's *Guide-book to Berkshire*, p. 74, Churn Knob, a hill near Chilton in Berkshire, is traditionally said to have been the spot where Cynegils was baptized. Having described the baptism of the king, Bede goes on to use a phrase which has a curious sound. He says that "the two kings," *i.e.* Oswald and Cynegils, gave Birin the city of Dorcic (*i.e.* Dorchester in Oxfordshire) as an episcopal seat. This intervention of Oswald, like the similar one of Æthelberht in the foundation of the see of London, is only to be explained on the assumption already made, that he was in fact, at this time, the overlord of Wessex and its king.

Dorcic, or Dorchester (called Dorceceastre in the Anglo-Saxon translation of Bede), the first ecclesiastical capital of Wessex, lies a few miles south of Oxford, not far from the boundary of Wessex and Mercia in later days. It is planted on the north side of the chalk hills. William of Malmesbury says that it had once been a town, but had become a village in his time.¹ Dr. Bright speaks of it as "that same Dorchester so familiar to us at

¹ "*Dorcestram, tunc urbem, modo villam*" (*G.P.*, p. 158).

Oxford, where the venerable abbey church of Saints Peter and Paul now occupies the traditional spot that witnessed the Christianising of the dynasty which grew into the royal line of England." He speaks of it as retaining traces of the Roman Dorocina (called *Caer Dauri* by the Britons), and as guarded northwards by the embankment called the Dykes, and beyond these "by the twin clumps of the mighty hill fort of *Sinodum*, perhaps the scene of a dislodgment of the Britons by Aulus Plautius in A.D. 43."¹

According to the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle*, Cwichelm, the son of Cynegils, was baptized at Dorchester in the year 636, and died the same year. Henry of Huntingdon says he had been associated with his father in 614. This he no doubt infers from the mention of the two together in the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle*, as fighting against the Welsh. Neither of these statements is in Bede, and they are correspondingly doubtful. As we saw in a previous volume, Cwichelm had tried to have Ædwin of Northumbria assassinated.² There is a hill crowned with trees formerly known as Cwichelm's hlaew, and now named Cuckhamsley, on the summit of the Berkshire range. This, says Bright, we may see from Foxcombe hill, or from the Wantage road beyond the turn to Cumnor, and is near West Ilsley.³ This "law"

¹ *Op. cit.* 170.

² Howorth, *Augustine the Missionary*, 257.

³ *Op. cit.* 172.

was probably a royal burial mound, and if it was, it goes to show that Cwichelm died a heathen and not a baptized person.

The *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle* further says that Birin in 639 baptized Cuthred, son of Cwichelm, and stood sponsor for him, an unusual but not unprecedented thing.¹ Inasmuch as Bede, however, does not mention Cuthred's baptism, the fact remains most doubtful. Nor does Bede mention the date of Cynegils' death; nor have we any better clue for it than the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle*, which puts the succession of his son Coinwalch, or Kenwald, in 643.

From Bede's statement it would seem that Coinwalch had not himself accepted Christianity when his father was baptized; the words are: "*qui et fidem ac sacramenta regni caelestis suscipere renuit.*" Under any circumstances it is clear that he was at that time a pagan like his brother-in-law Penda. It would further seem that his people also lapsed. We are not told by Bede what happened to Birin, whether he fled or not, nor is he, in fact, mentioned again.

The safest thing to say is that he left this world about the time that he quitted the page of history. MS. F of the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle*, which is a twelfth-century compilation, says he died in 650. This is clearly an inference from the other copies of the same document where the

¹ See the case of Caedwalla in *Bede*, v. 7; also Gregory of Tours, *H. Fr.*, v. 23 and vi. 27.

accession of his successor is put in that year. In 650, however, Wessex was part of the Mercian realm under the domination of the pagan Penda, who did not die till 656, and the appointment of a fresh bishop there in 650 is therefore inconceivable. All we know about the real date of his death is that his obit in the calendar is dated the 3rd December, but we have no definite year.

Another mistaken statement about Birin is made by Rudborne and the other late annalists of Winchester, who style him the founder of the church at Winchester. Nothing of this is said by Bede or any early writer, and it is no doubt one of the statements concocted by the authorities at Winchester to give that see a greater prestige when it had become famous as the burial-place of the English kings. The see of Birin was at Dorchester, where Bede says he was buried, and we have no real evidence that he ever built a minster at Winchester. It is possible indeed that Hampshire was not at that time a part of Wessex at all.

The result of Birin's work has been exaggerated by patriotic dwellers in Wessex. Bede says of him that "having built and dedicated churches, and drawn many to the Lord by his pious work he emigrated to the Lord." This seems to me to be a mere conventional sentence. There was no time for him to build churches in this fashion, and I know of no remains of any such, save the minster at Dorchester, or of their mention in later times. Bede

further tells us that he was buried in the latter place, and that after many years his remains were removed to Venta (*i.e.* Winchester) by Bishop Haedde, and were there buried in the church of St. Peter and St. Paul.¹ In later times considerable discussion arose as to this translation. A real saint's body was too valuable a possession as an attraction for the charity of pilgrims to allow of its being easily removed; and it seems that in later times the Dorchester authorities declared that the body alleged to have been translated by Haedde was really that of Bertinus or Byrnstan, who according to this account was the tenth of his successors.² This plea is not possible, however, for Byrnstan lived long after Bede, who expressly mentions the translation of Birin. "*Donaverunt autem ambo reges eidem episcopo civitatem, quae vocatur Dorcic, . . . sepultusque est in eadem civitate, et post annos multos, Haedde episcopatum agente, translatus inde in Uentam civitatem, atque in ecclesia beatorum apostolorum Petri et Pauli positus est.*"³ Father Goldie, in his tract on the Saints of Wessex, has an interesting passage about the remains of Birin which shows what difficulties and jealousies arose sometimes from the possession of these valuable assets, and which I shall quote. He says: "In 1140, the bishop of Lincoln placed canons regular in charge of the church of Dorchester, they petitioned the Holy See (in spite of the positive statement of the Venerable Bede, that St. Haedde translated St.

¹ *Bede*, iii. 7. ² See Stubbs, *Dict. C. B.*, i. 318. ³ *Bede*, iii. 7.

Birinus' relics to Winchester) to be allowed to raise his body from the humble grave in the church of Dorchester, where they declared it still lay, which they urged on the ground that his name was inscribed on the Register of Saints. The Pope (Honorius II.) commissioned the archbishop of Canterbury, Stephen Langton, to investigate the matter. It was brought up as evidence that, at the instance of a vision, one of the canons had, with the permission of the abbot, made a search for the body before the altar of the Holy Rood, and that there it had been found, vested in a red chasuble and two stoles, with a metal cross and a chalice. Wondrous miracles were also declared to have been wrought at the tomb. A search, as it was said, was made in the same spot, and the bones were found undisturbed, and though the body had fallen into dust, fragments of vestments and of the two stoles were discovered, and with them remains of a leaden cross, a small chalice, and a burse or bag of silk, embroidered on one side with gold. This the canons felt sure was that in which St. Birin used to carry about the corporal given him by the Pope. Honorius was very loth to reject the authority of so trustworthy an historian as the Venerable Bede, and gave orders that the archbishop should go to Winchester, and there make a personal inquiry as to whether any miracles like those said to have been wrought at Dorchester had been worked in the former cathedral. How matters ended we do not know, save that the

canons of Dorchester placed in a shrine what they believed to be the relics of St. Birin, and you can still see in the stately church the splendid remains, richly carved and decorated, of the stonework on which it rested. Winchester still claimed to possess them."¹ It will be noted upon what exceedingly fragile evidence a particular body of a cleric found at Dorchester (where there must have been many buried) was identified with that of St. Birin. The whole story is, of course, incredible. The statement of Bede is conclusive, but faith and the necessity of encouraging pilgrimages laughs at impossibilities.

A second translation of the remains took place under Bishop Æthelwold (963-984).² Henry of Huntingdon, in describing the wonders of Winchester, speaks of the miracles worked at the tomb of Birin.

Let us now return to King Coinwalch. Bede tells us that after a while he divorced his wife, the sister of Penda.³ This was an outrage which that potent person was hardly likely to tolerate, and he accordingly marched against his brother-in-law and drove him out. Coinwalch sought shelter with Anna, king of East Anglia, and Penda proceeded to annex Wessex, thus adding very largely to his dominions. Oswald does not seem to have assisted his pagan brother-in-law at this time.

¹ *Saints of Wessex and Wiltshire*, 7 and 8.

² See *Life of Birin*, Hardy's *Catalogue*, i. 236, and the *Annals of Winchester*.

³ *Bede*, iii. 7.

We have seen how after the battle of Heavenfield the Northumbrian king became the Bretwalda or dominant lord of Britain. Abbot Cummian, who wrote half a century before Bede, calls him in his life of St. Columba,¹ *Totius Britanniae imperator a deo ordinatus*. He dominated over both Christians and pagans, and probably ruled a larger realm in England than any king since Roman times, while in the far north, as we have seen, the Picts were governed by his nephew, over whom he probably exercised the rights of suzerainty. His glory, however, was short-lived. In order to understand how his downfall came about we must turn to the early history of central England, known as Mercia, of which Penda was now the ruler.

It seems probable that down to the time of Ædwin's conversion the Anglians of central England were subject to Northumbria. When Ædwin abandoned the creed of his ancestors and adopted Christianity it would appear that a large number of his people, especially in the thinly inhabited districts of "the Midlands," cast him aside, and putting a vigorous soldier and uncompromising pagan named Penda at their head, founded a new kingdom to which the name of Mercia was given. The genealogies attached to Nennius expressly say of Penda, *Non erat baptizatus et numquam Deo credidit*.² In the same genealogies there is a table of the Mercian rulers ending in the year 716, when it was possibly compiled. This gives them a

¹ Ch. 25.

² *Op. cit.*, ed. Mommsen, 208.

mythical origin, and traces them up to Woden, a fourth descendant of whom, we are told, named Guerdmund or Wermund, had a son Offa. Offa became the ancestor of the Mercian kings. He may be the same Offa who is made the ancestor of the kings of East Anglia, and from whom the latter were known as Uffings. Offa's son was Ongen whose son was Eamer, whose son was Pubba, who had twelve sons, of whom, says the compiler of the list just named, "two are better known to me (*notitiores*) than the rest," that is Penda (or Pantha) and Eva (or Eowa).¹

Penda, son of Pubba or Pybba (as this writer also calls him), reigned ten years. "He first," says the same writer, "separated the kingdom of the Mercians from the kingdom of the Northumbrians" (*Nordorum*).² This was probably, as I have said, in the reign of King Ædwin of Northumbria. Penda seems to have gathered round him a considerable number of Anglians who were dissatisfied with Ædwin's acceptance of Christianity, and in order better to protect himself he entered into an alliance with the Britons, who doubtless preferred a pagan to a descendant of the ruthless king who had murdered their monks at Bangor. When Caedwalla, the king of the Britons, attacked and killed Ædwin at Haethfeld (as we saw in a previous volume) Penda was his ally, and together they are said by Bede to have ravaged Northumbria.

As we have seen, some of the Welsh traditions

¹ Nennius, ed. Mommsen, 203, 204, and 208.

² *Ib.* 208.

actually make Penda a brother-in-law of the British king. Bede has a cryptic statement to the effect that Eadfrid, a son of Ædwin, went over to Penda, compelled by necessity (*necessitate cogente*), and was afterwards killed by him in Oswald's reign.¹ It has been suggested that his death was incited by Oswald and acquiesced in by Penda as a way of conciliating the Northumbrian chief. The next reference to Penda occurs in 635, when, according to Bede, he marched against the East Anglians, and defeated them, killing their kings, Sigeberht and Ecgric. These events I described in a former volume.

We do not know what was the cause of the quarrel with the East Anglians. It was possibly their conversion to Christianity, that thus qualified the previous close alliance between the two peoples, which had been based on their common paganism and common blood ties.

Penda's prestige and strength were no doubt much increased by his victories over the men of Wessex² and East Anglia, and he was now in a position to offer a much stronger front against Oswald, who had appropriated part of the Mercian realm, namely the country of the southern Angles, and against whom he seems to have had a special personal animosity.

Between the years 635 and 642, when Oswald came by his end, we have no tidings of that chief, and

¹ *Op. cit.* ii. 20.

² A victory of Penda over Cynegils and Cwichelm is mentioned in the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle* in 628, but not by Bede.

we may take it that his power as Bretwalda or Imperator was so great that no one dared to question it. It would seem that, as the battle which was now fought between Oswald and Penda probably took place on the borders of Mercia, Oswald was again the aggressor, and Penda was therefore probably acting on the defensive.

We know nothing of the events leading up to this battle, and the fight itself is referred to by Bede in a meagre sentence. He says, "Oswald was killed in a great battle by the pagan king of the Mercians, who had slain his predecessor Ædwin."¹ In the genealogies attached to Nennius Oswald is said to have been killed by some fraud (*per diabolicam artem*).²

The battle, he says, was fought at a place called in the English tongue Maserfelth. The site of this conflict has been much discussed, and a sharp division has occurred among the authorities, who are pretty equally divided in opinion. The question is whether it was fought at Oswestry (Oswald's Tree) in Shropshire, or at Winwick in Lancashire. It seems to me that the case for Oswestry is very weak. The main arguments are that the name of the town is probably a corruption of Oswald's tree, *i.e.* Oswald's cross, and that the church is

¹ It will be noted that Bede (not very ingenuously) here ignores the British king, Caedwalla.

A later epigram quoted by Henry of Huntingdon condenses one result of the fight, *Campus Masefeld sanctorum conduit ossibus* (the field of Maserfield was whitened with saints' bones).

² *M.H.B.*, 76.

dedicated to St. Oswald. Now it is quite plain that the county of Shropshire was only appropriated by the Mercians in the reign of Offa, *i.e.* in the second half of the eighth century, before which it was part of the dominion of the Welsh kings. The dedication of the church to St. Oswald and the introduction of the name Oswestry must therefore have been long after the battle of Maserfield. The Britons, who had good cause to hate Oswald for having defeated and killed their great hero Caedwalla, would not have tolerated the erection of such a monument to him on their territory, nor was it their practice to dedicate churches to Saxon saints. Nor, lastly, can we understand how a battle between Oswald and Penda could have been fought in Wales.¹

¹ I had written a defence of the Lancashire site when I found that my friend, the late Mr. Hardwick, had already partially forestalled my argument. He says, "Unquestionably no Christian church was dedicated to St. Oswald at Oswestry until after the final subjection of the district by the Anglian Christians. The probability is that the locality was so named, as in other instances, from the fact that it had become the location of a place of worship dedicated to him."

The name Oswestry is curious. If, as is generally agreed, it was not adopted until the Anglian conquest of Shropshire, its last syllable could hardly have been a corruption of the Welsh "tre"; besides which, in that case the particle "tre" would have preceded the personal name as in so many other place-names; "try" seems to be, in fact, a corruption of the English tree, which was applied allusively to the most famous of trees, Christ's cross. This is confirmed by the fact that the Welsh form of the name is "Cross Oswalt," Oswald's cross (*Red Book of Hergest*, ii. *The Bruts*, 316 and 324).

It may well be that when Offa conquered the country he put up a cross dedicated to so martial and anti-Welsh an English saint as Oswald, in his new possession.

Mr. Lloyd (i, 189, notes) seems to favour Oswestry on the ground

The case for Winwick, on the other hand, is much stronger and has been well set out in a book by Mr. Hardwick, already named.¹ In the first place its church is dedicated to St. Oswald, and it is mentioned in Domesday with that dedication. Secondly, in it there is a stone slab with a mediæval inscription on it showing a tradition of the country, connecting Oswald with Winwick, the first three lines of which are :—

“Hic locus, Oswalde, quonda placuit tibi valde ;
Nortanhumbroꝝ fueras, rex nuncque polorum
Regna tenes, prato passus Marcelde vocato.”

These three lines are alone given by Camden, who has put *loco* by mistake for *prato*. The next line reads :—

“Poscimus hinc a te nostri memor esto beate.”

Marcelde was doubtless a corruption which was needed to make the hexameter scan.

This inscription is a copy of another which had become decayed, and was renewed in 1530 by a

of certain etymologies—etymologies are dangerous unless used as subsidiary witnesses. We have no evidence that Penda fought with the Welsh and appropriated a part of their country ; on the contrary, he was in continuous alliance with them. Pontesbury, situated between Shrewsbury and Montgomery, the Pantesberie of Domesday 1, 255b 1., has generally been accepted as the same place as that named by the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle* in 661 (a much earlier authority than Domesday). It is there called Posentesbyrg, which is a name without any connection with Penda. In regard to Llanerch Panna, near Ellesmere, which is Mr. Lloyd's other support, he admits that in the Peniarth MS. we have the more regular form Banna, but neither Panna nor Banna is the equivalent of Panta, which was a Welsh form of Penda.

¹ See Hardwick, *Ancient Battlefields of Lancashire*. A. Heywood, Manchester, 1882.

person named Sclater.¹ Thirdly, half a mile to the north is a well known as St. Oswald's Well. Fourthly, Winwick is situated in the middle of a district of South Lancashire still known as Makerfield, and which in mediæval times was known as the Fee of Makerfield, which differs very slightly from the Maserfield of Bede. Fifthly, Nennius says that Penda slew Oswald at the battle of Cocboy. This name Mr. Hardwick associates with that of Cockedge, near Latchford, on the Mersey, close by Winwick. Sixthly, Geoffrey of Monmouth and the Welsh Bruts call the place of the battle Burne. Mr. Hardwick points out that there is a hall in the parish of Winwick still called Bryn Hall. Lastly, there are still in the churchyard at Winwick remains of a cross, ornamented with interlaced patterns on which is a panel in which a man who has lost his hands is represented standing on his head, while two other men are about to cut off his feet, which can hardly represent any one but St. Oswald. These reasons create a very strong case for the view that the battle was fought at or near Winwick in South Lancashire, which was near the borders of both Northumbria and Mercia. Mr. Oman, while leaning to Oswestry, has to create a

¹ Hardwick, *op. cit.* 66. This appears from three subsequent lines, reading :—

“Anno milleno quingentenoque triceno
Sclater post christū murū renovaverat istum
Henricus Johnson curatus erat simul hic tunc.”

This shows the legend was an old one in 1530. It is also reported in the early poem by Hollingworth, entitled “*Iter Mancuniensis*,” and also by Gough. See Baines’ *Lanc.*, ed. Harland, ii. 205.

very special theory for putting such a battle there, and says: "No ordinary struggle between Northumbria and Mercia could conceivably have been fought out at such a spot as Oswestry."¹

In this fateful battle Oswald was killed. He was then in his thirty-eighth year, and he died on the 5th of August 642. Tighernach, the Irish Annalist, puts the death in 639, misdating it by three years, as he similarly misdates the defeat of Ædwin and Oswald's victory over Caedwalla, which he puts respectively in 631 and 632.² Oswald was treated by the church as a saint and martyr. It would be difficult to find quite adequate reasons for the latter title beyond the fact that he fell in a fight with a pagan opponent whose lands he had attacked and partially appropriated. The fight was fought, as far as we know, on political and not on religious grounds. In regard to his sanctity, in the technical sense in which the word was used in the seventh century, more may be said. He, no doubt, re-introduced Christianity into Northumbria after it had been virtually extirpated there; he was the patron of Bishop Aidan, whom he helped in his work, and he was otherwise a religious person. We know him also as a ruthless one. He pursued the family of his predecessor, Ædwin, without much pity. Ædwin's widow had, as we saw in a previous volume, to send her children to France for fear of their being undone by him, and there are

¹ *History of England before the Norman Conquest*, 281.

² Bright, 175, note 4.

suspicions that they came to a cruel end there at his instigation. Of Eanfrid, a son of Ædwin's, who had sought refuge with Penda, Bede, as we have seen, says in a rather cryptic way that it was in Oswald's reign that Penda made away with him, and this has been read by Mr. J. Green and by Dr. Hunt as meaning that Oswald was the abettor of his death. It would seem therefore that whatever halo Oswald was entitled to, was streaked with some red stains. This did not prevent his becoming the centre of a widespread cult of a remarkable kind.

William of Malmesbury (*Gesta Regum*) says that he was the first Anglian whose remains worked miracles, while Thomas of Elmham calls him the first Anglian martyr (*Huic enim primitiæ martyrum conferuntur Anglorum*).¹ These statements overlook King Ædwin, whose claims to be a saint were clearly equal to Oswald's. What makes this oversight more strange is that Ædwin was strictly orthodox, and the pupil and protégé of the quite orthodox Bishop Paulinus, while Oswald was attached to the Scotie rite, and was possibly not in communion with Rome. If the differences separating the Roman and Celtic rites are not now deemed to have been fundamental, they were looked upon by both sides in those days as serious. Let us turn, however, to some of the miraculous and other stories connected with Oswald's name and remains.

Bede says that during his life he often con-

¹ *Op. cit.*, ed. C. Hardwick, 181 and 182.

tinued in prayer from matins to lauds—*a tempore matutinae laudis*,—and often till it was dawn—*ad diem usque*,—and that from his constant practice of praying or giving thanks to God he was wont from habit whenever he sat, to hold his hands turned up on his knees—*supinas super genua sua manus habere solitus sit*. It was a common saying, too, that he ended his life with words of prayer, for when beset with enemies and weapons, and seeing he must be killed, he prayed for the souls of his army. This was not, it is true, quite the Biblical ideal, which ought to have induced him to pray for the souls of his enemies also. It was from this incident, says Bede, that the phrase, “Lord have mercy on their souls, as Oswald said when he fell to the ground,” had its origin.¹ Oswald’s active merits were not deemed to have died with him, and he was supposed to have been as potent a friend to his friends after he left the world as he had been while still here. Thus, in his account of the plague at the Monastery of Selsey in 679, Bede tells us of a little boy who had been attacked by the disease and had been a long time in bed. On the second of three days of fasting and prayer—*triduanum jejunium*—which had been appointed, he was visited by an apparition of the Apostles Peter and Paul, whose faces he described as most pleasant and fair, Peter being shorn like a cleric and Paul having a long beard. They told him that through the intercession of the religious and dear servant of God, King Oswald, who had been

¹ *Bede*, iii. 12.

numbered among the elect on the very day he was killed by the heathen (which happened to be the day when the vision appeared), the plague had been stayed. They further, through him, bade the monks celebrate Masses in all the oratories of the monastery in memory of St. Oswald, who had interceded for them, although they were strangers to his nation, after which they were to communicate at a Mass in the church, while a particle of the oblation (*oblationis particulam*) should be taken to the sick boy. On this Dr. Bright remarks: "As the story speaks of the '*viaticum dominici corporis ac sanguinis*,' it would seem that the particle was first steeped in the chalice as in the Book of Deer, p. 90: *corpus cum sanguine . . . sit tibi.*"¹ Meanwhile they were to cease from fasting and partake of the heavenly sacrifice. The boy having called the priest and told him his experience, the latter looked up his calendar (*in annale suo*) and found that, as a fact, Oswald had been killed on that very day. He then summoned the brethren, ordered dinner to be provided, and Masses to be said, and that all should communicate in the way mentioned. The consequence was, that except the boy whose immediate journey to heaven had been foretold by the vision, no more of the monks died, and from that time, says Bede, the day of the nativity of that king and soldier of Christ began to be yearly honoured, with the celebration of Masses not only in that monastery but in many other places.²

¹ *Op. cit.* 347, note.

² *Op. cit.* iv. 14.

Oswald's relics had some romantic adventures. After his victory at Maserfield, Penda did not spare the remains of his enemy, who had, as we have seen, robbed him of a part of his realm. He ordered his head, hands, and arms to be cut off from the body, and to be placed on stakes, while the body itself was apparently buried. Although it is a long way from my subject, I cannot help recalling how the two white hands of Cicero, one of which had written so much fine Latin prose and so many bitter gibes against his foes, were similarly cut off and were nailed to the rostrum in the Forum where he had had so many triumphs, by the person who had probably suffered most from his vituperation, namely, Antony. To return, we are told that twelve months after the battle, Oswy, the brother and successor of Oswald, went to the spot and carried away the impaled fragments. Their subsequent history is interesting. The head was first buried by St. Aidan in the cemetery of the monastery at Lindisfarne. Thence it was removed to Bamborough, probably in the time of King Eadbert. According to Ailred of Rievaulx, shortly before the time of King Alcred, an old man praying before the shrine of St. Cuthberht at Lindisfarne imagined he received the saint's commission to bring back the head. He proceeded to the basilica on the Castle rock on St. Oswald's Day, and found the head of the royal martyr exposed above the altar for the veneration of the faithful. The concourse of pilgrims obliged him to delay

the execution of his plans till the following morning, and he lingered behind after Mass till every one had left the church except the porter of the monastery. Seeing that this official kept a very strict watch on his movements, he dropped his belt and gloves near the altar, and then went off to mount the horse which was waiting for him near the cemetery (possibly the cemetery among the sand-hills just east of the Castle). Dispatching his servant on an errand, he turned to the porter, whose curiosity had brought him out so far, saying, "Just take hold of my horse, and let me get my belt and gloves which I left in the church." Before the porter could say nay, he was off to the altar, and with St. Oswald's head under his arm, and with the gloves and belt displayed ostentatiously to allay suspicion, he rode safely off with his sacred booty to Lindisfarne. The porter, as he learned, carefully locked the church without looking inside again.¹

It would seem that at the time of the Danish invasion when St. Cuthberht's body was carried away for safety, the head of St. Oswald, by the saint's instruction, was put in his coffin. William of Malmesbury tells us that in 1104, when the coffin was opened in Durham Cathedral, it was found between the arms of the saint.² It was in a purple bag.³ When the coffin was again closed (as we are told by two excellent witnesses, the

¹ C. Bates, *op. cit.* 79 and 80.

² See also *Sym. Dun.*, Rolls series, i. 252, etc.

³ *Vit. Oswaldi*, 5.

anonymous abbot and Reginald), the only relic put with St. Cuthberht's remains was Oswald's head. The head afterwards followed the vicissitudes of St. Cuthberht's remains, and on the destruction of Lindisfarne by the Danes in 875, was carried from one place of shelter to another, until it rested at Chester-le-Street, Ripon, and finally at Durham.¹ In an Anglo-Saxon poem in praise of Durham, first published by Hickes, *Gram. Sax.* etc., 178, ed. 1705, we are told that that church contained among other things "the head of the chaste King Oswald, the lion of the English."²

St. Cuthberht's grave was opened again in 1827, and its contents were carefully examined, as we shall see later. On that occasion "a full grown skull, in a somewhat imperfect state, was found." "That this," says Mr. James Raine, "was the reputed skull of St. Oswald, which the anonymous monk and Reginald both prove to have been the only relic replaced in the coffin of St. Cuthberht in 1104, may fairly be presumed."³ This did not, however, prevent the monks at Epternach from claiming that they also had a head of St. Oswald in their monastery.

Mr. Raine says that about the year 1200 the monks of Durham added a reverse to their seal which, up to that time, had had only one face with a cross and an inscription round it, commemorating

¹ See Symeon of Durham, *Hist. Eccl. Dun.*, i. 6 and 13, iii. 1; Plummer, ii. 157.

² See also Raine, *St. Cuthberht*, 61, note.

³ *Op. cit.* 187.

St. Cuthberht. They somewhere procured an antique of an oval shape, an admirably cut head of Jupiter Tonans. This they let into a circular plate of brass, and converted it at once into the head of *Saint Oswald the King* by means of the following inscription :—

CAPUT SANCTI OSWALDI REGIS.¹

It is well known that in all old paintings and sculptures of St. Cuthberht, he is especially distinguished by holding St. Oswald's head in his hands.

So much for the head. In regard to the hands of the king, Reginald of Durham professes to account for the left one. In one of his stories he says that it was detached from the stake to which it had been fastened by a big bird which removed it to an old dead oak tree. It afterwards put forth green leaves again, as was to be seen in his day.² The right arm with the hand, which it was believed remained undecayed, was taken to Bam-borough. Under the year 774, Symeon of Durham speaking of that place says, Bebba is a very strongly fortified place (*munitissima*), not large, but of the size of two or three fields. It has one subterranean (*cavatum*) entrance, with steps rising up in a marvellous manner. On the summit is a beautiful church (*praepulchre factum*), in which there is a choice and precious reliquary (*scrinium*) containing the right arm of Saint Oswald, wrapped in a cloth and uncorrupted. On the west, and at

¹ Raine, *St. Cuthberht*, 212.

² *Vit. Oswaldi*, chap. xvii.

the summit of the town, is a wonderfully fashioned well, with very sweet and potable water.¹ From this, says Mr. C. Bates, we gather that the fortress of Bamborough was then, as now, divided into three wards; the entry was by a flight of steps near the west end of the rock, and from this you ascended through the two lower wards, occupied by the "city" to the deep well now enclosed in the Norman keep, and to the inner ward beyond, which contained a small basilica with a monastery attached.²

In his church history,³ Symeon tells us that a monk of Durham, named Swartebrand, who had died only a short time before, during the episcopate of Bishop William, and who was venerable from his grey hairs and his abundant simplicity and character, had seen this hand. Reginald of Durham says it was stolen in 1054 by a monk of Peterborough, and that it afterwards brought large profit to that monastery.⁴ It was then removed to Ely.

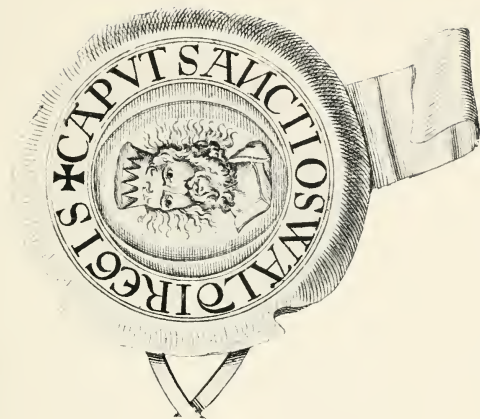
In regard to the head and right arm, the story is pretty continuous and reliable. About the trunk, which had been buried for a long time, the tale is more doubtful. We are told it was disinterred after Penda's death by Oswald's niece, Osthrytha, who had married Æthelred of Mercia. She is said to have carried the remains off to Bardney, in Lincolnshire (an abbey much cherished by her

¹ *Sym. Dun.*, Rolls series, ii. 45.

³ *Op. cit.* i. pp. 20 and 21.

² *Op. cit.* 79.

⁴ *Vit. Osw.*, ch. 48.



SEAL OF ST. CUTHBERT, WITH THE HEAD OF ST. OSWALD ON THE REVERSE.

[Vol. I., facing p. 6.]

and her husband), as she wished to deposit them there. When the waggon which carried them arrived in the evening, those inside refused to admit them, for although, as they said, they knew Oswald was a holy man, yet as he was a native of another province, and had acquired dominion over them (as a foreign king), they retained their ancient aversion to him even after his death. The relics were therefore left in the open air all that night, with only a large tent spread over the waggon where they were. Meanwhile a pillar of light reaching from the waggon up to heaven appeared, and was seen by all the people of Lindissi. Whereupon the brethren began to pray that the holy relics might rest among them. The bones were accordingly washed, put into a shrine and placed in the church, while the soldier-saint's banner, made of purple and gold, was hung over the spot. The water in which the bones were washed, was poured out in a corner of the sacristy, and from that time the earth which had received it was said to be effective in expelling devils from the bodies of persons possessed.¹ At a later date Offa, King of the Mercians, decorated St. Oswald's tomb with gold, silver, and precious stones.²

When Bardney Abbey was burnt by the Danes, Oswald's remains, which were preserved there, were removed, says Symeon of Durham, to Gloucester, which also professed to have the saint's left arm and hand. Reginald tells another

¹ *Bede*, iii. 11.

² *Carm. de Pontif.*, lines 388-395.

story about this last transfer. He says that in his time only three of Oswald's bones remained at Bardney, the rest having been lost in the Danish wars or plundered. Among the worst offenders in this behalf were Æthelfleda, the Lady of the Mercians, and her husband Æthelred, who founded a monastery in honour of St. Oswald at Gloucester in 909, and translated his bones thither.¹ They were again translated to a grander shrine by Thomas II. Archbishop of York (*temp.* Henry I.), Reginald of Durham being present.

Several places abroad have also claimed to possess relics of St. Oswald, as for instance the churches of St. Maria ad Martyres and St. Eucharius at Treves, and those at Tegernsee in Bavaria (where they are said to possess one of his teeth), at Prüfening, or Prüfling, at Ramshofen in the diocese of Passau, and at Wettingen in the Aargau. Sauris and Tai, two villages in the Venetian Alps, disputed the possession of a finger of the saint. The Abbey of Our Lady at Soissons had some of his relics before the Revolution, and the churches of Weingarten in Swabia, Herford in Westphalia, and Lisbon in Portugal have some still,² while Epternach is proud of having had a duplicate head of the saint.

In the face of all this evidence as to the supposed dispersal of Oswald's skeleton, it was still possible for the monastery of St. Winnoc's at Bergues, in French Flanders, to boast that

¹ Fl. of Worcester, *sub an.* 909; William of Malmesbury, *De Gest. Reg.*, ii. 5.

² Plummer, ii. 159.

Oswald's *whole body* was a precious possession of theirs when the monastery was burnt by the French Huguenots in 1558.¹ These they professed to have originally obtained from King Harold (Harefoot) or Edward the Confessor.²

Among those who extolled the virtues of St. Oswald's relics was the English missionary St. Willibrord, the evangelist of Friesland, of whom we shall hear again. He reported to St. Wilfred and his companion Acca what wonders had been performed by the relics of the king which they had taken with them. Acca also spoke of the power the saint had acquired in Ireland, and how he himself had attended a certain scholar of the Scotian race who was given to the cultivation of secular literature, but paid small heed to godly things, and who fearing for his fate in the next world had asked Acca to take him some relics of the Northumbrian king, if he had any with him, in case the Lord should through his merits have pity on him. Acca replied that he in fact had part of the stake on which the saint's head had been impaled after he was killed, and asked him if he believed with a sincere heart that the divine goodness might through the merits of so just a man grant him a long life here and eternal life hereafter. He replied that he did so believe. Whereupon, said Acca, "I blessed some water and put into it a chip of the stake in question, and then gave it him to drink. He presently found ease and lived for a long time after."³

¹ Plummer, ii. 159.

² *Ib.* 158.

³ *Bede*, iii. 13.

These stories are not told here because the writer in any way intends to vouch for them, or expects his readers to credit the saint with the duplication or triplication of his bones or his head, or to believe in the magical efficacy of the remains of saintly men in curing diseases or securing either a long life here or safety in another world, but as samples of the faith which flourished in the seventh century under the name and cloak of Christianity, and which does so still in many latitudes among perfectly honest, simple folk, and to enable those who read to measure the mental attitude and equipment of those who, calling themselves Christians, had in certain things merely changed one form of magic for another. Without a clear view of this aspect it is not possible to understand the thoughts and lives of men and women in that age, and many ages after. Well may Canon Raine say, "There are few things more discreditable in mediæval history than this hungry and jealous relic-mongering."¹ History is profitless if we limit ourselves to painting its choicer landscapes, and overlook noting a more lurid side of the picture where the ignorant, the simple, the emotional, and the frankly superstitious have been made the tools of the dispensers of slightly disguised materialism, magic, witchery, and fetishism.

Other relics of St. Oswald besides his bones were claimed to be in their possession by the monks of Durham, who owned an exceptional storehouse of such memorials. Its contents are quaintly epitomised

¹ *Historians of York*, i. xlviiii.

by an old writer, Hegge, in his legend of St. Cuthberht. He says that he had found "in an old manuscript of a monke of Durham, a catalogue of the relics of this Abbey, which were soe many, that it seamed a charnell house of saints' bones; for from hence at the resurrection St. Stephen will fetch his tooth, Zachary a leg, Simeon an arme, St. Christopher an elbow, St. Lawrence a finger, St. Ambrose some of his haire, St. Ebbe her foote, with many more: besides an whole wardrop of saint's apparell, both coats and hoods and stockens of the apostles, with divers fractions of the crosse and the sacred sepulchar." The oldest account of these Durham relics is preserved in the Cathedral at York; it was compiled, according to Mr. Raine, about the year 1180 or 1200. A very full list was drawn in 1383 by Richard de Segbrook, who was then shrine-keeper at Durham. In this list we find, among other things, (1) the ivory sceptre of King Oswald; (2) a red coffer containing his banner; (3) a portion of the baldric or coat of mail of the same king, and of the cross which he erected, both preserved in the same casket; (4) the ivory horn of St. Oswald.¹

In 1381-2, £28 os. 11d. was received from the alms box in the shrine of St. Cuthberht, of which £1 os. 9d. was given on the octave of St. Oswald. 3s. 4d. was paid in 1379-80 for painting the figure of the king in St. Cuthberht's shrine.² In a notice of the processions of the monks of Durham, on Holy Thursday, Whitsunday and Trinity Sunday, we are

¹ See Raine's *St. Cuthberht*, 121, etc. etc.

² *Ib.* 118-119.

told that a figure of the king in silver gilt was a notable feature.¹ In the niches of the reredos over the high altar, which was made of alabaster, there was a figure of St. Cuthberht and another of St. Oswald, richly gilt.² While the figure of the former, holding the head of the king "painted on his breast, and supported in his left hand," occurred in the stained glass in many of the windows.³ In one window, according to Sanderson, there was a picture of St. Oswald blowing his horn, and St. Cuthberht appearing to him.⁴ This anachronism was no doubt due to the reporter who mistook Cuthberht for Columba. The story of St. Oswald's beheading was represented in another window.⁵

It was not the mere personal relics of Oswald's body which were supposed to have a magical potency capable of curing diseases, of discomfiting the author of evil and his legions, and of gaining divine gifts bodily, mental and moral for those who cherished them. The cult in this, as in other cases, went a good deal further. Thus, the dust was collected from the place where the saint was supposed to have been killed, and being mixed with water, was given as a cure to men and animals. This reminds us how the Lamaist priests now dispense their bottles of essences of dead saints' bones as a cure-all for mental and moral and bodily ills, all over Mongolia. So popular did this cult of his relics become that a huge hole was dug out at the place where it

¹ *Op. cit.* 108.

² *Ib.* 169.

³ *Ib.* 169-170.

⁴ *Ib.* 170.

⁵ *Ib.* 171.

was supposed that Oswald's body had lain in order to supply materials for healing. Bede mentions a palsied girl and a sick horse as having been thus cured. The latter story is worth recording. He says "that a man was one day travelling on horse-back near the place where Oswald fell, when his horse suddenly began to tire and stopped; it hung down its head and foamed at the mouth, and as its pain increased, it fell to the ground. The rider dismounted, threw some straw under it and waited to see if it mended or died. At length, after much rolling in great anguish, it happened to roll over the spot where the king died, whereupon it gave up its mad struggles, and as is usual," says Bede, "with tired horses, turned gently from side to side, and then starting up, recovered perfectly, and began to graze on the green herbage."¹

Another story of the same type is also told by Bede. He says "that a man of British race happening to cross the site of the battlefield where Oswald died, saw a place where the grass seemed greener than elsewhere, and concluded that someone holier than any other in the army was buried there. He therefore took with him some of the dust from the spot, and tied it up in a cotton cloth. In the evening he arrived at a village and entered a house where the villagers were feasting around a great fire which was burning in the middle of the room. The sparks flew up and caught the wattled and thatched roof, which presently was aflame. The

¹ *Bede*, iii. 9.

guests ran out and the house was burnt. Only the part on which the cloth containing the dust was placed being untouched by the flame. It turned out that the dust had been taken from the very spot where some of Oswald's blood had been shed.¹ Again another story. When, on one occasion, Oswald's niece Queen Osthrytha was staying at Bardney Abbey, there went to visit her a certain abbess who (says Bede) is still living, called Ædilhild, the sister of Ædiluini, bishop of the district of Lindissi, and of Alduini, the abbot of the monastery of Bardney, not far from which was her nunnery. The abbess begged for some of the dust from the pavement where the water used in washing Oswald's bones had been thrown out, which she took away in a cloth and put in a small casket. She afterwards used it to cast out an unclean spirit from a man whom it had tormented, and who had become in consequence very violent.²

Apart from his remains, the memory of St. Oswald became very popular, and churches were dedicated to him in many places. Thus there is a Kirkoswald in Cumberland, and another in Ayrshire, and an Oswaldkirk near Helmsley in Yorkshire. There are churches dedicated to him at Gloucester, Carlisle, Oswestry, Hexham, and Bardney; at Paddlesworth in Kent, at St. Oswald's in Elvet, Durham, Nostell Priory near Wakefield, Methley, Filey and Flamborough, and Winwick in Lancashire,³ where the verses quoted on page 52 about the king are engraved on a stone;

¹ *Bede*, iii. 10.

² *Bede*, iii. 11.

³ Plummer, ii. 159.

at Chester, the south transept of St. Werburga's (the present Cathedral) was long used as St. Oswald's parish church; at Farnham in Northumberland; at *Scythlescester juxta murum* (perhaps Chesters, near Chollerton), where Cuthberht was associated in the dedication, and at Grasmere in Westmoreland. A well and church sacred to St. Oswald are also to be found at Candida Casa, or Whitherne, in Cumbria. His cult also spread abroad; thus at an abbey in Belgium he was once commemorated with St. Idaberga on the 12th of the Kal. of July. The two commemorations were afterwards separated, say the authors of the *Acta Sanctorum*, and that of the English saint was changed to the 20th of June. "In the monastery at Bamberg was a chapel dedicated to St. Oswald; at Prague was an altar, also at Altenmünster in Bavaria. At St. Emmerans, Ratisbon, in a church and chapel containing relics of him the dedication festival was held on the Sunday following his day, namely, 5th August. There are dedications to him of a chapel and altar at Oberlonon near Meran in Tyrol, at Weingarten in Swabia a church, and at Höllenthal in the Schwarzwald a chapel. His day was observed as a festival at Epternach. The *Annales Hamburgenses* date the solar eclipse of 1263 quite accurately by his day. In an Italian Life of the saint written in 1769, the author says he had evidence in his own day of the existing cult of the saint at Cologne, Constance, Mainz, Münster, Salzburg, Udine (his own city), Venice, Vicenza, and in Bohemia." This list is taken

mainly from *Acta Sanctorum*, Aug., ii. 91, from which, says Plummer, may also be added Bamberg and Spires. In Styria and Carniola, says the same author, I have found four places named after him—1, close to Grätz; 2, near Judenburg; 3, on the Drave, between Saldenhofen and Marburg; 4, about twenty miles north-east of Laybach. In reporting the marriage of Otho, afterwards Otho the First, with Edith, King Æthelstan's sister, the "Hrotsuithæ Gesta Oddonis" has the lines:—

". . . natam de stirpe beata
Oswaldi regis, laudem cujus canit orbis
Se quia subdiderat morti pro nomine Christi."

Pertz, iv. 320 and 321.

Plummer adds, "this is not genealogically correct, but it only makes the testimony the more striking."¹ The mention of St. Oswald in foreign missals and breviaries, printed in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, is also evidence of his continued popularity. So is the existence of an Icelandic Saga, known as Oswald's Saga, although it is only a fifteenth-century concoction."²

"The collect prescribed in the Sarum rite," says Dr. Bright, "for the 5th of August refers to the joyous and blessed gladness which had been associated with that day by Oswald's passion." It is notable also that one of the manuscripts of Bede, known as *Laud Misc.* 243, O₃, contains a new beginning, on an erasure probably, says Mr. Plummer, to make it more suitable for public reading in church or refec-

¹ *Op. cit.* 160.

² Plummer, *Bede*, ii. 161.

tory, for on the top margin the scribe has written, "*Incipit qualiter natalitius ejusdem Sancti Oswaldi dies divinitus celebrari mandatus est,*" and, an "Explicit" of similar character at the end of the chapter; while a cross on the left margin, answering to a similar cross and note at the beginning of iii. 14, indicates that this chap. iv. 14 was to be read after iii. 13, in order to complete the account of Oswald's miracles."¹ All this leads Stevenson to think, and not improbably, that the manuscript once belonged to a monastery dedicated to St. Oswald.²

I have devoted more space to the fate and doings of Oswald's remains after his death, and to their reputation as magical and mediæval remedies, than some may deem reasonable. Those who do so fail to understand the very large place these things filled in the minds and imagination of their ancestors in the seventh century.

¹ *Bede*, ed. Plummer, i. Introd. cxviii.

² MS. Bodl., 163, O₂, contains three lections on St. Oswald from *Bede*, ed. Plummer, i. Introd. cxix. Others are referred to by him, *ib.* i. 428-431.

CHAPTER II

KING OSWY AND THE NORTHUMBRIAN CHURCH—ST. FURSEY IN EAST ANGLIA

THE battle of Maserfield was a momentous event in our early history. It really meant a great victory for paganism, and the setting back for some years of the course of Christianity. The focus of this movement was the west-central part of England called Mercia; the realm especially controlled by Penda, who, as we have seen, assisted Caedwalla in his struggle against Ædwin.

By his victory Penda secured the position of Bretwalda or overchief of the English race. Once more a pagan dominated England, with a corresponding depression of the Christian faith; while the debateable lands of the southern Angles and the men of Lindissi were again united to Mercia.

By his wife Cyneburga, the daughter of Cynegils, king of Wessex, Oswald left a son, whose name the Northumbrians wrote Oidilwald. St. Adalbert, a pupil of St. Willibrord, who preached the faith in Kennemaren in North Holland, and was buried at Hollum (afterwards called Egmond), is also said to have been a son of

Oswald.¹ Oidilwald must have been quite a boy on his father's death, and therefore unfit to face a throne in such troublous times.

While Penda was overlord of England, he does not seem to have been powerful enough to occupy or annex Northumbria, and, in view of the need of a strong hand there, Oswald was succeeded, as was customary in such cases among the Teutonic tribes, by Oswy, one of his brothers.² He was then about thirty years old, and had for many years lived like his brothers among the Celtic peoples. The genealogies attached to Nennius call him Osguid. They tell us that his first wife was Riemmelth, the daughter of Royth, the son of Rum.³ Oswy seems to have contented himself with an immediate rule over Bernicia, and placed Oswin, the son of Osric (who had previously reigned there, and been killed by Caedwalla), as his deputy in Deira. Northumbria then extended from sea to sea, and as far north as the Forth, while the Picts beyond were ruled by Oswy's nephew and protégé, Talorcan, king of the

¹ *Ann. Xantenses*, ann. 690 and 694.

² He is called Osuio, or Osuiu, in the Anglo-Saxon translation of Bede and in the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle*. The name has generally been transcribed as Oswy. According to the twelfth-century life of St. Oswald, Oswy was a natural son of his father. Of the latter's seven sons, two only were born of Ælla's daughter, Acha, namely, Eanfrid and Oswald. "*Caeteri vero*," says that very late biography, "*de concubinis procedebant*" (*op. cit.* ch. i.).

³ Nennius, ed. Mommsen, p. 203. This Rum, or Rhun, is doubtless the Rum Map Urbgen who is said by Nennius to have baptized Ædwin. Urbgen was the famous heroic king of North Wales, otherwise known as Urien of Rheged. Riemmelth's name is read in the form Rhiein (*melth*) by Mr. Lloyd in his *History of Wales*, i. 165, note 12. In the *Liber Vitae* of Durham she is called Raegumald.

Picts. We are told that in the year of his accession Oswy visited the battlefield of Maserfield, and removed the remains of his brother, which were still impaled on stakes there.¹ A year later Bede tells us of the death of the former bishop of York, Paulinus, who ended his days, as we saw, at Rochester.²

Oswy was a great friend and patron of bishop Aidan of Lindisfarne, who reciprocated his goodwill towards him. The accounts of Aidan's miracles, as given by Bede, contain some graphic touches about the history of the times.

When King Ædwin was killed, his daughter Eanfleda was taken back to Kent by her mother. Oswy made advances for her hand, probably with the hope of strengthening his hold on Deira, and sent the priest Utta, who was highly respected, to escort her to Northumberland. He was afterwards abbot of Gateshead, which is a corruption of Goatshead, *Ad Caprae Caput*, as Bede calls it. Utta intended to go to Kent by land and to return with the princess by sea, a good proof of the dangers and difficulties of travelling about in England at that time. He asked for St. Aidan's prayers, and the saint, says Bede, gave him and his company his blessing, and also a phial of consecrated oil, for he foresaw that they would meet with a storm, and bade them when it came, pour the oil on the

¹ *Bede*, iii. 12. This is another reason for putting Maserfield in Lancashire, since Lancashire was in his dominions, while Shropshire was in far-off Wales.

² See *Augustine and his Mission*, 334.

waters to calm them. Bede tells us that matters came about as the saint had prophesied, and when the storm arrived they poured the oil on the waters, and it abated. "Thus it came to pass that the man of God, by the spirit of prophecy, foretold the storm that was to happen, and by virtue of the same spirit, though absent in body, appeased the gale after it had arisen. Which miracle," he adds, "was not told me by a person of little credit, but by Cynimund, a most faithful priest of 'our church,' who declared it was told him by Utta himself."¹

Bede gives us few details of what happened at this time. His purpose was to describe the fortunes of the Church, and it is very probable that the civil history of the period was distasteful to him, since it seems plain that the pagan Penda completely dominated the Anglian race, and that until the latter's death Oswy was a very subordinate person.

The Irish chronicler, Tighernach, tells us that in 642 (which ought to be 638), Oswy fought against the Britons. This may have been on account of his marriage with Eanfleda, who had probably displaced his British wife. We get a glimpse of the dominance of Penda in Northumbria from one of Bede's miraculous sagas. In this he does not definitely date the events, but reports them as occurring before the death of Bishop Aidan, which occurred in 651.² In telling the story he also relates the ravaging of Northumbria by Penda, and tells us that he actually laid siege to, and

¹ *Op. cit.* iii. 15.

² *Bede*, iii. 16.

approached Oswy's capital, the city of Bamborough, which, however, he found it quite impossible to capture, either by siege or by force, whereupon he determined to burn it (a proof that it was built of wood), and proceeded to break up the cottages in the neighbourhood, and to pull down the beams, planks, and wattles from the walls and the thatch from the roofs. These he piled about the city on the land side to a great height, and when he noticed that the wind was blowing opportunely, he set fire to it all with the intention of destroying the place.

At that time Aidan was living in the little lonely island of Farne, whither he was wont to retire for private prayer (that is to live the life of a hermit), and Bede tells us that in his own day they still showed his cell there. He adds that when Aidan saw the flames of the fire, and the smoke carried by the boisterous wind above the city walls, he lifted his hands towards heaven and said, "Behold, Lord, how great a mischief Penda doeth," whereupon the wind immediately veered round from the city. The flames turned upon those who had made the fire, and hurt some and frightened others until they desisted from their attack.¹ While we may be sceptical about the miracle, we can hardly doubt the fact of Bamborough having been assailed by Penda during Aidan's episcopate. Let us now turn to what was occurring elsewhere in Northumbria.

¹ *Op. cit.* iii. 16.

We have seen how Oswy conceded to Oswin, the son of Osric, the throne of Deira as his deputy. This arrangement continued for some years, during which Oswin ruled with assiduity and piety and with great prosperity. His reign came to an end in a way which seems paradoxical, and which Bede does not help us to explain. He merely says that a serious quarrel arose between the two kings, without giving any cause for it. It may be that the men of Deira had become restive at their dependence on the chief of Bernicia, and longed for their old independence, and recalled the days of their own hero Ælla. It may be that Penda had a hand in the business, and incited Oswin to rebel. All we know from Bede is that after seven years of an apparently quiet inoffensive rule over Deira, some cause of quarrel arose between him and Oswy. Both kings, we are told, raised armies, and it would seem that Oswin suffered some reverse, for Bede goes on to say that realising that his forces were inferior, his opponent having a larger number of auxiliaries (*plures habebat auxilios*), he determined to disband his men and to wait for a more auspicious occasion. His troops were then encamped at a place called Wilfaræsdun, or Wilfars Hill, which, Bede says, was about ten miles from Cataracta (in the Anglo-Saxon version, Catreht), *i.e.* Catterick, towards the west, *contra solstitialem occasum* (in the Anglo-Saxon version, *westrihte*, *i.e.* due west). The place has been identified with Ellerton in Swaledale, and by Mr. Plummer with

Gariston, but in neither case with any certainty. In dispersing his men, Oswin only retained one very trusty soldier (*cum uno tantum milite fidelissimo*, translated *þegne* in the Anglo-Saxon version) named Tondheri.¹ With him Oswin sought shelter in the house of a grandee named Hunwald. Bede calls him a count (*comes*, which is translated *gesyð* by Alfred), whom he deemed a trusty dependent (*sibi amicissimum autumabat*). He, however, betrayed him. Thereupon they were both put to death at the instigation of Oswy by his præfect Edelwin.² In the Anglo-Saxon translation the word præfect is translated *geréfa*, i.e. reeve. In Oswin's biography he is called Oswy's steward (*procurator*).

Bede says Oswin was killed at a place called *Ingetlingum*. This has been generally identified with Gilling in Richmondshire, but it seems clear, as the Rev. Daniel Haigh was the first to point out, that it was really at Collingham, near Wetherby, in Yorkshire, where there are the remains of a fine cross inscribed with his name,³ and where the church is dedicated to St. Oswald. There Oswy's widow, who was a kinswoman of Oswin, afterwards built a monastery, at which it was arranged that prayers should be said "for both kings, for him that was murdered, and for him who ordered him to be killed."⁴ It would have been more satisfactory if we had had a more neutral witness to tell the story, which, as

¹ He is called the son of Tylsius in the *Life of Oswin*.

² *Bede*, iii. 14.

³ *Vide infra*, pp. 91 and 92.

⁴ *Bede*, iii. 14.

reported by Bede, reads like a ruthless crime. Bede was prejudiced against Oswy. He describes Oswin as of a graceful aspect (*aspectu venustus*), tall (*statura sublimis*), lively in his speech (*affatu jucundus*), affable in his manners (*moribus civilis*), bountiful alike to the noble and the ignoble, and loved by all for his royal gifts of mind and body; and he says that people of the first rank came from many provinces to serve him (*ad ejus ministerium*). Among his virtues humility was the most conspicuous. He tells a characteristic story in illustration of this. Oswin once gave an excellent horse to Bishop Aidan. This would, he thought, be useful to him in crossing rivers or in long journeys, notwithstanding that he preferred so much to travel on foot. On one occasion, however, the saint met a poor man who asked alms. The bishop at once dismounted, and ordered the horse with all its trappings to be given to the beggar (a form of exaggerated generosity which borders on the ridiculous, but which is the kind of virtue biographers of saints like to dilate upon). When the circumstance was told to the king as they were walking in to dinner together, the latter said to the bishop, "Why did you give the beggar that royal horse which was so useful to you; had we not many horses less valuable and of other kinds which would have been good enough to give the poor man, while this one had been specially chosen by me as a gift for yourself?" The bishop again replied rather ineptly

(Dr. Bright says with Irish hastiness)—“Is the foal born of a mare more dear to you than the Son of God?” Thereupon they went in to dinner, and the bishop sat in his place, while the king warmed himself with his attendants at the fire. Suddenly, remembering what the bishop had said to him, he ungirt his sword, and gave it to a servant, and fell down at the bishop’s feet beseeching his forgiveness, promising that he would never again complain of his largesse to the poor. The bishop, starting up, and raising him, replied that if the king would only put away his sorrow and sit down to his meal it would remove all his soreness. Thereupon, Oswin began to be merry, while the bishop became melancholy and shed tears. His chaplain (called his priest, “presbyter,” by Bede) asked him why he wept. Replying in the language of his country (*lingua patria*, i.e. Irish), which the king and his attendants did not understand, he said, “I know that the king will not live long, for I never before saw a humble king; the nation is not worthy of such a ruler.” Not long after, the prophecy was fulfilled by Oswin’s sad death. As we look across thirteen centuries at this most instructive story, we feel instinctively that we have here no ideal king but one who should have worn a cowl, and our heart goes out to his great rival who did so much to consolidate a powerful kingdom in Northumbria, and played the part of a man in doing it. Oswin’s obit is mentioned in the Irish Annals, where the name

takes the form of Oissen, thus equating it with that of the famous Ossian.¹ The *Annals of Ulster* thus record it *Jugulatio Oisseni mic Oisirg*.² Mr. Plummer, who has discussed the date, puts it on 20th August 651.³ He was buried in the church at Tinemouth, which was dedicated to the Virgin, *In oratorio Virginis Mariae*. The monastery of which this was the church was situated at the mouth of the Tine in Lothian, and not on the Northumberland Tyne, and was afterwards known as Tineham. It was at first occupied by monks, but afterwards by nuns.⁴

It is curious that Oswin should have been thus buried in the very heart of Bernicia. It was probably in order that his own people in Deira should not try to make political capital out of his remains, as they might have done had he been buried among them.

There Oswin's body doubtless still rested when the monastery was destroyed by the Danes, as all the other foundations in this part of the country were destroyed and remained desolate for two hundred years, and somewhere on its site the royal ashes probably remain to this day.

The value of the relics of a royal saint was much too great, however, to permit such a treasure to pass into oblivion, and four centuries after Oswin's death, when the heathen Danes

¹ Plummer, ii. 163.

² *Op. cit.*, Rolls series, i. 110 and 111.

³ *Bede*, ii. 164.

⁴ See *Bede, Vit. S. Cuthberhti*, chs. iii. and xxxv., and Smith's note to *Bede*, p. 231, note 1.

had been converted, a convenient discovery was made after the pattern common in the history of hagiology. The remains of what was alleged to be the royal saint turned up not at Tinemouth in Lothian but at Tynemouth in Northumberland (a very lucky assonance), where a famous priory afterwards arose, largely endowed by the offerings of the faithful at this most doubtful of royal sanctuaries. My friend Mr. Craster has graphically described the site of this southern Tynemouth. "On the north side of the river Tyne," he says, "a rock of magnesian limestone, running out into the sea, forms the south-eastern extremity of Northumberland. Its cliffs break away precipitously on the east and north, but slope down more gradually towards the south; upon this side a small haven and a second promontory, smaller and lower than the first, separate the rock from the channel of the river. On the landward side sand and soil have accumulated, so that there is now a level approach from the west to what was, perhaps, once a partly isolated rock."¹

Here at the beginning of the eighth century there was a choice monastery (*eximium coenobium*), of which Bede's friend Herebald was abbot, which shared the fate of all the other religious houses of the district when the Danish flood overwhelmed the country. They were destroyed and were not rebuilt, and their possessions became part of the demesne of the Northumbrian earls. On the

¹ *A History of Northumberland*, vol. viii. 34.

lonely headland at Tynemouth only a little oratory-like church (*ecclesiola*), dedicated to the Virgin, existed in the year 1065 under the charge of a secular married priest called Edmund. To him, we are told, there appeared in a vision one claiming to be King Oswin, who declared he was buried under the floor of the church and bidding the priest give the body a statelier resting-place. Edmund duly reported the fact to Egelwin, bishop of Durham. Men were at once set to dig in the spot pointed out by the vision, but nothing was found till the priest Edmund himself took the spade (*ligonem*), and, digging deeper, a stone coffin was disclosed by the sharp ring of the tool. The lid was lifted and, as usual in such stories, we are told that an unusual fragrance arose from the sepulchre and filled the church. The bishop lifted the body from the coffin, it was then washed, wrapped in linen clothes, covered with rich apparel and transferred to a tomb in the church. The date of the finding was 11th March 1065.¹

Such was the astounding evidence upon which the credulous and very interested relic-seekers identified this body with that of the king whose place of burial had been in another church altogether, not in England but in Scotland, and had been lost sight of for centuries. It is qualified, as Mr. Craster says, by there having been another candidate for the distinction of discovering the saint, namely, Ælfrid Westou, the Durham monk who claimed so

¹ *Vit. Osw.*, ch. iv.; Craster, *op. cit.* 42.

many other saints among the treasures he had discovered, the remains of whom he carried off to Durham.¹ According to the same authority, it was Tostig's neglect to be present at this translation which was the cause of his misfortunes and of his being expelled the kingdom in 1065. The bones and hair of the saint, we are told, still remained intact, and some of the latter was given to Tostig's wife, the countess Judith. This hair was seen to glow like fire but was not consumed (a similar statement was made about St. Cuthberht). Tostig having been proscribed, his patrimony, which included the ruined church at Tynemouth, was confiscated and presently granted to Robert de Mowbray, who greatly venerated the saintly king.

In 1070, William the Conqueror on his return from a campaign halted at Newcastle, while his troops went out to forage all round, and in the course of their operations set fire to the little church at Tynemouth where the king's body was said to be, and it remained unroofed for fifteen years.² In 1074 the monastery at Jarrow was rebuilt and restored (it had been ruinous since the Danish invasion), and a small monastery was again founded there by Walcher, bishop of Durham. To this foundation Earl Waltheof transferred "the ruined church of St. Mary with the body of Oswin and all its other possessions at Tynemouth." The Jarrow monks, we are told, were wont at times to take the bones of King Oswin to their monastery,

¹ Sym. Dun., *Hist. Dunelm*, Lect. iii. 7.

² *Ib.* ch. 8.

keeping them at Jarrow as long as they pleased, and then returning them to their original resting-place.¹

In 1083 the same monks were removed to Durham. Thereupon the church at Tynemouth was reroofed and a monk was put in charge of it. About 1085, Robert de Mowbray, who had succeeded to the earldom of Northumberland, appropriated the church at Tynemouth, and with the consent of the king and Archbishop Lanfranc made it over to the abbey of St. Albans.²

The old and doubtless humble church at Tynemouth was now replaced by a much finer one, to which the saint's remains were, on the day of his martyrdom, 20th August 1110, removed with great ceremony, and in the presence of many great people, clerical and lay. In the *Life of Oswin* it is reported how those who had ridden to this function hobbled their horses and turned them out to graze on the sea cliffs. One unfortunate horse slipped over the edge, but owing to the saint's timely assistance it suffered no harm. The new church was rededicated to the Virgin and St. Oswin jointly. In the time of Prior Archarius in the twelfth century the shrine of the saint was greatly beautified. A famous goldsmith named Baldwin who had been brought from St. Albans was employed to do the work. He was also the artist of a splendid gold and silver cup described

¹ *Sym. Dun. Hist. Regum*, Rolls ed., par. 201.

² See Craster, *op. cit.* p. 46.

in the *Gesta Abb. Mon. Sancti Albani*, Rolls series, i. 190. Of it we read, "*quo non vidimus in regno Angliae nobiliorem.*"

In *The Life of St. Oswin* a story is told about his tomb which has a certain local colour: we read that while Baldwin was engaged on it he heard the shouts of a holiday crowd in the street, and, going out to see it, he incautiously left the door open. A man passing by, seeing the shop empty, laid hands on all the precious metal that he found there, and wrapping it in some dirty clothes, carried it away and wandered about the town, and, unluckily for him, entered the house of a woman who was the goldsmith's laundress. Her suspicions were aroused by his behaviour and by her recognising the wrapping of the bundle. The thief was duly tried and they hanged him on the scaffold (*suspenderunt in patibulo*).¹

In an early letter in a formulary once at St. Albans and now in the Cambridge University Library, MS. EE. 4-20, to which I shall revert later, there is a description of Tynemouth Priory and its contents. In it we have a panegyric on the saint's reliquary, which was decked with gold and gems, and on his virtues and the blessings his remains had brought the people. We there read, "he protects the murderers and thieves, and seditious persons who fly to him, and commutes their punishment to exile. He heals those whom no physician

¹ *Vit. Osw.*, ch. 45; Craster, *op. cit.* 66 and 67.

can cure." It then condenses his potent virtues in the jingling rhyme—

"Surdi, claudi, ceci, muti,
Sunt ad usum restituti,
Martyris clemencia."¹

In *The Life of St. Oswin* we read of the campaign of William Rufus (*rex ferocissimus* as it calls him) against the Scots in 1091. The Scots had occupied Northumberland as far as Durham, and presently retired to Newcastle on the approach of the king with his forces. These included fifty ships loaded with grain for the campaign which had been ordered to go to Scotland from among the Western Anglians (*apud occiduos Anglos*). These were delayed in the estuary of the Tyne. The sailors did not spare the treasures of St. Oswin's shrine there. It happened, says our naïve teller of stories, that one of them robbed a poor old woman (who hobbled along on crutches) of a piece of cloth which had taken her a long time to weave, and refused to return it. In great grief she repaired to the saint's shrine and implored his intervention. It then happened that while the weather was quite calm there suddenly arose a gale and the ships were thrown on the rocks at Coquet Island where the corpses of the drowned sailors were cast ashore with the loot they had captured, and among other things the poor woman's handiwork.² The ways of Providence as then taught were surely marvellous; that such a fearful and incredible penalty

¹ Craster, *op. cit.* 72 and 73.

² *Op. cit.* ch. 10.

should have been imposed, by the supreme wielder of justice, for such an offence as the taking of this old lady's web of linen, seems quite natural to the reporter of the tale.

We can well believe that the pilgrims to such a shrine must have been a crowded company, and that the extent and beauty of the priory church also grew apace as their offerings increased. Especially was this the case after the ravages of the Scots in the early fourteenth century. We read that in the time of Prior de la Mare, 1346-1349 (who did much for the building), the shrine of St. Oswin, which had been previously attached to the high altar, was removed to another part of the church,¹ so that the services at the altar should not be interfered with by the devotions of the pilgrims. Johanna, widow of the Black Prince, is named among other benefactors to the shrine.² It was destroyed in 1539 and the saint's relics were scattered.³

¹ Craster, 95 and 96. A conventual seal attached to a lost charter of Prior Germanus is described as having had on it the figure of St. Oswin, and on the counter seal the figure of the Virgin (Augmentation Office, *Cartae Antiquae*, B. 81 ; Craster, *op. cit.* 121). Among the Cottonian MSS. (*Galba* i. 5) is a psalter written in Irish characters and with Irish glosses, which was a good deal injured in the Cotton fire. It had an inscription on it assigning it to King Oswin, but both Sir G. F. Warner and Mr. Gilson assure me that it dates from the twelfth century. It is notable that the only work, so far as we know, which was composed at the later priory at Tynemouth was *The Life of St. Oswin* which has been above quoted and which was written by an anonymous prior of Wymondham, who visited the priory in 1111 and was afterwards invited by its monks to write the life of their saint. The potency of the saint's healing virtues seem to have reached a long way, for it was reported that one of the monks of Westminster whose eyesight was giving way staved off the blindness which threatened him by applying this book to his eyes (Craster, *op. cit.* 119).

² *Ib.* 100.

³ *Ib.* 111.

Among the relics preserved at Durham was a portion of the flesh of "St. Oswin, the king and martyr," preserved in a vial of crystal with a gilt pedestal. This notice, which comes from Segbrok's list of the relics at Durham in the year 1383, is glossed in a later hand: "*The writer told a lie, for he remains in a state of incorruption.*"¹

In regard to the memorial cross at Collingham inscribed with Oswin's name,² its remains were discovered when the church was being repaired in 1841. The present cross, as was shown by Mr. Edmonson and as can be easily recognised in Stephens' plates, is made up of fragments of two crosses. The two upper pieces of the three out of which it is built up differing in their ornaments from the lowest one. It has not been suggested before, but I have no doubt that the two crosses were originally set up to the memory of kings Oswy and Oswin by the former's widow when, as we shall see, she built the monastery at Collingham in memory of them both. The lowest part of the shaft, which is fixed in a base, is ten feet nine inches high. Its decoration is well designed. On the front are two recessed panels, one long and the other narrow. In the narrow one are two facing mythical quasi-lacertine animals, with their limbs prolonged into knotted cords; on the opposite face are also two panels, but the pattern once upon them has been scooped out or destroyed. On one of the narrow sides is a rolling scroll with curved tendrils

¹ See Raine, *St. Cuthbert*, 125.

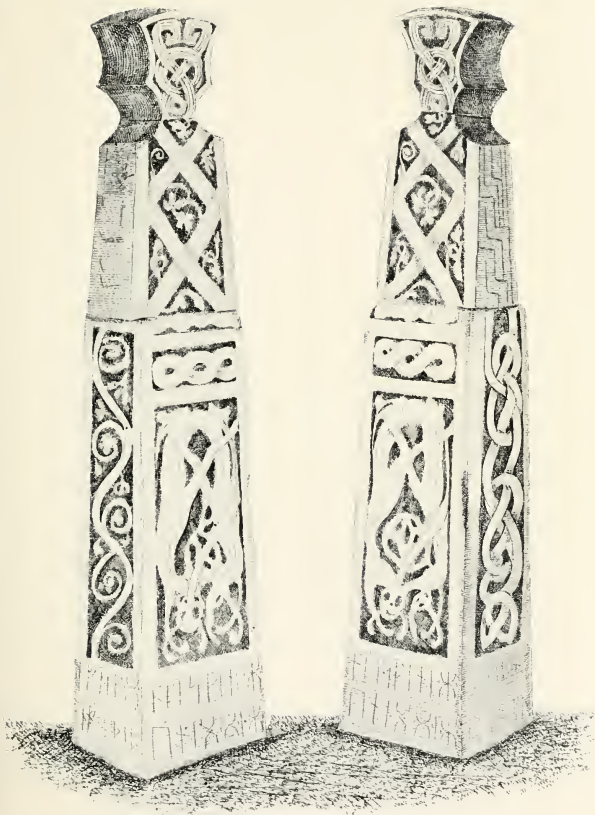
² *Ante*, p. 80.

on either side; on the other is a gracefully interlaced cord. On the base is an inscription in words, now partially defaced by the weather. The part remaining, according to Stephens, who has discussed the stone, read in his time "Æftar Onswini Cu (nung)," (*i.e.* after or in memory of Oswini the king). Stephens suggests that when complete it had the additional words, "Pray for his soul," etc. He also remarks on the very primitive form of the name as preserved on this cross, namely, Onswin, with the inserted *n*.¹

This is not the only existing "document in stone" which Father Haigh associated with the life of Oswin.

In the year 1832, a very early graveyard was discovered at Hartlepool, in the graves of which were a number of small square stones with well-designed crosses on them, all, so far as can be judged, dating from the seventh century. Haigh identified the graveyard with that attached to a monastery founded at Hartlepool by Heiu, the religious mother of St. Hilda, to which we shall revert presently. On two of these small crosses occurs the name Ediluini. This name occurs several times in Anglo-Saxon documents, but inasmuch as the place we are discussing is in Northumbria; that the dates of the crosses are in all probability of the seventh century; and that it is very unlikely that a lay person would have had the distinction of being buried in such a graveyard

¹ See Stephens, *Runic Monuments*, 392, etc.



ST. OSWIN'S CROSS AT COLLINGHAM.

[Vol. I., facing p. 92.]

unless he had been some one of consequence, it creates a very strong presumption that, as Haigh argued, the Ediluini there commemorated was no other than the king's officer, who brought about the death of Oswin. This argues that Edelwine's act can hardly have been deemed a serious crime by those who gave him such a burial. The name occurs on two of these stones. On one it occurs alone, and we have simply the inscription Ediluine. On another we read *Orate pro Ediluini*, below which we read *Orate pro Vermund et Torhtsuid*; while on a third one Edelwine is not mentioned, and we read *Ora pro Vermund et Torhtsuid*. The two latter personages we know nothing more about, but can hardly doubt that they were closely associated with Edilwine, and perhaps were his relatives.¹

Let us now return to the Northumbrian church.

It seems plain that at this time Deira had become part of the realm of Penda, and we accordingly find that the place of Oswin, as the immediate ruler of Deira, was taken by Oidilwald, the son of Oswald, who, although Oswy's nephew, was a protégé of Penda's and had probably to conciliate his patron, apostatised and become a pagan. Presently he is found on Penda's side in the latter's great struggle with Oswy. Mr. Plummer suggests that he was in fact appointed as ruler of Deira by Penda, and became his subordinate, while the realm

¹ See Haigh, *Geol. and Pol. Soc.*, Leeds, 1857, and Hübner, *Inscrip. Brit. Christ.*, 69 and 70.

of Oswy was after this time entirely limited to Bernicia. A little later, when Penda became more friendly to Christianity, and his son, Peada, had joined that faith, Oidilwald was again baptized by Cælin, the brother of St. Cedde and St. Chad.¹

Bede tells us that Oswin's death was followed in twelve days by that of St. Aidan, who died on the 31st August 651.² His last days were spent in one of the royal residences, in each of which, as we have seen, he had a church and a chamber. When he became ill they set up a tent, or more probably a penthouse, for him, close to the wall at the west end of the church and touching it, and there he died while leaning against a post or wooden buttress that was placed outside to strengthen the wall. His body was removed to Lindisfarne and buried in the churchyard belonging to the brethren there. Some time after, when a new and larger church was built at Lindisfarne by Finan, his remains were translated thither, and put on the right hand of the altar.³

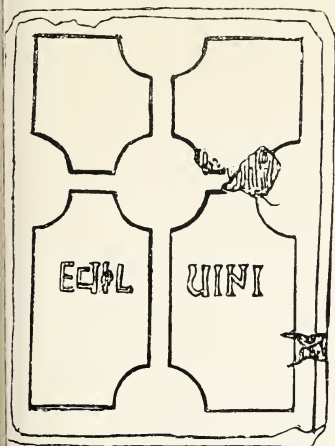
Colman, the successor of Finan, took some of them back with him to Scotland when he resigned his see in 664. The rest were removed from the island by the monks when they were driven away by the Danes, and "with the exception of a few fragments which King Edmund obtained during one of his northern expeditions, finally found a resting-place at Durham."⁴

¹ *Vide infra*, 141.

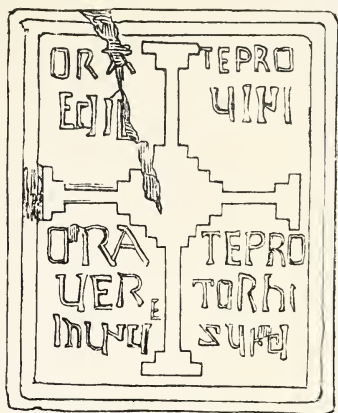
² *Op. cit.* iii. 14.

³ *Bede*, iii. 17.

⁴ Raine, *St. Cuthbert and his Tomb*, p. 9.



MEMORIAL CROSS OF EDELWINI.



MEMORIAL OF EDELWINI, WERMUND,
AND TORHTSUID.



MEMORIAL OF
WERMUND
AND
TORHTSUID.

In the inventory of the relics preserved at Durham, drawn up in the fourteenth century, we have recorded, Aidan's cross of black jet (*de nigro geete*) and his skull set in copper-gilt and adorned with precious stones.¹

In the spandril of the Te-Deum window over the clock in Durham Cathedral there was in 1827 a full-length figure of Bishop Aidan in painted glass, dressed in pontificals, with the inscription "Sanctus Aidanus."

Bede, although he says some kind words about Aidan, seems to have immediately repented of having done so, moved no doubt by his rancour against the Scots, whose obstinacy on the subject of Easter and the tonsure, and whose hesitation to conform to the Roman usage greatly exercised him. He says: "I have written thus concerning the person and works of the before-mentioned Aidan, in no way commending or approving what he imperfectly understood in regard to the observation of Easter, nay, very much detesting the same (*immo hoc multum detestans*), but like an impartial historian simply relating what was done through him, and commending such things as are praiseworthy in his

¹ Raine's further statement about Glastonbury seems to be unfounded. Mr. Plummer has an unusually strong sentence (for him) on the legend. He says that it is simply an instance of that huge system of monastic lying, in which Glastonbury had a bad pre-eminence. A similar Glastonbury lie with reference to Dunstan, called forth an indignant protest from Eadmer,—Stubbs' *Dunstan*, 412-422. "Whether," adds Plummer, "Eadmer would have been as zealous for the truth if he had not been a Canterbury man, is another question" (Plummer's *Bede*, ii. 167).

actions, and preserving the memory of the same for the benefit of readers. Such were his love of peace and charity; his continence and humility; his mind superior to anger and avarice, and despising pride and vainglory; his industry in keeping and teaching the heavenly commandments; his diligence in reading and watching; his authority becoming a priest, in reprovng the haughty and powerful, and his tenderness in comforting the afflicted and relieving and defending the poor. In a few words, as far as I could gather from those who knew him, he took care to omit none of those things which he found enjoined in the apostolical or prophetic writings, but to the utmost of his power endeavoured to perform them in all his actions. These things I much love and approve in the aforesaid bishop, because I do not doubt that they were pleasing to God, but I do not praise or approve his not observing Easter at the proper season, either through ignorance of the canonical time appointed, or if he knew it, being prevailed on by the authority of his nation not to follow the same." Bede ends this passage by calling the attention of his readers to the fact that although Aidan did not accept the more recent and more scientific calculation of the proper time of Easter, he did not, as some falsely fancied, follow the quarto-deciman system of the Jews in the fixing of their Passover, but always put Easter Day on a Sunday.¹

¹ *Op. cit.* iii. 17.

It is noteworthy that these censures attributed to Bede are omitted in two copies of the Anglo-Saxon version of that author.¹ Mr. Plummer has a timely and attractive sentence on his attitude and the causes of his querulousness. He says, "We cannot help feeling that the question occupies a place in Bede's mind out of all proportion to its real importance. It is sad that he should think it necessary to pause in the middle of his beautiful sketch of the sweet and saintly character of Aidan to say that he 'much detests' his mode of keeping Easter. It is strange that he should apply to this question the words which St. Paul used with reference to such infinitely more important matters, expressing the fear lest he 'should run, or have run, in vain'; stranger still that he should bring into connection with Ecgbert's conversion of the monks of Iona to the Roman system, our Lord's words stating how Abraham 'rejoiced to see My day; and he saw it, and was glad.'" ²

It is interesting that Aidan's fame (perhaps in consequence of Bede's depreciatory remarks) presently shrank; thus in the *Life of King Oswin* above quoted, a priest is reported to have said (on hearing of a vision in which Aidan had appeared), "of Oswin I have heard sometimes, but as to Aidan, I never heard of his name."³

After his death the dedication of the church at

¹ Plummer, *Bede*, ii. 167.

² *Op. cit.* I. Introd. xl. and xli. Gal. ii. 2 and John viii. 56.

³ Plummer, *ib.* ii. 165.

Bamborough was changed to that of St. Aidan. Among his more famous protégés and pupils were Eata, Cedde, Ceadda or Chad, Heiu, and Hilda, all of whom will be heard of again in the following pages, nor will it be forgotten that St. Cuthberht was alleged to have been induced to adopt a religious profession by a vision of St. Aidan which appeared to him.

Mr. Baldwin Brown explains the complete absence of old dedications to St. Aidan, in the county of Durham, by the fact that other names were substituted for his in after times, when the Roman rite had been substituted for the Scotie one after the Synod of Whitby. He instances how Theodore, on the final departure of the Scotie missionaries, altered the dedication of St. Aidan's own oratory in Holy Island to that of St. Peter.¹

Aidan was succeeded as bishop of Lindisfarne and abbot of the Abbey there by Finan. This was in 652. Tighernach, the *Ulster Annals* and the *Martyrology of Donegal* call him MacRimedo (*i.e.* son of Rimid).² He was one of the monks of Iona, and his name is one of the many derivatives of the Irish Finn, *i.e.* the white. We are told that on the death of Aidan he was ordained as bishop (*ad gradum episcopatus a Scottis ordinatus*), and sent to take his place, so that he was probably not one of the original companions of Aidan. Bede adds that he built a church in the Island of Lindisfarne appropriate to the dignity

¹ *The Arts in Early England*, i. 277 and 278. ² Plummer, ii. 189.

of an Episcopal see (*fecit ecclesiam episcopali sedi congruam*), which, according to the method of the Scots, he built not of stone, but entirely of hewn oak (*de robore secto*), and roofed with reeds (*harundine textit*).¹ As Mr. J. Raine says in a note to his *St. Cuthberht and his Tomb*, "the *harundo* of Bede was in all probability the long wiry bent grass, which grows in abundance on the Island, and serves, by its deeply penetrating roots, to bind fast the sand-banks which run along the coast. This grass the monks of Holy Island, many centuries afterwards, used as strewments instead of rushes, in their church and hall. In the year 1303, their *bent* for the church and chamber stood them in the sum of 10d."²

The fact of Aidan's church having been rebuilt so soon shows how humble it must have been. The church built by Finan was dedicated by Archbishop Theodore to St. Peter, and it continued in the same state until the time of Eadberht, the seventh bishop of the see. Finan presently removed the bones of St. Aidan from their resting-place in the common cemetery of the church, and enshrined them on the right side of the altar. "Walbottle" (*Ad Murum*), says Raine, "near Newcastle, seems to have been the principal place of his ministry, for there at different periods he baptized Peada, king of Mercia, and Sigeberht, king of the East Saxons. There were probably still Roman remains there which might afford him a residence."

One of the results of Penda's victory was, as

¹ *Bede*, iii. 25.

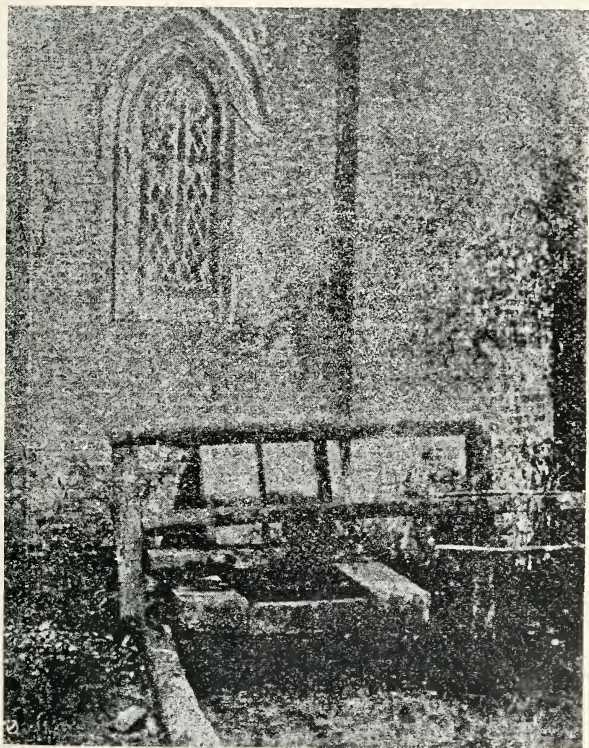
² *Op. cit.* 10, note.

we have seen, that the debatable district between Mercia proper and East Anglia, which had been appropriated by Oswald, was once more annexed to Mercia. This district has had a confused nomenclature due to the ambiguous meaning of the word "middel," which in early times and still in Germany does not mean what we mean by middle, but southern. The inhabitants of the district I am referring to were called Middelangli in the vernacular, but the name is thus glossed by Bede, *Middelangli id est Mediterranei Angli*, that is, he means by it the southern Anglians or the Angles south of the Trent. These southern Anglians are elsewhere called by him southern Mercians (*regnum Australium Merciorum*). He tells us that they consisted of five thousand families, who were separated by the river Trent from the northern Mercians *ab Aquilonaribus Merciiis*, whose land contained seven thousand families.¹ When Penda recovered the district of the south Angles he made it into an appanage for his son Peada, who no doubt ruled it subject to himself.

Let us now turn to East Anglia. In a former volume on *Augustine the Missionary* I carried the story of East Anglia down to the death of King Sigeberht.²

¹ *Op. cit.* iii. 24.

² I ought to say here that it has been supposed by some that a correspondence took place between this king and Desiderius, bishop of Cahors, of which some letters are supposed to have been preserved at St. Gallen. This is a mistake however. The correspondent of Desiderius was not Sigeberht of East Anglia, but Sigebert, son of Dagobert, the king of the Franks.



HOLY WELL OF ST. FURSEY.

[*Vol. I., facing p. 100.*]

In writing the life of Sigebert in a previous volume I omitted to give an account of a very famous Irish missionary named Furseus (or Fursey, as the English called him), who settled in East Anglia in his reign. This omission was due to the fact that he had no connection with the Augustinian mission. A few paragraphs must now be devoted to him, for in some ways he was one of the most important figures of the early Middle Ages. Bede gives up the nineteenth chapter of his third book to him, and tells us that he derived his information about him from a little book about his life (*libellus de vita ejus*). This "little book" was, in fact, an account of his life which, as Hardy says, must have been written soon after his death, and is still extant in many MSS.¹ This is a measure of the extent to which the fame of the man and of his visions had reached. The Latin life of Fursey was clearly a favourite book. The visions reported in it were also translated into Anglo-Saxon by Ælfric in the homily appointed to be preached on the Tuesday, known as "the Greater Litany."² An epitomised account of them is also reported by Bede.

According to "the early life" Fursey was of noble birth. His father was Fintan, son of Finlog, a *regulus*, or small sovereign in South Munster, and his mother was Gelges, daughter of Ædh Finn,

¹ See Hardy's *Catalogue*, i. 239 and 240.

² The *Litania major*, says Lingard, was a Roman institution, and kept on the 25th of April (*Hist. Ang.-Sax. Chron.* i. 295, note). Lingard contrasts it with the processions of the three Rogation days, a Gallic institution not known at Rome.

a prince of Connaught. The year and place of his birth are unknown, but he apparently lived awhile in the monastery of Inchiquin, on Lough Corrib, when Meldan was abbot there. He afterwards founded a monastery at Rathmat, in the diocese of Tuam, afterwards known as Killfursa. He then went to Munster to strengthen his relatives in the faith;¹ at this time he is reported to have had visions and ecstatic dreams of a most fantastic kind, such as often came to the lonely anchorites who led lives of extreme rigour and abstinence, and which we are expressly told came to him when suffering from great sickness. This was about 627 A.D.² They are similar in form to those reported of other ascetics by Pope Gregory, but more elaborate and weird. It will not be unprofitable to condense an account of them, for they afford a vivid picture of the modes of thought which prevailed among these solitary men, and which eventually steeped the mind of western Europe in a mist whence all kinds of fantastic shapes arose, and which were mistaken by ingenuous people for realities. Of these wielders of the magician's wand few are more picturesque and quaint than St. Fursey, and it would seem that next to Pope Gregory's *Dialogues* his visions probably had the most influence in later times in shaping the perfervid imagination of the Middle Ages on these matters. In reporting them Ælfric,

¹ The Rev. J. Gammack, *Dict. of Chr. Biog.*, ii. 587.

² See Tighernach, *sub an.* 627; *The Annals of Ulster* date them in 626.



KILLFURSA, NOW KILLARSA, EAST WINDOW.

[Vol. I, facing p. 102.]

in one of his homilies, reminds us how St. Paul himself tells us that he was led up to the heavens, until he came to the third heaven, and arrived in paradise, and there saw and heard ghostly secrets, but he adds, "he did not make known to earthly men when he came back what he had heard or seen." With such a prototype it is not wonderful that the succeeding ages produced a number of "visionaries" who, in their ecstatic state, also saw visions and were not as reticent as St. Paul. Dr. Bright speaks of the imagination of the author of *The Apocalypse of Peter* and his imitators, as fed rather from pagan than Jewish or Christian sources, which had popularised such ideas among the simpler Christians of an earlier age.¹ We saw in an earlier volume how St. Gregory himself used these visions in his dialogues, and showed very plainly that he believed them to be inspired, and to afford a real view of the landscapes of heaven and hell. Writing of himself Ælfric said, "I knew a man in Christ, who was snatched away fourteen years since, and was led into the third heaven," and again "he was led to paradise, and there heard the secret words which no earthly man may speak."² After St. Gregory, Fursey was the first of these descendants of Ezekiel and of the author of the Revelation whose visions awakened widespread interest. They are reported in his life above mentioned, and Bede gives a large place to them in his narrative, the order of which is, however, as Plummer points out,

¹ *Op. cit.* 144.

² Thorpe, *Ælfric's Homilies*, ii. 333.

most confused. The story, as told in the earlier life, attributes the visions to the period of his residence in Ireland, when he is said to have fallen into a trance, during which his soul is supposed to have quitted his body from evening till cockcrow. During this interval, says Ælfric, he was found worthy to behold the hosts of angels, and to hear their blessed praisegiving.

Let us now turn to the visions. The early life tells us that, when he was ill and near the point of death, two angels with white wings took his soul, and led it along between them. A third angel flew before him, armed with a white shield and a shining sword. The three angels were glistening with like brightness and wondrous pleasantness, which was enhanced by the sound of their wings and the melody of their song. They sang *Ibunt sancti de virtute in virtutem*, and again, *Videbitur Deus deorum in Sion, i.e.* "The saints go from strength to strength; the God of Gods shall be seen in Sion." Then Fursey heard another unknown song, many angels singing *Exierunt obviam Christo*, that is, "They went to meet Christ." Whereupon one of the celestial host commanded the angel who was leading the soul of our saint, to lead it back again to the body from which it had been separated. Then spake the angel, who flew on his right hand, to him, and said, "Thou shalt receive thy body again and give to God the work and efficacy of thy solicitude." The holy Fursey replied that he was not anxious to leave their society, whereupon the angel replied



DOORWAY OF THE CHURCH OF ST. FURSEY AT INCHIQUIN.

[Vol. I., facing p. 104.]

that in accordance with his wish they would come again to him and take him to themselves. They then sang, and the soul of Fursey did not realise how it again came into his body, by reason of the pleasantness of the melody. Then about cockcrow the holy man lay requickened, suffused with a rosy hue, and the corpse-bearers straightway uncovered his face. Fursey then asked why the noise was so great, and what it was they wondered at. They answered him that he had died in the evening, and that his corpse had lain on the floor all night till cockcrow. He then sat up, reflecting on his vision, and bade them "housel" him (*hét hine huslian*, as Ælfric says), *i.e.* give him the sacrament, and thus he lived for two days. Then again on the third day at midnight he stretched forth his hands in prayer, and once more blithely departed from this toilsome life. Again there came the three aforesaid angels, and led him away, whereupon there also arrived the accursed devils with horrid aspect, towards his soul, and one of them said to the others, "Let us oppose them with battle." The devils then began to fight, and shot their fiery darts against his soul, but the devilish darts were straightway all extinguished by the shielding of the armed angel (*daes gewæpnodan engles scyldunge*). The angels said to the accursed spirits, "Why do ye hinder us in our journey? this man was no party to your ruin." They replied that it was not just that a man who had consented to evil should go to rest without punishment, for it is written that he who

consents to wrong is as bad as he who perpetrates it. The angels then fought against the accursed spirits so vigorously that it seemed to the holy man that the cry of the battle and the noise of the devils would be heard over all the earth. The devils also urged that inasmuch as Fursey had spoken evil words on earth he should not enjoy everlasting life unhurt. The angel replied that unless they could fix on him the more deadly sins he ought not to be punished for the lesser ones.

Then follows a curious dialogue between the devil ("the old accuser," *Se ealda wregera*, of Ælfric) and the angel. The former said that the Almighty would not forgive a man his sins unless he forgave other men. The angel asked on whom Fursey had avenged his injuries. The devil replied that it was not written that "ye shall not take vengeance, but that ye shall forgive from your hearts those sinning against you." Thereupon the angel said, "He shall be judged by God." The fiend again replied, "Unless ye be as meek as a little child, ye shall not enter the kingdom of heaven. This commandment he (*i.e.* Fursey) has failed to fulfil." The angel replied that he had had mercy in his heart though he followed the usage of men. Thereupon the devil again answered, "As he had received his sin from human usage, so would he be punished by the Judge above." The angel retorted, "He shall be justified before God." Upon this a fight again ensued, in which the angels were the victors through their able fighting and their prudence.

The holy angel then bade the blessed man look back upon the world. Upon which, casting his eyes downwards, he saw as it were a very obscure valley underneath him. He also saw four fires kindled there, and was told those were the fires which would kindle and consume the world and burn the souls of men who had made void the confession and promise of their baptism. The first fire would burn those who love "leasing" (*leasunge* in Ælfric), the second one the covetous, the third those who are given to strife and discord, and the fourth those guilty of fraudulent improbity. These fires, increasing by degrees, extended so as to meet one another, and being joined became an immense flame. When this vast flame drew near, Fursey fearing for himself, said to the angel, "My lord, behold the fire draws near me." The angel answered, "That which you did not kindle within you in life by your sins shall not burn you now: for though this appears to be a terrible and great fire, yet it tries every man according to the merits of his works; for every man's concupiscence shall burn in this fire. Just as every one burns in the body through unlawful lusts, so when discharged from the body, the soul shall burn in the degree which it has deserved."

Then he saw one of the three angels, who was armed, and who had been his conductor throughout both his visions, go before and divide the flame of fire, whilst the other two, flying on both sides of him, defended him from the

danger of the fires. The devils in the fire then rushed towards the soul, and one said to the angels, "The man who knows his master's will and does not do it shall be punished with great punishment." The angel asked in what thing had this man not fulfilled his master's will. The devil replied that a little before, he had appropriated the garment of a dying man. The angel replied that it had been a gift and a token of repentance on the part of the man, and added, "Let us refer it to the judgment of God." The accursed spirits then replied that every sin not atoned for on earth should be judged in this world. "If this man does not cleanse his sins on earth, and on earth receive punishment, where is God's justice?" The angel thereupon rebuked them for their presumption, since they knew not God's judgments, that His mercy would always be with a man while the hope of penitence lasted, while repentance might yet be allowed him. Another devil then said, "It is written, 'Love thy neighbour as thyself.'" The angel said he had done good to his neighbours. "This is not enough," said the devil, "unless he loved him as himself." The angel replied that good deeds were a proof of true love, and that God requited every man according to his deeds. The devil then replied tauntingly, "This man, having promised to abandon all worldly things, afterwards loved them against the apostles' command." The angel replied that he had sought worldly possessions

not for his own need, but to distribute to the poor. The old accuser then said, "Unless thou dost correct the unrighteous, I will requite their evil-doing on thee. This man did not reprove the wicked for their sins." The angel replied that it was written of evil times that the wise man would be silent when he saw that his preaching had no success. Thus the strife continued till the devils, through God's judgment, were confounded. Fursey then looked up and saw a host of many angels shining with great brightness, and the souls of the holy flying towards him with indescribable light, and put the devils to flight from him, and turn from him the terror of the fire. Then he noticed that among the blessed were two holy venerable bishops (*presules*) who in their previous life had been his countrymen, and very celebrated. They approached and spoke to him familiarly. Their names were Beanus and Meldanus.

Then there was great serenity in heaven, and two angels flew, as it were, through a hill (*anre duna*) into heaven, and then a great light darted out thence after the angels, and the songs of four hosts of angels were heard, singing, "*Sanctus Sanctus, Sanctus, Dominus Deus Sabaoth.*" Then his conductor told the holy man that the melody came from the heavenly host, and bade him listen attentively to the divine song, adding that sadness never entered that heavenly realm save on account of man's perdition.

Again came angels from the heavenly secrecy

(*heofenlican digelnysse*), and declared that Fursey must again return to the earth. Seeing him in great dread, they told him that he had but one day's journey to travel. He then asked them about the end of the world. They replied that this would not be yet, but was not far off, but meanwhile men would be afflicted with famine and with pestilence, and that he would perish through four things—sins, the instigation of the devil, the heedlessness of teachers, and evil example. God's wrath had been especially stirred about the teachers because they neglected the divine books, and were wholly solicitous about worldly things. It was fitting in bishops and priests that they should teach the doctrine (*þæt hi heora lāre gymon*, Ælfric), while monks should lead their lives in silence. They then bade him report the vision he had seen in the world, and bade him when he returned spend some of his time in privacy and sometimes among men, and when among men to seek the salvation of their souls and not worldly profit. They bade him further be merciful to all his enemies, requiting good for evil, praying for them, and keeping nothing for himself save food and raiment. Having finished their discourse, the whole heavenly host went back to heaven with the bishops above named, while Fursey and his two angel-companions returned to earth. When on their way earthwards they again approached the aforesaid immense fire, and the angel divided the flame, as he had done before ;

but when the man of God came to the passage so opened amidst the flames, the unclean spirits, laying hold of one of those whom they were roasting in the fire, threw him at him, and when the uncouth missile touched his shoulder and jaw, it burned them. He knew the man thus cast at him, and called to mind that he had been a fellow-townsmen, and that he had himself received his garment when he died. The angel immediately laying hold of him, threw him back into the fire, while the malignant enemy said, "Do not reject him, whose property you before received; for as you accepted the goods of this sinner, so you ought to partake of his punishment." The angel replying, said, "He did not receive the same through avarice, but in order to save his soul." The fire thereupon ceased, and the angel, turning to Furse, added, "That which you kindled has burned in you; for had you not received the property of this person that died in his sins, neither would his punishment have burned in you." He then bade him preach repentance to all men, and make confession to priests to the end of his life. He was never again to receive the possessions of a sinful man when he was dying, nor let his corpse be buried in a holy place. Before his departure, the heart of such an one ought to be wrung with sharp torments. That he might at some future time be purified he ought before his death to repent of his unrighteousness and distribute alms abundantly. Let not a priest, however, receive anything

of a sinful man's possessions for himself, but let them be distributed among the poor at the grave.

The three angels duly conducted Fursey's soul back to the earth, and placed it on the roof of the church where the corpse still lay, surrounded with people. The angels then bade him recognise his own body, and resume it. He, however, looked on it as on an unknown corpse, and would not approach it. The angel asked why he shunned it, since he might now have it without the strife of sins. In his recent tribulation he had overcome unhallowed lusts, so that in future they would have no power over him. He then saw the body open under the breast, and the angel said to him, "When thou shalt be requickened, sprinkle thy body with font-water, and thou wilt feel no soreness save the burn that thou caughtest in the fire."

Fursey had a second similar vision of his own death, and saw a great multitude of men, ecclesiastical and lay, about him, who with great lamentations bewailed their human follies. He was duly sprinkled with font-water, as the angel had prescribed; nevertheless the burn he had caught from the unrighteous man on his face and shoulder were ever visible,—“a great wonder,” says the narrator, “for thus was seen on the body the effect of what the soul had alone received.”

After his visions we are told he went over all Ireland and Scotland (*eal Yrrland and Scotland*, says Ælfric), and declared the things that he had seen

and heard. To all good men he was kind, and to the unrighteous and sinful terrible. He shone in divine miracles, drove out devils from possessed men, and cheered the poor.

Bede says of these visions that he would only relate them to those who wished to learn them from the desire of reformation. "An ancient brother of our monastery is still living," he adds, "who is wont to declare that a very truthful and religious man told him, that he had seen Fursey himself in the province of the East Angles, and had heard of his visions from his own mouth; adding, that though it was then most sharp winter weather and a hard frost, and Fursey was sitting in a thin garment when he related his story, yet he sweated as if it had been in the greatest heat of summer, either through excessive fear or spiritual exaltation."¹

Bede adds that after preaching for some time in Ireland, and becoming distracted with, and weary of the crowds which flocked to hear him, he took his departure and traversing the land of the Britons went to "Saxonia." He, in fact, went to East Anglia. This was apparently about 633.

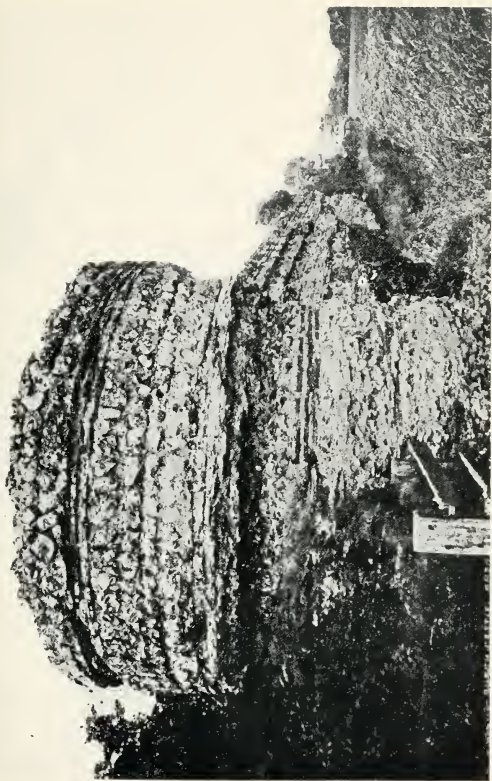
"On coming into the province of the East Angles, he was favourably received by the aforesaid king (*i.e.* Sigebert), and performed his usual employment of preaching the gospel. By the example of his virtue and the efficacy of his discourse he converted the unbelievers to Christ, and confirmed in the faith and love of Christ those who already believed.

¹ *Bede*, iii. 19.

“There he fell into some infirmity of body, and was thought worthy to see another angelic vision (*angelica meruit visione perfrui*, the phrase is notable), in which he was admonished diligently to proceed in the ministry of the Word, which he had undertaken, and to continue indefatigably in his usual watching and prayers; inasmuch as his departure was certain, but according to the saying of our Lord, the hour of it would be uncertain, ‘Watch ye, therefore, because ye know not the day nor the hour.’¹ Being confirmed by this vision he applied himself with all speed to build a monastery on the ground which had been given him by King Sigeberht, and to establish regular discipline therein. This monastery was within a wood, and pleasantly situated in the vicinity of the sea; it was built,” says Bede, “within the castle, which in the English language is called ‘Cnobheresburg,’ that is, Cnobher’s Town; afterwards Anna, king of that province, and the nobility, embellished it with more stately buildings and donations. This man,” says Bede (*i.e.* Fursey), “was of very noble Scotie blood, but much more noble in mind than in birth. Even from his boyish years, he had particularly applied himself to reading sacred books, and following monastic discipline, and, as is most becoming to holy men, he carefully practised all that he learned ought to be done. In short, in process of time he built himself the monastery wherein he might with more freedom indulge his heavenly studies.”²

¹ Matt. xxv. 13.

² Bede, iii. 19.



ROMAN FORT AT BURGHCASTLE, CALLED CROFTERSBURGH BY THE ANGLIANS.

Dr. Bright adds that it was probably through the influence of Fursey that Sigeberht, the king of East Anglia, set the bad precedent of abandoning his royal duties, while in full vigour of life, and retired into a cell which he had made for himself, and in which, according to Bede's estimate, he adopted the tonsure so that he might "play the soldier for the sake of a *heavenly* kingdom."¹ This was probably at or near the later Bury St. Edmunds.²

Returning to Fursey, we are told, he was presently pressed by the desire to withdraw more completely from worldly thoughts and cares, and, leaving his monastery to his brother Fullan (in Irish, Foillan or Faelan) and the priests Gobban and Dicul, he determined to adopt the life of a hermit, following the example of another of his brothers who had come with him from Ireland, who was named Ultan, and who after a long monastic probation had also adopted a hermit's life. Fursey accordingly repaired to him, and they lived together a life of continence and prayer, labouring daily with their hands. Presently seeing that the province was in confusion by reason of the irruption of the pagans (Bede here doubtless means Penda and his men), and presaging that the monasteries would in consequence be in danger, he left all things in order (*dimissis ordinate omnibus*), and sailed for the land of the Franks.³

¹ *Bede*, iii. 18.

² Bright, *op. cit.* 145, note 1.

³ *Bede*, iii. 19. This was probably about 648; see J. Stevenson's transl. of *Bede*, 414, note.

There he was kindly received by the Frank king, Chlovis the Second, and by the patrician Ercinwald (*i.e.* the Mayor of the Palace so-called), and planted a monastery at Latineacum, *i.e.* Lagny, on the Marne, six leagues from Paris.¹

The date of this is disputed. Mabillon, Baronius and Fleury, who are followed by Smith in his edition of *Bede*, put it in 644; others think this too early, and Colgan puts it in 648 or 649. In France his career became much more important and his influence more far-reaching, while his fame spread thence to his old country of Ireland, attracting others from its shores. With the help of Ercinwald, the Mayor of the Palace, he built two other religious houses near that of Péronne, where he lived, and whither he had translated the remains of Bishops Beanus and Meldanus whom he had seen in his vision.² He was also much favoured by Queen Bathildis. Presently, having set off to visit his brothers Fullan and Ultan, whom he had left in Saxonia, he fell ill at Maceriae, or Mazeroëles, on the Authie in Ponthieu, and there he died.³ His body was removed to Péronne and buried in the new church on Mont Cignes. Four years later it was translated by Eligius, bishop of Noyon, and Autbertus, bishop of Cambray, into a chapel built for it on the east side of the altar of the same church, and the place became a favourite resort of pilgrims from

¹ *Bede*, iii. 19. See *Gall. Christ.* vii. 490, and Mabillon, *Annales Bened.*, iii. ch. xiii. par. 26.

² Plummer, *Bede*, ii. 171.

³ Plummer, ii. 173.

all parts of Gaul and Britain. So much was Péronne frequented by Irish pilgrims that from the 7th to the 10th century it was known as Perrona Scotorum.¹

The actual date of Fursey's death is uncertain, and authorities differ as much as thirty years about it, varying from 630 to 660, but most probably it was about 650. His chief festival is 16th January, but he is also commemorated on 6th, 9th, and 25th February, 4th March, 14th July, 17th and 28th September, and 26th December. On the first of these days he has a place in all calendars, showing his popularity and fame.

The latest history of some at least of his remains is pathetic and interesting, and I cannot resist transcribing it from Bishop Browne's account. "At Péronne," he says, "his remains remained fresh and uncorrupted in the time of William of Malmesbury. The head survived the horrors of the French Revolution to suffer grievous things in the bombardment of Péronne by the Prussians in 1870. It was found among the burnt ruins of the church, and was still in the reliquary in which it had been preserved so long, the glass of which, however, had been melted by the fire, and while soft had taken an impression of the head!!!"²

As usual, more than one church boasted the possession of his relics. Canterbury claimed to possess his head.³ It is also described as "being enclosed in an altar at the east end of the crypt

¹ Pertz, i. 319, xiii. 626; Plummer, ii. 174.

² *Conversion of the Heptarchy*, 89.

³ Plummer, ii. 147.

of the same Cathedral,"¹ while Smith, in his edition of *Bede*, says his relics are in the collegiate church at Péronne (which is dedicated to him), except the skull, which is at Lagny.

Several works have been assigned to him, e.g. the first book of the *De Vita Monastica*, which Dempster attributes to him, but about which there is much doubt. Harris² assigns a prophecy to him, and in Trinity College Library, Dublin,³ are some poems and a Litany attributed to him. I am indebted for these particulars to an article on Fursey by Mr. Gammack.⁴ Speaking of Fursey's visions, the same writer says, "they gave a distinct impulse to the developing and fixing of the mediæval belief with regard to the condition of the departed, and have afforded, at least in part, the basis of probably the most sublime and best known poetical production of the later middle age, Dante's *Divina Commedia*. With those of Drythelm⁵ they form a well-defined landmark in the evolution of Christian teaching, as showing how theological speculation was taking place in the 7th century from the few and mysterious unveilings of inspiration to the full-grown eschatological systems prevalent at the time of the Reformation. They are important as indicating the under-current of theological and dogmatic thought which was shaping the doctrine and discipline of the church

¹ Eadmer, *Vit. S. Audoeni*; see Raine, *Hist. of the Arch. of York*, xlvi.

² Ware, *Ir. Writings*, i. ch. 4.

³ MS. H, i. 11, 6-7.

⁴ *Dict. of Chr. Biog.*, ii. 588.

⁵ Bede, *Eccl. Hist.*, v. 12.

in the following centuries, and have thus a value and significance far beyond their own individual merits."¹

I will conclude what I have to say about St. Fursey by quoting one of the hymns in his praise appended to his life in the *Act. Sanct.*, vol. ii. 16th Jan., pp. 400-401.

“Laeta plaude Hibernia,
 Latiniaci moenia.
 Choro coruscat júbilo,
 Pulso moeroris nubilo.
 Clarum struit coenobium,
 Fratrum ponit consortium :
 Aqua scaturit baculo,
 Sed fixo terrae in arido.
 Matrona vobis improba,
 Sancti supra ecclesiam
 Gemit argenti millia,
 Tam multa, inquit, perdita,
 Fursee, lampas sideris,
 Tui memor sis generis :
 In nos cum mors jam pendulum
 Suum fuderit jaculum ;
 Clausa natus de virgine,
 Jesu spei fons unice
 Cum Patre et Sancto Spiritu
 Pius salvet in transitu. Amen.”

St. Fursey's brothers, Ultan and Fullan above-mentioned, followed him to France after his death.² There Ultan became Abbot of Fosse, in the diocese of Liège, and eventually ruled over the community of Irish monks at Péronne.³ He died about 680.⁴ The Abbey of Fosse was built on some land given him by St. Gertrude, whose death he had foretold. St. Fullan helped his brother Ultan in building the Abbey at

¹ *Dict. of Chr. Biog.*, ii. 587.

³ *Ib.* i. 319, xiii. 626.

² Pertz, iv. 2.

⁴ Plummer, ii. 172.

Fosse. He also built a second one at Rœulx, near Mons,¹ and is said to have been martyred in 655, and buried at Fosse. His death-day was 31st October.

Let us now return to the patron of Fursey's earlier monastery, Anna, or Onna as he is called in MSS. A and C of the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle*, king of East Anglia, the successor of Sigeberht. As we have seen, Penda marched against him for having given shelter to Coinwalch, king of Wessex, who had fled the country after divorcing his sister.² The *Liber Eliensis* says he died in the nineteenth year of his reign. As his death is generally put in 654 or 655, this would make him succeed his brother Sigeberht in 635 or 636, a date accepted by Stubbs but questioned by Plummer, who says his accession must be placed in 630 or 631.³ Of Anna it is said that he and his nobles embellished with stately buildings and other gifts the monastery founded by St. Fursey at Cnobheresburg (now Burgh Castle in Suffolk, on the Yare, and known to the Romans as Garionum).

Bede gives us no details about his life, and merely says he was killed by Penda, doubtless to revenge his having sheltered his enemy Coinwalch. This, according to the frail authority of the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle*, MSS. A, B, and C, was in the year 654. MS. E, which is very late, puts it in 653. It has not, I think, been noticed that his death occurs in the Irish Annals. There we read in the *Annals of Ulster* under the year 655, *Bellum*

¹ Pertz, xxi. 551.

² Bede, iii. 7.

³ ii. 169.

Annae, "Battle of Anna," showing he was killed in a battle. The Book of Ely wrongly makes Anna marry Heresuitha, the sister of St. Hilda, who was really the wife of his brother Æthelhere.¹ The Ely chronicler also says that in later times Anna's body was transferred to Beodrechworth, *i.e.* Bury St. Edmunds.² Bede describes Anna as a good man, and happy in an excellent family of children³ (*bona ac sancta sobole felix*). He was probably like his predecessor, more fit to be a monk than a king in those rough times, and is chiefly famous for having been related to a number of royal ladies, nearly all of whom had distinguished careers in the Church.⁴

"Among his '*sancta soboles*,'" says Plummer,⁵ "are his daughter Ethelburga, his step-daughter Saethryth, and his grand-daughter Earcongota (by the marriage of his daughter Sexburgh to Earconberht of Kent), all of whom became abbesses of Brie in Gaul; his daughter Ethelthryth, abbess of Ely, in which office she was succeeded by her sister Sexburgh, the mother of Earcongota, who was in turn succeeded by another daughter, Ermingild, who had been married to Wulfhere of Mercia, to whom she bore St. Werburg." A fourth daughter, Wihtberga, became, it is said, a nun at Ely, and afterwards a recluse at Dereham,⁶ but the accounts of her seem rather mythical.⁷ Still

¹ See Plummer, ii. 244. ² *Anglia Sacra*, i. 595. ³ *Ib.* iii. 7.

⁴ Anna's wife is called Sewara in the *Life of St. Botulf*.

⁵ Plummer, ii. 144.

⁶ See Bright, 175; Hardy, *Cat.*, i. 264, 265, 469 and 470.

⁷ See Appendix I.

more mythical seems a son, St. Germinus.¹ William of Malmesbury identifies him with St. Germanus of Auxerre, who lived about two centuries earlier.²

Anna was succeeded by his brother Æthelhere, who was possibly a pagan. He was faithful to Penda, and fought on his side in the battle in which both of them lost their lives. Æthelhere married Here-suitha, the sister of St. Hilda of Whitby, by whom he had two sons, Aldwulf and Alfwold.³ He was immediately succeeded by his cousin Æthelwold.

It would seem that Penda in his later days became a good deal more tolerant. Perhaps he had been so all along, and if we only had some unbiased account of him, we might find that his wars were much more defensive than has been thought, and that the ruthlessness was not altogether on one side. He, at all events, permitted his daughter, Cyneburga, to marry Alchfrid, son of Oswy, and this could only have been on condition of her becoming a Christian. He now also consented to a more important event, which is much clearer evidence of the fact we are discussing, namely, the conversion of his son Peada (the viceroy of the southern Angles) and of his people. Bede describes Peada as a most excellent youth, and very worthy of the title and the person of a king. He adds that he visited Oswy, king of Northumbria, and asked him to

¹ Wm. of Malmesbury, *G.P.*, p. 156; *Liber Eli.*, pp. 15 and 23.

² Plummer, ii. 144.

³ See *Bede*, iv. 23; and Florence of Worcester, *M.H.B.*, p. 636, who is responsible for the second name.

give him his daughter Alchfleda in marriage. Oswy told Peada that he could not give him his daughter unless he became a Christian, and consented to be baptized, together with his people. Bede adds that he was eventually persuaded to do this by Alchfrid, who became his brother-in-law. He adds that the prince confessed himself as willing to accept Christianity even if it did not secure him the maiden. He was accordingly baptized by Bishop Finan with all the noblemen (*comites*) and soldiers who had accompanied him. This was at the royal vill, which Bede calls Ad Murum, now Walbottle in Northumberland. These events happened about 652. We must remember that the Northumbrian church, a convert of which Peada became, had virtually no ties with Rome, and was treated by Rome as largely schismatical, but was a protégé of the Irish monks.

Peada having been baptized, returned home, accompanied by four priests, all belonging to the Irish mission, and respectively called Cedde, Adda, Betti, and Diuma. The three former were Anglians by race, while the last was of Scotie blood. Adda was the brother of Utta (above named),¹ "a renowned priest" and abbot of the monastery, which Bede calls *Ad Caprae Caput*, i.e. Gateshead, on the southern bank of the Tyne, near Newcastle. "When they arrived among the southern Angles, the four missionaries diligently preached the Word, and many as well

¹ *Vide* p. 76.

of the nobles as of the ailing (*et nobilium et infirmorum*) were persuaded to abandon idolatry and to be baptized." This is very interesting and very notable, since it is clear that it could not have happened without the consent and approval of Penda, who is so generally painted as an unrelenting pagan. It is well to remember the following notable sentence of Bede, in the face of the bitter language about him in the later annalists who were more bigoted: "Nor did King Penda obstruct the preaching of the Word among his own people, that is, the nation of the Mercians, if any were willing to hear it; but, on the contrary, he hated and despised those whom he perceived not to perform the Word of Faith when they once received Christ's faith, saying that they were contemptible and wretched who neglected to obey their God in whom they believed."¹ Bede adds that these events happened two years before Penda's death, that is in 652. It is a pity that we have no information about the internal economy of Mercia during Penda's reign, for he was a very powerful and interesting person, the last great pagan ruler, in fact, in these realms until the Danes came. It seems very probable to me that it was in his time that the rough and picturesque mountain district of Derbyshire, Pecland, as it was then called (a name still surviving in "The Peak"), was first settled by the Anglians. Its people were called Pecsætas, after the fashion of the first Saxon

¹ *Op. cit.* iii. 21.

settlers in Wilts, Somerset, Devon, and Dorset, who were doubtless colonists, and occupied a deserted or very thinly inhabited district. The Derbyshire folk are typical Mercians in speech and other ways.

During the next two years we have no account of what was happening, and when we again have any news, we find Penda once more at feud with Oswy. Mr. Cadwallader Bates, who did so much to illuminate Northumbrian history, has some shrewd and suggestive remarks on the political situation, and the grouping of the chief parties to the struggle at this time. Speaking of Bede's cryptic statement that the king of East Anglia, Æthelhere, was the real author of the war, he says: "Æthelhere was the husband of St. Hilda's sister, Heresuitha, and their son, Aldwulf, was on pure legitimist principles the rightful heir to the throne of the Deiras, then occupied by St. Oswald's son, Oidilwald. In his turn Oidilwald had the best hereditary claim to the throne of the Beornicas, in which, in his minority, his half-uncle, the powerful Oswy, had been placed."¹ For Oswy, the maintenance of Oidilwald as king of the Deiras, was a politic method of keeping dormant his pretensions to the throne of the Beornicas. Æthelhere, however, who owed his own crown to Penda, persuaded that stalwart heathen, despite his 80 years, to champion the claims of Aldwulf. The murderer of Oswin, Oswy, was ready to sacrifice Oidilwald

¹ See also *Vit. Oswaldi*, cap. xix. in *Symeon of Durham*, Rolls series, 358 and 359.

in his turn. He sent his young son, Ecgfrid, to the Mercian court as a hostage for its benevolent neutrality in the event of an attack being made on his half-nephew by the two southern kings.¹ In this extremity Oidilwald, we may gather, adroitly turned the tables on Oswy by offering to give up York to Aldwulf if the Mercians and East Angles would aid in establishing himself at Bamburgh. The then confederate kings, Æthelhere, Penda and Oidilwald, were readily joined by Catgabail, king of North Wales, and other British princes, and their hosts advanced against Oswy.² I do not endorse all this as literally proved, but it seems to me a very probable explanation of the reported facts.

What is perfectly plain is that Penda invaded and ravaged Northumbria again and laid waste the land with fire and sword. He burned down the village and church where Bishop Aidan died, *i.e.* at Bamburgh, showing that they were made of wood, and it was reported as a miracle that the only thing saved was the post against which the saint was leaning when he died.³ It is plain, from Bede's incidental notices, that Penda had Bernicia very much at his mercy. So intolerable did the position become that Oswy offered him more and greater royal ornaments and gifts "than can be imagined" to purchase peace if he would return home and cease to ravage and harry the provinces

¹ He was really in the keeping of Penda's wife, whom Bede calls Cynuisse, and Thomas of Ely, p. 24, William of Malmesbury, i. 79, Cyneswitha.

² Bates, *Arch. Æl.*, new ser., xix. 183.

³ *Bede*, iii. 17.

of his kingdom. Penda refused the offer, as Bede says, and was determined to destroy and extirpate all the nation, high and low. Thereupon Oswy bound himself by a vow, securing the gifts which had been rejected by Penda "to the Lord our God," and further promising that if he were victorious, he would dedicate his daughter to the Lord in holy virginity, and would give twelve estates (*possessions*) upon which to build monasteries. Thereupon he gave battle with a small force. It was reported that Penda had an army three times as big as his own; in the struggle which followed, he is indeed said to have had thirty *legions*, *i.e.* separate contingents, led by most notable commanders, including some British chiefs. Oswy, on the other hand, had only his son, Alchfrid, with him, while his other son, as we have seen, was held as a hostage "by Cynuse, the wife of Penda, in the province of the Mercians." This shows better than anything else what a dominating position Penda then held. Oidilwald, son of Oswald (says Bede), who ought to have assisted Oswy and Alchfrid, was on the enemy's side, and led it to the fight against his uncle and his country, but he treacherously withdrew from the field, and waited in a place of safety. The pagans were defeated and slain. The thirty royal commanders, converted by patriotic Welshmen into as many British chiefs, who had come to Penda's assistance,¹

¹ MS. E of the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle* calls them *xxx cynebearna*, *vide sub an. 654*.

were almost all of them killed as was Æthelhere, king of the East Anglians, who had been the cause of the fight, together with all his soldiers and auxiliaries. The battle was fought near the river Winwæd, whose waters were greatly swollen by the rains and had overflowed their banks, so that more were drowned in the flight than were destroyed by the sword.¹ Bede adds that this river was situated *in regione Loidis*, or, as Florence of Worcester, and the Chron. of Mailros, or Melrose, call it, *Provincia Loidis*. Symeon of Durham speaking of the Tweed says, *qui Northumbriam et Loidem disterminet*. This makes it clear that by Loidis was meant Lothian, and not Leeds as has often been supposed.

Bede seems to have hardly done justice to the desperate position in which Oswy must have been placed. This is more clearly pointed out by an authority whose sympathies were on the other side, namely, the Appendix to Nennius. He calls the battle that of *Gai Campi* and *Strages Gai*.

From his account Oswy seems, in fact, to have been driven right into the north of his dominions, and as far as the Firth of Forth, where he took shelter in "the city which is called Judeu." According to Nennius, it was there that Oswy offered as a ransom all the wealth (*omnes divitias*) he had in that city, and as far as and including Manau.² This treasure was known, we are told, as *Atbret Judeu*, or the restitution of Judeu.³ Mr.

¹ Bede, iii. 24.

² *Hist. Brit. M.H.B.*, 76.

³ See Rhys, *Celtic Britain*, 4th ed., 134.

Skene identifies the Judeu of this notice with the city Giudi, placed by Bede on the Firth of Forth, while Manau, as he thinks, was all the district between the Pentlands and the Roman Wall.¹ The city of Judeu has sometimes been identified with Cær Eyddyn, afterwards known as Edinburgh, while Skene has further identified it, as it seems to me, with very slight probability, with Inchkeith, in the middle of the Firth of Forth. Mr. C. Bates has discussed the question with his usual skill. Speaking of Skene's view, he says, "this has been owing to a mistaken interpretation of a passage in Bede's *Ecclesiastical History*": *Orientalis (sinus) habet in medio sui urbem Giudi, occidentalis supra se, hoc est ad dexteram sui, habet urbem Alcluith.*² Bates then proceeds. This city of Judeu which he (Skene) calls Giudi, has been located on Inchkeith, an island in the very middle of the Forth, instead of at Inveresk, in the centre of the fine bay that forms the southern side of the Forth. Judeu is evidently the same city as the Roman *Ejudensca* mentioned in the Ravennas.³ It requires little etymological subtlety to detect in the termination of the word a reference to the river Isca, or Esk. The Roman remains at Inveresk have been celebrated ever since the discovery in 1565 of the altar dedicated to Apollo by the pro-consul Quintus Lucius Sabinianus, and their extent and grandeur have

¹ *Celtic Scotland*, i. 254. ² *Bede*, i. 12 ; *Arch. Æl.*, new ser., x. 184.

³ *Mon. Hist. Brit.*, xxvi.

received quite recent confirmation. It is possible that Ejudensca may have remained a Roman "factory" on the coast after the interior of the lowlands had been abandoned. In Celtic times, the Forth appears to have been called the sea of Giudin, Muir n-Giudan,¹ the sea of Giude, or Iodeo and Merin Iodeo,² and the name lingered under the English form of Judan-byrig.³ The city was probably destroyed during the Scottish conquest, and its name forgotten.⁴

Mr. Bates fixes the actual site of the battle at Stow in Wedale; he says the names *Guinion* and *Wedale* together give us the long lost Winwæd. The pass through which the Gala Water runs is a natural route for an army marching from Bamburgh on Inveresk to choose, and the local traditions clearly prove that a heathen host was there signally annihilated.⁵

The fact that the battle between Penda and Oswy was fought in the far north is very consistent with a further one, namely, that Penda's attack upon Bamburgh already described seems to have been part of the same campaign, and that Florence of Worcester puts the fight in Bernicia.⁶

¹ *Book of Lecan*; quoted by Reeves, *Culdees*, 124.

² Aneurin, Skene, *Ancient Book of Wales*, ii. 103. Plummer, ii. 1.

³ *A.-S. Chron.*, sub an. 952. Mr. Bates says this could not be Jedburgh, which was then called Geddawerda (*Sym. Dun.*, Rolls ser., ii. 101 and 190). He adds that Judeu could not have been Edinburgh, as this seems clearly distinguished as Eiddyn, "the lofty hill," in the Gododin poems, Skene, *op. cit.* i. 425, while the name Edwinesburh already appears in 854. *Sym. Dun.*, ii. 101.

⁴ Bates, *Arch. Æl.* 184-186.

⁵ *Ib.* 188.

⁶ i. 23.

In the supplement to Nennius we read that the only one of the Celtic chiefs who escaped from the battle was Catgabail, king of Gwynned or North Wales, who got away with his army at night. We do not read whether this was the night before or the night after the battle, but are told that in consequence he was afterwards known as Catgabail Catguommed, *i.e.* "he who would not fight."¹ Professor Rhys calls Catgabail Cadavæl—and says he is not heard of again.² He was the son of Cynfedw.³

Henry of Huntingdon has put into some measured lines a condensed view of the sort of heroic fighting man Penda (*strenuissimus strenuissimorum*, as he calls him) appeared to writers centuries after, and in which he has recited the victims of his prowess.

I will quote them :—

"In Winwed amne vindicata est caedes Annae
Caedes regum Sigbert et Ecgrice
Caedes regum Oswald et Edwine."⁴

William of Malmesbury⁵ apostrophises him as *illud vicinorum excidium, illud perduellionum seminarium*.

The fight in which Penda met his end was a fateful one in other respects. He was a mighty personage. For many years (twenty-two, in fact) he had wielded a powerful sword, and, as Freeman said, he came nearer to achieving the union of the whole English nation under one sceptre than any

¹ Rhys, *C.B.*, 4th ed., 135; Skene, *Chronicle of the Picts and Scots*, 13.

² *Op. cit.*

³ Lloyd, *Hist. of Wales*, i. 190.

⁴ *Op. cit.*, ed. Arnold, 60.

⁵ i. 55.

prince before the West Saxon Ecgberht.¹ William of Malmesbury is inspired with some choice abusive phrases in depicting the career of this remarkable ruler. In one of them he describes him as "a raven flying greedily at the smell of a carcass."² We can hardly doubt that the cause of paganism must have greatly flourished in Britain in his reign, and this has lessons for the archæologist as well as the historian, and he will take care to note that it meant if not the revival, the continuance of methods of pagan burial in those districts ruled by Penda for many years after it had probably ceased elsewhere, as, for instance, in eastern Kent. With his death, the active resistance of the old faith rapidly ceased in England, never to be revived. No doubt pagan thought and pagan customs survived in hundreds of manor-houses and homes, and largely infused the popular Christian worship, but as a system, prepared to stand and fight against Christianity, if need be, its end came with the great battle in which Penda died. The victory of Oswy gave him the overlordship of England. It was also the last real struggle in which the British race took a part for the recovery of its old lordship over Britain. The Britons now ceased to be dominant in north-west England, and were limited in their rule to Wales, while the Anglians are found from this time settling and colonising the old realm of Cumbria, comprising north Lancashire, Cumberland, and Westmoreland.

¹ *N.C.*, i. 36.

² *Op. cit.* i. ch. 4.

Mr. W. G. Collingwood, who knows the district so well, condenses the results of this appropriation of a large part of the ancient Cumbria by the Anglians after the battle of the Winwæd. "By our map," he says, "shewing the distribution of early monuments, the subsequent settlements are indicated. We see the Angles coming in along the wall to Bewcastle, Carlisle, and Ruthwell; over Stainmoor to Kirkby-Stephen and Addingham; up the Maiden Way to Lancaster, Hatton, Heversham; and over the fells or round the coast to hold the important haven of Ravenglas, with settlements on both sides of it at Irton and Waberthwaite. These places have monuments of the earliest Anglian period. Here, in the lowland of north-west Cumbria, they seem to have settled and mixed with the native Welsh, producing the group of 'spiral' crosses, with outliers at Addingham and perhaps Dacre. These seem to be of a secondary age with a derivative art, lasting into the period of Scandinavian settlement."¹

Let us now turn to Oswy's dealings with the other Anglian states after he had secured for himself the empire or Bretwaldaship of England. Oidilwald, the son of Ædwin, who had ruled for some years, as we have seen, over Deira, or a part of it, and had been in alliance with Penda in the late battle, and then abandoned him, now disappears and is not heard of again. He was

¹ *Early Sculptured Crosses of Cumberland*, 307 and 308.

not improbably killed in the fight. Whether this was so or not, it is pretty certain that he was buried at the monastery which he had been so instrumental in founding near Lastingham. Bishop Browne tells us that his monument remains at the church of Kirkdale, near Lastingham, which was probably built on the site of the monastery church. The stone has a raised cross and arabesques of foliage sculptured on it. In the four angles of the cross when found were runes which were legible at the time, and were read by the well-known antiquary, the Rev. Daniel Haigh, before the stone had become weathered from exposure. The letters then read, *Cununc Oithilwalde* (i.e. King Oidilwald). They have now perished. When Dr. Browne took his photograph several years ago, one rune, in the king's name, still remained. He took the full reading, however, from a drawing made at the time of its discovery.¹

On the disappearance of Oidilwald, Oswy made his son, Alchfrid, ruler of Deira, under himself. Peada, his son-in-law, he retained in the government of the South Angles, which the latter had held under his father Penda. Mercia, proper, Oswy kept in his own hands, and he appointed Diuma, one of the four priests who had been sent home with Peada to aid in the conversion of his people, to be its first bishop. He was a Scot by descent, and as bishop he superintended the Church not only in Mercia, but in the districts of

¹ Browne, *Conversion of the Heptarchy*, 152-153.



GRAVE SLAB OF KING OIDLWALD,
KIRKDALE CHURCH, NEAR LASTINGHAM.

[Vol. I., facing p. 134.]

the South Angles, of the Lindisfaras (*i.e.* Lincolnshire), and the Gyrvii or Fenmen. Diuma was consecrated by the Northumbrian Bishop Finan. He was not, of course, in administrative communion with Rome. Bede explains what to him seems to have been an irregular proceeding, namely, the setting of one prelate over more than one "nation," by the fact that there was such a scarcity of priests. Diuma, we are told, died among the Southern Angles, in a place called Infepingwm.¹ The name is evidently corrupt, and it is not easy to fix the place. The suggestion that it was Repton is excluded by the statement of Bede that it was situated in the country of the South Angles, while Repton was in Mercia, and the burial-place of the Mercian kings. Nor would Repton be described as a district (*regio*). It is probably to be identified with a place mentioned in an Anglo-Saxon list of territorial names in Birch's *Cartularium*,² where we read, Faerpinga, þreo. hund. hyda . . . is "in Middel Englum."

On the death of Diuma, he was succeeded by a Scot from Iona called Ceollach.³ Stubbs (I do not know on what authority) says that, like his predecessor, he was consecrated by Bishop Finan.⁴ He was more probably consecrated at Iona. Ceollach, according to Bede, quitted his episcopal post while still alive and returned to the island of Hii, which was the chief and head of many

¹ *Bede*, iii. 21.

³ *Bede*, iii. 21.

² i. 414.

⁴ *Dict. of Chr. Biog.*, i. 442.

monasteries among the Scots.¹ In another place Bede says he went back to Scottia, being the first time the name is used for Scotland or any part of it; this was after a very short tenure of his office in Mercia.² The withdrawal of Ceollach was probably connected with the revolt of the Mercians in 658, and the supersession of Oswy as ruler of Mercia by Wulfhere.³

Peada continued to reign over the South Angles until the year 658, when he was killed at Easter. It was said that his death had been brought about by the connivance of his wife, Oswy's daughter, to whom he had possibly been unfaithful. So far as we know he left no children. It is said in manuscript E of the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle*, that Peada, in conjunction with Oswy, founded the abbey at Peterborough. This statement is based on a forged charter. The probability is that the abbey was actually founded by Wulfhere, king of Mercia, and I shall revert to it presently.

In the year 654 all the manuscripts of the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle* mention the foundation of a monastery at Icanho by St. Botulf. Icanho, or Wicanho, has been identified with great probability with Boston in Lincolnshire, the original name of which was Botulfestun, or Botulfstowen, or with the neighbouring village of Kirton.⁴ This foundation is not mentioned by Bede, which is strange, for it is named in the anonymous tract on the Abbots of

¹ *Op. cit.* iii. 21.

² *Bede*, iii. 21 and 24.

³ *Vide infra.*

⁴ *Bright*, 206.

Jarrow, which states how its Abbot Botulf was there visited by Abbot Ceolfrid.¹ Bede's silence about Botulf in his great work is probably due to the latter's having been trained in France and having introduced at Icanho the Rule then prevailing in the French monasteries, which would not be welcome to him. The same tract speaks of Botulf as a man of exemplary life and doctrine, full of the grace of the Holy Spirit, and with a widespread reputation.² His obit is dated 17th June. This is practically all we know about him. The monastery of Icanho was, like many others, destroyed by the Danes. According to Orderic,³ Botulf's remains were removed by St. Æthelwold in the reign of King Edgar to Thorney.⁴

¹ Plummer's *Bede*, i. 389.

² *Op. cit.*, *Bede*, ed. Plummer, i. 389.

³ xi. 33.

⁴ Brompton (Twysden, 868) says by mistake that St. Pega was the sister of St. Botulf instead of Guthlac. He says that St. Botulf's remains were divided into three parts: his head was preserved at Ely, the middle of his body at Thorney, while the rest of it was put into a reliquary belonging to King Edgar. More than fifty churches in England were dedicated to him, ten of which are in Norfolk (*Parker Calendar*, illustrated, 311; see also Bishop Forbes, *Kal. Scottish Saints*, 283-84, and Stubbs, *Dict. of Chr. Biog.*, i. 332). William of Malmesbury (*G.P.*, p. 156) says that his body, with that of St. Germinus, brother of St. Ætheldreda, were buried at Bury St. Edmunds. In the *Acta Sanctorum* there is a professed Life of St. Botulf written by Folcard, Abbot of Thorney, soon after the Conquest, which is a mere tissue of fables. In it he is made the brother of Adulf, who was said to have gone to Germany (France is meant) to learn the Gospel more fully, and there became a monk. Adulf is also said to have become Bishop of Utrecht, which is impossible, since, in that case, St. Willibrord cannot have been its first bishop, and no such person occurs in the list of bishops there. Botulf is said to have returned to England, having acted as guardian to two sisters of a quite unknown king of the South Anglians, whom he calls Æthelmund. Æthelmund, with his two relatives, Æthelhere and Æthelwald, kings of East Anglia, and his

Let us now turn to the East Saxons. In a previous volume I described how Bishop Mellitus was expelled from his see of London, how the East Saxons with their kings reverted to paganism, and how the latter were killed in a war against Wessex.¹ Bede says these joint-rulers, the sons of Sabercht, were three in number.² He does not, however, record their names. Florence of Worcester, on what authority we do not know, names two of them only, and calls them Sæxred or Sexred, and Sæward or Seward.³ On the death of these princes (Florence says they fell in a fight with the West Saxons), the throne of the East Saxons was occupied by Sigberct, styled "the Small" (*parvus*).⁴ Florence makes him the son of Seward.⁵ He must have died before 653 A.D.⁶ Sigberct the Small was succeeded by a second Sigberct, styled "Bonus" or "Sanctus," *i.e.* the Good or Pious.⁷ He is made the son of Sexbald by Bede⁸ and of Sigebald by Florence.⁹ Bede tells us that this Sigberct was on very friendly terms with Oswy of Northumbria, and often paid him visits, and he

mother, Siwara (if she was his mother he must have been the son of Anna), offered him an endowment from the royal demesne to build a monastery upon (Æthelhere, as we have seen, was a pagan), but he preferred a piece of uncultivated ground at Icanho, which he first purged of the evil spirits which dwelt there. We are told, the devils thereupon raised a fœtid vapour and with loud wailings abandoned the place. He then built a monastery on the plan of those which he had known in France (Hardy, *Cat.*, i. 373-75). Such is the collection of fables as compiled by Folcard. His obit was 17th June.

¹ Howorth, *St. Augustine*, 231-2.

² *Bede*, ii. 5.

³ *Op. cit.*, *M.H.B.*, 629 and 637.

⁴ *Bede*, iii. 22.

⁵ *Op. cit.*, *M.H.B.*, 629 and 637.

⁶ Plummer, *Bede*, ii. 177.

⁷ *Bede*, iii. 22.

⁸ *Ib.*

⁹ *M.H.B.*, 626 and 637.

professes to give us the substance of the latter's counsel to his visitor, which, we cannot doubt, was his own composition. It is none the less interesting as embodying the kind of arguments deemed effective in the seventh century in dealing with those who were heathens. He says¹ that Oswy frequently urged upon Sigberct in a brotherly way that those could not be gods which were made with human hands, nor could real gods be made of wood or stone, the chips of which (*quorum recisurae*) were either burnt in the fire or made into articles useful for man, carted out as rubbish or pulverised into dust. That God was rather to be deemed as having an incomprehensible majesty and as being invisible to human eyes, almighty, eternal, the creator of heaven and earth and man, who would govern and judge the world in righteousness, whose everlasting seat was in heaven, that He could not be embodied in vile or fading metal (*in vili et caduco metallo*), and that it was a reasonable conclusion that those who had learnt and who obeyed the will of Him by whom they were created would receive from Him eternal rewards. Sigberct was at length converted, and with the consent of his friends agreed to adopt Christianity, and was baptized by Bishop Finan in the royal vill of Ad Murum, at a distance of twelve miles from the sea.²

On returning home, Sigberct asked Oswy to provide him with some teachers. The latter

¹ *Op. cit.* iii. 22.

² *i.e.* the place now known as Walbottle.

thereupon sent to the country of the South Angles and summoned Cedde. He was one of the four missionaries who had gone there with Peada when he returned home after his conversion. Oswy gave him another priest as a companion, whose name is not mentioned, and sent them to preach the gospel amongst the East Saxons. They duly visited all parts of that kingdom and collected a large congregation (*multam Domino ecclesiam congregassent*). Cedde presently returned to Northumbria, and having consulted with Bishop Finan, the latter, with the assistance of two other bishops (*vocatis ad se in ministerium ordinationis aliis duobus episcopis*), consecrated him as Bishop of the East Saxons.¹

At this point Bishop Browne aptly reminds us that the two bishops just named actually took part in Cedde's consecration. So far as we can judge, all had a real share in the ceremony. Bede, he urges, knows nothing of the modern Roman theory (invented for polemical purposes) which teaches that it is only the principal bishop who consecrates, the others being merely witnesses. Bede, who reports the events, never suggests the modern view, but expressly unites the three bishops in a common ceremony. His own words, as above cited, are quite plain, and show what his own view was. *Ordinare*, it should be noted, was a word almost always used by him for the ordination of bishops.

It would be interesting to know whence the two bishops came from who assisted Finan in this ordina-

¹ *Bede*, iii. 22.

tion. Iona was a long way off. Can it be that, in the Celtic monasteries of Northumbria, the Irish fashion of having monastery-bishops prevailed? This seems very doubtful. Bede does not mention the fact. Can it be, on the other hand, that the presence at this particular ceremony of additional bishops was a surmise or an invention of Bede to bring the practice of the early Northumbrian Church into closer union with what he himself deemed Catholic? Cedde was an Anglian by race, and one of four brothers who were distinguished priests; the others were Cynibill, Cælin, and Ceadda. The fact of there having been so many ecclesiastics in one family is mentioned by Bede as rare, and is made more notable because two of them became bishops.¹ The third, Cælin, as we have seen, administered baptism to Oidilwald, son of Oswald. Cedde, having become bishop of the East Saxons, pursued the work he had already begun with more ample authority, built churches in several places, and ordained priests and deacons to assist him in teaching the faith and in baptizing. It has by some been taken as the initial stage of the creation of parishes, properly so called in Essex, but this is a mistake. Parishes in our sense of the word were unknown to the Irish monks. They worked their dioceses from their central monasteries, and the churches were served by monks, who used them as convenient places for saying Mass and preaching, etc., but they had no parishes attached

¹ *Op. cit.* iii. 23.

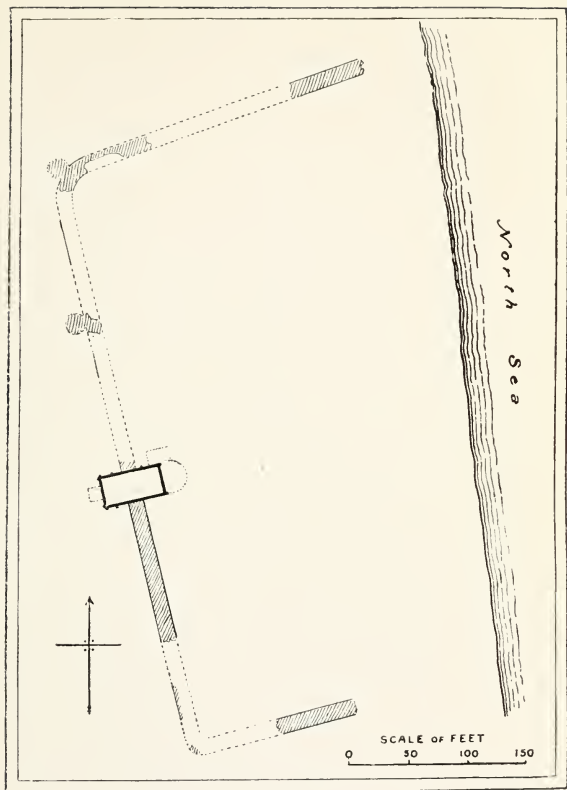
to them. Cedde built two such monasteries, the centres of his missionary work. One of them is called Ythancæstir by Bede, who says it was on the banks of the Penta (*i.e.* the Freshwell, one of whose sources is still called Pante).¹ It is now planted on a tongue of land between the Crouch and the Blackwater in Essex. This was one of the Roman stations on the so-called Saxon shore and was known as "Othona," and the church built by Cedde is now called the church of "St. Peter's on the Wall."

This church fortunately still remains largely intact, owing to its being protected by the castle in which it was planted, and it will be useful to describe it. It is situated in the parish of Bradwell, and is built *across* the wall of the Roman fortress of Othona, which guarded the mouth of the Blackwater. The character of the building was first divined and its real character made out² by Mr. Thomas Lewin, and his conclusion was endorsed by Micklethwaite, who had only seen the plans, but whose instinct here, as in other cases, was right, and the question is now considered settled.

An excellent account is given of the church in the *Archæological Journal*, vol. liii., by my friend C. N. Peers, from which I shall liberally borrow. Speaking of the early class of church to which it, together with St. Martin's, and St. Pancras', Canterbury, St. Mary's, Lyminge, and St. Andrew's, Rochester, and perhaps the old Minster at South

¹ See *Bede*, ii. 178.

² See *Archæologia*, xli. 446-452.



GROUND PLAN OF THE ROMAN FORT AT YTHANCEASTER,
WITH ST. PETER-AT-WALL.

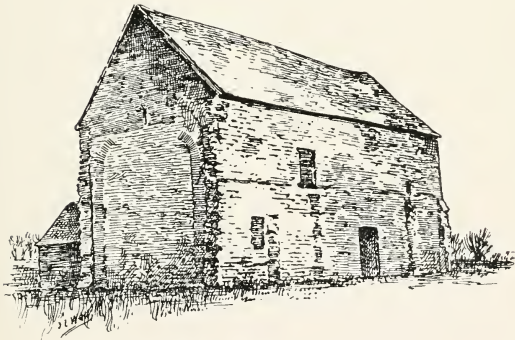
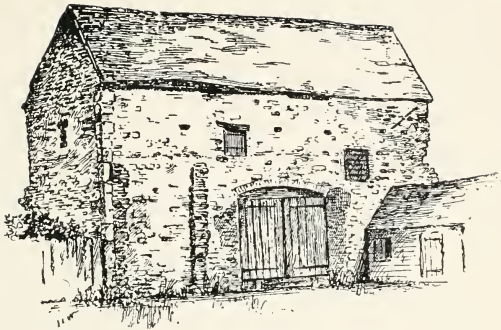
[Vol. I., facing p. 14.]

Elnham belong, he says "they are connected with each other and distinguished from all other early churches in this country in (1) the use of three arches, in place of the usual single arch, between the nave and presbytery. This only occurs in the churches mentioned, together with those at Reculver and Brixworth, to be presently named; (2) the short and broad nave; and (3) their approximation to Roman detail and the complete absence of all the characteristics of later Saxon work.¹ The external measurement of the nave of the church in question is 54 feet 3 inches long by 26 feet 3 inches wide, and it formerly opened at the east end by an arcade of three equal arches into an apse of the same width, in circuit rather more than a semicircle. At the west of the nave is a doorway 5 feet wide, once covered by a western porch, which in later times was carried up as a tower, and has now entirely disappeared. The apse has also gone, and of the triple arch, only the responds and parts of the side arches remain, sufficient, however, to determine their span. The western porch has gone, and the church having in recent times been used as a barn, a cartway has been driven across the nave, destroying some 12 feet of the middle of both north and south walls. But a great deal of the original building is left: the nave walls exist to their full height (about 25 feet), and the east and west gables are only slightly lowered. There are no mediæval alterations to

¹ *Op. cit.* 403.

obscure the early work. The materials consist of coarse white septaria and Roman bricks, chiefly, if not entirely, taken from Roman buildings. The mortar is brown and very hard, containing sand, pebbles, and fragments of bricks. At the western angles of the nave are pairs of buttresses, of irregular width, 1 foot 10 inches to 2 feet 3 inches, and of 2 feet projection, made of stone rubble with a few brick courses at their base, and having heads of brick in horizontal courses, sloping back to the wall-face at an angle of about 50 degrees.

“Remains of similar buttresses exist on the north and south walls; two on the north and one on the south. They are all about 14 feet high and die into a wall at the level of the sills of the windows. The western angles of the nave are built in their upper part with blocks of oolite and bands of brick, and below with heavy quoins of Roman ashlar, and as the buttresses come to within 6 inches of the angles, the sides next the angles are built with a straight joint against the ashlar face of the quoins, bonding being of course impossible. The coursing of the masonry is irregular and uneven; for 8 feet from the present ground level are stretcher courses of Roman wrought and squared stones; above this, the stones are smaller and uneven, as if no more facing-stone was available on the site, and ‘the hearting’ of the Roman work is used. The mortar joints are very wide, and the stones are often laid on end as if to make them go as far as possible. The chief interest of



CHURCH OF ST. PETER-ON-THE-WALL.

[Vol. I., facing p. 144.]

the building, apart from its plan, centres in the windows. Of these, parts of five remain; two in the north wall, two in the south, and one in the west, over the west doorway. The west window, which originally looked over the roof of the west porch, and must have afterwards been blocked by the tower, raised on the porch walls, is 4 feet 5 inches wide internally, with a semicircular arched head, both jambs and head being built in brick and splayed right through the wall. The splay is 3 feet wide at its outer opening, which is now blocked with modern brickwork. The bottom course of the jambs internally is of ashlar, cut to the splay. The other four windows have splayed jambs similar in all respects to the western window, but have flat heads with wooden lintels, which, though probably not original, are at any rate their successors. The width of the openings at the outer wall face is 3 feet, and 5 feet 3 inches inside, and they must have been filled with pierced woodwork screens, or *transennae*, either fixed or in the form of shutters; the mid-wall planks, which are still to be seen here and there in our later Saxon churches, are an adaptation of the same idea. The sills are of brick stepped in horizontal courses, and were no doubt finished with a plastered splay.

“Remains of two doorways exist, both with jambs right through the wall. The western doorway is 5 feet wide; it is blocked with modern brickwork, and has lost its head, which may have

been either arched or flat. The second doorway is on the south wall just west of the presbytery arches. Only the lower part remains, and shows that it was 4 feet wide with ashlar jambs; it may have opened into a small *porticus* or chapel, of which there is no trace beyond the bonding of its west wall. There may have been a similar arrangement on the north of the nave, where the wall has been altered, and marks of bonding are to be seen externally.

“Of the triple arcade, only the responds and part of the side arches are left. The responds are of 2 feet projection and 2 feet 5 inches wide, made of brick, with a stone base course, and another half-way up. Of the springing of the arch, two courses of brick are set out on the soffit, and the arch, which is of brick, semicircular, and apparently slightly tilted, is set back from the face of the responds at its springing. From the curve that remains, it seems that the three arches were of equal space; whether they were carried by stone columns or brick piers, does not now appear. On the wall-faces above the arcade, and elsewhere inside the nave, are patches of a fine white plaster, very thin, which may be the original finish. There is no evidence as to the nature of the floor. Of the eastern apse nothing can now be seen, but its roof was lower than that of the nave.

“The internal western angles of the nave show a curious system of bonding by sections, and not by courses, which produces an alternation of straight joints between the west and side walls which might

be very misleading if the building were not as well preserved as it is ; and in any case, it is an interesting commentary on the straight joints between practically contemporary pieces of masonry at St. Pancras', Canterbury. The walls of the west porch give another instance, being built without bond against the west wall of the nave for some four feet, and then bonded regularly as far as traces of them can be seen."¹

Summing up the characteristics of this very interesting type of early Saxon churches, Peers says that they show none of the well-known details of later Saxon work, long and short, double splay, rib work, balusters, and so forth, but clearly belong to an earlier and simpler age, when Roman tradition was everything, and a locally developed style a thing of the future. Their plan is an adaptation of the small rectangular building with an apse at one end, which became common in the fourth century and of which the Church of Junius Bassus in Rome is a typical example. When this is applied to a larger building, the size of the arch in front of the apse creates problems which have to be solved,—first, the increased thrust, and secondly, the increased height of the arch, whose crown must be kept below the flat ceiling, or at any rate below the level of the beams of the roof. These difficulties are got over in a way which suggests the inexperienced and timid builder—not by accepting the difficulty and providing for it, but by avoiding it.

¹ *Arch.*, xli. 420-423.

In place of one arch, three are built, with, of course, less height and less thrust. In St. Pancras', indeed this development seems to be in the experimental stage, for when the triple division had been made, the builders were, as it appears, not satisfied with its stability, and further to buttress the central arch, walled up the side openings, almost immediately after their erection. And this might be taken as evidence that the triple arcade is the invention of the timid, and the first step towards a native style. We should expect to find its prototype in Gaul, or even in Rome, but so far, says Peers, "I have not been able to find any parallel sufficiently clear to be given here." Micklethwaite, speaking of these triple arcades, says they came of the want of experience in such work on the part of the builders, who were most likely English, and the lack of skill to direct them in the Italian, or Italianised *amateurs* under whom they worked. They seem to have feared to throw an arch over a large space, so where a wide opening was wanted, they divided it by pillars.¹ Mr. Peers continues: "Another special and remarkable detail is the use of buttresses, hitherto considered to be a definitely non-Saxon feature. They occur at St. Martin's, St. Pancras', and Ythanchester, and also in the nearly contemporary church at Reculver (*vide infra*). The complete examples of St. Martin's and Ythanchester have sloping heads of brick in horizontal courses, and St. Pancras' had

¹ *Arch. Journ.*, liii. 299.

the same, if the illustrations of the years 1722 and 1755 are to be trusted. . . . The only two doorways which remain to their full height have flat heads, though the outer opening of the west porch at St. Pancras' was arched. As far as the evidence goes, there were no external north or south doorways; all were in the west wall, and all probably opened into a west porch, the nucleus of the later west tower.

“The lateral chapels or *porticus* are other special features, and contain, no doubt, the germ of the transept of later times. Some of them at any rate were built as places of burial, and whether they had altars at first does not appear. Evidence of them exists at St. Martin's, St. Pancras', and I think Ythanchester, and there are records of them at Rochester, Lyminge, St. Augustine's Canterbury, and elsewhere, all with reference to burials. The walls are thin, those at St. Pancras and Lyminge of the regulation Roman thickness, 1 foot 10 inches wide, but thin walls were built throughout Anglo-Saxon times. Floors are of plaster wherever remains of them exist. All the existing windows have a single splay from inside to outside. The masonry details in the west wall of the nave at St. Martin's are like those of the undoubtedly Roman windows in the Pharos at Dover. The wide windows at Ythanchester have their prototype in the windows of Roman churches whose window-openings are filled with pierced slates called

transennae. The same may be said of the flat heads, though the idea of having the windows as near the top of the wall as possible, was no doubt a factor here in the discarding of an arch; for in the west wall, where the gable-end gave height and to spare, the window over the western opening has the arched head.

“From all this it will appear that these buildings are just such as would naturally be built at the date which is on so many points claimed for them, full of details borrowed from Roman work, the only tradition of the time, but having distinctively non-Roman features.”¹

In regard to a more general question, it is well to remember that although Cedde was a Scotie monk and imbued with the traditions of the Scots, yet in the only church we have remaining, for which he was responsible, he adopted the pattern of the Roman churches in Kent, and probably employed Kentish workmen. If his church had been built in Northumbria, it would no doubt have followed the Scotie pattern. So much for Cedde's church at Ythanchester. The other monastery, which, according to Bede, was made a second centre of his missionary work, he calls Tilaburg (now represented by West Tilbury on the Thames, where the Roman fort seems to have been). Cedde's church there has long ago disappeared. It is curious that in the account of his work in Essex no mention is made of London, which was doubtless then,

¹ *Arch. Journ.*, liii. 430-433.

as now, a large cosmopolitan centre and remained pagan for a considerable time longer. Cedde is called Bishop of the East Saxons, and not of London.¹

Soon after the above reported events² King Sigberct was murdered by two brothers who were his relations, and who, according to Bede, hated him because he was too tender and gentle and forgiving to his enemies. A more probable reason is that they resented his acceptance of Christianity. According to Bede, his death had already been foretold by Cedde. He says that one of the two nobles (*comites*) was at the time unlawfully married—*i.e.* no doubt within the prohibited degrees. The bishop, not being able to prevent or correct it, excommunicated him, and commanded all who were willing to give ear to himself, to avoid entering his house or taking meat with him. The king disregarded this excommunication, and accepted an invitation to the great man's house. While on his way thither he met Cedde, and according to Bede, at once dismounted and fell at his feet trembling and asked pardon for his offence. The bishop, who was on horseback, also alighted. Then, much enraged at what he probably deemed a contumely which had been put upon him, he touched the king with a rod (*virga*) which he held in his hand, and, using his pontifical authority (*pontificali auctoritate*), spoke thus: "I tell thee, forasmuch as thou wouldst not refrain from

¹ *Bede*, iii. 22.

² *Ante*, 139 and 140.

entering the house of that wicked and condemned person, thou shalt die, and in that very house." This truculent sentence, or so-called prophecy of the bishop, may be put beside that of St. Augustine in reference to the Welsh bishops, told in a former volume. Bede has a cryptic comment on the transaction. He says: *Sed credendum est, quia talis mors viri religiosi non solum talem culpam diluerit, sed etiam meritum ejus auxerit; quia nimirum ob causam pietatis, quia propter observantiam mandatorum Christi contigit.*¹ "But it is to be believed that such a death of a religious man not only expiated such a fault, but enhanced his merits, since it was undoubtedly the result of his observance of Christ's precepts" (*i.e.* of charity and kindness).

Of the length of Sigberct's reign we have no definite account. According to Bede, he was succeeded as king of the East Saxons by Suidhelm, the son of Sexbald, a pagan, who was baptized by Bishop Cedde while both were on a visit to the East Anglians, and staying at a country residence of the East Anglian king at Rendlaesham, a place still called Rendelsham, on the river Debin in Suffolk. The king of the East Angles, Æthelwald, brother and successor of king Anna, became his godfather.² Suidhelm must have died before the year 664, when Sigheri and Sebbi were reigning in Essex.³

While Cedde was Bishop of Essex he was wont to pay an occasional visit to his old home in

¹ *Bede*, iii. 22.

² *Bede*, *ib.*, and ii. 176-177.

³ Plummer, *Bede*, iii. 30, and ii. 77.

Northumbria to preach (*exhortandi gratia*). At that time Oidilwald, son of Oswald, who reigned over part of it, as we have seen, made him a gift of some land on which to build a monastery, whither that king might himself resort to say his prayers, and where, no doubt, he intended to be subsequently buried. Oidilwald then had by him (probably as a chaplain) a brother of Cedde's named Cælin, already mentioned, and who apparently introduced the Bishop to him. The latter, says Bede, thereupon duly chose a site for a monastery among lofty and distant mountains (*in montibus arduis ac remotis*), which resembled the hiding-places of wild beasts rather than the dwellings of men, so that, according to the words of Isaiah, "In the habitation where before dragons dwelt, might spring up grass with reeds and rushes." He first purified the site in the prescribed fashion from the supposed pollutions of former times by prayers and fasting, and in order that this should be quite efficacious he asked permission to be allowed to remain there all the approaching Lent to pray. During all this time, except on Sundays, he fasted till the evening, as was his custom, and then partook of only a very little bread, a hen's egg, and a little milk and water. These practices he said he had learnt from those who had taught him the rule of regular discipline, and who were wont before building a church to thus purge its site by prayers and fasting. When there were still ten

days of Lent remaining, he had to leave his work in order to go and assist the king in his business (*negotiorum regalium causa*), and appointed his brother Cynibill to superintend it. The latter, having completed the term of prayer and fasting, built the monastery, which, says Bede, is now called Læstingæu.¹ Dr. Browne has shown good reason for thinking that its church was on the site of Kirkdale church, near Kirby Moorside, and near the modern Lavington, and was not actually at the latter village, as has been generally assumed.² It lay under the Pickering Hills and not far from Whitby, and was afterwards destroyed by the Danes. It is curious that in the prescribed ritual for the consecration of churches among the Celts, we do not read of the placing of relics in the altars, or the foundations, which had then become very usual in the case of churches built under the Roman discipline. At Læstingæu Cedde established the rule and usage which prevailed at Lindisfarne, where he and his brothers had been educated.³

Cedde continued to preside over the church of the East Saxons for some years, and also retained in his hands the abbacy of the monastery just named, over which he placed priors (*prepositi*).

NOTE

In writing on page 79, etc., about King Oswin and his end, I overlooked a paper by the Rev. Daniel Haigh, whose acuteness

¹ *Bede*, iii. 23.

² *Conv. of the Heptarchy*, 151.

³ *Bede*.

always makes it necessary to note any suggestions he may have made. In this case it is possible he may be right. Bede makes Kings Oswy and Oswin first meet in conflict at a place he calls Wilfaræsdun, which he says was ten miles north-west of Catterick. Mr. Haigh says that no place with a name at all like this occurs near Catterick, nor indeed in Yorkshire, and he argues that Bede made a mistake and confused Catterick with Kettering in Northamptonshire, eight miles to the north-west of which is a place called Wilbarston. I would add that Northamptonshire was part of the land of the South Angles, who at this time possibly belonged to Northumbria. This conclusion has been made more probable by the further identification of Ingetlingum with Collingham (*vide ante*, p. 80; *Fragments of Crosses discovered at Leeds in 1837*, by the Rev. Daniel Haigh, pp. 12 and 13).

CHAPTER III

KING OSWY, ST. WILFRID, AND ST. BENEDICT BISCOP

IN Church matters Oswy, king of Northumbria, was devoted to the Scotie mission. It had done much to evangelise his dominions, and had shed its light over the country from Lindisfarne as from a great lighthouse. He had been baptized by Scotie monks, and what he knew of Christianity he had learnt from them. The Scotie monks had lived much secluded from the rest of the Church, and especially from the metropolis of the Latin Church at Rome, with which they had had no administrative ties whatever, nor had they shared in some of the reforms and movements which had taken place in the latter. They were, in fact, as the Irish priests are still, exceedingly conservative in their theological views and ritual practices, and notably in such matters as the date of keeping Easter and the use of a peculiar tonsure, sharing in these respects in the views of the British Celts who were found so immovable by Augustine and his companions.

While the patronage of King Oswy kept the

Northumbrian Church very staunch to the cause championed by the Scotie monks, it did not prevent a certain leaven from Rome permeating the community.

Oswy had married Eanfleda, the daughter of King Ædwin. As we have seen, she was a pupil of Paulinus, and very naturally therefore a supporter of the Roman mission which had converted her father, and which had been so cherished by him. When she went to Northumbria she took with her a chaplain named Roman, or Ronan (I believe these names to represent one and the same person), who was devoted to the Roman cause, and who was probably also the same person mentioned by Bede in the following sentence: "Those that came from Kent and France affirmed that the Scots kept that festival, *i.e.* Easter, contrary to the custom of the Universal Church. Among them was a very zealous champion of the true Easter whose name was Ronan, a Scot by nation, but instructed in ecclesiastical matters either in France or Italy."¹ Mabillon argues, that very probably this Ronan was a certain "*Peregrinus ex genere Scottorum*," who is called Romanus in a charter reciting the foundation of an ecclesiastical establishment at Mazeroles, on the river Vienne in Picardy, of which he and his *peregrini* were the first occupants.²

¹ *Bede*, iii. 25.

² *Annal. Ord. S. Bened.*, i. 474, and J. Stevenson, *Bede*, 426, note ; see also *Gall. Christ.*, ii. 1222.

Ronan, Queen Eanfleda's chaplain, disputed much with Finan, who, as we have seen, had succeeded Aidan as bishop of Lindisfarne, but he made no impression, and only increased the latter's rigid attitude on the subjects that divided them. Bede, who it must be remembered was opposed to his views, calls Finan a man of violent temper (*quod esset homo ferocis animi*).

Besides Ronan, there was another champion of the Roman view in the north at this time, namely, James, who had been the companion of Paulinus, and who, as we have seen, on the latter's flight remained behind to keep together the few fragments of his Mission Church which survived. Finan probably died in the year 661.¹ So long as he lived his personal influence prevented the outbreak of an open feud between the Roman and the Celtic champions. On his death he was succeeded by Colman, after the latter had been duly consecrated. The Reverend J. Gammack² says that the name is one of extreme frequency in Irish hagiology; ninety-seven Colmans are mentioned in the Donegal Martyrology, and one hundred and thirteen are referred to in the index; while Colgan gives their number as one hundred and thirty, and Ussher as two hundred and thirty. The root of the name is Colam or Colman, meaning a dove,

¹ The *Ann. Lindisfarnenses* put his death in 660, so does Tighernach; the *Annals of Ulster* and the *Mart. Don.*, p. 10, put it in 659, while some foreign chronicles put it in 658. Plummer says it was probably in 667; *op. cit.* ii. 188.

² *Dict. of Chr. Biog.*, i. 596.

which occurs in the names of Saints Columba and Columbanus. Forty-one lives of different Colmans are given in the *Dictionary of Christian Biography*. The Colman who is now occupying us is number twenty-three in the latter list ; he is first heard of definitely in Bede, who tells us that on the death of Finan he was sent (*missus*) from Iona to fill the latter's place as Bishop of Lindisfarne.¹

The necessity for some kind of settlement of the main question which divided the rival Churches must have been greatly emphasised by the fact that about this time a dual celebration of Easter was taking place each year in Northumbria. When the king and his party had ended their period of fasting, and were observing the Easter festival, the queen and her followers were still fasting and celebrating Palm Sunday, assuredly not a very edifying spectacle in a missionary Church.

We must now make a short digression. Among those who had been influenced by this Roman element planted so near the throne, were two young Northumbrians of noble birth, whose names afterwards became very widely known. These were Benedict Biscop and Wilfrid, and it is fitting that we should here give an account of their early lives.

Biscop, surnamed Benedict, was a Northumbrian by birth : the name Biscop is a singular one. It is precisely the same in form as the Anglo-Saxon word for bishop, but as Plummer says, the name

¹ *Bede*, iii. 25, iv. 4.

has probably only an accidental connection with the latter. It occurs as a personal name elsewhere. Thus Florence of Worcester, in his genealogy of the Lindisfarnenses, mentions a certain person called Biscop, son of Beda, son of Bubba.¹ The Biscop who is now occupying us is first mentioned by Æddi in his *Life of Wilfrid*.² He calls him Biscop Baducing, as does Fridegod in his *Metrical Life of Wilfrid*. Baducing is no doubt a patronymic. Bede tells us he was sprung from the Anglian nobles.³ He also calls him a "minister" (*i.e.* doubtless a thane) of the Northumbrian King Oswy, from whom he had received a property suitable to his rank (*possessionem terrae suo gradui competentem*). He adds that Biscop was then twenty-five years of age; this fixes his birth approximately in the year 628.⁴ Being well off, and probably well educated, we find him, like other well-born and educated young men at this time, abandoning his worldly ambition and career and adopting a religious vocation. At the same time he seems to have taken the name of Benedict, probably after the famous abbot of Monte Cassino, whose career had hypnotised so many other people. At the outset he determined to make a journey to Rome, the fame of which place needed no trumpeter, and his first step was to Canterbury. At that time Earconberht was king of Kent, and Honorius was

¹ *Mon. Hist. Britt.*, 631.

² Ch. iii.

³ *De nobilibus Anglorum . . . venire* (*Hist. Eccl.* v. 19). *Nobili quidem stirpe gentis Anglorum progenitus* (*Hist. Abbat.*, 1).

⁴ Plummer, *Bede*, ii. 356 and 357.

Archbishop of Canterbury. To them doubtless he took introductions from the queen.

At Canterbury he met another young man, probably an early friend of his in the north, namely, Wilfrid, or Wilfrith, who was born about 634. His biographer Æddi tells us he was about thirty years old (*circiter triginta*) when elected bishop in 664, and according to the same writer he was in his seventy-sixth year when he died in 709, which would put his birth in 634 (see also Plummer's *Bede*, ii. 316). It has not, I think, been noted, that Florence of Worcester also dates Wilfrid's birth in 634. His father was a man of good family, who had lost his first wife when Wilfrid was still very young, and the boy was not kindly treated by his step-mother. At the age of thirteen he was sent to the Court. He is described as being a comely, well-born, and well-mannered boy, and it is probable that his father had in view his becoming a page or attendant there. We are told he was introduced to the Court by some nobles on whom he had waited at his father's table. At all events, he and his companion were duly supplied with horses, arms, and fine clothes. Queen Eanfleda took a fancy to him, and presently sent him to complete his education at Lindisfarne under the tutelage of Cudda, a king's thane (*sodalis regis*) who had been stricken with paralysis and had retired there, and who became Wilfrid's master or director (*dominus*). Cudda himself became a monk, and eventually abbot of Lindisfarne.¹

¹ Æddi, ch. ii.

Wilfrid stayed at Lindisfarne for some time, and there learnt St. Jerome's version of the Psalms, known as the Gallican Psalter, off by heart. This version was completed by Jerome in 369, and was made directly from the Septuagint. It is now incorporated in the standard Vulgate. He does not appear to have been much influenced by his Scotie neighbours and companions, and in this respect resembled his patroness the queen, from whose chaplain he had doubtless imbibed other views than theirs. He now seems to have conceived a desire to visit Rome, which name was then, as it still is, a great loadstone to very many people. He was apparently encouraged by Eanfleda, who sent him to Kent to her cousin, King Earconberht, with a request that he should be sent on to Rome in an honourable manner. Although he had evidently made up his mind to follow a religious vocation, he was still untonsured.¹

As we have seen, while Wilfrid was in the north he had learnt and used the Psalter in the edition known as the Gallican, which was taken directly from the Septuagint. At Canterbury, according to Bede, he found the Roman Psalter in use. By this was meant Jerome's revision from the Hebrew, which had been made in 383. This is still used at St. Peter's at Rome, while some of the canticles in the Roman breviary are also taken from it. It is curious that Æddi should tell us

¹ *Adhuc enim laicus capite, corde vero a vitiis circumcisis*; Æddi, ch. 2. Bede says, "*necdum quidem adtonsus*"; *H.E.*, v. 19.

that the translation of the Psalter found in use by Wilfrid at Canterbury was the so-called *Quinta* (*juxta quintam editionem*), which it will be remembered was one of the texts employed by Origen in his *Hexapla*.¹ Whichever version it was, we are told that Wilfrid learnt it off by heart—*memoraliter transmetuit* (for *transmutavit*).

While at Canterbury, where he stayed a year,² Wilfrid, as we have seen, met Biscop. The two young men had attracted the attention of Archbishop Honorius, and he arranged that they should travel together. They accordingly set out, and eventually reached Lyons. At that time the Archbishop of Lyons was named Annemund. Æddi and Bede both call him Dalfinus, but this is a mistake, Dalfinus was his brother, and was Count of Lyons.³ It is curious that Bede should have been similarly mistaken in the name of another archbishop of Lyons, who was the correspondent of Pope Gregory.

Both the companions were still laymen, and untoured. At Lyons they separated. Biscop, possibly annoyed at Wilfrid's slow movement, hastened on to Rome; he was anxious, Bede says, to hurry on and see the tombs of the Apostles Peter and Paul; or perhaps he may have re-

¹ Æddi, ch. iii. Another suggestion has been made, namely, that *quintam* is a corruption of *quinam*, which is meant to be the equivalent of the Greek *κοινή*, i.e. the Vulgate. G. H. Forbes, quoted by Raine, *Historians of the Church of York*, i. 5, note.

² Æddi, ch. iii.

³ Mabillon, *Act. SS. Bened.*, i. 425, 443; *Gall. Christ.*, iv. 43; Plummer, *Bede*, ii. 321.

sented his companion's imperious temper. Whatever the reason, they parted, and they apparently never met again. Biscop went on to Rome, and after a while returned again to Northumbria; meanwhile Wilfrid stayed for a time with the archbishop at Lyons. The latter was much attracted by him, wanted him to marry his niece, the daughter of his brother Dalfinus, and offered to give him command of a district, and to treat him as his adopted son. Wilfrid agreed to the adoption, but could not see his way to marrying the niece, for, as he explained to the archbishop, his journey to Rome was in pursuit of spiritual and not temporal aims. He remained, however, for some time at Lyons.

Presently his patron, finding him obdurate in the matter of the marriage, sped him on his way, and furnished him with a guide and requisites for his journey, begging him to come and see him again on his return northwards. Having arrived at Rome, probably in the spring of 654, Wilfrid applied himself for some months to daily prayers at the various holy places, and to the study of ecclesiastical affairs, and secured the friendship of "a most holy and learned man," Boniface, the archdeacon, who was also the Pope's counsellor (*qui etiam consiliarius erat apostolici papae*¹). Under his instructions he studied the contents of the four Gospels, the true way of calculating Easter, "which the schismatics of

¹ *Bede*, v. 19.

Britain and Ireland did not acknowledge," and other matters of ecclesiastical discipline which he could not learn in his own country. Boniface also introduced him to Pope Eugenius the First (Bright says, "the newly elected Pope Eugenius I."),¹ who put his hand on his head, and blessed him. Some years ago a leaden *bull*a was found at Whitby, which is now in the Whitby Museum, and is inscribed + *Bonifatii* + — + *Arceidiac* +, which there is every reason to believe had been attached to some document by Wilfrid's friend.² Among other places Wilfrid visited at Rome the oratory dedicated to St. Andrew, on the altar of which was a book of the four Gospels³; Bright says there was such an oratory under St. Peter's,⁴ and another in the Via Labicana, but, as he suggests, it is much more probable that it was the oratory in St. Gregory's own monastery of St. Andrew's, on the Cælian Hill, that is meant.

Wilfrid stayed at Rome many months (*per multos menses*),⁵ leaving it probably after August 10, 654.⁶ He then returned to Lyons, taking with him some relics of the saints. There he remained for three years, becoming no doubt thoroughly imbued with the theological views and the learning which still survived in the valley of the Rhone. At length a great tragedy (namely, the murder of his patron, the archbishop) led to his withdrawal. Æddi, who

¹ *Op. cit.* 219.

² Raine, *Historians of the Church of York*, i. 8, note 3.

³ Æddi, 5.

⁴ Bright, 219, note 1; *Vit. Pontif.*, i. 156.

⁵ Æddi, 5.

⁶ Plummer, *Bede*, ii. 317

is followed by Bede, directly attributes the murder to Baldechildis or Bathild, the widow of Chlovis II., who died in 656, and who was then acting as regent for her son Chlothaire III., king of Neustria and Burgundy. In her biography¹ she is said to have been a Briton (but her name is German) who was sold as a slave and had married a nobleman named Erchinwald (*i.e.* the "Mayor of the Palace," so-called), whom she abandoned in order to marry Chlovis II. Æddi calls her *malevola regina*,² and associates her with Jezebel (*sicut pessima regina Jezebel*). Fridegod compares her to an infernal cauldron, and Eadmer in his *Life of Wilfrid* says she was fired with demoniacal fury. It is difficult to see how the real character of the queen and the circumstances of the death of the archbishop could have been misunderstood by Æddi and these other writers. As Mabillon says, Æddi was on very intimate terms with Wilfrid, who had lived at Lyons for three years as the special protégé of the archbishop, and the latter was so devoted to him that he had intended making him his heir. It must also be remembered that Sigeband, the Bishop of Paris, was put to death in 664 for being the supporter and abetter in wrong-doing of the queen. Mabillon tries to relieve her memory by attributing the murder (apparently quite arbitrarily) to her "mayor of the palace." On the other hand, as she was placed in the calendar of saints, there has been a great temptation to whitewash her. She even-

¹ Mabillon, *Act. SS. Ben.*, ii. 777.

² *Op. cit.* vi.

tually retired into a monastery at Chelles, which she much cherished and where she died in 680. She was a great benefactress to the double monastery for men and women at Faremoûtier-en-Brie, founded by a very noble abbess in 617, "where," says Bede, "so many royal and noble ladies afterwards lived,"¹ by whom he means English ladies.

Wilfrid had received from Archbishop Annemund a great mark of discrimination from the Celtic ecclesiastics in his old home, namely, the Roman tonsure. His biographer describes it as *tonsuræ Petri Apostoli formulam, in modum coronæ spineæ caput Christi cingentis . . . suscepit*. He attended his patron the archbishop at his execution, and stripped off his own coat preparatory to sharing his fate. To this the archbishop objected. The executioners asked who the youth was, and learning that he was a foreigner and an Englishman they spared his life.² Annemund's death-day was September 9, and the year when he died was probably 658. After the execution Wilfrid returned to England.

Meanwhile, before we proceed further with his history, it will be well to recall the more recent doings of his early travelling companion, Benedict Biscop. It is a curious fact, and perhaps the most striking proof of Wilfrid's imperious temper, that from the day they parted company at Lyons, as previously described, we have no evidence

¹ *Bede*, iii. 8.

² *Æddi*, 6.

that these two famous Northumbrian churchmen, who were contemporaries, ever met again. As we have seen, after a stay in Rome Biscop returned to his old home in Northumbria. Sometime after this Alchfrid, the ruler of Deira and the son of King Oswy and of Eanfleda, having planned a pilgrimage to Rome to worship at the tombs of the apostles, adopted Biscop as his travelling companion. Oswy, however, intervened and constrained his son to remain in England. Biscop, on the other hand, having already made his preparations, set out and returned to Rome. There he stayed for some months, increasing his stores of learning; and on his return he went to Lérins, where he joined the community, and received the tonsure, no doubt in the orthodox way. At Lérins he spent two years in study and devotion.

Let us try and realise the situation, the surroundings, and inmates of this very romantic place where so many real and nominal saints were trained and educated. A short digression about it and some of its more distinguished *alumni* may not be thought out of place, since two such renowned natives of these islands as Benedict Biscop and (as there is good reason to think) St. Patrick spent a considerable time there, and no doubt had their careers largely shaped in consequence. We can hardly doubt that the famous monasteries founded later in Northumbria by Biscop were framed on the model of the establishment at Lérins.

“On the coast of Provence, near Antibes,” says Canon R. T. Smith, “lie two small islands, that which is nearest to the coast, now called St. Marguerite, was in ancient times named Lero. Beyond it is St. Honorat, or St. Honoré, once famous under the name Lerinum. The latter is the smaller of the two, and so flat that the Mediterranean waves often break over it; hence the name Planasia, by which it is designated by Strabo. On its southern point there now rises a tower-like structure, the remains of the famous Benedictine abbey. . . . The island had once been occupied by a town which Pliny calls Vergoanum, but this had long vanished and the place was alleged to be inhabited only by a large number of serpents.”¹

Among the notable people who abandoned their wealth and pursued an austere life in the beginning of the fifth century, was Honoratus, a nobleman of consular family born on the borders of Champagne and Lorraine. When still young he and a relative, Venantius, determined to adopt an ascetic life and divested themselves of their property. Having done this they went on a pilgrimage to the holy places in Palestine, and on their return (in obedience, it was said, to some divine message) Honoratus went to settle at Lérins; this was in the year 410. There he lived the life of a recluse, subjected himself to great austerities, and was presently ordained against his wish, probably by his friend Leontius,

¹ Canon Smith, *The Church in Roman Gaul*, 262.

bishop of Frejus. He then founded a monastery, of which he became the first abbot, and collected around him a number of disciples, who came from all sides, among whom were Hilary, afterwards the famous bishop of Arles and Salvin, another well-known churchman. Honoratus was himself presently persuaded to accept the see of Arles, and died two years afterwards, on January 14th or 15th, 429; being succeeded as bishop by Hilary. The island where he had planted his monastery was afterwards known from him as St. Honorat.¹ The Rule which was followed by the community at Lérins was doubtless that of St. Cassian, who had shortly before introduced the eastern form of monachism into western Europe.

John Cassian is one of the most famous figures in the early history of Western Christianity. He was born about the middle of the fourth century, and it is a matter of dispute whether his birth took place in the East or, as is more likely, at Marseilles. He was placed by his parents for education in a monastery at Bethlehem, and became a proficient scholar both in religious and profane literature. About the year 390 he, with his friend Germanus, determined to visit Egypt, which was then so famous for the number of solitary devotees who had crowded thither. They had pushed the limits of human self-torture, the abnegation of pleasure, and the denial of every craving of the body, even those of family ties and natural affection, to the utmost

¹ Canon Smith, *op. cit.* iii. 138.

limits of endurance, each one vieing with his neighbour in the invention of fresh methods of punishing the flesh, and thus creating the highest ideal known of ascetic perfection. It was among these lonely hermits and anchorites that Cassian and his friend hoped to learn fresh lessons for their own lives.

The bishop of the first town in Egypt which they reached, was a competent guide, for he had himself been a hermit for thirty-seven years, and had then been taken by force for the episcopate, like so many other bishops of that time. He took up his staff and goatskin, the usual travelling equipment of a monk, and conducted the travellers across the banks of the inundated country to visit Chæremon, an aged monk so bowed with years that he moved upon his hands and knees, and who, like the other famous recluses, was given the honorary title of abbot, although he was only a solitary hermit, and had no monks living under him subject to a Rule. After learning what he had to say in praise of the contemplative life and its rigours, Cassian visited others like him, and they so impressed the two travellers that they determined to stay for a time in Egypt, and, in fact, remained there seven years.

During these years they no doubt saw most of the famous saints there, and their communities. Among other places, we are told, they visited the great desert settlement of Scethis, situated on an island between one of the channels of the Nile and the

sea, where water had to be carried by the recluses for three miles. One of these, finding that they wanted to remain, gave them his hut and its contents, and went forth and erected a fresh hermitage for himself. One of the hermits named Theonas had abandoned his wife contrary to her wish. While Cassian did not approve of this action, he thinks God had given His sanction to it as an exceptional case, as was shown by his conferring upon Theonas the gift of miracles.¹ Another, who had received a packet of letters from his family fifteen years after his retirement from the world; to show his self-denial, and after much reflection, threw them unopened into the fire. One of the so-called abbots, named Abraham, was found eulogising the virtues of manual labour as good for the spirit, and a better way of gaining a livelihood than dependence on others. A certain amount of manual labour was, of course, needed in certain cases if the anchorites were to live at all, and Cassian himself and his friend earned their scanty living while in Egypt in this way. They needed little, for he tells us they consumed but twelve ounces of bread a day, and went barefoot and scantily clothed. Perhaps the most famous of the ascetics whom they visited was Serapion, who discoursed to them on the principal vices of cloister life, greediness, incontinence, avarice, anger, sadness of spirit, vanity and pride. Another, named Serenus, told them he thought the

¹ Smith, *The Church in Roman Gaul*, 249; *Dict. of Chr. Biog.*, iv. 991.

solitaries were less troubled by demons than their predecessors who had first sought those lonely haunts, but the spirits of evil were still all around, and peopled the atmosphere between earth and heaven.¹

Having spent seven years in Egypt, we find Cassian at Constantinople in 404. Here he was ordained deacon by, and received various commissions at the hands of, the famous Father St. John Chrysostom. Among other things, he conveyed the letter about the exile of their patriarch from the clergy there to Pope Innocent at Rome. Hence he went on to Marseilles, where he spent the rest of his life, which adds to the probability that he was, in fact, a native of that city. There he was ordained a priest, and proceeded to found two monasteries, one, that of St. Victor, for men, and the other, that of St. Salvator, for women. These were apparently the first monasteries, in our sense of the term, which were founded in western Europe.

The earlier religious communities of St. Martin and St. Victricius, in the centre of France, were doubtless only rudimentary and half-developed in discipline when compared with those established by Cassian at Marseilles, and with the many others which speedily arose modelled upon his elaborate rules.² One of the first of the latter was founded by Castor, Bishop of Apt, in 420. In founding it he asked Cassian for a Rule, and it was in answer to this invitation that the latter composed his twelve

¹ Smith, *op. cit.* 250.

² Smith, *op. cit.* 245-6.

books of Monastic Institutions, entitled *De Institutis Renuntiantium*.

Inasmuch as it is fairly certain that both at Lérins and in the monasteries subsequently founded by Benedict Biscop in Northumbria the Rule of St. Cassian was more or less followed, it becomes important to realise what were the kind of regulations drawn up by the latter. I shall rely for an abstract of them on the excellent work of Canon Smith above cited. "Though treating so much of Egyptian monasticism," he says, "the instructions were intended for the guidance of the Gallic, and were, in fact, so used." Cassian speaks with a little contempt of the supposition that anybody would be able to devise in Gaul, a new monastic constitution better than that of the Eastern system, to which he attributes nothing less than an apostolic origin: but he grants that in the application of the Egyptian rules to Gaul, allowance was to be made for the difference of climate and of manners, and in such cases he qualified the more austere practices of the Egyptian cœnobites by the milder discipline of the monasteries of Pontus and Cappadocia, where St. Basil had first established his Rule. The first book refers to the dress of the monks. The Egyptians wore an inner linen garment, and an outer one of some coarse stuff. Camel's hair within was well enough, he says, but it must not be used outside, for he held that the self-denial of the monks should not be seen of men, a sheep or goat's skin covered the shoulders, and braces joined over

the chest left the arms free for work. The feet were naked except in very cold weather or in sickness.

The second book refers to the course of prayer and of psalmody. Cassian says he had found the greatest difference of practice in the various monasteries he had visited in regard to the number of psalms chanted in the nightly assemblies of the brethren. In some cases twenty, or even thirty, were read every night, with some modulations and an anthem preceding; and the like difference prevailed in regard to the services of the day. In a later page, in which we shall have much to say of St. Cassian's great predecessor, St. Basil, we shall describe the history of the introduction of the so-called Canonical Hours. The chief alteration in them attributed to Cassian was the introduction of that of "Prime," which he claims as having first been introduced in his Monastery of Paula at Bethlehem. He says, *Hanc Matutinam . . . canonicam functionem nostro tempore in nostroque monasterio primitus institutam*.¹ Prime was a new "Hour" interposed between matin-lauds and terce, and was said after matin-lauds and before sunrise. It was some time before the use of this service spread in the West. It does not seem to have been known as a service for monks and nuns to St. Cæsarius († 506), nor is it contained in the list of Hours given by Cassiodorus fifty years later, nor by Isidore a century later still. It was, however, known to St. Benedict, is found in the Rule of

¹ *De Inst. Coen.*, iii. 4.

Aurelian in 555 A.D., and had made its way into Spain before the middle of the seventh century. Mr. Scudamore, to whom I owe these facts, says it was without doubt largely owing to St. Benedict and his followers that it eventually became universal in the Latin Church.¹

In Egypt the number of psalms chanted at each of the Hours was uniform; uniformity having been maintained there by a tradition which claimed a miraculous origin for the practice. Twice in the twenty-four hours the brethren assembled in the oratory—in the evening, and about the middle of the night, and on each occasion they recited twelve psalms, because once long before, an angel had joined in the worship, and after the twelfth psalm had cried “Hallelujah” and disappeared.

It was the practice for one of the brethren to recite while the rest sat silently listening on the ground; but the reading of the whole twelve psalms would have been too much for a man subsisting on the poor diet of these monks, and they relieved each other twice or three times during “the office.” After the psalms two lessons were read, one from the Old and the other from the New Testament, except on Saturday, when both came from the New. Then all the monks knelt in prayer, and the abbot or presiding priest finished the office by a public prayer in the name of all. Each then retired to his cell, but not to sleep; he worked or prayed for the greater part of

¹ Smith, *Dict. of Chr. Antiquities*, i. 795.

the night. None conversed with any other, none issued from his cell except for the offices. This, though a cœnobitic life, differed little from that of the solitaries.

Cassian's third book treats of the monks of Palestine. They met for prayers both at the night hours and the three day hours already mentioned. Late-comers were admitted to the services if they arrived before the end of the first psalm in the day offices, or before the second in those of the night. If any one was later than this he had to wait outside till the end of the service, and then to ask forgiveness on his knees. On Saturday nearly all the night was spent in psalmody and the solemn reading of several lessons from scripture, which were slowly given for the purpose of meditation. "The Westerns," he said, "fasted on a Saturday, but not the Easterns."

The fourth book describes how monks were proved and received at the great monastery of Tabenna, an island on the Nile containing 5000 monks under one abbot. When a postulant asked for admission he was first kept at the gate for ten days, prostrating himself meanwhile to any brother who passed by, while to test his real devotion to his calling they at first repelled him scornfully as if his motive was merely to secure maintenance. He must surrender all his worldly goods, but the monastery was not to receive them, for fear, that if he had many, he might be puffed up with pride over poorer brethren who had less to

give up. He was to divest himself of all his clothes, which were to be put aside in case of his after expulsion or desire to leave, and was to receive from the abbot similar ones to those used by the rest of the monks. He was to be lodged under the care of some old monk, in some dwelling near the monastery, until after a year's proof of humility and patience. Meanwhile he was humbly to attend upon every stranger until he was personally received as a dweller in his new home, all the time associating with the Order, and submitting to the instructions of another aged monk who was called a dean (*decanus*), because ten young monks were placed in his charge.

It was the dean's duty to impress on his charges the mortifying of their wills by strict obedience. They were further taught that they must reveal every thought of their hearts to him, on the ground that anything they wished to conceal must come from Satan. They could not leave their cells without his leave; he was to furnish them with clean clothes when they needed them; and their food was to be a kind of soup made of wild herbs and seasoned with salt. On hearing the signal of the hour summoning them to prayer, or to a meal, they were to leave instantly whatever they were doing, and must not even wait to finish a half completed character in their copying. It was deemed a great offence when any of them called any article his own.¹ "What shall we Westerns say,

¹ It will be remembered how stringent St. Benedict and St. Gregory also were on this point; in fact, the rule on the subject had

miserable people that we are," says Cassian, "who, though being in monasteries under an abbot, bear about our own keys, and wear signet rings on our fingers to seal up the hidden treasures which, not merely our boxes, but even our persons, are insufficient to contain; things that we accumulated or reserved when we left the world behind."

If a monk broke anything belonging to the monastery he was put to penance, as he was for being late; for hesitating (however little) in his chanting; for not going back immediately to his cell after the office; for joining in prayer with any one under suspension; or for receiving a letter without the knowledge of the superior. For these and other offences he must seek forgiveness while prostrate on the ground. This extraordinary and extravagant discipline may be pictured by the story of a brother who, having dropped three grains of lentils on the ground, was suspended from prayer by the abbot. Graver offences, as eating out of hours, talking with a female, or having any private possession, were punished by castigation or suspension.

Reading aloud at meals, which in after times became so marked a habit of conventual life, had its origin not in Egypt, but in St. Basil's Cappa-

become much more rigid in their day, and it was probably due to the influence of Cassian. When writing the chapter on St. Benedict's Rule in my account of Pope Gregory, I had not realised the amount of obligation Benedict was under to Cassian and to St. Basil, whom he praises so highly. I only appreciated it on reading my friend Abbot Butler's quite excellent edition of the famous Rule which has recently been published.

docian monasteries. In Egypt meals were partaken of in perfect silence, except when the deans gave some order; and every brother pulled his cowl over his head so far as to see nothing but the table and the food. Each in turn took the duties of menial service for a week, beginning on Monday morning and ending on Sunday evening. Then the whole community assembled, washed the feet of those who were to go out during the week, and prayed for them, as a precaution against the temptations they might meet with in their intercourse with the world.

The fifth book treats of the sin of gluttony, in which the sensible principle is laid down that different people require different amounts of food, and that each should take what was sufficient for him. It urged that we must cultivate moderation in fasting itself: and it was better to eat with great moderation every day, than to observe intervals of extravagant fasting.

Manual labour was prescribed as the monk's true remedy against the sin of laziness, and the example of a certain Abbot Paul is commended, who, being a long distance from any town, and unable to sell the articles he had made, burnt them to make room for a new stock rather than be idle, a plan which would hardly be approved by the political economy of our day.

Any vain or frivolous tendencies were to be specially repressed. With this end in view the monks were recommended to avoid frequenting the

company of bishops. "No doubt, the patronage and employment of regulars to the exclusion of the secular clergy, which afterwards became so common a source of jealousy and emulation, was already extending among the heads of the Church."¹

This is but a slight summary of the famous work of Cassian, which had such a great effect on all the subsequent monkish Rules, and notably on that of St. Benedict, of which it was the basis. While purporting to be a description of the methods of the eastern monks, it is in fact a manual in which the recasting of these methods is suggested by the far-sighted Western scholar, who saw that no system equalling in austerity that of the Egyptian could be made to work in a country with the climatic conditions of Gaul. In addition to his great work, Cassian wrote another, entitled *Collationes* (i.e. Conferences). It contained twenty-four sections, which are supposed to have been addressed to the reader by as many Egyptian abbots, and which treat of the inner life of the monk and contain an exaltation of the ideals he pursued. It was also known as *Speculum Monasterium*. St. Benedict (as we have seen in a former volume²) ordered it to be read daily, and it was also highly approved by the founders of the Dominican, Carthusian, and Jesuit orders.³

¹ Smith, *The Church in Roman Gaul*, 251-257.

² Howorth, *St. Gregory the Great*, 72.

³ It will be well to add one word about the views of Cassian on one great subject of anxious dispute in his time, and which doubtless through him had a wide influence in the West, namely, his attitude towards the Augustinian doctrine of predestination. On this matter I prefer to quote from another friend of mine, namely, the Reverend

Such was the Rule, and such the manual of conduct prevailing in St. Honorat's foundation at Lérins, under which a very remarkable succession of scholars and men of high character were trained, who for more than a century made the Church of Gaul an unrivalled focus of Christian light. Although its glory had largely departed in the seventh century, as it had indeed from the Church of Gaul as a whole, Lérins still remained its greatest school of theology, and possessed unmatched prestige. It was to Lérins, as we have seen, that Benedict Biscop repaired for his training, and there he adopted the tonsure and remained for two years. There we will leave him for a while and return to his quondam travelling companion, Wilfrid.

We have seen how he came back to England about the year 658, after the death of his patron the Archbishop of Lyons. During his absence great changes had taken place there. The pagan king of Mercia was dead, and his powerful son Wulfhere had become a Christian. Oswy, a devoted

J. Gregory Smith. He says, "On the subject of predestination, Cassian, without assenting to Pelagius, protested against what he considered the fatalistic tendency of St. Augustine. In the *Collationes* he merely professes to quote the words of the Egyptian 'fathers,' and in the *De Incarnatione* he distinctly attacks Pelagianism, as closely akin to the heresy of Nestorius (i. 3, vi. 14). Still it is certain from the tenor of his writings that Cassian felt a very strong repugnance to any theory which seemed to him to involve an arbitrary limitation of the possibility of being saved. It has been well said that Augustine regards man in his natural state as dead, Pelagius as sound, and Cassian as sick. Never formally condemned, and never formally canonised, Cassian occupies an ambiguous position. In the Latin Church he is usually only styled *beatus*, though dignified by the title of Saint in the Greek" (*Dict. of Chr. Biog.*, i. 415 and 416).

pupil of the Scotie monks, was in reality "Emperor" of England, while his son Alchfrid, the patron of Wilfrid, had been placed in charge of Deira by his father.¹ We cannot doubt that Wilfrid had become a highly cultured man, according to the standards of the times. He doubtless knew classical Latin well, and he also probably spoke fluently the debased Latin or very primitive Provençal French, which was the language of the valley of the Rhone.

King Alchfrid, who had married Cyneburga, daughter of Penda (one of the five children of that sturdy pagan who were styled saints), had at this time, according to Wilfrid's biographer, been persuaded by Coinwalch, the king of Wessex, to adopt the Roman rather than the Scotie view in the controversies which divided the Church in North Britain. Perhaps the change was due in a greater extent to the influence of his mother, and those who surrounded her. These being Alchfrid's views, we are not surprised that he gave a warm welcome to Wilfrid, and that they became fast friends. We are told that he asked him, for the love of God and St. Peter, to stay with him, and that they became as closely united as David and Jonathan.

Alchfrid also gave Wilfrid an estate at Æt-Stanforda,² on which lived ten peasant families

¹ *Alchfrithus, qui cum Oswiu patre suo, regnabat*, says Æddi, chap. vii. ; *regnantibus Oswiu et Alchfritho filio ejus* (*id.*, chap. x).

² Æddi, chap. viii. Plummer says that the Durham tradition in the fifteenth century certainly identified this with Stamford in Lincolnshire (see Raine's *Hexham*, i. p. 14, note 15; *D.C.B.* iv. 1179). Smith

(*tributarii*), and shortly afterwards he seems to have presented him with a finer property at Ripon (*in Hrypis*) with the land of thirty great *mansiones* (*cum terra triginta mansionum*) for the good of his own soul. Some Scotie monks had been previously settled there; among them there were two famous persons, Eata and Cuthberht; the king gave them the option of conforming to his new views or moving away to Bernicia, where his father Oswy, who clung to the Scotie rites, ruled: they chose the latter course and settled down at Melrose, where the two personages just mentioned had been living before they were called to Ripon. This expulsion of the Scotie monks must have greatly displeased Oswy, and irritated a large number of their irascible brethren.

Wilfrid's name is closely associated with the early history of the fine minster at Ripon, which was so largely his handiwork, and of which remains are to be found in the existing crypt. He also built a monastery there. Of this monastery he became the first abbot, and in its precincts he was evidently buried. I have described the remains of Wilfrid's work at Ripon on a later page.

It was while Wilfrid was acting as abbot of Ripon that the Frenchman Agilbert, who had been bishop of Dorchester, but had resigned,

and J. Stevenson urge that Alchfrid could then have had no authority in Lincolnshire, and suggest that the place was Stamford on the Yorkshire Derwent, now known as Stamford Bridge (Plummer, ii. 332-3). Their argument is not of much value, since it is clear that on Penda's death, Alchfrid's father, Oswy, became the ruler of Lincolnshire.

arrived at York. We have seen that it was Coinwalch, king of Wessex, who was (partially at least) responsible for Alchfrid's change of views on the questions that separated the Roman clergy from the Scotie monks. In this matter it is very probable that Coinwalch's late bishop had also a part. He must, at all events, have been aware of what had taken place, and it doubtless led him to visit York when he was driven from Wessex. On his arrival there, Alchfrid persuaded him to ordain his friend the young abbot Wilfrid, who was still a mere monk, as priest. Bishop Browne, speaking of this, says aptly, that Wilfrid was brought up by the Scotie Church, tonsured by a Gallican archbishop, and ordained priest by a Gallican bishop who had studied in Ireland.

Meanwhile the converging influence of various potent people, lay and clerical, combined with the zeal of his wife and son, and of the clergy who sided with them, seem to have persuaded Oswy of the desirability of calling a Church synod to deal with the differences that were causing so much friction in his kingdom.

It was not unnaturally convoked in the province and sub-kingdom of Deira, where the Roman influence was most powerful, and over which Alchfrid, who chiefly supported it, was ruler. The place of meeting fixed upon was the abbey of Whitby, then presided over by the abbess Hilda, who was apostrophised by Bede for her prudence (*Tantae autem erat ipsa prudentiae*). Although originally

a protégé of Paulinus, she apparently sympathised with the Scots; and her house might thus be well deemed a more neutral trysting-place than any other. All of us know the site, either at first hand or from pictures, dominating as it does the picturesque fishing town of Whitby, and described by Dr. Bright as "that proud seaward height which is now crowned by the ruined church of an abbey founded two centuries after Hilda's minster had been laid desolate."

The meeting was not, strictly speaking, a synod, or council, but it was rather, as Æddi says, "a gathering of all the ranks of the Church system."

We must not forget, however, that it in no way represented the English Church as a whole. The kingdoms of Kent, Essex, East Anglia, Mercia, and Wessex were not represented there. It was, in fact, purely a local Northumbrian synod. This fact must not mislead us, however. Northumbria was then a perfectly substantive, independent kingdom, and neither in civil nor religious matters did it form a part of a greater England. The synod was not therefore a provincial but a national one. It represented the whole nation of the Northumbrians. Æddi tells us that there were present the abbess Hilda (*santimoniale matre piissima Hilde*), the kings (*i.e.* Oswy and his son Alchfrid), and the two bishops Colman and Agilbert.¹

Bede says that Agilbert took with him a priest named Agatho, whom Æddi calls *Agatho*

¹ *Op. cit.* x.

papa. Can this by any chance have been the subsequent pope of the name? The conjunction of this name and this unusual title at this time is certainly curious. It is not less curious because the title Pope was at that time very occasionally given to a mere bishop. Thus Isidore, in his *De Vir. Illus.*, ch. 45, mentions a letter addressed by Eutropius to a fellow-bishop in Spain named Licinian, and styled by him *Papa*. Bede adds that Colman brought with him his clergy (*cum clericis suis*) from Scotland, and that the deacons James and Romanus were also present. Hilda the abbess, with her people, took the part of the Scots, as did the venerable Bishop Cedde, who, as we have seen, had been ordained by them and who, according to Bede, acted as a most vigilant interpreter and moderator at the synod (*interpres in eo concilio vigilantissimus*).¹ Whether these statements about Cedde's sympathetic attitude are all trustworthy is not quite certain.

The proceedings were opened, according to Bede, by a speech from King Oswy, who urged that, inasmuch as they all served the same God they should also observe the same rule of life, and not differ in celebrating the divine Sacraments, but should rather inquire which was the true tradition and then follow it. He bade his own bishop, Colman (*episcopum suum Colmanum*), set out what the practice was which he followed. Æddi says nothing about these introductory phrases of the king, which read suspiciously, in view of his subsequent conduct, but

¹ *Op. cit.* iii. ch. 25.

merely says that Colman was first given time to speak, as was worthy (*ut dignum erat*).

The version of what followed, as given by Bede, is more rhetorical than the account in Æddi, but substantially it is the same. I propose to follow the earlier writer, Æddi. He makes Colman say : “ Our fathers and predecessors, who were manifestly inspired by the Holy Spirit, as was Columcille (*i.e.* St. Columba), held that Easter Sunday should be observed on the fourteenth of the month if it fell on that day, thus following the example of John the Apostle and Evangelist, who rested his head on the Lord, and was called the beloved of the Lord (*amator Domini*). He celebrated the Paschal feast on the fourteenth, and we, like his disciples Polycarp and others, faithfully celebrate it also ; nor dare we, nor do we wish, to change what our fathers did. Such is our statement, now for yours.”

Thereupon Agilbert the bishop and Agatho the pope (*sic*) requested Wilfrid the priest and abbot to explain the view of the Roman and Apostolic Church in his own language (*i.e.* in the Anglian language), no doubt so that the synod might better understand what was said, than they could if it was spoken by an interpreter. Wilfrid accordingly said that “ this question had been investigated at Nicæa in Bithynia by three hundred and eighteen most holy and wise fathers, who were assembled together in a wonderful way, and they decided, among other things, that the cycles of nineteen years during which the moon went through

the same phases should be observed. This did not in any way involve, however, that Easter should be celebrated on the fourteenth of the month. Such became, however, the practice of the Apostolic See, and of nearly all the world. Thus our fathers decided after much discussion (*post multa judicia*). One alone who condemned this view was declared anathema.”¹ This statement is amplified by Bede as follows: “Wilfrid, being ordered by the king to speak, replied that the Easter observed by himself and his companions was what they had seen observed by every one at Rome, where the apostles Peter and Paul lived, taught, suffered, and were buried. They saw the same done in Italy and Gaul when they travelled through other countries for the sake of learning and prayer; they also found the same practised at one and the same time in Africa, Asia, Egypt, Greece, and in all the world wherever the Church of Christ was spread abroad, through different tongues and nations. Only among the Northumbrians and their obstinate accomplices, the Picts and Britons, was it different, who, with foolish labour in these two remote islands of the world (and only a part even of them), opposed all the rest of the universe.”²

Æddi concludes his account with the two speeches of Colman and Wilfrid. Bede, however, makes the two protagonists continue the discussion. He says—

“Thereupon Colman again replied that it was

¹ Æddi, ch. x.

² *Op. cit.* iii. 25.

strange Wilfrid should call their labours foolish because they followed the example of so great an Apostle who was thought worthy to lay his head on the Lord's bosom, and who all the world knew to have lived most wisely. Wilfrid replied that they did not presume to charge John with folly when he literally observed the precepts of the Mosaic law at a time when the Church still judaised in many points, but the apostles were not able at once to cast off every observance of the law which had been instituted by God. Since it was necessary that all who came to the faith should forsake the idols invented by devils, they deemed that they ought not to give scandal to the Jews who lived among the Gentiles. Hence it was that Paul circumcised Timothy, that he offered burnt sacrifice in the Temple (*quod hostias in templo immolavit*), and that he shaved his head with Aquila and Priscilla of Corinth; this was for no reason save to avoid giving scandal to the Jews. This was also the reason why James said to Paul, 'You see, brother, how many thousands of Jews have believed, and they are all jealous of the law' (Acts xxi. 20). Now that the gospel was spreading over the world it was needless, nay unlawful, for the faithful to be circumcised, or to offer the flesh of victims as a sacrifice to God. Thus John began to celebrate Easter on the fourteenth day of the first month, in the evening, regardless whether this day was a Saturday or any other day. When, however, Peter preached at Rome, being mindful that Christ

rose from the dead and gave the world the hope of resurrection, on the first day of the week, he concluded that Easter ought to be observed so as always to await the rising of the moon on the fourteenth day of the first month, in the evening, according to the custom and precepts of the law, even as John did. If the Lord's day, *i.e.* the first day of the week, was the next morning, however, he began, said Wilfrid, to keep Easter on the eve of that day, as we do at this time. But if the Lord's day did not fall the next morning after the fourteenth of the month, but on the sixteenth, or the seventeenth, or any day till the twenty-first, he waited for that day, and began to observe Easter on the Saturday before. Thus it came about that Easter Sunday was kept only from the fifteenth of the month to the twenty-first. This apostolical and evangelical tradition did not abolish the law, but rather fulfilled it, the command being to keep the passover from the fourteenth of the first month in the evening to the twenty-first of the same month in the evening, which all the successors of John in Asia and all the Church had since followed. That this was the true Easter was not decreed afresh at the Council of Nicæa, but only confirmed as the Church history informed them. It thus appeared, continued Bede, that Colman did not follow the example of John any more than that of Peter, whose tradition he, in fact, contradicted, and that he neither agreed with the law nor the gospel in the keeping of Easter. John, following the Jewish custom, did

not heed the first day of the week, on which day alone Colman and his people celebrated it. Peter kept Easter Sunday from the fifteenth to the twenty-first of the month, while they kept it from the fourteenth to the twentieth of the month, so that they often began Easter on the evening of the thirteenth, a thing unknown to 'the law.' It was on the fourteenth that our Lord ate the passover in the evening, and delivered the sacraments of the New Testament in commemoration of his Passion (*novi testamenti sacramenta in commemorationem suae passionis*). Besides, in their celebration of Easter his opponents utterly excluded the twenty-first of the month, which the law ordered to be principally observed. Thus Colman and his friends agreed neither with John nor Peter, nor with the law nor the gospel, in the celebration of this the greatest festival."

To this Colman answered, "Did Anatolius, a holy man and one much commended in the Church history, act contrary to the law and gospel when he said that Easter was to be celebrated from the fourteenth to the twentieth? Similarly, their most revered father, Columba, and his successors, men beloved of God, who kept Easter in the same fashion. Was it to be believed that they thought or acted contrary to the divine writings; they whose sanctity was testified by heavenly signs and miracles, whose life, customs, and discipline he himself never ceased to follow, nor to question their sanctity?"

Wilfrid replied that it was plain Anatolius was

a most holy, learned, and commendable man, but what had Colman and his friends to do with him? They did not even obey his decrees; for example, he appointed a cycle of nineteen years, of which they either knew nothing (although it was accepted by the whole Church) or else despised it. According to the custom of the Egyptians, he so computed the fourteenth day of the month in the Lord's Easter that he acknowledged it to be the fifteenth day in the evening, and so assigned the twentieth to Easter Sunday, holding that day at sunset to be the twenty-first. Of this they were clearly ignorant, since sometimes they kept Easter before the full moon, that is, on the thirteenth of the month. In regard to what they had said of Columba and his followers, he replied that when many at the day of judgment declared to our Lord that they had prophesied and cast out devils, and wrought many wonders, He would reply in His own words that He never knew them. He did not deny, however, that Columba and his followers were God's servants, and beloved by Him, and that they had with rustic simplicity, but pious intention, loved Him. Their practice was not hurtful so long as no one had come and showed them a more perfect rule. If they had known of the latter he felt sure they would have followed it. Bede makes Wilfrid conclude in a different and perhaps less effective strain, charging his opponents with sin in disobeying the decrees of the Apostolic See, or rather of the Universal Church when confirmed by the Bible. "Although their fathers were holy," he

said, "was their voice to be listened to before that of the Universal Church throughout the world?" "That Columba of yours," he added, "and yea, of ours too, is he to be preferred before the most blessed Prince of the Apostles, to whom our Lord said, 'Thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my Church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it; and to thee I will give the keys of the kingdom of Heaven?'"

It is difficult to say where Bede got all this long argument, and why, if it was recorded anywhere, it was not used by Æddi, who was the friend and protégé of Wilfrid, and it seems to me that the elaborate dialectic was afterwards put together, if not by Bede, by others. Plummer infers this when he says that Bede himself "states the arguments in his own way and in his own words."¹ It is very noteworthy that the whole of the contents of Chapters 25 and 26 of Book III. in the Latin version of Bede are omitted from the Anglo-Saxon version, and from the *Capitula*, nor does the argument appear in the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle*. Æddi, having reported the speeches of the protagonists Colman and Wilfrid, makes King Oswy turn to the assembly and ask (Wilfrid meanwhile smiling), which was the greater in the Kingdom of Heaven, Columcille or Peter the Apostle. All the synod replied with one voice that this had been settled by "the Lord," when he said, "*Tu es Petrus . . . et tibi dabo claves regni coelorum.*" The king

¹ *Bede*, ii. 190.

then wisely (*sapienter*) said, "He is the doorkeeper (*hostiarius*) and the key-bearer (*clavicularius*), against whom I will not contend."¹

Bede amplifies this. Having reported the dialogue above detailed, he continues: "The King thereupon asked Colman if it was thus Christ spoke to Peter." He replied, "It is true, O King." Then he further said, "Can you produce any such commission for Columba?" Colman answered, "None." "Then do you both agree without despite that these words were principally (*principaliter*) spoken to Peter, and that the keys of the kingdom of Heaven were given him by the Lord?" They both answered, "We do." Thereupon the King said: "In that case I will not myself contradict that doorkeeper," adding that he desired in all things, so far as he was able, to obey his decrees, lest when he himself went to the gates of the kingdom of Heaven, there should be none to open them, since he who had possession of them would have become his adversary. Thereupon all present, those who sat and those who stood, duly gave their assent and hastened to conform to the custom they had found the better. The discussion being over, the company broke up, and Agilbert returned home to France. "Colman, seeing that his view had been rejected and his party despised (*videns spretam suam doctrinam sectamque esse dispectam*), took with him as many as were willing to follow him, and, having refused to comply with the Catholic requirements respecting the keeping of

¹ Æddi, ch. x.

Easter and the tonsure of the crown (for there was much controversy about that also), went back to Scotia to consult with his people as to what they should do."

In a later chapter Bede tells us that when Colman withdrew from Northumbria in 667 he took with him all the Irish monks he had had with him at Lindisfarne, and also about thirty of the English monks who had formed part of his community there, the rest remaining behind. First he repaired to Iona, whence he had been sent to preach the Gospel to the English nation. He then retired to a small island on the west coast of Ireland, called in the Scotie (*i.e.* Irish language) *Inisboufinde*, which Bede explains as meaning the Isle of the White Heifer.

There he built a monastery, where he placed the monks he had brought from both nations. These latter presently disagreed. "The Scots," says Bede, "in the harvest-time of summer, instead of staying to garner the harvest, used to wander about the country, in various places known to them; when the winter came, they nevertheless claimed to use in common what had been secured by the labour of their English brethren. To remedy these not unnatural discussions, Colman determined that the two nationalities of monks should live apart, in two separate communities, and he bought a property at Magéo (*i.e.* Mayo) and built a new monastery, with this condition, that the monks residing there should say prayers for himself, the founder. This he built

with the assistance of the chieftain and all the neighbours (*juvante etiam comite ac vicinis omnibus*). There he placed the English monks. The monastery," adds Bede, "is to this day possessed by the English, being the same that has grown from small beginnings to be very large, and is generally called Muigéo, also called Mageo." He then adds a cryptic sentence, meaning, no doubt, that Colman's original Celtic discipline had been changed for a more orthodox one. He says: "As all things have long since been brought under a better method, it contains an excellent society of monks,¹ who are gathered there from the land of the English and live by the labour of their hands after the example of their venerable fathers, under a rule and a canonical abbot in much continency and singleness of life."² O'Donovan, the editor of the *Annals of the Four Masters*, says that the island (still called Bophin, but more properly Bo-finne) is situated off the west coast of the Barony of Murrisk in the county of Mayo. The ruins of St. Colman's Church are still to be seen in the townland of Knock on the island, and near it is a holy well called Tobar-Flannain. There is also a lake called Loch Bo-finne, and it is still believed that the enchanted white cow, or Bo-finne, which gave its name to the island, is seen periodically emerging from its waters.³

The Irish writers tell us that when he returned

¹ This, as Dr. Bright slyly says, shows that the monks had in fact adopted the very rules against which their founder strove so vainly in 664.

² *Op. cit.* iv. 4.

³ *Op. cit.* i. 278 and 279.

to Ireland Colman took some relics of the saints with him. These were doubtless remains of St. Aidan and others which he removed from Lindisfarne. The *Ulster Annals* make Colman, "whom they call Columban," go to the island in 667, which, according to O'Donovan, is right. Tighernach gives the date as 668, and the *Annals of Clonmacnoise* and the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle* as 664, which was the year of his leaving Northumbria, and which O'Donovan says is wrong.¹ His death is entered in the *Ulster Annals* in 675. The *Annals of the Four Masters* put it on 8th August (which is his day in the calendar) 674. Tighernach does not mention it. Colman had been bishop of Lindisfarne for three years.

His Irish monastery continued to be recruited from England long after Bede's time. Thus the *Four Masters*, sub an. 768, speak of the death of one Ædhan, bishop of Magheo (*i.e.* Mayo).² Symeon of Durham enables us to correct this name into an English one. Under the year 768, he says: "*Hadwine (i.e. Ædwine) ordinatus est episcopus ad Machui*" (*i.e.* Mayo).³

Alcuin wrote a letter to the Saxon monks in this monastery, who, he says, had left their country for the sake of Christ, and had suffered the tribulations that overtake every pilgrim. He speaks of their learning and how they had spread light in many places. He bids them go on with the work of thus illuminating

¹ *Annals of the Four Masters*, 279, note.

² *Op. cit.* 373.

³ *Op. cit.*, ed. Arnold, ii. 44.

a very barbarous race (*nationis perbarbarae*) like a star in the western sky, and to treat their bishop like a father.¹ Plummer remarks, "that whereas the Irish had formerly taught the English, now the positions were reversed."² In 1169 the place was still called *Magheo na Saxan*, and we are told that its church was burnt in that year. It was again so named in the *Annals of the Four Masters* in the years 1176, 1209, 1236, and even as late as 1478.

Returning once more to Northumbria, Bede tells us that before Colman set out for Ireland he requested King Oswy to appoint Eata, who had been one of Aidan's own pupils, abbot of Lindisfarne, and that after the Whitby synod, Bishop Cedde forsook the practices of the Celts and returned to his bishopric, having acknowledged the Catholic observance of Easter.³ Such was the end of one of the most important of English synods. So far as England was concerned it resulted in the adoption of certain uniform methods of ritual and practice and brought to an end a hurtful schism, based not on doctrinal differences, but on differences of ecclesiastical procedure, which continually created friction and bad blood. The matters in dispute, however small in themselves, necessarily advertised differences and contentions, and this, too, in the face of the common enemy. It must be remembered that the views of Colman and his friends, even if grounded on old traditions and plausible arguments, were after all only accepted by a small fragment

¹ *Mon. Alc.*, 847 and 848.

² *Op. cit.*, ii, 210.

³ *Bede*, iii. 26.

of the Church and were in opposition to the great mass of the Christian opinion of the time.

The language of Bede, who championed the winning cause in the dispute, has, however, exaggerated the actual extent of the change from the Celtic to the Roman use. No doubt the time of keeping Easter was altered, as it had been altered already in the Church in the south of Ireland. The matter was one rather of discipline than doctrine, and it must have been generally acknowledged as indecent that the great feast of the Church was not being celebrated everywhere at the same time. In other matters, such as the tonsure and the special uses in regard to the canonical hours, it is pretty certain that the old fashions continued to prevail in those parts of England which had been evangelised by the Celts. It is not credible that in the various Celtic monasteries existing in the central and northern parts of England, there should be a violent change in matters of so little practical importance and so largely sentimental as the particular form of the tonsure, or of the special psalms or collects used at special times. Complete conformity from all local churches to one model was not, indeed, exacted by the Roman authorities themselves until comparatively modern times. In one respect the influence of Irish ways made a very striking mark on the English Church, namely, in the architecture of its churches, which in some respects kept an Irish character. On this point I again largely lean for my information upon my friend and master, Micklethwaite.

In speaking of the Irish churches, Micklethwaite says: "The Scots had their own way of church building. . . . It probably originated in a lack of skill to do any better on the part of the first Irish church builders. They were accustomed to houses of the shape of bee-hives, and made by piling up stones without mortar, or by setting up a number of poles in conical form and covering them with turf and earth. And when they wanted churches they built them in like fashion, but tried to make them rectangular, not always with success. Soon they did better, but the rude hut with the altar at the east side and a little door at the west, was the beginning from which they worked, and its influence remains in our English churches even to-day. The little chamber or presbytery was better built, and had a window given to it; then in front of it a large chamber was built to shelter the worshippers; but still the entrance to the presbytery was but a doorway, and when it grew into an arch it was a very small one. The last development brought the Celtic church to a small square-ended presbytery, opening by a narrow arch into a somewhat larger nave. . . . When the followers of the Irish missionaries overran England from Northumbria downwards they carried with them their form of building, which met, and was modified by, the Italian form, but contributed the larger share to the shaping of the English tradition. Most small English churches were built on a plan which is purely 'Scottish' all through the Saxon time, and beyond

it. There are scores of them all over the country." Micklethwaite quotes a number of examples. The smaller church at Deerhurst of the eleventh century; the church at Kirkdale, near Kirby Moorside in Yorkshire, which was dated in the tenth century; Corhampton, Hampshire; St. Martin's, Wareham; and Wittering, Northamptonshire; and many more show the same plan almost complete. "I believe," he says, "that the same is true of most of the very many churches with Saxon west towers, but nothing else so old is to be seen in them."

Except those of the early Northumbrian group, which, though strongly influenced by Scotie tradition, are not purely Scottish, all the examples of the Scotie type which so far have been mentioned with dates to them, belong to quite the end of the Saxon period, and "I believe," says Micklethwaite, "that by far the larger part of the whole do so, and were built after the pacification under Canute. Churches, however, were built there between the seventh and eleventh centuries, and their plans betray them even when there is no distinctive architectural character in them and no written record." Micklethwaite quotes St. Michael's Church at St. Albans, which we know was rebuilt in 948, but enough of the original remained some time ago to show that it had an aisleless nave with a presbytery carrying us back a hundred years earlier. He mentions the existing chapel at Bradford-on-Avon, which he thinks was built by St. Aldhelm, as an

example of the eighth century. . . . After the close of the missionary period, when the English Church had become a national institution, no more churches seem to have been built upon the Italian type of plan ; but the Italian influence still showed itself in the occasional use of the apse, the larger presbytery, and the wider arch, and probably in other matters of detail we cannot now trace. The Scotie type, on the contrary, continued all through Saxon times, and was passed on to those which came after. It is excellent for small churches when the requirements are simple.¹ Mr. Micklethwaite's remarks are largely limited to the stone churches of the Scots. We must not forget, however, that as in Ireland it is pretty certain that the great bulk of the churches built by the Celtic missionaries were, after the example of Iona and Lindisfarne, made of wood, and not a trace of them remains. We can as little doubt that they were of the same general type as their stone ones.

It was not only in the matter of church building that the greater part of England remained attached to the Celtic fashion. A considerable portion (nearly all, in fact) of the monasteries of northern and central England had been founded by Celtic monks, and were tenanted by their disciples. They had adopted the rules and usages of the Celts, even in critical matters, like the practice of having double monasteries of men and women in the same institution, and in many cases having

¹ *Arch. Journ.*, vol. liii. 319-324.

women over the double foundations, so that monks were placed in them not unfrequently under the rule of an abbess. These and other points of rule and ritual we may be quite sure survived long after the Synod of Whitby, and greatly distinguished the larger part of the English monasteries from those which had adopted the Rule of St. Benedict. Thus outwardly and inwardly there continued a great divergence in matters of discipline, usage, and ritual in the English monasteries. The churches over which Scotie influence dominated were easily distinguished from those where the Roman customs were introduced in their integrity, and thus began the great and long-lived feud between ultramontanism and local and national rites and customs in these realms. This does not mean that there were notable divergences of doctrine; rather was it a cleavage about disciplinary matters implying issues the same or very similar to those between Gallicanism and Ultramontanism in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. Wilfrid was, in fact, the first distinguished Ultramontane in these islands, while his opponents represented the standpoint of Bossuet and Fénelon.

Let us now return to Northumberland. When Colman retired to Scotland after his discomfiture at Whitby, a certain Tuda, whom Bede calls Christ's servant, was appointed bishop of Lindisfarne (*i.e.* of Northumbria) in his stead. He had been instructed and ordained among the southern Scots, *i.e.* those of the south of Ireland,

who adhered in some respects to the discipline of the Church of Rome.¹

Bede says that Tuda used the tonsure which prevailed among the southern Scots, and also accepted the Catholic views respecting the time of Easter. He had come out of Scotland in the days when Colman was bishop, and taught the people diligently by word and example. He was a good and religious man, but only governed the Church for a short time.² He, in fact, died during the terrible outbreak of plague which occurred in the year 664, and was buried at the monastery of Paegnalaech.³ The site of this monastery is very uncertain, and the name occurs in several corrupt forms, chiefly due to the confusion between the Saxon P and W. It would seem to be the same place as Wincanheale, where Symeon of Durham tells us that in the year 765 Ethelwald lost the kingdom of Northumberland. In the years 787 and 798 he says two synods were held there. In these latter cases the MS. gives a P instead of a W.⁴ Roger of Wendover identified it with Finchale near Durham, and this was accepted by Smith in his edition of *Bede*, and seems very probable.

When Tuda was appointed bishop, Eata, abbot of Melrose, was nominated provost or prior (*praepositus*) by King Oswy over those of the flock of Colman who had preferred to remain when the latter went away. This favour was obtained by Colman

¹ Plummer, *Bede*, ii. 225.

² *Bede*, iii. 26.

³ *Id.* 27.

⁴ See *Symeon of Durham*, ed. Arnold, ii. pp. 43, 51, and 59.

from the king on the ground that he had been one of Aidan's "twelve boys of the English nation."¹ Tuda was not the only bishop who died of the plague in the north at this time. Another and more famous one was Bishop Cedde. We have described his life and ministrations as bishop of the East Saxons. While he held that post he was also abbot of Læstingæu. He left that abbey in the charge of a *praepositus* or provost, paying it occasional visits. On such an occasion, says Bede, he arrived at the abbey while a great mortality (*i.e.* the plague) was raging there, and he fell sick and died. This was in 664.

Bede tells us that he was first buried in the open air.² This was, perhaps, to prevent infection, but presently a church was built of stone in the same monastery, in honour of "the Blessed Mother of God," and his body was moved to the right hand of the altar. We are further told that the abbot-bishop bequeathed the government of his monastery to his brother Ceadda, better known as St. Chad, who afterwards became bishop. This method of appointing an abbot was entirely different to that prevailing with the Benedictines, among whom the fraternity elected its own abbot.

Bede tells a touching, and indeed a tragical, story about one incident that followed Cedde's death. He says that when the brethren who were in his monastery in the country of the East Saxons, heard that he had died and been buried

¹ *Bede*, iii. 26.

² *Ibid.* iii. 23.

in Northumbria, about thirty of them set out thither, being desirous of either living near the body of their father, or of dying there and being buried with him. They were welcomed by the brotherhood at Læstingæu, but all of them died of the pestilence, except one little boy, who was saved from death by the Saint's prayers. He continued to live there and applied himself to reading the Scriptures. When he was reminded that he had never been baptized, he now became so, and was presently promoted to the order of the priesthood, "and afterwards proved very useful in the Church."¹

Bishop Browne tells us that when the slab covering the remains of King Oidilwald was discovered at Kirkdale, a second slab was discovered, which he attributes with some probability to Bishop Cedde. He says it was covered with bold and skilful interlacements of the Lindisfarne type, and was without a name or inscription of any kind as far as could be seen.²

The year 664 was very fatal to the great ecclesiastics in England, and, as we have seen, among those who perished was Tuda, the bishop of the Northumbrians. It was apparently his death, and the vacancy thereby caused, which led to a serious political change in Northumbria. Alchfrid and his Deirans doubtless thought it a good opportunity to have a bishop of their own, who, like Paulinus, should have his seat at York; this was probably with-

¹ Bede, iii. 23.

² Browne, *Conversion of the Heptarchy*, 152.

out his father, Oswy's, consent. Alchfrid determined to appoint his gifted friend Wilfrid to the post. Æddi describes in a very rhetorical passage what he calls the election of Wilfrid. He says that the *Kings* (in the plural), which can only mean Oswy and Alchfrid, summoned a council, which proceeded to elect a bishop to the vacant see who was willing to accept the discipline of the Apostolic see, and to teach it to others, who was decorous in manners, acceptable to God and amiable to men, etc. etc.¹ The statement seems quite incredible. The election of bishops, so far as I know, was quite unknown in Northumbria when the Church was under the Celtic discipline, and the other bishops of Northumbria, so far as we know, were appointed by the king. Secondly, it is even more incredible that Oswy should have had any part in the election of one whom he so much disliked as Wilfrid.

It is not strange, therefore, to find on turning to Bede, that not a word is said by him about this election, nor about Oswy having had anything to do with the appointment. Bede's statement is clear and plain, and shows that Wilfrid was not the nominee of *the Kings*, but of Alchfrid alone, and that he was meant by him to be, not the bishop of all Northumbria, but the bishop of Deira only, with his seat at York. His words are: King Alchfrid sent the priest Wilfrid to the King of "the Gauls" (*ad regem Galliarum*, sic) to be consecrated bishop

¹ *Op. cit.* ch. xi.



PROBABLE GRAVE SLAB OF
BISHOP CEDDE.

Vol. I., facing p. 26.

over him and his people (*eum sibi suisque consecrari faceret episcopum*).¹

Having, according to Æddi, been elected bishop by the Council at York, Wilfrid determined to go to France for consecration. He tries to excuse him for having sought a foreign country for this ceremony. His hero is made by him to say to the Council that there were many bishops in Britain who were quartodecimans, and who ordained the Britons and the Scots (*Brittones et Scotti ab illis sunt ordinati*), adding the notable statement about them that neither did the Apostolic See receive them into communion, nor did it recognise them, inasmuch as they were schismatics (*quos nec Apostolica sedes in communionem recipit, neque eos qui schismaticis consentiunt*). Wilfrid consequently asked the Council to send him to "the Gauls," so that he might receive the rank of bishop without incurring any disapprobation from the Apostolic See.² The words put into Wilfrid's mouth in these phrases, show how careless of the facts ecclesiastical biography often is. The British and Scotie Churches did not countenance the quartodecimans. Secondly, if they were treated as schismatical and out of communion, as Æddi says, how came it that so many of their greatest men were recognised as saints by Rome? Thirdly, it was incorrect to say that there were no canonically elected bishops in England at the time. Wini, bishop of Wessex, had been duly consecrated by

¹ *Bede*, iii. 28.

² Æddi, ch. 12.

the French bishops, and Boniface of East Anglia by the Archbishop of Canterbury. Bede tells us that King Alchfrid commended Wilfrid to the king of the Gauls (*ad regem Galliarum*), who in turn sent him to be consecrated by Agilbert of Paris.¹ Agilbert knew England well, for, as we have seen, he had been bishop of Wessex for some time. He also knew Wilfrid well, for he had ordained him priest, and had selected him as his mouthpiece at the Synod of Whitby.

What followed is reported in greater detail by Æddi. He says that Wilfrid was well equipped for his journey, provided with a ship, and with no lack either of men or money, so that he might go to Gaul with due dignity. Agilbert summoned a large synod, which was attended by not less than twelve Catholic bishops (*duodecim episcoporum catholicorum*).² Among them was Agilbert himself, who probably presided over the Council. Bede says that the synod was held in a royal village (*in vico regio*) called Compendium (now known as Compiègne,³ in the district of Soissons at the junction of the Isère and the Aisne). It is curious that Æddi does not mention the place of meeting. Nor does Bede mention the number of bishops present. He merely says, "*convenientibus plurimis episcopis.*" Æddi tells us that all the bishops present took part in the consecration,

¹ *Op. cit.* iii. 28.

² Æddi, ch. 12. Note the special use of the word "catholic" here.

³ *Op. cit.* iii. 28.

which was done in stately fashion before all the people, Wilfrid being carried round, seated in a golden chair according to their fashion (*in sella aurea sedentem more eorum*), which was borne on the shoulders of bishops into the church (*intra oratorium*), while the choir sang hymns and canticles in procession.¹ Dr. Bright adds that this singular custom was known to Gregory the Great, who presented Gregory of Tours with "a golden chair" for use in his church.² The *sella gestatoria* in which the Pope is borne in procession on State occasions, is another notable example of the custom. Martene³ also says that by an ancient custom in Gallic churches, which was long kept up at Orleans, a newly-consecrated bishop, on arriving at the city, was placed on a chair and carried *humeris religiosorum* (or *nobilium*) into his cathedral for enthronement. A Soissons ritual is also quoted, according to which the new prelate was there carried with his chair to the larger church (*elevatur cum cathedra ad majorem ecclesiam*) by the Count of Soissons and three other lords.⁴

Let us now return to Northumbria. As we have seen, Oswy, its great king, had had no part in the appointment of Wilfrid, and if any synod was called to select him, it was not summoned by him, and was therefore irregular, for his son was really only his deputy. It is clear, in fact, that he greatly resented it, and he proceeded to nominate

¹ *Op. cit.* ch. 12.

² *Op. cit.* 242.

³ *De Ant. Eccl. Rit.*, ii. 332.

⁴ See Bright, 242 and note 3.

a candidate of his own for the bishopric of York.

The priest who had been selected by King Oswy for that see was one of the four brothers already mentioned, one of whom was Cedde, the bishop of the East Saxons, who had recently died of the plague. His name was Ceadda, more familiarly known as Chad, or St. Chad. He was at this time abbot of Læstingæu. With him the king also sent his chaplain (*misit presbyterum suum*) Eadhæd, who afterwards became Bishop of Ripon. They set out for Kent apparently with the intention that Ceadda should be consecrated by Archbishop Deusdedit, and only discovered that he was dead when they arrived.¹ This fixes the date of their journey, for that prelate died on the 14th of July 664.

The reason for Ceadda going to Canterbury for his consecration was doubtless the difficulty of finding a bishop to perform the ceremony nearer home. Tuda, bishop of Lindisfarne, and Cedde, bishop of the East Saxons, were both dead of the plague. The Mercians were at feud with King Oswy, so that their Bishop Jaruman was not available, and Boniface, bishop of the East Anglians, was a long way off.

Finding on his arrival that the see of Canterbury was vacant, Ceadda, as Bede tells us, went to the province of the West Saxons, where he was duly consecrated by Bishop Wini. With him, he says, were associated two British bishops, who kept

¹ *Bede*, iii. 28.

Easter according to the canonical fashion. By these bishops it has been very plausibly thought were meant two bishops from Cornish or Devonian sees.

Bede exaggerates the position when he says that at that time there was no bishop in all Britain canonically ordained except Wini.¹ He might object to Jaruman for he was ordained by the Scots, but there could be no canonical impediment in the case of Boniface of Dunwich.² Bede expressly says in his *Recapitula* that Ceadda was consecrated in 664. He thereupon returned to York, and that writer thus sums up his work there: "Being thus consecrated, he began immediately to devote himself to ecclesiastical truth, to chastity and the practice of humility, continence and study. He travelled about, not on horseback, but after the fashion of the Apostles, on foot, preaching the gospel in towns, in the open country, in cottages, villages, and castles, following the examples of St. Aidan and his own brother, Bishop Cedde." It is

¹ *Bede*, iii. 28.

² The words used by Bede are : *Adsumtis in societatem ordinationis*. As Dr. Bright says, these words ignore that artificial theory which would make the presiding bishop the *sole* agent in the conveyances of the episcopal character, as if the assistant bishops were simply approving witnesses, and had no more to do with "the collation" of the episcopal character than "the priests present" with that of the presbyterate. In support of his view he quotes from Martene (*De Ant. Eccl. Rit.*, ii. 331), a very good authority, the sentence : *Non tantum testes, sed etiam co-operatores*, and a letter from Archbishop Hincmar to Hincmar of Laon which says, *Tuum est autem cum aliis mecum ordinare episcopum, et literis canonicis, quas ordinatus ab ordinantibus suis jubetur accipere, post me in tuo loco subscribere*. (See also *Vit. St. Anskarii*, 121), *pariter consecrantibus* (Bright, *op. cit.* 245, note 1).

hardly doubtful that at this time the only regularly appointed bishop in Northumbria was Ceadda, and those who have treated him as an intruder into Wilfrid's see have been entirely mistaken. Bede does not make the mistake, nor do we find any complaint in his work in regard to Ceadda having been anything but a legitimate bishop. We will now leave Ceadda for a while and return to Wilfrid.

His next movement is puzzling. One would have supposed that, having been duly consecrated by unimpeachable prelates, he would have hastened to return to occupy his diocese of York. Assuredly he would have done so, if he had felt that he had the confidence of the great Northumbrian ruler instead of having, in fact, been merely the protégé of his son, the sub-king of Deira.

News, no doubt, soon reached him that his friend and patron had, in fact, disappeared, probably as the result of rebellious conduct; that Oswy was once more dominant in the whole of Northumbria and that, entirely ignoring himself, he had actually appointed a rival bishop in the place of Wilfrid to the See of York. Instead of hurrying home, therefore, he loitered for a considerable time, probably more than three years, in fact. He then set out. On his way across the Channel, a terrible storm arose, and he and his party were driven on to the coast of the South Saxons, where their ship was cast ashore. The natives, who, like their descendants of a later day, were proficient wreckers, seized the ship, divided its cargo among

them, and carried off the crew and passengers, threatening to kill them. Wilfrid tried by a generous offer of money to buy them off. They replied scoffingly, that all that the sea threw up was theirs.

Meanwhile the principal priest (*princeps sacerdotum idolatriæ*) of these pagan wreckers, standing on a high mound, "cursed the people of God" and tried to bind their hands by magic (*suis magicis artibus manus eorum alligare nitebatur*). Thereupon one of Wilfrid's companions, imitating David, took up a stone and putting it in a sling pierced his head with it, and he fell down dead on the sands. The pagans then proceeded to attack the travellers. The latter were well armed, however, and in high courage, and although only one hundred and twenty in number they made a pact with each other that they would all stand together and that none would break away, but would rather die manfully. Meanwhile Wilfrid, with the clerics who were with him, on bended knees and with uplifted hands prayed to God for succour. Three times the foe was driven back by the travellers with the loss of only five men. Presently the returning tide enabled them to float their ship, and notwithstanding a fourth attack, in which their enemies were led by their king, the ship got away, and with the west wind behind them they reached Sandwich in safety (*in portum Sandwicæ salutis pervenerunt*).¹

¹ Æddi, ch. 13.

Thence Wilfrid apparently went to Northumbria, where he found Ceadda duly installed as bishop, with the full approval, as it would seem, of King Oswy and his Church. He does not appear to have made any claim or any protest, but, as we are told, retired to the abbey of Ripon, of which he was abbot. There he continued for three years, a bishop without a see, filling, in fact, the position of what was called a *Chorepiscopus*, and his services were utilised elsewhere when there was a vacancy in other sees, as for example at Canterbury. Bede, as I have said, does not hint that he deemed Ceadda in any way a usurper, or that Wilfrid had then any claims under the circumstances to the See of York. In one place (after referring to Ceadda), he says of him, however, that having been made a bishop, he came into Britain, and by his doctrine brought into the English Church very many rules of Catholic observance, whence the Catholic faith duly gained strength, and all the Scots who dwelt among the Angles either submitted or returned to their own country.¹ Æddi says that while Wilfrid was in retirement at Ripon he was often invited by King Wulfhere of Mercia to perform episcopal functions in his province. This friendship of Wilfrid and Wulfhere was a natural complement of the feud of both with Oswy. Æddi adds that Wulfhere made him grants of various lands (for the good of his own soul), in which Wilfrid planted monasteries. He says further that Ecgberht, king of the Kent men, also invited him

¹ *Op. cit.* iii. 28.

to his province, and that there, among other things, he ordained Putta (who afterwards became Bishop of Rochester) as priest, as well as not a few deacons. Wilfrid, he adds, travelled about performing episcopal functions with the cantors Æddi (*i.e.* the biographer himself) and Æona, and introduced the Benedictine rule into various monasteries.¹ In finishing this episode in the life of Wilfrid, I cannot avoid remarking on the very prejudiced and biased way in which it has been treated by Dr. Bright, who is almost as unqualified a panegyrist of Wilfrid as Æddi himself. This causes him to do less than justice to St. Chad.

Let us now turn for a while to the history of Mercia. We have seen how, after the battle of the Winwæd and the death of Penda, Oswy, instead of making the young and powerful community of Mercia tributary and allowing it to be ruled by one of its own princes under his overlordship, took possession of it and, in effect, annexed it to his Northumbrian realm. This was, no doubt, a very unpopular and, probably, a very imprudent act. As the event showed, he was not powerful enough to permanently hold so large and difficult a country as Mercia against the wishes of its people, and within three years of the battle of the Winwæd a successful revolt took place there. This was in 658 A.D. Bede tells us what happened, but he only gives us very scanty information about it.

He says that three full years (*completis tribus*

¹ *Op. cit.* xiv.

annis) after the death of King Penda, Immin, Eafha or Eaba and Eadberht, leaders (*duces*) of the race of the Mercians, rebelled against King Oswy and set up as their king, Wulfhere, son of Penda, a youth whom they had kept concealed. They then expelled the officers of the foreign king (*ejectis principibus regis non proprii*), and recovered their territory and their liberty.¹ He speaks of the prince and his supporters as Christians, but does not tell us how they became so. It was not improbably through the influence of his brother Peada, the sub-ruler of the South Angles (who were of close kin with the Mercians). It is noteworthy that the murder of Peada took place in the very year of the Mercian revolt. It now seems to me that his death may have been brought about by his having been compromised in it, and that this would afford a reason for his wife's action. She was Oswy's daughter, and if she murdered her husband as is suggested by Bede, it may well have been in consequence of what she deemed some act of treachery against her father. With the disappearance of Oswy's rule from Mercia there also disappeared Bishop Ceollach, above mentioned,² whom he had placed there.

Wulfhere thereupon appointed Trumhere in his place. He was an Anglian by race and a monk by profession (*monachica vita instituto*), and was ordained Bishop by the Scots.³ He had been

¹ *Op. cit.* iii. 24.

² *Vide ante*, p. 135.

³ *Bede*, iii. 21.

Abbot of Collingham (*Ingetlingum*), which monastery had been built by Eanfleda, Oswy's wife, in memory of King Oswin, of whom Trumhere was a relative.¹ It is a noteworthy proof both of the independence of Mercia under Wulfhere, and of the provincial character of the Synod of Whitby, that Trumhere is not named as having been present there.

Let us now return again to Oswy, who, notwithstanding the loss of Mercia, continued to be a very potent person. At the close of the Synod of Whitby his power seemed, in fact, unassailable. There was no one apparently to dispute it from the Forth to the Thames, while the kingdom of the Picts, which was ruled by his nephew Talorcan, was no doubt dependent upon him. Talorcan died, according to the *Pictish Chronicle*, in the year 657. The *Annals of Ulster* put it in 656. This did not, however, so far as we know, affect the continued submission of the Picts to the Northumbrian king.

In regard to the Britons, we have only one reference during his reign known to me, after the battle of the Winwæd. This is contained in the *Cambrian Annals*, and is terribly short and grim. It is as follows: "Osguid *venit et praedam duxit*" (Oswy came and carried off plunder). It is dated in 658. No doubt the condition of the Britons at this time was greatly depressed.

During the four years following the battle

¹ *Bede*, iii. 24.

of the Winwæd, Oswy's fortune suffered seriously however. Bede condenses in a remarkable sentence, to which I shall return presently, the results, without affording us much insight into the causes of the change. It was apparently partly due to the imperious temper of Oswy himself, and partly to the impatience of various communities, which had once been free and independent, and now found themselves not merely having to play a second part, but completely absorbed. Partly also, no doubt it was due to the efforts of the Roman party in the Church to discredit and weaken the influence of the Northumbrian king. The position of Oswy towards the great feud between the Roman and the Celtic Churches has been somewhat misunderstood. He had been persuaded to concur in the alteration of the mode of dating the great Easter festival among his people, so as to make it conformable to that of the rest of Christendom, and in this he had been followed by his clergy, except the few who had retired to Ireland under Colman. He was by no means, however, prepared to throw over the cause of the Church in which he had been baptized, and to which in matters of discipline and otherwise his clergy were still very loyal, and either to exchange the primacy of his own bishop at Lindisfarne for that of an Archbishop of Canterbury whose see was in the territory of another and independent king, or for the primacy of the greater Bishop beyond the Seas. We have seen how he

put his veto on the voyage of his son Alchfrid, when the latter proposed to go to Rome with Benedict Biscop, and he now showed much more definitely what his real views were. In this he was probably strengthened by what was going on in Deira. Deira and Bernicia had been for some time united into one kingdom under himself, but they remained much apart in sympathies and policy, and he had found it prudent, just like the Frankish kings had in a similar position, to make a sub-kingdom of it under his son Alchfrid.

Now it happened that Alchfrid and, no doubt, his mother were in complete disagreement with Oswy on Church matters. They were both devoted to the Roman party, and Alchfrid's views on this subject were doubtless encouraged and inflamed by his intimacy with Wilfrid. This would tend to create a greater breach between him and the Lindisfarne clergy, and might easily grow into a movement for complete reparation. It must be said that Alchfrid's conduct (probably incited by Wilfrid, who, although a strong person, was very injudicious) was anything but conciliatory towards his father. Oswy must have been greatly troubled when the Lindisfarne monks were turned out of the monastery at Ripon and Wilfrid was put in their place. Two of them, Eata and Cuthberht, were afterwards notable, and one of the two, Eata, was already a famous personage. He had been Abbot of Melrose, which he probably founded, and had been especi-

ally invited by Alchfrid to go to Ripon to organise his new monastery there.¹ Florence of Worcester, in fact, calls Eata *Hrypensis monasterii fundator*.² When compelled to leave, he with Cuthberht returned to Melrose, of which, as Mr. Plummer says, he had probably continued to be the abbot. On the withdrawal of Colman to Ireland, Eata was appointed his successor as Abbot of Lindisfarne, and probably held it and Melrose together.³

It doubtless brought matters to a crisis between Oswy and his son when the latter persuaded the clergy at York to elect Wilfrid as their bishop, and thus threatened a separation of Deira from the See of Lindisfarne. What the actual nature of the breach was we do not know, but it would appear that it involved some act of rebellion on the part of Alchfrid, in which it is not improbable that his brother-in-law, Wulfhere, king of Mercia, had a part. Mr. Plummer shares the view that he actually rebelled against his father.⁴ Bede implies this when he says that among the sources of harass from which Oswy suffered was his own son Alchfrid (*laboriosissime tenuit . . . impugnatus videlicet . . . et a filio quoque suo Alchfrido*).⁵ What is clear is that Alchfrid is not heard of any more after the year 664. After his death, as we shall see, a splendid cross was erected to his memory in Cumberland. It may possibly be that Alchfrid had

¹ Bede, *Vit. Cuth.*, ch. vii.

² *M.H.B.*, 532.

³ See Plummer, *Bede*, ii. 192 and 193. ⁴ *Op. cit.* ii. 198. ⁵ *Bede*, iii. 14.

fled thither from his father's vengeance and had perished there. On Alchfrid's death his widow, Cyneburga, Penda's daughter, is said to have entered a monastery in Northamptonshire called Castor, where she was joined by her sister Cyneswitha, and where they both became saints. There they were buried, and thence they were translated to Peterborough.¹

According to Thomas of Ely, on the disappearance of Alchfrid, Ecgfrid his brother was appointed ruler of Deira in his place.² This authority, however, is of small weight, and nothing of the kind is said by Bede.

Whether Wulfhere took part in Alchfrid's rebellion or not, it is plain that soon after it, he is found dominating all the possessions of Oswy south of the Trent, and probably thereby attaining the position of Bretwalda or Emperor of Britain. It is, at all events, plain that he must have secured the old Mercian country of the South Angles and the Lindisfaras or Lincolnshire folk.

He also became overlord of the East Saxons. This was soon after 664, when Bishop Cedde, the nominee of Oswy, died, and Wulfhere is found directing the spiritual affairs of that nation. His bishop at this time (Jaruman) was an Englishman, who had been consecrated among the Scots and who had succeeded Trumhere; we do not know precisely in what year, but it has been conjectured about 662. At this time Sigheri and Sebbi were

¹ Plummer, ii. 175. ² *Op. cit.* pp. 27 and 28; Plummer, ii. 120.

joint kings of the East Saxons, having succeeded Suidhelm in or soon after 664.¹ According to Florence of Worcester, the former was the son of Sigberct, and the latter of Seward.² The former, with a portion of his grandees and people, abandoned Christianity as the result of the visitation of the plague. They restored the heathen temples, and in their despair turned to their old gods for help. His brother and partner in the kingdom, on the other hand, stood by the new religion. When Wulfhere heard what had happened, he sent his bishop Jaruman thither to correct the aberration and to bring the people back to the Church. At this task Jaruman worked very assiduously. Bede tells us he was informed of the facts just mentioned by a priest, who had been a companion and fellow-worker of Jaruman in that mission. The result was that the apostate king and his people were brought back to the orthodox fold, and the temples and altars were again destroyed, after which the bishop and his party returned home again.³ Meanwhile Wini, the bishop of the West Saxons, having been driven from that province by King Coinwalch—we do not know why—went to Mercia and, according to Bede, simoniacally bought the See of London from King Wulfhere and held it many years. This proves how completely Wulfhere dominated over the East Saxons at this time.

At the end of Oswy's reign, Bede makes

¹ *Bede*, iii. 30.

² *M.H.B.*, 629.

³ *Bede*, iii. 30.

Wulfhere ask him, at the instance of Archbishop Theodore, to permit the transfer of Bishop Ceadda to Mercia, and to appoint Wilfrid to the See of York. This statement seems incredible. Wulfhere and Wilfrid were Oswy's most powerful and persistent enemies. It seems to me either that Bede has mistaken the name Ecgfrid for Oswy, or that the sentence was interpolated in the interests of Wilfrid. Bede dates the death of Oswy in 670. The *Cambrian Annals* put it in 669, and the *Annals of Ulster* in 671. Two foreign sources also put it in 671.¹ According to Bede, he was then fifty-eight years old. He was buried at Whitby, where his wife and daughter were also interred.²

Bede, or some interpolator, has made another incredible statement in regard to Oswy's latter days, which is contradicted by all the events of his life, and by his own previous statements. He says that feeling death approaching he desired to go to Rome if he got better and to die there. This, we are told, he did because he had such a great affection for the Roman and Apostolical institutions, and he entreated Wilfrid (Wilfrid, of all people, who dared not visit Northumbria till the fierce king was dead), and promised him a large gift of money if he would conduct him thither.³ This must assuredly be an interpolation, like other passages in the same author.

With Oswy's death there passed away a notable character. It was largely his handiwork that

¹ Plummer, *Bede*, ii. 211. ² *Bede*, iii. 24. ³ *Op. cit.* iv. 5.

paganism was finally put away by the Anglian princes and people. In his early years he had an heroic struggle with the great pagan soldier Penda, who had killed so many kings, and he destroyed him. In later times he was for a few years the supreme ruler of the various English States. He put an end to a scandal which divided the Church and caused much friction, but his temperament was not conciliatory. He was faithful to the Church and priesthood from whom he had received his Christianity, and a persistent opponent of the Italian Church, which did not easily tolerate men with strong wills like his own, who would not bend their necks at its bidding. His latter days were soured by struggles with external and internal foes, and by the rebellious attitude of his son, but he was a picturesque figure, and Bede evidently liked and respected him. He is very quiet now in his cold bed on the great headland at Whitby.

As we have seen, Nennius gave him two wives. The first one being called Riemmelth, the daughter of Royth, the son of Rum;¹ and the second one, Eanfleda, daughter of King Ædwin. His eldest son, Alchfrid, was not, as we have seen, on good terms with his father, and apparently perished in a rebellion. He is called Alcfrid by Nennius. His second son, Ecgfrid, who had been a hostage among the Mercians in Penda's time, succeeded him, and inherited his martial, determined character. A third son, called Ælfguin by Nennius and

¹ *Ante*, p. 75.

Ælfrin by Bede, was killed in a battle in Mercia in 679. About Aldfrid, Ecgfrid's successor, Bede has an ambiguous sentence. He speaks of him as "Aldfrid who *was said to have been* the son of King Oswy" (*filius Osuii regis dicebatur*).¹ Oswy also left two daughters: Osthryda, who married Ethelred, king of Mercia,² and Alchfleda, who married Peada, king of the South Angles.

¹ *Op. cit.* iv. 24.

² *Bede*, iv. 21.

CHAPTER IV

CONSTANS THE EMPEROR, ST. BASIL THE MONK, AND ST. THEODORE THE ARCHBISHOP

HAVING surveyed the disintegrated history of the English Church in various parts of northern, central, and western England during the second quarter of the seventh century, we ought now to return to its fortunes in the metropolitan district of Kent; but before doing so, I propose to give a short notice of what was occurring beyond our seas in continuation of the similar picture I gave in a previous volume. I will begin with "the Empire," whose fortunes I traced in epitome, down to the reign of the grandson of Heraclius, generally known as Constans the Second (642-668), but whose real name was probably Constantine. In this survey I shall not scruple, as before, to freely borrow my materials, if not my pen, from my accomplished friend, Professor Bury. Constans was a remarkable person. Few rulers of autocratic states who mount the throne at thirteen, and find themselves surrounded with temptations to libertinism and vice, and with limitless power for their indulgence, have failed to succumb, and left history

to find excuses for their feebleness. Constans, on the contrary, was a strong and masculine personage, and must have been under very respectable tutelage. He had a difficult position to meet. The decrepitude which marked the latter part of his grandfather's reign, had laid the Empire prostrate before the advancing tide of Muhammedan enthusiasm, and, as we have seen, all the rich and prosperous provinces of the farther East, once covered with Roman cities, and with the grand monuments of Roman prosperity and power (save Armenia, which speedily followed), had definitely passed out of the ambit of the ancient Empire, and from the ultimate control of the Christian Church. This included Egypt, an exceedingly rich possession, which formed the granary of the capital and its unfailing support in times of famine. On the other hand, the almost savage feuds of the eastern monks about their empty shibboleths had sapped, and were still further sapping, the defensive capabilities of what was left of the Empire. These were the most critical external and internal difficulties which Constans had to face, and he faced them like the man of "strong will and restless energy" that he was. In opposing the Saracens in the East, he by no means always succeeded, but he made a brave show and ended by signing a profitable peace. Armenia was no doubt lost, while the Arab children of the desert found allies among the seafaring folk of the Syrian and Phœnician coast, who helped them to conquer the famous islands of Cyprus and

Rhodes, and to defeat the Imperial fleet at Tripolis in Phœnicia. At the capture of Rhodes, the famous bronze colossal figure of the Sun, which adorned the chief harbour of the island, the work of Chares of Lindos, which had been thrown down by an earthquake, was sold to a Jewish trader of Edessa, who carried off the metal on 900 camels; a notice, says Bury, which shows the wealth and enterprise of the Jewish merchants of his time.¹

Presently, however, the feud between the different Arab claimants to the Caliphate, which followed on the murder of Othman in 656 A.D., compelled the very successful soldier Muawiah in 659 to agree to a treaty, which was a great triumph for Constans, and must have been very humiliating to the Arabs. By it the Caliph, as he then was styled, agreed to pay Constans 1000 *nomismata* (£625); and for every day the peace lasted, a horse and a slave.²

Meanwhile things were not going on so well with the Empire farther west. The Arabs, as we saw in a previous volume, had conquered and occupied Egypt. Thence they turned their faces westwards and proceeded to attack the Roman province of Africa, which differed from Egypt very materially in two respects. First, in its language, for its people spoke Latin; and secondly, as being religiously subject to the Latin patriarch at old Rome, *i.e.* the Pope, instead of to the patriarch of

¹ *History of the Later Roman Empire*, ii. 290.

² *Id.* 291 and 292.

Alexandria, who was the spiritual head of the Orthodox Egyptian Church. This Province, once so loyal, peaceful, and prosperous, had, as we have seen, risen in rebellion against Phocas under its exarch, the father of Heraclius. It now (in 647) rebelled again against Constans, under the leadership of the exarch Gregory, incited largely, as we saw in a previous volume, by the monks of the so-called orthodox party, who hated the Emperor, and abetted by Pope Martin, who suffered (as the neutral historian must allow) most righteously for his treason. This revolt gave a great opportunity to the Arabs, or Saracens as they were generally known to the European writers. Amru, the conqueror of Egypt, had added to it the western line of coast as far as Tripolis, including the town of Barca, and in these regions (now so familiar to us from the recent Italian war) tribute was paid to the Arabs in the form of African slaves. In 647 and 648 Abu Sarh, who had succeeded Amru as Governor of Egypt, advanced along the coast in the direction of Carthage and defeated the rebellious exarch Gregory, who opposed him at the head of one hundred and twenty thousand men,¹ and presently conquered Carthage.

At this time a further notable change occurred in Egypt. Irritated by the rebellious conduct of the Greeks, the Arabs razed the walls of their famous city Alexandria, and transferred the seat of government to Fostat, which presently became

¹ Bury, *op. cit.* ii. 288.

known as Cairo, and which has remained the capital of Egypt for nearly six hundred years.

Constans having punished and put down a revolt of the Slavs in the Balkan peninsula, brought them back to their duty, and garrisoned and fortified the chief fortresses of Asia Minor, he now turned his attention to the dangers which were threatening his Western possessions. I will here borrow a graphic sentence from my friend, the latest historian of the Eastern Empire: "A great object of Constans," he says, "was to bring the outlying provinces of the Empire, the exarchate of Africa and the exarchate of Italy, into close union with the centre, so that the Empire might present a compact resistance to Muhammedan progress. Syria and Egypt had been lost, and Constans could hardly look forward to recovering them in the immediate future; in Rhodes, Cyprus, and Armenia, however, he might hope to re-establish Roman supremacy. But first of all it was imperative to prevent further Saracen aggression in the West, where the fertile provinces of Africa and Sicily were seriously threatened by the unbelievers."¹ He also doubtless dreamt of the possibility of driving the Lombards out of Italy. With these views he was tempted to consider a bold but not a very wise idea. He disliked Constantinople for its continual restlessness, and the increasing bigotry, ignorance, and fanaticism of the monks who dominated its Church, and he knew that he was

¹ Bury, *op. cit.* ii. 297.

not popular either with its people or its clergy, and would be very willing to leave it for ever. He therefore conceived the idea of moving the capital of the Empire back to the old city of so many memories on the Tiber. According to Zonaras,¹ he said "it was more fitting to pay high honours to mothers than to daughters." In this he was imitating the scheme of Heraclius, who similarly wished to remove the capital to Carthage. From old Rome he might with greater effect indulge his hope more easily of recovering if not the whole peninsula, at least Southern Italy, from the Lombards, and be also able "more effectually to protect Sicily and Africa from the advance of the Asiatic foe."² He therefore set out at the head of an army for Italy, where no emperor had set foot for a long time. He went by way of Athens and Tarentum, and proceeded, oblivious of the adage about letting sleeping dogs lie, to invade the Lombard Dukedom of Beneventum. Romuald was then duke; his father Grimuald had previously been so, and had now secured the Lombard *Kingdom* with its capital, Pavia. The army of Constans was defeated, and he was obliged to raise the siege of Beneventum after hurling the head of Sesoald, a Lombard chief who would not be treacherous, into the city from a catapult. His bad fortune caused him to give up the idea of removing his capital to Rome. He, however, determined to pay it a visit: assuredly a very memorable visit, for it was nearly three hundred

¹ Zonaras, iii. p. 316, quoted by Bury.

² Bury, *op. cit.* ii. 299.

years since a Roman emperor had entered Rome. Thither he therefore set out from Naples.

The *Liber Pontificalis* tell us that Pope Vitalian with his clergy went out to meet him to the sixth milestone from Rome. The same day the Emperor visited the church of St. Peter and prayed and offered a gift there, and on the following day he offered a similar gift at St. Paul's (*i.e.* at the Basilica so called); on the Saturday he went to St. Maria (*i.e.* S. Maria Maggiore) and did the same, and on the Sunday he repeated his visit to St. Peter's. This time it was with his army, each soldier carrying a wax taper, while he himself offered a gold embroidered pallium on the altar. On the Saturday following he went to the Lateran and bathed and fed in the Basilica of Vigilius, and on the Sunday there was a *statio*, or special pontifical mass, at St. Peter's. After hearing mass, the Emperor and Pope bade each other good-bye. Constans remained twelve days altogether in the city. While there, he despoiled the church of the Pantheon (St. Maria ad Martyres) of its bronze tiles and sent them with other things he had removed to Constantinople. He then set out for Naples, and thence went overland to Reggio, and crossing the Straits entered Sicily and took up his residence at Syracuse. There he behaved very tyrannically, and brought great misery upon the inhabitants and proprietors of the provinces of Calabria, Sicily, Africa, and Sardinia by various exactions and imposts, such as had never been known before. "Husbands were separated

from their wives and children from their parents, so that all hope had ceased among the people, while the sacred vessels and reliquaries of the saints were taken from the churches."¹ These latter phrases may be exaggerations due to the ill-odour in which he was held by many of the clergy. The account concludes with a grim, abrupt sentence, stating that he was killed in his bath. This was the famous bath called Daphne, generally visited by travellers who go to Syracuse. According to Theophanes, "as the emperor was about to smear himself with Gallic soap (*γαλλικῶ σμήχεσθαι*) a certain Andreas, son of Trollus, who was waiting for him, and had probably been bribed to do the act, struck him on the head with the soap-box and killed him."

During his sojourn at Syracuse, Constans had continued his vigorous policy. Although a Roman army of thirty thousand men was defeated at Tripolis, he recovered Carthage from the Arabs. On the other hand, Romuald, the Duke of Beneventum, although he secured some advantages over the Roman arms, made no substantial additions to the Lombard possessions. The new danger which the conquests of the Arabs had created, necessitated a rearrangement of the administrative districts of Italy. The south of Italy had been for some time, and perhaps from the days of Justinian, part of the government of Sicily and Sardinia, and had not been subject to the Exarchate of Ravenna, from which it was separated by the very hostile

¹ *Lib. Pont., Vit. Vitaliani.*

Lombard Duchies of Beneventum and Spoleto. Constans, according to Bury, now constituted it a sort of special imperial prefecture or principality, with Syracuse for its capital and residence.¹ The same scholar thus sums up the mental and moral gifts of Constans, who was a much more remarkable ruler than has been sometimes suspected. He says of him: "He may be considered a typical example of a certain class of later Roman emperor. There is, I apprehend, a general idea current that the emperors who reigned at Constantinople were almost without exception either weak and cruel profligates, or strong and cruel profligates, and that if any were strong, their strength was generally misdirected." Such an idea is totally false. Brought up in an atmosphere of intrigue and danger, calculated to foster the faculty of self-help in a strong boy, and at the same time to produce a spirit of cynicism, Constans grew up a strong and inflexible man, with decided opinions on policy and administration, resolved to act independently and not afraid of innovation, surprisingly free from religious bigotry, in a bigoted age, an unusually strong and capable ruler . . . we have not a single hint that he was addicted to sensuality. . . . He was never under the influence of ministers as far as we know, and his independent, self-relying conduct may sometimes have seemed obstinacy.² . . . This severe emperor of the seventh century, animated with some reflection of the old Roman

¹ Bury, *op. cit.* ii. 302.

² *Op. cit.* ii. 302-304.

spirit, and out of touch with his own age, was one of the men in history who have trodden the wine-press alone.”¹

From the Emperor let us turn to the Pope and the Church. We saw how on the trial and exile of Martin the First, Eugenius the First (654–657) was elected in his place, and how his election was confirmed by the emperor. He was a Roman, says the *Liber Pontificalis*, born in the district of the Aventine and a cleric from his childhood, and his father's name was Rufinianus. The same work calls him kindly, gentle, and affable to all, famed for his sanctity, and given to good works and charity. What is of more importance as to his reputation, is that he is commemorated as a Saint in the Roman calendar on 2nd June. Father Mann, however, who styles Martin the First, Saint, does not give Eugenius that title. He is troubled as to whether he was a Pope or an antipope. The difficulty is continually arising in regard to the Popes, and is very embarrassing to those who profess to believe in an infallible Papacy. If he was an antipope, then he ought not to be in the Roman calendar as a sainted personage. If he was a true Pope, then Martin the First ought not to be there. With Martin's disappearance from that list, as we showed in a previous volume, would go the Roman Synod he presided over and all its doings. Eugenius is interesting to us since he was Pope when St. Wilfrid visited Rome. He reigned for

¹ Bury, *op. cit.* ii. 305.

three years, from 654–657, and was buried at St. Peter's. It is curious that neither he nor his predecessor Martin is said in the *Liber Pontificalis* to have built any building or presented any gifts to the churches of Rome. He was succeeded as Pope by Vitalian, who was born at Segni in Campania. On his accession, as was the custom (*juxta consuetudinem*), he sent messengers (*responsales*) with a synodical letter "to the very pious princes" (*apud piississimos principes, i.e.* to the imperial family), informing them of his ordination, who returned bearing with them a confirmation of the privileges of the Church. They also bore with them as a gift from the princes a copy of the Gospels bound in gold (? silver gilt), ornamented around with white gems (? *i.e.* no doubt rock crystals) of a very large size. He it was who received Constans at Rome, as we have seen.

In the year 666, Maurus, the archbishop of Ravenna, refused to go to Rome to pay his respects to the Pope, as had apparently been the custom, claiming for his see that it should be autocephalous like the other metropolitan cities (*sicut reliqui metropolitae*), *e.g.*, those of Milan and Aquileia. On the Pope excommunicating him, he in turn excommunicated the Pope. Both of them appealed to the emperor, a fact which is fatal to the argument of those who would have it that the Pope in administrative matters was not ultimately subject to the emperor. Constans gave his decision in favour of Maurus, who was to receive the pallium

from himself (*nostrae divinitatis sanctione*), and not the Pope, and to be consecrated by the bishops of his own diocese.¹ The Pope had to submit to this order. Father Mann says that the grant of Constans which is represented in the contemporary mosaics on the left wall of the "mighty basilica" of St. Apollinaris in Classis, where it is being handed to Reparatus the successor of Maurus, is marked *Privilegium*. The epitaph of Maurus praises him for having freed Ravenna from the yoke of Roman servitude.² We shall return to Vitalian and his dealings with England presently.

To England we will now turn, and especially to what was happening in Kent.

As we have seen in the preceding chapters, the kingdom of Kent, which had had such an active share in shaping the fortunes of the Roman mission to England under Augustine, and which in consequence looms so big in English history in the pages of the Church historians, hardly figures at all in the period succeeding the reign of Æthelberht and the death of Augustine.

For the first and last time in our early history Kent had held the hegemony of England. This continued during Æthelberht's life, but it is probable that in his latter years his real influence had greatly shrunk. The fact that he had become a Christian, and had persuaded some of his influential people to do the same, had no doubt

¹ *Agnellus Vit. Mauri*, ch. iv. ; Migne, *P.L.*, vol. 106.

² *Agnellus, loc. cit.*

created a great gap between him and the still unconverted English who formed a large part of the population of our island, and who could not even understand, much less consent, to be guided by the bizarre brotherhood from Italy who had brought them a great message in such an unfamiliar setting. With the death of Æthelberht, as we have seen, the overlordship of England passed into the north, where a more vigorous and pure-blooded race occupied the land, whose personal prowess had remained fresh, and whose weapons had been kept bright and sharp by continual strife with their neighbours, while their rulers formed a roll of fine fighting men. The marriage of the Northumbrian ruler Ædwin with Æthelberht's daughter, instead of adding to the former's power or prestige, was probably the cause of his own undoing, for it brought a graft of the Kentish Church into North Britain, where the great mass of his people were not prepared to receive it, and where on his death, as we have seen, the tender plant withered away as it had done among the East Saxons.

Æthelberht's son, Eadbald, was clearly a person of very slight consequence in our history; only a petty king of Kent, which itself was a mere fragment, although a Christian one, of an otherwise pagan realm, and any reflected glory which came to him from the fact that the Bretwalda Ædwin was his brother-in-law, came to an end with the tragic death of the latter on the 12th October 633.

Eadbald himself died, according to Bede, in the year 640. The exact date is preserved for us by one only of the Frankish annalists, who in later years occasionally supply us with otherwise unrecorded facts. In this case it is the *Annals of Salzburg*, which, it has been argued, show signs of having had an Anglo-Saxon origin.¹

Eadbald married his step-mother Bertha, the widow of Æthelberht, as was the custom with his heathen ancestors. This is beyond question, since it is stated by Bede (ii. 5) and by every other authority. Bede further implies that he had not accepted Christianity in his father's life (*fidem Christi recipere noluerat*). This is curious, since his father was such a powerful personage. It would seem more probable that he apostatised, and possibly did so in order to marry Bertha, since he could not get the sanction of the Church to such a union. Bede adds, and the words seem to confirm this inference: "By both these crimes he gave occasion to those to return to their former uncleanness, who under his father's reign had either for favour or through fear of the king submitted to the laws of faith and chastity." The apostacy of Eadbald was followed by a similar apostacy of the two sons of Saberct, king of the East Saxons, by the flight of two of the three

¹ The date there given is xiii. Kal. February 640. See *Annales Majores Juvavenses Mon. Germ. Hist.*, vol. i. Lappenberg, intr. xxxvi. The latter, in a note, vol. i. p. 245, wrongly gives the date as 20th June. He adds that Thorn (p. 1769) also gives the date, but no earlier English writer.

English bishops to the Continent, and by the preparation for a similar flight on the part of Archbishop Laurence. The Church in England was in fact in a desperate plight, and Laurence was not in a position to demand any terms from the king. Bede's narrative at this time, including the saga about Laurence having been chastised by St. Peter, has the look of an apology,¹ and I venture to suggest that one phrase in it is an afterthought, as other phrases in his work are. He would have us believe that the king within two years of his father's death divorced his father's queen (*abdicato conubio non legitimo*),² a lady of the highest birth and a French princess, to secure whose hand he is said to have apostatised; and this not when the Church was triumphant, but when it was reduced to the verge of dissolution and when his action in repudiating it had been endorsed by his chief supporters. The whole story is most improbable, and to me incredible. It seems to me plain that Eadbald when he agreed to again become a Christian (as he certainly did), did so because his wife Bertha was either dead at the time or that she really had remained his wife and was the mother of his children, as Ælfric says she was, in his *Life of St. Mildred*. Otherwise, it would be curious to find her given a stately burial by the side of her first husband, Æthelberht, in St. Martin's Church, as all the authorities agree. The story as

¹ *Vide* Howorth, *St. Augustine the Missionary*, p. 232, etc.

² *Bede*, ii. 6.

told by Bede was evidently felt to involve great difficulty, and led to the invention of a second wife for Eadbald. Bede nowhere mentions that he had any wife but Bertha, nor do the Anglo-Saxon Chronicles, nor any of the earlier writers. The first mention of such a marriage is in the genealogies appended to Florence of Worcester's *Chronicle*. In them nothing is said of Eadbald's having married Bertha after his father's death, but speaking of his wife we there read: "*Hujus regina Emma, regis Francorum erat filia.*" In the genealogical table, where the king is wrongly called Æthelbald (quite a different name to Eadbald), her name is given as Emme. This shows that the notice is of no value and was probably due to a mistake of Florence. From him the statement of his marrying Emma was doubtless taken by the forger of the charter given by Thomas of Elmham and professedly dated in A.D. 618.¹ Lappenberg accepts the fact of this marriage with an Emma.² In a note he quotes the charter in question as his authority; Thorpe, his translator, referring to the charter in the note (after quoting *Cod. Dipl.* i. 8 for it), adds: "where it is marked as spurious." I have dissected it in my former volume on Augustine.

In the Saxon *Life of St. Mildred*, doubtless the work of Ælfric and dating from the end of the tenth century, we are told that King Eadbald "had three children — Eormenred the Ætheling (who was doubtless the eldest); Earconberht cyning

¹ *Op. cit.*, ed. Hardwicke, p. 144, etc.

² *Op. cit.* i. 245.

(*i.e.* the king), and Eanswitha, who lay at Folkestone in the monastery she had founded there." This authority distinctly styles all three the children of "the Frankish king's daughter," whom it calls *Byrhte* (*i.e.* Bertha).

Eormenred apparently died before his father. We are told in the document just cited that he had married Oslava, and by her had had three children, Æthelred, Æthelberht, and Eormenburga (styled *Domne Eave* or *Domneva*).¹ This account is exactly followed by Symeon of Durham.² In the *Life of St. Mildred* by Jocelyn, Domneva and Eormenburga are made into two persons, which, as Hardy said, is clearly a mistake. He also gives Eormenred two other daughters, Eormenbeorga and Eormengitha (styled Saint by Florence of Worcester, who perhaps derived his story from him). On the death of Eadbald, his eldest son being dead and his grandsons only children, his second son, Earconberht (according to the Anglian fashion), succeeded him. Bede says that he was the first of the English kings who of his supreme authority commanded the idols throughout his whole kingdom to be forsaken and destroyed, the fast of forty days to be properly observed, and appointed adequate punishment for the offenders.³ This shows how perfunctory and superficial had been the English conversion under Æthelberht and Eadbald. Earconberht married Sexburga, the daughter of

¹ Hardy, *Cat.*, i. 382.

² Rolls series, ii. 3, etc. etc.

³ *Op. cit.* iii. 8.

Anna, king of the East Anglians.¹ He died on 24th July 664,² after a reign of twenty-four years. In a marginal note to Thomas of Elmham we read that he was buried in St. Augustine's Monastery (*in presenti monasterio*) with his fathers.³ The most remarkable thing about his long reign (and it is a measure of the very scanty materials we alone have for English history at this time, except where the interests of the Church are concerned), is that we should know no more about him than is contained in the above rhetorical paragraph of Bede.

On the death of Earconberht, his nephews, the sons of his elder brother, *i.e.* Æthelberht and Ætherled, were of ripe age and ought in reality to have succeeded. The rule of succession prevailing among the Anglo-Saxons, as among the other Teutonic tribes, was a modified form of heredity. The members of the royal stock or family were all eligible for the throne, while the outsider, as we familiarly call him, *i.e.* one not in the recognised succession, who succeeded in mounting it by his prowess or truculence, was treated as a usurper or *tyrannos*. Direct succession from father to son was the rule where the son was of suitable age and not disqualified by physical or mental disability, but where the deceased left only children behind him, the practice was for him to be succeeded by his next brother, and he by his next brother, etc. In the case of the successors of Æthelwulf, it will be remembered that four of

¹ *Op. cit.* iii. 8.

² *Bede*, iv. 1.

³ Hardwicke, 191, note.

his sons thus succeeded in turn. This plan was necessary in turbulent times, or in view of the difficulties attending the government of a rough race when it was necessary to have a man and not a boy at the head of affairs.

With the increasing influence of the Church the rigidity of the hereditary principle was increased also, and thus the fitness of the candidate for a throne became of secondary importance to his particular position in a genealogical table. The result of this was really disastrous, and no better proof of it can be found than the utter decrepitude of affairs among the Franks, where a succession of boys, most of them vicious and quite unfit to rule in such times, "Rois fainéants," as they are called, led to the virtual dissolution of the community, and eventually to the suppression of the Merovingian dynasty by that of the Carolingians. Precisely the same thing happened in England on a smaller scale, and was largely responsible for the unrestricted ravages of the Danes, and eventually of the supplanting of the Anglian royal race by a Danish one.

The recognised succession of brothers had its disadvantages, however. Every king likes his own descendants to succeed him, and it often happened that the first thoughts of a new king were to make away with those of his nephews who had a better title to succeed him than his own children. Such a case happened now in Kent.

By his wife Sexburga, Earconberht left a son named Ecgberht, who now mounted the throne in

spite of his two nephews, Æthelberht and Æthelred. In the Saxon *Life of Mildred* already cited, which is followed by Symeon of Durham, we read how a certain thane called Thunor incited Ecgberht to allow him to murder his two nephews. Thunor apparently owned a large property in Thanet, where the people were probably for the most part pagans. The story that follows is described by Lappenberg as "a beautiful legend to which history itself will not refuse a place." Having murdered the two princes, Thunor buried their bodies under the Royal seat at the palace of Easterige *quae vulgari dicitur Easterige pronunciatione* (that is Eastry, near Sandwich), a cunning device no doubt to escape detection. We are told, however, that the crime was soon discovered, for an ambient light was noticed over the king's palace. Ecgberht became afraid that the whole secret might be discovered. He accordingly summoned his Witan, or council of wise men, with his *comites*, thanes or ealdormen, and bishops, which was presided over (we are told) by the Archbishop of Canterbury, Deusdedit, and they proceeded to the spot where the miraculous signs had appeared. "It was a sad hour when the uncle looked on the faces of his nephews" (really cousins). The remains were thereupon put into a bier (*feretrum*), and it was proposed to move them to Canterbury and to bury them in the monastery of Christ Church there, but they could not be moved from the place where they had been laid (*moveri non quiverunt ab illo in*

quo statuta fuerant loco). They then proposed to carry them to St. Augustine's Monastery and to several other places in turn, but in each case the arms of those bearing the coffins became powerless. It was then determined to remove them to the monastery of Wakering in Essex (*ad monasterium Wacrinense*; no trace or other record of this now remains), and thither they were borne in procession with music and chanting, and buried behind the altar, and for many years miracles occurred there.¹ Meanwhile we are told that Ecgberht summoned Eormenburga (*i.e.* Domneva), the sister of the two martyrs, who had been married in Mercia, and by the advice of Deusdedit, it was determined to give her a *man-bot*, or fine, payable to her in respect of the homicide of her two brothers. She asked that she might have an estate in the Isle of Thanet. I shall revert to her and her estate presently.

While this story is in the main probably true, some of its details are not to be reconciled with our prime authority, Bede. The latter distinctly says that Deusdedit died on the same day as King Earconberht, namely, 14th July 664.² If this was so he could not have taken the active part he is made to do in the story just recited, in which Ecgberht, Earconberht's son and successor, was so prominent. The name Deusdedit has been evidently substituted for Theodore by the biographer

¹ Symeon of Durham, *Hist. Reg.*, Rolls ser., ii. 9 and 10.

² See *Bede*, iv. 1; and Florence of Worcester, *M.H.B.*, 532.

of St. Mildred, as it was by Symeon of Durham in his account of the consecration of St. Mildred's nuns;¹ she herself was certainly consecrated by Theodore. Mr. Hole has clearly been misled on this point.² Deusdedit was buried at St. Peter's Monastery at Canterbury.³ As we have seen, he was the last of the Archbishops of Canterbury who claimed episcopal ties with St. Augustine, and as we are now entering on another "dynasty" of bishops I am tempted to repeat a paragraph from Mr. Hole's article on Deusdedit in the *Dictionary of Christian Biography*, which gives us a graphic picture of the condition of what we may call St. Augustine's Church on the death of that prelate. He says that at this period there were eight bishops in the Heptarchy: two in Kent, at Canterbury and Rochester; one amongst the East Saxons, one in Mercia, one among the East Angles at Dunwich, one over the Northumbrians at Lindisfarne. The West Saxons had their Bishop Wini at Dorchester.⁴ "The magnitude of these bishoprics, for the most part as compared with the Canterbury diocese, or even with all the kingdom of Kent; the circumstance of their being nearly all filled and rigorously worked by bishops of Celtic or foreign consecration, unconnected in their origin with Canterbury, or in their working with one another, show but slight consolidation in the

¹ *Hist. Reg.*, ch. ix.

² *Dict. of Chr. Biog.*, i. 821.

³ Thomas of Elmham, 192.

⁴ I think Mr. Hole is mistaken in supposing they had a second see at this time. Agilbert had then finally left Wessex, *vide infra*.

Church, or rather the Churches of England, and prove how much in the shade the successor of Augustine must now have been. No less than six or seven of the consecrations of Deusdedit's time were by Celtic or French bishops, and only one by the Archbishop of Canterbury. . . . It must have been a mere flourish of Elmham to talk of his having greatly increased the Church, especially by ordaining bishops, priests, and deacons."

The fact is, it has not been sufficiently realised that the Archbishop of Canterbury was only treated at this time as a metropolitan by the clergy of the Kentish kingdom, and his ecclesiastical authority varied according to the varying fortunes of the Kentish realm. The bishops in the other kingdoms in England were as independent of him and of each other as the kings were. There was no general metropolitan authority recognised by any of them anywhere until Theodore's time, any more than there was among the Scotie bishops at this time. As metropolitan the Archbishop of Canterbury then had only one suffragan, namely, the Bishop of Rochester. It was probably because his ecclesiastical status was so limited that Deusdedit never received the pall. His death by the plague, which, as we read in a previous volume, killed so many of the English and Irish ecclesiastics, must have greatly paralysed and impoverished the Church in Kent, and we know what a difficulty there was in finding a suitable successor to him, and what delay there was in securing one.

During the interregnum, as we have seen, Wilfrid, who was at the time a bishop without a see, *i.e.* a so-called chorepiscopus, occasionally performed the functions of a bishop in Kent.

When he had selected Wighard for his bishop,¹ Ecgberht sent him to Rome to be consecrated. Damian was then probably dead, and the King of Kent would hardly like to have his bishop, or rather archbishop, consecrated by the bishops of other kingdoms in England. The prestige of the See of Canterbury, which was the especial child of Rome, had to be considered, so he was sent to Rome. I forgot to mention that on the way thither he called at Lérins, where he found Benedict Biscop pursuing his studies, who accompanied him to Rome.

In his *History of the Abbots* (an earlier and more trustworthy work than the *Ecclesiastical History*) Bede mentions Ecgberht, the King of Kent, and no other person, as concerned in the choice of Wighard and his dispatch to Rome.² In the *Ecclesiastical History* we have an entirely different story, which I cannot avoid believing to be a spurious interpolation in Bede's genuine work. I have discussed the question in the Introduction. In this story it is not Ecgberht, King of Kent, who is made the prominent figure in the appointment of Wighard, Bishop of Kent, and the correspondent of Pope Vitalian, but Oswy,

¹ See Howorth, *St. Augustine the Missionary*, 337 and 338.

² *Hist. of the Abbots*, 3.

King of Northumbria, who had, so far as we know, nothing whatever to do with Kent, who had his own independent bishop and who was the great champion of the Celtic clergy against the Roman party, the latter of which he bitterly opposed. It is nevertheless to him that Vitalian is made by Bede to write a most fantastic letter. The chapter in which this occurs (*i.e.* iii. 29) is a foreign boulder in Bede's narrative, which it interrupts, and the story of Wighard is repeated in epitome in the first chapter of the fourth book, in which one sentence has been obviously inserted to disguise the position and in which clause Oswy is mentioned.

It would seem that when Ecgberht sent Wighard, he also (as was very natural) sent a letter to the Pope. In this it is equally probable that he reported to him the ravages which the plague had caused in England, and the consequent difficulty there had been in filling the see, and suggested that if Wighard should by death or otherwise be prevented from becoming archbishop the Pope himself should select a fitting successor to his great predecessor Gregory's missionary, Augustine. After reporting Wighard's death, Bede proceeds: "The Apostolic Pope having consulted about that affair, made diligent inquiry for some one whom he might send to be Archbishop of the English Churches."¹

There was at this time an abbot named Hadrian, presiding over a monastery at Niridanus

¹ Bede, *H.E.*, iv. 1.

(wrongly called Hiridanus in some MSS. of Bede and by Thomas of Elmham).¹ This monastery was situated near Naples, in Campania.² He was an African by race, and Bede describes him as proficient in sacred letters, skilled in monastic and ecclesiastical discipline, and most learned in Greek and Latin. The Pope having summoned him, ordered him to be ordained bishop, and to set out for Britain. He declared himself unworthy of such an honour, but added that he knew a man who was most suited for such a post, and specially fitted by his accomplishments and age. He accordingly suggested a certain monk named Andrew. By all who knew him, he was declared worthy to be a bishop, but he also excused himself on the ground of his frail health. The Pope once more had recourse to Hadrian, who again refused the honour, and begged that he might be permitted to suggest a second substitute, namely, Theodore, who, like the great Apostle of the Gentiles, was a native of Tarsus in Cilicia, once, and perhaps still a great seat of wealth, learning, and culture.³ Bede describes him as a monk. He was born in or about the year 602,⁴ and, as Dr. Stubbs says, he was about two years old when St. Gregory and Augustine of Canterbury died. He doubtless belonged to the order of St. Basil.

The dominant position presently occupied by

¹ See *M.H.B.* 209, and Hardwicke, *Thomas of Elmham*, p. 202.

² Smith, in a note to Bede, says near Monte Cassino.

³ *Bede*, iv. 1.

⁴ *Id.*

Theodore as the second founder of the English Church, makes it necessary to examine a little more closely what this meant. We must continually remember that if Augustine was a scholar of St. Gregory the Great, Theodore was similarly the product of the teaching of St. Basil, who was the only Doctor of the Eastern Church, who was also styled "the Great," and we cannot ignore that very considerable personality in treating of the second birth of the English Church. I shall rely for my account of him very largely on the admirable article by Mr. Venables in the *Dictionary of Christian Biography*, and also on the recent biography of him by Mr. Morison.

Basil was born at Cæsarea, the capital of Cappadocia, in the east of Asia Minor, in the latter part of the year 329 A.D., and came of a noble and wealthy Christian family, and two of his brothers became bishops ; Gregory of Nyssen, and Peter. He received his early education at Cæsarea and then went to Constantinople, where he studied under the famous sophist, Libanius. He then went to Athens, where he lived from 351-356, and worked under the sophists, Himerius and Prohæresius. His constant companion was Gregory Nazianzen. "They occupied the same chamber, ate at the same table, studied the same books and attended the same lectures." Another fellow-student there, with whom he made friends, was also a philosopher. He was the nephew of the Emperor Constans, and afterwards became very

famous as the Emperor Julian, styled Apostate by the Christians.

In 355, Basil left Athens and returned to Cæsarea, where he found that his father was dead, and where he settled as a teacher of rhetoric and an instructor of boys. At this time he is described by his sister Macrina as having been much elated by his popularity and the fame he had acquired, and as looking down on his superiors in dignity and rank, while he adopted the airs of a fine gentleman. He is pictured as "tall and thin in person, and holding himself very erect, with a dark complexion, a pale and emaciated face, a projecting forehead and retiring temples, a quick eye flashing under finely arched eyebrows, and slow and deliberate of speech, with a reserved and polished manner." Up to this period he looked to a career as an advocate, and had no notion of entering a religious life. It was his grave mother Emmelia who persuaded him to do so, much to the joy of his old instructor, Libanius. He was now baptized, and in 357, when still under thirty, he set off to visit the anchorites of Egypt, Palestine, Syria, and Mesopotamia. He was greatly attracted by what he saw among them, and records his admiration of the abstinence and endurance of the ascetics whom he met with, their mastery over hunger and sleep, and their indifference to cold and nakedness, and expressed a wish to imitate them. He now, in fact, determined to withdraw from the world, and chose a place of retirement

near the village of Annesi, where his father's property was, but on the other side of the river Iris in Pontus, near to where his mother and sister were living a semi-monastic life. He has himself described the place in graphic terms in one of his letters to his devoted friend Gregory.¹ This has been translated by the poetic pen of Newman, from whom I will quote it:—

“There is a lofty mountain covered with thick woods, watered towards the north with cool and transparent streams. A plain lies beneath, enriched by the waters which are ever draining off from it, and skirted by a spontaneous profusion of trees, almost thick enough to be a fence; so as even to surpass Calypso's island, which Homer seems to have considered the most beautiful spot on earth. Indeed, it is like an island, enclosed as it is on all sides by deep hollows which cut it off in two directions, the river which has lately fallen down a precipice runs all along one side and is impassable as a wall, while the mountain, extending itself behind and meeting the hollows in a crescent, stops up the path at its roots. ‘There is but one pass, and I am master of it,’ he says. Behind my abode there is another gorge rising to a ledge up above, so as to command the extent of the plain and the stream which bounds it, which is not less beautiful to my taste than the Strymon, as seen from Amphipolis. For while the latter flows leisurely and swells almost into a lake and is too still to be a river, the

¹ *Ep.* 14, Newman's translation.

former is the most rapid stream I know, and somewhat turbid too by reason of the rock which closes on it from above; from which, shooting down and eddying in a deep pool, it forms a most pleasant scene for myself, and any one else, and is an inexhaustible resource to the country people in the countless fish which its depths contain. What need to tell of the exhalations from the earth or the breezes from the river? Another might admire the multitude of flowers and singing birds, but leisure have I none for such thoughts. However, the chief praise of the place is that being happily disposed for produce of every kind, it nurtures what to me is the sweetest produce of all, quietness. Indeed, it is not only rid of the bustle of the city, but is even unfrequented by travellers, except a chance hunter. . . . Does it not strike you what a foolish mistake I was near making when I was eager to change this spot for your Tiberina, the very pit of the whole earth."

On his retirement there, Basil gradually surrendered all his worldly possessions for the service of the poor, retaining, however, the control of their expenditure. He adopted a very severe form of ascetic life. He wore but one outer and one inner garment, slept in a hair shirt; his bed was the ground; he took little sleep, no bath; the sun was his fire, his food bread, his drink the running stream.¹

Gregory joined him in Pontus for a while, and

¹ Venables, quoting Gr. Naz., *Or.*, xx. p. 358.

found the hard lodging and fare which Basil had chosen as his lot, very trying. They studied the Scriptures and the works of Origen together, and wrote a book on the beauties of that author, called the *Philocalia*. There Basil remained for five years, and ruined his health by his extreme austerity. His friend Gregory describes him as "without a wife, without property, without flesh, and almost without blood." There Basil elaborated his famous reforms in regard to the monkish life, which have had such world-wide influence, and were so much appreciated in later years by St. Benedict. He had come to the conclusion that the life of an anchorite, which he had closely studied, was not the ideal thing which he first thought. "To his calm and practical mind," says Mr. Venables, "the cœnobitic life appeared much more conducive to the exercise of Christian graces than that of the solitary. God," he said, "has made us like the members of one body to need one another's help. For what discipline of humility, of pity, or of patience can there be if there be no one on whose behalf these duties are to be practised? Whose feet wilt thou wash, whom wilt thou serve, how canst thou be last of all if thou art alone?"¹

With these views, it is not strange that Basil should have applied his practical good sense to the inauguration of a great change, namely, the substitution of a common life for a solitary one, and the replacement of anchorites by what were

¹ Basil, *Reg. Resp.*, vii.

then known as Cœnobites (*quos vocari Coenobitos diximus*).¹

Eustathius of Sebaste had already introduced monachism into Asia Minor, but monastic communities were still a novelty in the Christian world, and of them Basil is justly considered the founder. "His reputation for sanctity collected large numbers of followers about him; monasteries sprang up on every side. He repeatedly made missionary journeys through Pontus, and the result of his preaching was the establishment of many cœnobitic industrial communities, and the erection of monasteries for both sexes, by which the whole face of the Province was changed, while the purity of the orthodox faith was restored by his preaching. Throughout Pontus and Cappadocia he was the means of the erection of numerous hospitals for the poor, houses of refuge for virgins, orphanages and other homes of beneficence. His monasteries had among their inmates, children he had taken charge of, married persons who had mutually agreed to live asunder, slaves with the consent of their masters, and solitaries convinced of the danger of living alone."²

All through his active life he was a most strenuous defender of the orthodox view as against the various so-called heresies of his day, and notably that of the Arians, and he began early (360 A.D.) with a feud with his bishop, Dianius, who occupied

¹ Jerome, *Ep.* xvii. 35.

² Venables, *op. cit.*, quoting *Basil Regulae*, 10, 12, and 15.

the See of Cæsarea, "a gentle, undecided man, whose creed always inclined to that of the strongest, and who valued peace above orthodoxy." When Dianius presently died after a reconciliation with Basil, there was a feud among the clergy about the appointment of his successor. As it did not seem that it would be speedily settled, the populace elected a layman who had not even been baptized, named Eusebius, and compelled the reluctant provincial bishop first to baptize and then to consecrate him." This very irregular proceeding was apparently condoned by Basil and his friend Gregory because his views were orthodox. Eusebius now put pressure on the two friends, whose hearts were elsewhere, to be ordained priests. At first the new bishop employed Basil's theological knowledge and other gifts to supplement his own deficiencies, but presently a bitter feud arose between them, caused very largely by the haughty and patronising attitude of Basil towards one who was his official chief although so inferior in mental gifts, and he yielded very unwilling obedience to his bishop, who was naturally piqued at conduct which, as Mr. Venables says, amounted at times to insolence. It ended by Basil and his friend Gregory returning to Pontus, where the former devoted himself to fostering the monasteries he had founded. Three years later he returned to Cæsarea to oppose the Emperor Valens, the great champion of Arianism, and with great tact he again made friends with Eusebius and put all his powers at his service, thus greatly

strengthening the cause of the orthodox, and was unwearied in enlarging the powers of opposition to heresy in Asia Minor.

Eusebius died in 370 in the arms of Basil. The latter was anxious to succeed him as bishop. Like other strong men he perhaps felt that he was the man of the hour, and perhaps also, like others of imperious temper and will, he was ambitious to play a great rôle. He made desperate efforts, and was at length elected by the casting vote of the aged Gregory of Nazianzen, to the joy of the orthodox and of the priests and monks, but to the chagrin of the bishops, who were perhaps jealous of his superior gifts, of the authorities, who dreaded his resolute character, and of the rich, who disliked his homilies on the subject of charity. Athanasius, however, the great protagonist of the orthodox cause, and himself of dominant temper, congratulated Cappadocia on possessing a bishop whom every province might envy. It is no part of my purpose to describe the feuds, personal and public, which now accumulated round the person of Basil, and especially his struggle with the Emperor Valens, in which the imperious attitude of the bishop is denounced even by Jerome as the cause of much evil, and contrasted by Milman with what he rightly calls the patience and toleration of his sovereign. Jerome's famous phrase about him runs thus: *Basilus Caesariensis episcopus Cappadociae . . . qui multa continentiae et ingenii bona uno superbiae malo perdidit* (*Chronicle*, sub an. 380).

No threats and no dangers could daunt the fiery, self-confident, and morally irreproachable bishop. What, in fact, could be done in the way of durance to compel a man who could thus write to his Emperor's deputy, Modestus, who refused him the title of bishop, and threatened him with confiscation, exile, torture, and death. "Such menaces," he said, "are powerless on one whose sole wealth is a ragged cloak and a few books, to whom the whole earth is a home, or rather a place of pilgrimage, whose feeble body can endure no torture beyond the first stroke, and to whom death would be a mercy, as it would the sooner transport him to the God for whom he lives."

Again, when the Vicarius or Governor of Pontus, pursuing a rich lady who had escaped the pressure of an unwelcome suitor to marry her, and had taken refuge in Basil's cathedral, threatened to tear out his liver, he replied that he should be very much obliged if he would do so, since that organ gave him a great deal of trouble.

Basil's fierce and domineering temper, largely due no doubt to his ill-health, not only brought him into trouble with the Emperor and his officials, but also with other bishops and with his old friends, even with the closest and dearest of them, Gregory, who never forgave him for virtually compelling him to become a bishop.

What probably troubled him more than anything were the charges of heresy brought against him in his later years, charges always dangerous

with the Eastern mob, clerical and lay, which was ever hunting for verbal differences on insoluble mysteries to find occasion for reports of false doctrine. No one was safe, not even so redoubted a champion of the Nicene pronouncement as Basil.¹

Basil at length died at Cæsarea, before his time, on 1st January 379, in the fiftieth year of his age, worn out by labours, austerities, and sickness. "At forty-five he calls himself an old man; the next year he had lost all his teeth; three years before his death all remaining hope of life had left him." "Seldom," says Mr. Venables, "did a spirit of such indomitable activity reside in so feeble a frame, and, triumphing over its weakness, make it the instrument of such vigorous work for Christ and His Church."

"The voice of antiquity," says the same writer, "is unanimous in its praise of Basil's literary works. His former tutor, Libanius, acknowledged that he was surpassed by Basil, and generously

¹ Hooker, our own incomparable Hooker, puts the case well. He says: "Till Arianism had made it a matter of great sharpness and subtlety, to be a sound believing Christian, men were not curious what syllables or particles of speech they used, upon which when S. Basil began to practise the like indifferency, and to conclude public prayers, glorifying sometimes the Father *with* the Son and Holy Ghost, sometimes the Father by the Son in the Spirit, whereas long custom had inured them to the former kind alone, by means thereof the latter was new and strange in their ears; this needless experiment brought afterwards upon him a necessary labour of excusing himself to his friends and maintaining his own act against them, who because the light of his candle too much drowned theirs, were glad to lay hold on so colourable a matter and exceedingly forward to traduce him as an author of suspicious innovation" (Hooker's *Polity*, v. xlii. 12).

rejoiced that it was so, as he was his friend.”¹ Nor has the estimate of modern critics been less favourable. “The style of Basil,” writes Dean Milman, “did no discredit to his Athenian education. In purity and perspicuity he surpasses most of the heathen as well as Christian writers of his age.”²

A very important issue remains to be discussed, namely, the attitude of Basil towards the See of Rome. Here again Mr. Venables states the case very clearly and well. “His letters,” he says, “were usually addressed to the bishops of the West, and not to the bishop of Rome individually. In all his dealings Basil treats with Damasus (*i.e.* the Pope so called) as an equal, and asserts the independence of the East. In his eyes the Eastern and Western Church were two sisters with equal prerogatives; one more powerful than the other, and able to render the assistance she needed, but not in any way her superior. The want of deference in his language and behaviour offended, not only Damasus, but Jerome and all who maintained the supremacy of Rome over all Churches of Christendom. Jerome accuses Basil of pride, and went so far as to assert that there were but three orthodox bishops in the East—Athanasius, Epiphanius, and Paulinus.”³

I have thought it well before turning to the history of the second founder of the English Church

¹ Basil, *Ep.* 363.

² *Hist. of Christ.*, iii. 410; Venables, *op. cit.* 296.

³ *Ad. Pammach*, 38; see Venables, *op. cit.* 294.

to give this account of the life of Basil, the master to whom Theodore traced his mental and moral teaching, just as I was constrained to do the same for Augustine's master, Pope Gregory. To complete this survey it will be necessary, however, to condense a notice of his influence on the Eastern Church which long remained very much what he made it.

Just as Gregory was responsible for steeping the Western Church in the monastic atmosphere which so largely dominated its after days, so Basil (only in a much greater measure) converted the Eastern Church into a Monk's Church. Its episcopal organisation was presently very much more influenced by monastic ideals than the Western Church, because of the potent fact that all its bishops were selected from monks, and not from secular priests, and have remained so to our day. In regard to this it is important to remember that Eastern monachism is everywhere Basilian in name and form. There are no separate Orders of monks in the East as there are in the West, and the modern orthodox monasteries are very little different from those of the fourth century as constituted by Basil, "yet their spirit is in most cases very far from the Basilian ideal. The Eastern monk would seem to have reverted to the monachism of the Fathers of the Desert. There is much prayer and recitation of immoderately long offices, and also much fasting, but the claims both of industry and charity have been neglected; . . . it seems to be stagnant and ineffective. The monks

of the East have failed to see with their master that the monastic ideal is social as well as devotional, practical as well as contemplative.”¹

Basil's influence on one phase of monasticism was very far-reaching. According to his theory, the joys of the world only “provide material for the eternal fire,” and “it is only by abandoning the pleasures of the flesh that a man can be safe of obtaining those of heaven.” Hence his *raison d'être* of a monk's life, and hence his strong feeling of the utter wickedness of those who, having devoted their lives to God, abandoned their vocation and returned to the world. To him it involved a special treachery and sacrilege to the Almighty, since a man thus steals away himself and robs God of his offering. On such a one the brethren were bidden to close their doors, even if he returned for shelter after only a short absence.² It would seem, in fact, as many of the best authorities hold, that Basil was the first to introduce the practice of irrevocable vows into the monastic life. With him the vow made before God was inviolable and could not be recalled. It only needed the intervention of the State, which came presently, and made such a breach punishable, to complete the most cruel and drastic form of human slavery ever invented. The only mitigating circumstance was that Basil took great pains to secure that the vow should not be

¹ Morison, *St. Basil and his Rule*, 132.

² *Id.* 91 and 92.

taken lightly, but only after a proper inquiry about his vocation and a due apprenticeship of the novice, in which he was put to stringent tests to make sure of his devotion to the cardinal monkish virtues of obedience, humility, continence, and poverty.

The *Rule of Basil*, says the Rev. E. J. G. Smith, was the first written code of the sort. It was popular for a time in Southern Italy, a stronghold, from the circumstances of its colonisation, of Greek sympathies. It was translated into Latin at the instance of Uroclus, abbot of Pinetum, probably near the pine woods of Ravenna,¹ and was used in Gaul during the fifth century at Lemovicus (Limoges) in conjunction with Cassian's *Institutes*.² The provisions of Basil are chiefly comprised in his *Sermones Ascetici* and his two collections entitled respectively, "Ὅροι κατὰ πλάτος (*Regulae fusius tractatae*) and "Ὅροι κατ' ἐπιτομήν (*Regulae brevius tractatae*). He starts with the view that the object of a monastic life is the salvation of the soul and its union with God. In essence it is the same theory which governs the Buddhist monks of the East, the Hindoo saints and Muhammedan fakirs, with whom the underlying notion is the emancipation of the human soul from the taint and corruption induced by the passions and wickedness of the flesh and its natural and inherited appetites. Hence the whole life of the anchorites and solitaries, among whom Basil had learnt his

¹ Mabillon, *Ann. Bened.*, i. 15.

² *Dict. Chr. Antiquities*, ii. 1222.

lessons, was devoted to mortifying the flesh and its appetites, so that the soul could give itself up entirely to communion with God. Basil held this firmly, and he only modified its methods in order to make them more endurable and tolerable to a larger number of men, while rigorously retaining its theory and ideals. "He who would follow the Lord truly," he says, "must free himself from the bonds of the passions of this life, and this is done by a complete abandonment and disregard of the old manner of living." The beginning of this renunciation was to be made, he held, by discarding all outside belongings, such as property, empty fame and honour, with the social connections and ties of this life, which are all unnecessary and useless things. "Complete renunciation is only reached when a man no longer loves his life, but has the sentence of death in himself so that he does not trust himself." If we keep back some earthly possession or some transitory good, the soul, since it is as it were immersed in the mud here below, can never rise to the right idea of God, and can never be inspired with a desire for the heavenly beauty and the blessings that are promised us when a strong and continuous impulse moves us to desire it and makes the toil for it light."¹ Hence the manifold regulations for securing an ascetic tone of life and the practice of continuous abstinence and temperance in all things, and especially the mortifying of the will and the

¹ *Reg. Fus.*, viii. 1 and 3 ; Morison, *op. cit.* 32 and 33.

practice of humility in small things. Basil even blamed "the competitive asceticism" (as Mr. Morison neatly calls it) of the eastern hermits, which had fostered spiritual pride, and expressly forbids a scramble for the last place at table as leading to the same evil and as breeding contention.¹

In pursuing his scheme, as I have said, he had learnt to disapprove the mode of life of the anchorites, and deprecated it in favour of the cœnobitic standard. "The solitary buries his talent in the earth and renders it useless by sloth. He can neither feed the hungry, nor clothe the naked, nor tend the sick. He has no one towards whom he can exercise his humility, compassion, forbearance, or patience; if he errs, he has no one to lead him back; if he falls, he has no one to lift him up; his offences remain hidden for need of some one to rebuke him." So satisfied was Basil of this that he recommended those who insisted on pursuing the solitary life to plant their cells near his monasteries, and he in fact built cells for them in such positions. Gregory Nazianzen praises this attitude and says: "He founded cells for ascetics and hermits, but at no great distance from his cœnobitic communities, and instead of distinguishing and separating the one from the other as if by some intervening wall, he brought them together and united them, in order that the contemplative spirit might not be cut off from Society, nor the active

¹ Morison, *op. cit.* 36, 37.

life be uninfluenced by the contemplative, but that, like sea and land, they might unite by an interchange of their social gifts in promoting the one object, the glory of God."¹ In later days, says Mr. Morison, we find that the life of the monk was often condemned as merely preparatory to the life of the hermit, but there is no suggestion of any such idea in Basil's monastic system. He asserts plainly and without qualification that the solitary life is both difficult and dangerous.² Among its dangers he specially names self-complacency, the result of having no one to correct us and of becoming the objects of popular devotion almost amounting to worship. He nevertheless extolled the virtues of quiet and peace as necessary to a perfect life.

He advised that a cœnobitic establishment should be in a lonely place, not only remote from men, but from any other similar establishment, so that there might not be rivalry and ill-blood, and to save aspirants from difficulty of choice and consequent restlessness and fickleness.³ The number of the brethren for such a community should be more, rather than less, than ten, and should be presided over by a man who was a pattern of Christian virtue and of blameless life. He was to be elected by the senior brethren, and his authority must be implicit and his word law. The practice of rigid obedience

¹ Morison, *op. cit.* 46 ; *Orat.*, 43, 62.

² *Reg. Fus.*, 7 ; Morison, 46.

³ *Reg. Fus.*, 6 and 35.

to him was to be a condition precedent to residence in the monastery. He should be old rather than young, but old age was not to be a chief qualification.¹ The Superior, as he was called, was to be the custodian of the secrets of the brethren, and was to rebuke offenders without fear or favour;² he was to tend all the brethren as a nurse cherishes her own children, and if he should be guilty of wrongdoing, he was to be admonished by the seniors. He was to have a deputy to take his place if sick, absent, or busy.³ Each brother was counselled to select a man of stern and inflexible morality to act as his counsellor and director, and not a generous weakling.

No one was to be admitted to the brotherhood without examination or trial for a definite period.⁴ Married persons might be received on an assurance of their having separated with mutual consent,⁵ and children when presented by their parents or guardians. Orphans of both sexes were to be adopted as children of the community, but were not to be entered on the register until old enough to judge for themselves, and to understand the meaning of monastic vows. They were to be separated from the brethren except at public worship, and special rules in regard to sleep, food, etc., were made for them suitable to their age.⁶

¹ *Serm. Ascet.*, i. p. 330; *Reg. Fus.*, ch. xlvi.

² *Reg. Fus.*, ch. xxviii.

³ Ch. xlv.

⁴ Ch. x.

⁵ Ch. xii.

⁶ Ch. xv.

Runaway slaves were, after admonition, to be returned to their masters and bidden to be patient under the trials they had to endure, and to obey God's law rather than their master's when they were inconsistent with each other. Those who joined the brotherhood were not bound to surrender their property to their heirs unless they were likely to use it well, but were to give it up to those who would use it for God's glory,¹ which seems a very dangerous regulation. Private ownership by monks was rigorously repressed, and no one was to call even a shoe, vestment, vessel, or any necessary of life his own.

We will now turn to Basil's regulations for the daily life of the monks. Following the Biblical injunction to pray without ceasing, he impressed on them the necessity of saying their prayers not merely in erratic and spasmodic fashion, but regularly and continuously. I will quote a passage from one of his homilies on this subject which has been gracefully translated by Mr. Morison:—

“Ought we to pray without ceasing? Is it possible to obey such a command? These are questions which I see you are ready to ask. I will endeavour to the best of my ability to prove my case. Prayer is a petition for good addressed by the pious to God. But we do not rigidly confine our petitions to words. Nor yet do we imagine that God requires to be reminded by speech. He knows our needs although we do

¹ *Reg. Fus.*, ch. ix.

not ask Him. What do I say then? I say that we must not think that our prayers consist only in words. The strength of prayer lies rather in the purpose of our soul, and in deeds of virtue, affecting every part and moment of our life. 'Whether ye eat or drink, or whatever ye do, do all to the glory of God.'¹ As thou takest thy seat at table, pray. As thou liftest the loaf, offer thanks to the Giver. When thou sustainest thy bodily weakness with wine, remember Him who supplies thee with this gift, that He may make thy heart glad and comfort thy infirmity. Has thy need for food passed away? Let not the thought of thy Merciful Benefactor pass away too. As thou art putting on thy tunic, thank Him who gave it to thee. As thou wrappest thy cloak about thee, feel yet greater love towards God, who alike in summer and winter has given us clothing convenient both to cover what is unseemly, and to preserve our life. Is the duty over? Thank Him who has given us the sun for the service of our daily work, and has provided us with fire to brighten the night, and to serve for the other needs of life.

"Let night also afford other suggestions of prayer. When thou lookest up to heaven and seest the beauty of the stars, pray to the Lord of all things visible, the great Artist of the universe, 'who in wisdom hath made them all,'² and when thou seest all nature sink in sleep, then

¹ 1 Cor. x. 31.

² Ps. civ. 24.

again worship Him who even against our will releases us from the continuous strain of toil and by a short respite restores us once again to the vigour of our strength. Let not night herself be altogether the special property of sleep. Let not half thy life be useless in the dull torpor of slumber, but divide the time of night between sleep and prayer. And let thy slumbers be exercises of piety; for the dreams of our sleep are wont to be for the most part the reflections of our thoughts by day. As have been our conduct and pursuits, so will of necessity be our dreams. Thus mayest thou pray without ceasing, not in words, but by the whole conduct of thy life, so uniting thyself to God that thy life may be one long, unceasing prayer."¹

With these views ingrained in him, it is not wonderful that Basil should specially cherish the monastic vocation as affording the undistracted life, solitude, and peace that in his view could alone secure ceaseless communion with God and obedience to His will which are impossible with men distracted continually by daily cares. Monks with their constant round of prayer and meditation were able (to use his own words) "to imitate on earth the choruses of the angels." Mr. Morison remarks as curious that "although Basil asks his friends to remember him in their prayers, he nowhere in his instructions to the monks mentions the duty of intercessory prayer, which

¹ *Hom. in Mart. Julittae*, 3-4; Morison, 58-60.

in later times has become one of their chief functions.”¹

Basil inherited his devotion to the theory of continual prayer from the Egyptian hermits, with whom, however, as in most things, the theory was pressed to quite fantastic extravagance and led to strange excesses. The task, as they interpreted it, was indeed beyond the limits of human capacity. The individual worshipper, however great his devotion, could not entirely disregard the needs of his physical nature.

When the hermits began to form communities it therefore became the practice to discriminate between private prayer and the common worship of the society, and among the rigid a plan was discovered by which “perpetual praise” (*laus perennis*) was secured by members of the community taking up the duty in turn. Thus Gregory of Nyssen tells us that in the convent over which Basil’s sister presided, there was a perpetual requiem of prayer and praise,² and the practice has always had its votaries among the most austere Orders.

A more practical and more generally practised plan was introduced by St. Pachomius, the famous Egyptian abbot, in his regulations for the associated hermits who claimed him as their father, namely, that of having fixed hours for the common prayer. In his case the number of these gatherings for prayer was, however, excessive, otiose, and

¹ Morison, 61.

² *Vit. S. Macrinae.*

quite impracticable under any other conditions than those prevailing in Egypt.

The more reasonable and practical minds of the founders of true monachism went to a better source of inspiration. The practice of the Jews was to pray three times a day, at the third, sixth, and ninth hour.¹ Tertullian prescribes the same times of prayer,² so does St. Jerome.³

By the third century, as appears from St. Cyprian,⁴ the number of the prescribed times for prayer had been increased by two. He says expressly: "Besides the Hours observed of old . . . we ought to pray in the morning, *i.e.* at sunrise, and when the sun sets,"⁵ and it was these five Hours which were prescribed by St. Basil in his Rule as necessary for monks.⁶ Cyprian called the early office *matutina oratio*; by others it was called *laudes matutinae*, from the use in it of the three last psalms, which were called emphatically by the Latins "laudes," and by the Greeks *αινοι*, whence came the later name of lauds; but it continued to bear the name *matutinae* with many, and was so called by Benedict. Basil calls it *τό ὄρθρον*, or the office of dawn, a name which is still retained among the Greeks.⁷

The evening office was called Vespers by the

¹ See Psalm lv. 17; Dan. vi. 10; also Acts ii. 15, iii. 1, v. 9 and x. 30. Scudamore, *Dict. of Chr. Ant.*, i. 794.

² *De Orat.*, 25.

³ *Comm. in Dan.*, c. vi. v. 10.

⁴ Writing in 252 A.D.; see Scudamore, *loc. cit.*

⁵ *De Orat. Dom.*, *sub fin.*

⁶ *Reg. Fus.*, 37.

⁷ Scudamore, *op. cit.* 794.

Latins, sometimes (as by St. Jerome) "lucernarium," and sometimes also "the twelfth." By the Greeks it was called *τό λυχνικόν*, so named from the lighting of the lamps, and more properly *τὸ ἐσπερίον*;¹ it is so named in the Apostolical Constitutions.

The other three canonical Hours were so named from the fact that they were held at intervals of three hours each, beginning with the third hour after sunrise, hence called *terce*; the next one being called *sext*, and the third *nones*. It would seem that in Basil's time these five Hours were the only ones prescribed as obligatory and canonical for common prayer.

He further mentions as seemly, that the monks should pray before going to sleep that their rest might be blameless and free from fantasies, and should also then recite the 90th (now 91st) Psalm. This seems to have been a private prayer, and so St. Ambrose apparently understood it. It has been suggested that it was from this devotion that the sixth canonical Hour of later days took its rise. It was perhaps made obligatory by Benedict, and was known as Compline (*completoria* or *completorium*), probably meaning the completion of the day's services. The Greeks called it *ἀπόδειπνον*, because it followed the last meal of the day.

A seventh devotion is also mentioned by Basil, but it does not seem to have been so obligatory in

¹ Scudamore, *op. cit.* 794.

his time as the five ancient Hours. It apparently arose from the pious custom of prayer when one awakes in the night. It presently, however, became obligatory to have such a service at what was known as cock-crowing. Cassian calls this service *Solemnitas nocturna* and *nocturni psalmi et orationes*; whence the name by which it is generally known, namely, nocturns; the Greeks called it *μεσονυκτικόν*.¹ These seven Hours no doubt fulfilled an obligation, which apart from other considerations was felt by the monks to be demanded by a very high precedent, namely, that where the Psalmist says in the 119th Psalm, "Seven times a day do I praise thee." It will be noted that nothing is here said about the service known as "Prime." It was not in use apparently in the time of Basil, and was introduced at a later time, as we have seen, by Cassian.²

Basil continually urges the combination of meditation with the reading of scripture and the lives of saints, the last as examples of a pious life. He reprobates, however, the view of those who held that the reading of good books was all that was needed to make a man good. He says that such an one is like a person who learns how to weave, but never weaves anything. Like St. Gregory in later days, he also prepared a special manual entitled *Moralia*, containing precepts for a godly life. In one respect, at all events, his horizon was larger than that of his great admirer, Gregory, namely,

¹ Scudamore, *op. cit.* 795.

² *Ante*, p 175.

in his tolerance for the great teachers of pagan times. Thus in his homily *Ad adolescentem*, speaking of Socrates, he says, "Where their conduct, as in this case, is so much on a level with Christian ideals, I maintain that it is well worth our while to copy these great men." We do not find, however, in his works evidence that he had a real taste for classical and pagan learning. It virtually has no place in them, nor did he consider it a monk's duty even to provide divine learning. Scripture was to be obeyed rather than investigated. He enjoins frequent confessions to those among the brethren "most apt at curing moral disease."¹ I cannot follow Mr. Morison, however, in his immense induction from a solitary sentence in the manifold writings of the saint that such confessions among monks were to be made to others than members of their own confraternity, who were to be priests. The analogies he quotes seem to me to have reference only to such confessors, including laymen or monks, as were entrusted with the duty of baptism. Basil's words, as quoted in one of his Rules (the only place where he mentions the fact) are: "Sins are to be confessed to those who are entrusted with the dispensation of the mysteries of God;² as those who were repentant are found to have confessed their sins to John the Baptist: and in the Acts, to the Apostles by whom they had all

¹ Morison, *op. cit.* 73 and 74.

² Cf. I Cor. iv. 1.

been baptized.”¹ It is a long stride from this injunction to the conclusion, which seems to me quite unwarranted, that “Sacramental confession in the technical sense was enjoined *on Monks* in the time of St. Basil.” We must remember that whatever innovations he introduced in the *administration* of monasteries, the ritual and the theory of the sacraments which he followed were, we can hardly doubt, what he had learnt in Egypt. It is very important for many reasons, therefore, to realise what the practice in regard to the most sacred of the sacraments was in Egypt at this time. Nowhere is it described with such plainness as in a letter of St. Basil himself,² which Mr. Morison quite frankly quotes, and which I will set out from his own translation. He says, “It is needless to point out that for anyone in time of persecution to be compelled to take the Communion in his own hand without the presence of a priest or minister is not a serious offence, as experience and long custom sanction such conduct. All the solitaries in the desert, where *there is no priest*, keep the Communion at home and there partake of it themselves. And at Alexandria and in Egypt, each one of the laity for the most part keeps the Communion at his own house, and partakes of it when he wishes.” Here it will be seen it is not merely monks, but ordinary lay-people, who are referred to. Not only did they not practise “sacramental confession,” but entirely dispensed with the intervention of a priest

¹ *Reg. Brev.*, 286.

² *Ep.* 93.

in the sacrament of the Lord's Supper. It seems to me plain that in the farther East this absence of sacramental confession must certainly have been largely the practice. Basil's influence and authority in such matters became paramount in the Eastern Church, and there at all events we cannot doubt that in later times monks who were not in priests' orders habitually heard confessions.

Basil enjoined frequent Communions, and says that he himself communicated four times a week, on the Lord's day, on Wednesday, on Friday, and on the Sabbath (*i.e.* Saturday). The last of these days was that specially adopted for their Communion by the monks of Pachomius.¹

Let us now turn from the regulations of the monks to the internal economy of Basil's monasteries. Work equally with prayer was a prime injunction of the wise Doctor; they were to pray and sing while at work. The brothers working at a distance were to keep the Hours in the field.² Everybody was to work at what he could do best, so that the whole community might be supported by the toil of its own hands. The work was not to pander to luxury, but only to the necessities of the inmates, and such as could be practised without noise or disturbing the unity of the brethren was to be preferred; thus weaving and shoe-making were to be preferred to building, carpentering, or brazier's work. Agriculture was, however, chiefly commended.³ This was also the teaching of Basil's

¹ See Morison, *op. cit.* 78.

² *Reg. Fus.*, xxxvii.

³ *Ib.* xxxviii.

Egyptian master Pachomius, and this calling Basil had himself diligently pursued. In writing to him, his friend and companion, Gregory recalls the struggles they had had "with their garden, which was no garden and grew no vegetables," and he complains that "his neck and hands still bore the traces of the labours they endured in drawing their unwieldy wagon up and down" (τὴν γεώλοφον ἄμαξαν).¹

Basil held that monks ought not to choose the work they were to do, but do whatever was assigned them by their superior.² The produce of their labours was to be committed to a grave, elderly man, who would dispense it without the brethren having to go outside the monastery.³ A long absence from home was deprecated. If such a journey were necessary in the interest of the convent, it was only to be made by a single person if he were especially discreet, otherwise several of them were to travel together for mutual safeguard. Fairs were to be especially avoided, even when under the name of religion they were held around the martyrs' tombs.⁴ If they must needs go into a town to sell their goods, they should go together and to one place, rather than wander about from town to town. The monks from different monasteries should assemble at the same inn, both for mutual protection and so that they could keep the accustomed Hours; towns should be chosen which had a high character for piety.⁵ On their

¹ Greg. Naz., *Ep.* v.

² Morison, 82-85; *Reg. Fus.*, xli.

³ *Serm. Ascet.*, i. 321.

⁴ *Reg. Fus.*, xl.

⁵ *Ib.* xxxix.

return they were to be sharply questioned and penance exacted if they had broken the laws of the society, and all "gadding about" or huckstering, under pretence that it was on the business of the convent, was prohibited as inconsistent with the monastic life.¹ All women or idle persons were to be excluded from the precincts. If such presented themselves, they were to have no intercourse with the brothers, but only with the superior.

Even with relatives, converse was forbidden, unless likely to be edifying. All conversation likely to revive the memory of the monks' former life in the world was to be avoided. A monk's relatives were to be deemed the common kinsmen of the community, and not his own merely. Nor were his relations or parents allowed special access to him. Labour and rest were to be equally shared among the brethren, who were told off in a rota of pairs for the necessary work of the place, so that all might obtain an equal reward for humility.² A discreet and experienced brother was to be set apart to settle disputes, and if he failed he was to bring the matter before the superior.³ The superior was not to rebuke the brothers angrily.⁴ If rebuke failed, then penance was to be exacted corresponding to the offence. Exercises of humility were prescribed for the vain-glorious, silence for the too talkative, vigils or prayers for the sluggards, hard work for the lazy, fasting for the

¹ *Reg. Fus.*, xlv.

² *Serm. Ascet.* i. 322, *ad fin.*

³ *Reg. Fus.*, xlix.

⁴ *Ib.* ch. l.

gluttonous, and separation from others for the discontented and querulous.¹ Other common penances were exclusion from the common prayer or psalmody of the society, or a restriction of food. Rebellion was punished by incarceration, and persistent obstinacy by expulsion.² The superior himself was to tolerate reproof, advice, or warning from the oldest and most prudent brother.³ The superiors of different establishments were to meet at stated times for mutual counsel, for better regulating the common life, discussing difficulties, reproving negligence, and for commending those who had done well.⁴

Silence was obligatory except when at prayers or singing the psalms, and loud laughing was also forbidden, although a cheerful countenance was encouraged.⁵ Nods or signs were to be used in preference to words. When it was necessary to speak, it should be in a low and gentle voice, except when rebuke or exhortation had to be given.⁶ The rejection of medicine as an interference with God's will was reproved, unless the malady was obviously a penalty for sin.⁷ The quantity and quality of the food and clothing were strictly limited so as to secure a real practice of asceticism. Basil deprecated the excessive abstention and fasting practised by the anchorites of Egypt; he was

¹ *Reg. Fus.*, xxviii., xxix., li.

² *Serm. Ascet.*, i. 322; *Reg. Fus.*, xxviii. ³ *Reg. Fus.*, xxvii.

⁴ *Ib.* liv. Rev. E. Venables, *Dict. of Chr. Antiquities*, ii. 1232-1234.

⁵ *Reg. Fus.*, xvii.

⁶ *Serm. Ascet.*, ii. 326.

⁷ *Reg. Fus.*, lv.

nevertheless exacting and severe in these matters. Eating was to be deemed a necessity, and mere eating for pleasure was reprobated. Only enough food was to be taken to secure good health and enable the monks duly to perform their duties, but stronger food or wine was permitted in certain cases. In his letters he gives us some details of his ideas on the subject, which seem very exacting. "For a man in good health," he says, "bread will suffice and water will quench thirst. Such dishes of vegetables may be added as best serve to strengthen the body for the exercise of its functions." Guests were to feed like the brothers. Grace was to be said before and after meat. There was to be a fixed hour for the repast, when all were to meet. One meal a day was apparently the rule. At meals there was to be reading. Mr. Morison points out that while this scanty food might have been tolerable in a warm country like Egypt, it must have been excessively trying in a country with such a winter as Cappadocia. Life would indeed have been insupportable unless the rule was often in practice relaxed, and notably in the case of sickness or fatigue from overwork or long journeys.

In regard to clothing, Basil decided in favour of a distinctive dress for the monks, as tending to make their conduct and behaviour more correct in public. In this he was not original, and in Asia Minor, as he himself tells us, the monks of Eustathius, his predecessor, were distinguished by their coarse cloak, girdle, and shoes of untanned

hide. He himself prescribes that the tunic should be fastened to the body by a girdle, the belt not going high above the waist like a woman's, nor left slack so that the dress would flow loose like an idler's; brightness in colour and softness in touch were to be avoided by the monks in their clothes. The tunic was to be thick enough to suffice without necessitating another garment; the shoes should be cheap but serviceable. The same clothing was to serve for day and night, nor was a monk to have a different dress for work and another for show. Their dress was also to be uniform. Warmer clothes were allowed in winter than in summer. Clothing made of hair was only to be used as a penance. He seems to have encouraged rough unkempt hair and untidy dress to be worn continuously night and day as a proof of humility. Those who have consorted with certain types of friars in modern days would prefer a more widely distributed aphorism, namely, that "cleanliness is next to Godliness." Yet it will be remembered that Julian, the Imperial philosopher, who had certainly no sympathies with monks, himself affected a dirty personal appearance in proof of his admiration for the old philosophers.¹

We will now return to Theodore. He is described by Bede as versed in secular and Divine literature and in the knowledge of Greek and Latin, as having grave manners, and being of venerable age. He was actually sixty-six years old when he

¹ See Pullan, *Church of the Fathers*, 266.

was appointed. In a letter written by Pope Zacharias to Saint Boniface it is said of him: *Graeco-Latinus ante philosophus et Athenis eruditus*,¹ showing not only that he had studied at Athens, but also that, notwithstanding the Edict of Justinian expelling the philosophers, it still remained a centre of culture. As the above phrase implies, he became a good Greek and Latin scholar and a "philosopher," by which an adept in rhetoric and dialectics was probably meant. In addition to which he was a prudent, tactful man of affairs. It is a great pity that no biography of him more detailed than that of Bede exists. Dr. Stubbs suggests that he may have come West with the Emperor Constans, who spent the winter of 661 at Athens, and arrived at Rome in 663. This is not improbable, but we must remember that at this time there was a considerable colony of Greek monks at Rome and in South Italy, who were recruited largely by fugitives from Syria and Egypt, when those countries were overwhelmed by the Saracens. The hero of one of Pope Gregory's *Dialogues*² was a Syrian monk who had settled at Spoleto. Herculanius of Perugia is also said to have been a Greek monk.

In 667, Theodore, who was sixty-five years old, was at Rome. He was not then in Orders, but a professed Basilian monk of unusual learning and gifts, and was probably a friend of Hadrian, upon whom, as we saw, the Pope had without success pressed

¹ *Mon. Mag.*, ed. Jaffé, p. 185; Stubbs, *Dict. of Chr. Biog.*, iv. 926.

² Lib. iii. ch. 14.

the acceptance of the Canterbury see, and who, at all events, had discovered Theodore and persuaded him to undertake the arduous post. He was now ordained a subdeacon, and then waited for four months so that his hair might grow and he could be re-tonsured with a coronal tonsure, which is the one still prevailing in the Roman Church, for according to Bede he previously had "the tonsure of St. Paul the Apostle, after the manner of the Eastern people," which simply means that he had been a Basilian monk. However he changed the method of cutting his hair, it is hardly possible that he could have rid himself of all the teaching on faith and ritual which he had acquired in the East. At sixty-five, men do not often change their views on serious subjects. Having entered the subdiaconate, he quickly passed through the other Orders, and was ordained bishop by Pope Vitalian on Sunday the 7th of the Kalends of April (26th March) 668.¹ The service was doubtless performed in the Church of the Lateran, and he was no doubt ordained by the Pope himself, having been the first English bishop to obtain the distinction of a papal ordination. This would certainly be with all the ceremony and pomp usual on such occasions, and which would no doubt be especially used on this one, since Theodore was no ordinary bishop, but was setting out to reorganise a missionary Church which was specially the daughter of Rome, and which was the cherished child of Rome's greatest bishop, St. Gregory. The cere-

¹ Bede, *H.E.*, lib. iv. ch. 1.

monial then used at Rome on the occasion of the ordination of a bishop is described by Duchesne from the three old Sacramentaries styled Gelasian, Leonine, and Gregorian. A very notable thing to remember is that at this time it was the practice of the bishops of Rome, in ordaining bishops, priests, and deacons, to officiate alone. The Pope might have bishops around him, and in general this was the case, but he was the sole administrator in the ceremony. "This departure," says Duchesne, "from the later rule that a single bishop could not consecrate another, is mentioned in the sixth century in the *Breviarium* of Ferrandus." In the 6th canon of the Roman Council of 386, it is expressly ordered: "*Ut unus episcopus, episcopum non ordinet.*" To this Ferrandus, in the sixth century, adds the note: "*Excepta ecclesia Romana.*"¹ The custom preserved at Rome was doubtless the primitive one. It is clear that the apostles in ordaining bishops on their missionary journeys, must have ordained singly, and Gregory made no objection to Augustine doing so in England. Paulinus and others followed his example, and it was apparently the usual practice among the Celts. The rule about more than one bishop being present at consecrations was a good and salutary one, and no doubt avoided scandals at times, but it in no way affected the perfect legitimacy of an ordination by a single bishop.

¹ Duchesne, *Christian Worship*, third Eng. ed., translated by Mrs. M'Clure, 361-2 and note 2.

The usual proceedings at an episcopal ordination, according to the Roman rite, as practised in the metropolitan province, were as follows. A candidate having been duly elected by the district in which he was to serve, an official report or decree was drawn up which was signed by the notables of the place, both clerical and lay, and the future bishop thereupon set out, accompanied by some representatives of his Church, for Rome, where the election was verified and the candidate examined. If the election was found to be regular and the Pope approved of the choice of the electors, the consecration followed. In the present case these preliminaries were of course omitted, since Theodore was the Pope's own choice. There was no special time in the year assigned for this ceremonial, but it had always to take place on a Sunday. First the Gradual was sung, and the Pope then called on the congregation to pray for the candidate with this invitory phrase: "Let us pray, my beloved ones, that on this man (or these men) setting out to advance the usefulness of the Church, the favour of the omnipotent grace of God may bestow its bounty abundantly" (*Oremus, dilectissimi nobis, ut his viris ad utilitatem Ecclesiae provehendis benignitas omnipotentis Dei gratiae suam tribuat largitatem*).¹ Then followed a Litany, then a second prayer asking God to confer His grace on those about to be consecrated; and lastly, a Eucharistic prayer with some fine but not too easy Latin

¹ Duchesne, *op. cit.* 360.

phrases, which is given in that tongue in the English translation of Duchesne, but which I prefer to give in English. In this translation I have had the help of my scholarly friends, Mr. Brooke and Mr. Mattingly of the British Museum.

“ It is very meet, right, and our bounden duty, etc. . . . O God of all honours, O God of all dignities which minister to Thy glory in holy orders ; O God, who, instructing Moses Thy servant in secret colloquy as to other ordinances for heavenly worship and also as to the wearing of priestly vestments, didst order Aaron thine elect to be clothed at the holy rites with a mystic robe ; in order that ages to come might have understanding from the examples of men of former time, lest any age should lack knowledge of Thy doctrine, since among the ancients reverence was paid to the semblance of inner meanings, and we have had experience of realities surer than allegorical figures. For the clothing of that former priesthood is the adornment of our mind, and not splendour of garb but beauty of soul commends to us the glory of the episcopate. For not only those things which delight the bodily eye are required, but rather those qualities which they symbolise. And therefore upon these Thy servants, whom Thou hast chosen for the ministry of the highest priesthood, bestow, we pray Thee, O Lord, this grace, that whatsoever those vestments typify in the sheen of gold, the brightness of precious stones, and their manifold variety, this may be reflected in their

characters and their works. Fulfil in Thy priests the completeness of thy mystery, and sanctify with the flow of heavenly unction those who are armed with the full equipment of glorification. Let this, O Lord, flow abundantly upon their heads, let this run down to their chins, let this flow to the furthest parts of their bodies, that the power of Thy Spirit may fill their inward parts and cover them. May they abound in steadfastness of faith, in purity of judgment, in sincerity of peace.

“May their feet by Thy blessing be beautiful to preach the gospel of peace and of Thy good works. Grant them, O Lord, a ministry of reconciliation in word and in deeds, in the power of signs and wonders. Let their conversation and preaching be not in the suasive words of man’s wisdom, but in the display of Thy Spirit and virtue. Give them, O Lord, the keys of Thy kingdom; may they use, not to their own vain glory, the power that Thou givest them for edification, not for destruction. Whatsoever they have bound on earth may it be bound also in heaven, and whatsoever they have loosed on earth may it be loosed also in heaven. Whosoever sins they have retained, let them be retained; and whosoever they have remitted, do Thou remit. Let him who has blessed them be blessed, and let him who has cursed them be fulfilled with curses. May they be faithful and wise servants whom Thou settest, O Lord, over Thy household, that they may give them their

meat in due season, to the end that they may make every man perfect. May they be not slothful in business but fervent in spirit. May they hate pride, and may they love truth, nor ever let it be overcome by weakness or by fear. May they not put light for darkness nor darkness for light. May they not call evil good nor good evil. May they be debtors to the wise, and gather fruit of the increase of all men.

“Assign to them an episcopal seat, that they may rule Thy church and all Thy people. Be Thou their authority, be Thou their power, be Thou their strength. Multiply upon them Thy benediction and grace, that they may be made fit by Thy blessing, and consecrated by Thy grace to the continual invocation of Thy mercy.”¹

Before we follow the steps of the new archbishop to Canterbury, we must turn aside shortly to realise what was taking place in Gaul. In a previous volume on St. Augustine, I brought down the epitome of Frankish history to the accession of Dagobert the First, the most remarkable in some ways of the Merovingian sovereigns. He started his reign under better auspices than many other members of the dynasty, since he controlled the whole Frankish realm, and had no jealous and ambitious relatives who disputed the position with him. His only brother, Charibert, was loyal to him. Nevertheless, if he had not had very special qualities and gifts, it is

¹ Duchesne, *op. cit.* 360.

not likely that his reign would have been generally accepted as one of the most successful ones in the history of the Franks. I shall, in treating this part of my subject, rely upon the so-called *Chronicle of Fredegar*, and on the latest and best modern authority known to me, namely, the admirable French history of M. Lavissee.

Chlothaire the Second died on the 18th of October 629, and was buried in the church of St. Vincent in one of the faubourgs of Paris, where his epitaph has been found. His son, Dagobert, was then about twenty-six years old. He had, as we previously saw, ruled over Austrasia in the name of his father, and now sent deputies to Neustria and Burgundy to announce his succession. These other great divisions of the kingdom had become very loosely attached to the throne, and were largely in the hands of their turbulent nobles, each with his semi-independent seigniory. Dagobert made several expeditions to and fro there, reduced the nobles to obedience, not sparing the authors of the anarchy, and speedily asserted his supreme authority. He made Paris his capital. Pepin, who as majordomo in Austrasia had exercised almost sovereign power during Dagobert's rule, was now driven to seek refuge in Aquitaine, and there only remained one official with the title in the kingdom, namely, Æga, who fulfilled the duties of mayor of the palace for all its three divisions.¹

¹ Lavissee, *Hist. de France*, ii. pt. i. 157-8.

Aquitaine, which stood apart from the rest of the Frankish realm, and in which the Gallo-Roman provincials had largely absorbed their Visigothic masters, had only a sparse and scattered population of Franks. It was prone, therefore, to revolt, and to keep it in a good humour Dagobert made his brother Charibert his viceroy there. The latter controlled the counties of Toulouse, Cahors, Agen, Périgueux, and Saintes, with his residence at Toulouse. His State formed a powerful buttress against the Basques of Septimania. These latter he presently subdued, thus extending the Frank realm to the Pyrenees. Charibert died in 632, when Dagobert placed his appanage under his own immediate control, and it continued to be dominated by the Franks till 670.¹

Dagobert having compelled the grandees and the bishops to acknowledge his authority everywhere, held an inquiry into the properties of the Church and those of the seigniors, and, contrary to the edict of 614, took possession of a number of them. In order to stop the evils of mortmain, he confiscated a number of estates which had been left to the bishops and the abbeys. This increased the revenue considerably and led to the spread of luxury and the culture of the arts, of which Dagobert was a great patron, especially of the art of the goldsmith, and he presented the Abbey of St. Denis with some fine gold vessels and church furniture,

¹ Lavissee, *Hist. de France*, ii. 158-9.

which were made by a famous artist, Eloi, who afterwards became Bishop of Noyon. We shall speak of him again later.

Meanwhile, as in other cases when the arts flourished, morals decayed. Dagobert divorced his wife Gomatrude to marry a young woman of low birth called Nantechildis. By another wife, Ragnetrude, he had a son named Sigebert. "Like Solomon," says Fredegar, "he had three wives and any number of concubines; nevertheless," adds the courtly chronicler, "he distributed large alms to the poor, and if he had not destroyed the effect of his good works by his cupidity he would have deserved the Kingdom of the Skies."¹ It arouses suspicions when we are told that Ethelberga, the exiled queen of Northumbria, sent some of her young family to Dagobert's court because, as Bede reports, he was "a friend of hers." It implies that she had visited him, and it may have been another case of the Queen of Sheba. On the other hand, as I have previously argued, she was possibly more nearly related to Dagobert than has been supposed.

While the bishops blamed his amours, they could not deny him praise for his administrative capacity. He filled the great sees with worthy bishops: Eligius or Eloi at Noyon, Audœnus or Ouen at Rouen, and Desiderius or Didier at Cahors were all men of note. The monasteries

¹ Fredegar, ch. lx.

grew richer and new ones were built in large numbers. That of St. Denis, which Dagobert chose for his burial-place, received important privileges. St. Ouen founded the Abbey of Rebaise in Champagne; and his brother Adon, the Woman's Convent of Jouarra. Eloi built the monastery of Solignac in Central France. In Austrasia, Remiremont was established on the plan of Luxeuil, while in the forest of Ardennes there arose the twin foundations of Stavelot and Malmedy. Meanwhile the missionary efforts of the Church were not neglected, and St. Amand prosecuted the work of Christianising the Flemings and the Basques. The reign of Dagobert was, in fact, distinguished by the lives of many "saints."¹

While the affairs of the kingdom thus flourished, its external relations were also happy. Dagobert put down a rebellion of the Basques and their Duke swore fealty. So did Judicael, the chief of the Damnonian Bretons. The Frankish king also intervened in the affairs of Spain, and by his influence one Visigothic king there was substituted for another, namely, Sisinand for Suintila,² and he induced Crotaire, the Lombard king, to take back the Frank princess whom he had repudiated. He thus acted as a sort of over-king in the greater part of Western and Southern Europe.³

In Central and Eastern Europe great changes

¹ Lavissee, *Hist. de France*, ii. pt. i. 160.

² Howorth, *St. Augustine the Missionary*, p. 313.

³ Lavissee, *Hist. de France*, ii. pt. i. 161.

had taken place in the previous half-century. The lands there which had been formerly occupied by German tribes, and which, since the migration of the latter, had been left vacant, were now occupied by Slavs belonging to the two great divisions of the race. They advanced as far as the Elbe and the Saale, and founded colonies in the valley of the Main. They occupied Bohemia, Styria, Carinthia, and Carniola, and were divided into several sections, the Croats and Slovenes in the Alps, the Tscheques in Bohemia, the Sorabians, Wiltzi, and Obodriti on the Saale and Elbe. Years ago I wrote a series of memoirs on the migrations of these Slavic tribes in the *Transactions* of the Archæological Institute.¹ In some places they acknowledged the supremacy of their neighbours of other races, Ostrogoths, Bavarians, and Avars. The most remarkable result of all was when the Tscheques elected Samo, a mere Frank trader who had assisted them against the Avars, as their ruler. He founded a mighty kingdom, the focus of which was Bohemia, which extended from the Havel to the Alps of Styria. He offered his alliance to Dagobert, who contemptuously refused it, probably because Samo had forsaken Christianity and worshipped the gods of the Slavs. "It is not possible," he said to their ambassadors, "for the servants of God to ally themselves with dogs." Samo imprisoned his envoys and defeated his

¹ *Op. cit.* vols. 7, etc.

army, and Dagobert thereupon founded the Duchy of Thuringia as a buttress against them.¹ This he gave to Rodulf, son of Chamar, a turbulent person to whom Fredegar applies the proverb that "he who likes fighting seeks occasions of quarrel."² Dagobert also induced the Saxons to attack them. Thus "commenced the struggle between the Germans and the Slavs, which fills the history of those countries and continues till to-day." Samo presently made peace with the Franks. He retained his kingdom till his death in 658, but it afterwards fell to pieces.

Dagobert also came in contact with the Bulgars, a race originally of Turco-Finnish blood and language, which came from the plains of Russia, and had been defeated by the Avars, who were their distant relatives, whereupon nine thousand of them fled into Bavaria, then subject to Dagobert, and were most of them put to death by him.

He also entered into relations with Heraclius the emperor, who had similar foes to face as himself. They concluded a perpetual peace, in which they probably devised a common policy against the terrible enemies who were threatening the lands of the Danube, and against the Jews, who were at this time the objects of persecution almost everywhere. Lastly, Dagobert did a considerable service to the State by revising the Salic Laws.

¹ Lavissee, *Hist. de France*, ii. 161.

² Fredegar, ch. lxxviii.

It will be seen from these notices what a very great personage he was. Unfortunately, in his later years he was compelled to adopt certain measures which again weakened his kingdom. The union of the Frank Empire was a union in name only. It was really a temporary coalition of three communities intensely jealous of each other. The Austrasians resented the removal of the capital of the Empire from their territory to Paris, and demanded a king of their own, and Dagobert was obliged to concede their demands by appointing his son Sigebert their ruler under himself, and giving him as advisers Cunibert, the bishop of Cologne, and the major-domo Adalgisl, the son of Arnulf.

The action of the Austrasians was followed by the Neustrians, and when in 634-5 Dagobert had a second son, who was named Chlovis, they claimed him as their king.

Dagobert died on the 19th of January 639, and was buried at St. Denis. Thereupon his two sons, with the concurrence of the *grandees*, divided his empire between them. Sigebert took Austrasia with its dependencies, Aquitaine and Provence, and Chlovis II. took Neustria and Burgundy, under the tutelage of his mother, Nantechildis, and the major-domo *Æga*. The young kings were of little moment, however, compared with their great officers the major-domos, who naturally controlled the real power during their minority. *Æga* continued to rule in Neustria; while in

Austrasia, Pepin, who returned from Aquitaine, displaced his relative Adalgisl ; and the Burgundians, who had no king, were pacified by having their own major-domo in the person of Flavochat.

Æga was succeeded by Erchinoald and Pepin, who died in 690, by a grandee of the name of Otton or Othon, son of "the Domestic" Uron.¹ He had been tutor to Sigebert.

The major-domo, or mayor of the palace, had difficult functions to perform. He was in reality the head of the Nobles, and was expected to protect their privileges and dignities. On the other hand, he was the chief Minister of the King, and had to defend his prerogative, to raise taxes, and to insist on military service being duly rendered. It depended on the idiosyncrasy of each man whether he allowed his allegiance to the King or that to the Nobles to predominate. Erchinoald, who was reputed to be gentle in manners and considerate to the clergy and had only moderate wealth, favoured, and was favoured by, the Nobles. Othon, on the contrary, was a partisan of the Crown, and demanded the obedience of every one else. He was consequently disliked by the Austrasian nobility, some of whom refused to help their king Sigebert against Rodulf, Duke of Thuringia. The Franks were consequently beaten. They lost Thuringia (this was in 641), and soon after Othon was killed by the Alemannic Duke Lothaire, whose country was also lost to

¹ Fredegar, ch. lxxxvi.

the Franks. Thus the eastern frontier of the kingdom, which in 639 had been the Elbe, was in 643 pushed back to the Rhine.¹ Othon's place was taken by Grimoald, the son of Pepin. He was an ambitious person and refused to submit either to Sigebert or to the nobles, and, as it would seem, tried to seize the throne. When in 656 Sigebert died, Grimoald sent the latter's young son Dagobert out of the way into Ireland, and proclaimed his own son Childebert as King. This was resented by the Neustrian nobles, who seized him and handed him over to Chlovis the Second of Neustria, who put him to death. Chlovis himself now became undisputed ruler of the Franks. He died in 657, and was succeeded in it by his son, Chlothaire the Third, under the tutelage of his mother, Bathildis, who, it is supposed by some, had been a Breton slave. Her name, however, is German. He was nominally sole king of the Franks, and the only major-domo left in the realm was Ebroin, who was appointed to the post in Neustria about 658, while Austrasia and Burgundy fell into anarchy.

Ebroin was a person of remarkable vigour and energy. He was determined, like the famous Queen Brunichildis, to re-establish the Royal power in its integrity, deeming this the only way to save a society which was in process of dissolution. His whole life was a continuous struggle, and he stopped at nothing

¹ We now lose the guidance of the Frankish chronicler, Fredegar.

to secure his ends.¹ The best proof of his capacity is that he should have remained in power for such a long time in that turbulent age. As we have already seen in a previous page (*ante*, p. 166), he was probably responsible for the murder of Anne-mundus, the Archbishop of Lyons (*ante*, p. 167).

In the earlier part of his career he was somewhat restrained by the Queen-Mother Bathildis, who is described as a Jezebel by the biographer of St. Wilfrid, but who was placed in the Calendar by the Church. She founded the famous Abbey of Corbie, and ended her days in the Nunnery of Chelles. Her son, the young Chlothaire II., deprived of her guidance and probably encouraged by Ebroin (who had his own game to play), became exceedingly dissipated, vicious, weak-minded, and eventually insane. In the *Gesta Francorum* it is reported that he was the first of his race to be driven in an ox wagon, and stories were told of his having broken off the arm of St. Denis and having carried off some silver ornaments from his monastery. On the other hand, he released that monastery from the jurisdiction of the Archbishop of Paris, and was a benefactor to several other Brotherhoods.² Meanwhile Ebroin dominated the position, and it must be said that in his rough way he protected the interests of the Frank realm.

¹ "Pro levi offensâ sanguinem nobilium multorum fundebat innoxium."—*Vit. Leodegarii* (i.e. St. Leger, Bishop of Autun), ch. ii.

² See T. R. Buchanan, *Dict. of Chr. Biog.*, i. 583.

CHAPTER V

ST. THEODORE AND THE ENGLISH EPISCOPATE—THE COUNCIL OF HERUTFORD AND THE RESULTS OF KING EDWY'S DEATH

WE must now revert to Archbishop Theodore, who, after his consecration, departed for England with his companions. They set out from Rome on the 27th of May 668. In his *History of the Abbots*, written before his greater work, Bede tells us it was Benedict Biscop, who knew English ways and the Anglian language well, who escorted Theodore through France. He says the Pope had persuaded Biscop to give up a contemplated visit to Palestine in order to give the new Archbishop the benefit of his help and guidance, and to act as his interpreter. In his *Ecclesiastical History* he assigns this office to Hadrian (who would be useless as an interpreter, and knew nothing of Britain), and says nothing of Biscop. The former view seems in every way the more rational. Bede, moreover, adds that Hadrian had already travelled twice in France, which looks as if in his later work Bede had, in fact, mixed the rôles of the two men. He tells us that Hadrian was, moreover, provided with a sufficiency of men of

his own (*sufficientesque esset in possessione hominum propriorum*). He also more than hints that the Pope had doubts about the orthodoxy of the Eastern monk Theodore, and was afraid he might introduce some Greek notions contrary to the Faith as held at Rome, and that he relied on Hadrian to keep him right in the matter. These doubts were possibly shared by Bede himself. Hadrian, being an African, was no doubt strongly imbued with the views of St. Augustine. Pope Vitalian armed Theodore with letters of commendation. Bede expressly says the party travelled by sea as far as Marseilles and then overland to Arles, where they delivered letters from the Pope to Archbishop John. They were detained by the latter till the major-domo Ebroin gave his permission for them to proceed. Ebroin was then supreme in the Frank realm. He seems to have greatly suspected the motives of the Emperor Constans in his voyage to Italy and his attempt to recover a part of that peninsula, if not the whole of it, from the Lombards. He doubtless thought that the turn of the Franks would come next, and seems to have also seen a sinister purpose in the mission of Theodore, to the prejudice of the kingdom, which at that time was under his especial care (*adversus regnum, cujus tunc ipse maximam curam gerebat*).¹ It would seem that Theodore with Benedict Biscop now went on to Paris, where they were very kindly received by

¹ Bede, *op. cit.* iv. 1.

its Bishop, Agilbert, who had himself, as we have seen, been a bishop in England, and knew the country well.

Agilbert entertained Theodore for some time. Hadrian, meanwhile, went first to Sens to pay a visit to its bishop,¹ and then to Meaux to see Faro or Burgundofaro, Bishop of Meaux (626–672). Bede explains these delays by the extreme severity of the winter, which compelled the travellers to rest wherever they could.

King Ecgberht of Kent, having heard that the Archbishop whom he had so long expected (nothing is here said of Oswy) was actually in France, sent his præfect Rædfrid to conduct him to England. With Ebroin's leave the latter accompanied him to Quentavic,² now called Etaples. There he was for a while indisposed. Having recovered, he sailed for Britain,³ where he arrived in 669.

It will be well to realise the condition of the Church in England at the time of Theodore's arrival. The kingdom of Kent was then limited to the modern counties of Kent and perhaps Surrey. The wide extent of country which had been dominated by Æthelberht as over-chief, on the arrival of Augustine had passed out of the control of his family. Sussex, which was still pagan, had a king of its own, and was apparently dominated by Mercia, while the great state of Mercia itself, which had been founded since Æthelberht's time,

¹ Emme or Emmo, *Bede*, iv. 1 (658–675); *Gall. Chris.*, xii. 9.

² *Vicus ad Quantiam*, i.e. the Cauche.

³ *Bede*, *H.E.*, iv. 1.

was now ruled by a Christian king, Wulfhere, who claimed to control the whole country as far as the Thames, including the overlordship of Essex. This included London, which, as we have seen, had reverted to paganism. Cedde, who had been Bishop of the East Saxons for some years, had died of the plague in 664. His death was apparently followed by a short interregnum in the see, during which Essex was conquered by Wulfhere, who proceeded to appoint Wini, the expelled Bishop of Wessex, as Bishop of London. We shall have more to say about Wini presently. The See of Wessex was vacant when Theodore arrived.

In East Anglia, Boniface was still living, although doubtless a very old man, while Wulfhere's bishop in Mercia was Jaruman, already named.¹ Northumbria under its "Imperator" Oswy was, of course, by far the most important kingdom in Britain at this period, and overshadowed all the other states there. Oswy's bishop was Chad (Ceadda), who had succeeded Tuda as Bishop of the Northumbrians, and who apparently fixed his seat at York, while Wilfrid, who was Abbot of the two monasteries of Ripon and Hexham, and had been consecrated as a bishop in France, was a prelate without a regular see.

Let us now return to Theodore. It has been remarked by some that he missed a great opportunity when he did not revert to the great scheme of Pope

¹ *Ante*, pp. 223 and 224.

Gregory and plant the metropolitan seat in London instead of Canterbury; but the fact was, not only had London become pagan, but it belonged to another community over which the king of Kent, Theodore's secular chief, had no authority. This inevitably settled the question, and Theodore accordingly became Archbishop of Canterbury and not of London. He had doubtless brought his pall with him, and was thus duly equipped as a metropolitan, and in a position to ordain other bishops, with the authority at that time exacted at Rome wherever it had the power.

The diocese of Kent was doubtless in a sorry state when he arrived. There had been, as we have seen, a vacancy in the archiepiscopal see ever since the death of Deusdedit, and the See of Rochester had been similarly, long vacant. Things would have been even worse there if it had not been that Wilfrid, the Abbot-Bishop, had not performed occasional episcopal functions and ordained priests and deacons. He had apparently hoped to obtain the See of Canterbury (to which, although a Northumbrian, he in fact had considerable claims for himself), and seems to have resented the appointment of Theodore, with whom he was never afterwards on cordial terms. One of the first things the latter did, after his arrival in Kent, was to appoint his travelling companion, Benedict Biscop, to be the head of the monastery of St. Peter and St. Paul at Canterbury. This seems a very irregular proceeding if the abbey was then a

Benedictine one, for the Order has always been jealous of the right of its abbeys to appoint their own abbots. Bede's words are plain enough, however. Thus he says, in his *Lives of the Abbots*: "*Benedictus suscepit monasterium beati Petri apostolis regendum.*"¹ It would seem probable that Theodore merely put him in charge until the release of Hadrian. Thomas of Elmham, the local historian, is much exercised at the notion of Benedict having been appointed Abbot of St. Augustine's at all, and disputes the fact at some length. He bases his objection on the ground that Bede does not mention the fact of Biscop's appointment in his *Ecclesiastical History*, and further, that no such name as Benedict or Biscop occurred in any extant list of the Abbots of St. Augustine's.² Thomas, however, as is clear, had not seen Bede's *History of the Abbots*, which is conclusive.

About the time of Theodore's coming, Boniface, Bishop of the East Angles, died. He had been consecrated by Archbishop Honorius in the year 652, and according to Bede his episcopate had lasted seventeen years.³ This would make him die in 669, which was the year of Theodore's arrival. To fill the vacancy, the latter appointed Bisi. Bede describes him as a very pious man. He attended the synod of Herutford,⁴ but he was apparently afflicted with a grievous disease,

¹ *Op. cit.*, paragraphs 3 and 4.

² *Op. cit.*, ed. Hardwicke, pp. 185 and 186.

³ *Bede*, iii. 20 and iv. 5.

⁴ *Vide infra*, vol. ii. p. 22.

and Theodore accordingly divided his diocese and placed two bishops over the two portions, who during Bisi's life were probably only his coadjutors: these were Æccī and Baduwin.¹ They, either immediately or soon after, became definitely Bishops of Dunwich and Elmham respectively. "Since that time," says Bede, "that province has had two bishops." The new diocese of Elmham, we can hardly doubt, was meant to supply the needs of the South-folk, while Dunwich continued to be the see for the North-folk, it having been the fashion in Anglo-Saxon times, as Bede tells us, to have a separate bishop for each tribal division. The fact that South Elmham in Suffolk is so near to Dunwich has caused Mr. Baldwin Brown to locate the Saxon see of Elmham at North Elmham in Norfolk, which would be a most unusual arrangement, since it would mean that the North-folk had two bishops and the South-folk none at all. He himself, in fact, quotes a passage from "The Great Survey" which is virtually conclusive. Speaking of the Manor of Hoxne close to South Elmham, we there read: *in h. man. ē aēcc̄lia sedes episcopatus de Sudfolc.*² It is doubtless to this date that we may with every probability assign the remains of a primitive church, which still exist at South Elmham in Suffolk, which was doubtless the seat

¹ Bede, iv. 5.

² *The Arts in Early England*, ii. 219 and 220. See also B. B. Woodward, *Proc. Suff. Inst. of Archæology*, iv. 4.

of Baduwin's bishopric. I shall transcribe my friend Mr. Peers' admirable description of the ruins of this church:—

“The ruined church there is still known as the ‘Old Minster.’ It stands within a quadrangular enclosure of some four acres in extent, called the Minster Yard, which is surrounded by a bank and ditch possibly of Roman origin. . . . The building consists of three parts—an apse to the east, a nave, and a western chamber. It is 101 feet 5 inches long and 35 feet wide, and built of flint rubble set in exceedingly hard mortar; the facing, both internal and external, has been of flints and pebbles brought to a fairly even face, about 6 inches thick. This facing, together with all salient angles, has been extensively stripped off for building material; it remains chiefly on the upper part of the outer face of the south wall, and at all re-entering angles throughout the building. The whole outer face of what remains of the north and west walls has been removed. Of the eastern apse nothing but foundations is left, and a short piece of the west end of the south wall 3 feet thick.

“The apse was slightly tilted, 21 feet 3 inches deep by 24 feet 5 inches wide in the clear. The nave has walls 3 feet 10 inches thick on north, south, and east. The north wall is almost entirely destroyed, with the exception of 6 feet at the west end, which remains to a considerable height, and contains the western jamb of a window. The

south wall is better preserved, and retains parts of three windows, the eastern work of these being left to nearly its full height, and showing part of the head. All arrises are gone, and all facing, except a little to the splayed jambs. The south-east corner externally is in better condition than any other piece of the outer face; the salient angle has been picked off, as elsewhere, but otherwise the walling is in good order, though much overgrown with ivy, and a certain amount of plastering, of the same quality as the mortar, remains."

Judging by the casts left in the mortar of the bonding ends of the materials used, Mr. Peers judges that they "by no means suggest wrought-stone quoins, but rather flints and rounded pebbles, the removal of which has, in some cases, not destroyed more than 3 inches of the angle. From one of the windows of the western chamber it is difficult to imagine that anything but flint-work dressings have been used; very small ashlar quoins are, however, common in the neighbourhood, and the appearance of the window jambs in the north wall of the western chamber suggests that wrought-stone has been employed.

"The opening from the nave to the apse is 20 feet 9 inches wide, the responds being square, of the full thickness of the wall, 3 feet 10 inches. The north respond has lost its salient angles, but retains some 5 feet of its facing on all three sides. A foundation of the full width of the responds runs

from one to the other, at a higher level than the presumable line of the nave floor, so that there may have been a step here."

"The western chamber is an exact square of 26 feet internally with walls 4 feet 6 inches thick on all four sides. All stand to a considerable height, in places as much as 14 or 15 feet. In the eastern wall are two openings with square jambs on either side of a central pier, giving access to the nave. There is no evidence as to whether they were arched or square-headed. They are 6 feet 8½ inches wide, and retain parts of their jamb facing, in one case up to 6 feet from the ground, but have lost their angles. In the north and south walls the window openings remain, two on each side. The eastern window in the north wall, and the western in the south, exist to their full height, except for a little masonry at the crowns of the arches. Heads, jambs, and sills are all splayed through the wall from inside to out, the splays of the sills being flatter than the rest; they retain at their junction with the jambs, remains of the plastering with which the whole surface of the opening was originally covered. The sight-line of the sills is about 7 feet above the present ground-level, and the window openings when perfect were 5 feet high to the springing, with semicircular heads, and 1 foot 7 inches wide in the clear. There is no trace of built arches in the heads; the destruction of the wall surfaces makes it impossible to say whether there were facing arches on either or both sides; what remains of the heads

is found in the flint rubble, laid, no doubt, on centering as the walls went up. There are some indications, as before mentioned, of wrought-stone dressings on the inner face of the jambs of the windows on the north wall. The outer face of the west window on the south wall, where the surface is nearly perfect, suggests that here, at least, they did not exist. The west wall has lost much of its central portion, especially up to 5 feet from the ground-level; above that, where the wall is more out of reach of the casual spoiler, it overhangs considerably, being held up by the strength of the mortar, and shows part of the jambs and springing of a large arched central opening 6 feet wide, the springing being 10 feet above the ground-level, and the opening not splayed but square through the wall as far as it is left."

"Throughout the building the 'put-log' holes are a most noticeable and curious feature. Roughly speaking, they are triangular, with the apex of the triangle upwards in the lower part of the walls, and reversed (*i.e.* with the apex downwards) in the upper parts. They are also unnecessarily close together vertically, four rows occurring in less than 14 feet of height, so that the scaffolds would have been not quite 3 feet 6 inches apart; but this can be paralleled elsewhere in ancient work. They go about 14 inches into the walls, generally tapering inwards, and in many instances those on the inner and outer faces correspond exactly in level and position. Nearly all have a coating of mortar, and

their greatest width averages 8 inches, those with the apex downwards occurring chiefly on the upper part of the walls. There are two such, lower down at the east end of the nave; they naturally have a flat stone above them. In some cases they seem to have had their tiles or boards in this position now gone, but leaving casts of their shapes in the mortar coat which surrounded them."

"The 'Old Minster' at Elmham thus differs considerably from the other Saxon buildings previously described, both in plan and in the great thickness of the walls, as well as in the character of the masonry. On the other hand, the shape and proportion of the windows are quite unlike any later Saxon or Norman churches of a small size like this, both in height and width of opening; nor are there any of the ordinary and characteristic details of later Saxon masonry. The plan again is early, so are the entrance doors, with jambs neither rebated nor splayed, the unusual western entrance and the western chamber. The fact of its being early is also attested by its having only one entrance doorway, and this at the west end and of considerable width (6 feet). In this it resembles the early Saxon churches of Kent, so do the proportions of the nave. Again, the wide foundations across the east end of the nave are just what one would expect to find if a triple arcade had existed there, and are hard to explain on any other hypothesis. A sleeper wall as massive as this to carry nothing more than a stone step or to steady the jambs of an

arch on which no great weight can ever have been placed is, to say the least, an unusual arrangement."

"The windows are splayed right through the wall, as in the 'St. Pancras' and other early type of buildings; all the other openings have square unrebutted jambs, a characteristic of Saxon work of all dates. The great height of the western entrance suggests that it cannot have been an outer doorway, but must have opened on to a porch, which is another regular feature of early Saxon work."

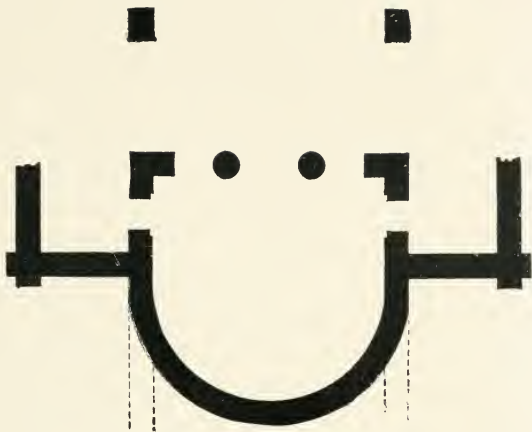
"On the other hand, the thickness of the walls is certainly a feature in which this church differs from all other known Saxon churches, which are characterised by their thin walls."

The western chamber, says Mr. Peers, is a very rare feature in England. He adds that he only knows of one nearly exact parallel, namely, in the late Saxon church of Daglingworth in Gloucestershire. Other cases partially resembling it occur at Boarhunt in Hampshire and Methley in Yorkshire.¹ I should like to add the suggestion that this western chamber may have been a baptistery.

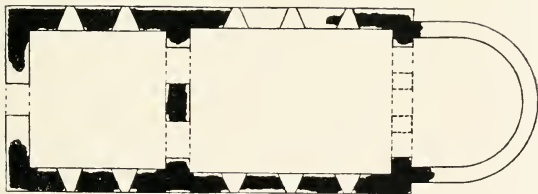
So much for the church founded by Theodore at South Elmham.

Another early act of the Archbishop after his arrival was the filling of the vacant see of Rochester.

¹ Vide "On Saxon Churches of the St. Pancras Type," *Arch. Journ.*, 2nd ser., vol. viii. pp. 423-430.



PLAN OF SAXON WORK AT RECULVER.



GROUND PLAN OF THE CHURCH OF SOUTH ELMHAM.

Bede tells us that, having arrived at that city, where the see had been long vacant (*episcopatus jam diu cessaverat*) by the death of Damian, he ordained a person to its charge "who was better skilled in ecclesiastical discipline, and more devoted to simplicity of life than active in worldly affairs," which is a civil way of saying that he was unpractical. His name was Putta, and, as we have seen,¹ he had been ordained priest by St. Wilfrid. He was, however, highly skilled in church music according to the method of the Romans (*maxime autem modulandi in ecclesia more Romanorum . . . peritum*). This he had learnt from the disciples of Pope Gregory.²

In the year 671 (according to all the copies of the *English Chronicle*) Ecgberht, King of Kent, gave Bass, the mass priest (*maesse-prioste, i.e.* his chaplain), Reculver that he might build a minster there. It is not impossible that this mass priest may have been the King's thane of the same name who escorted King Ædwin's young sons to Kent after their father's death,³ and who may have been meanwhile ordained. The notice in the *Chronicle* about the foundation of the church of Reculver was possibly derived from some charter now lost. It is curious that no mention is made of it in Bede. The fact, however, of such a church having been built at Reculver at this time is beyond doubt, for its remains are still extant, and

¹ *Ante*, p. 217.

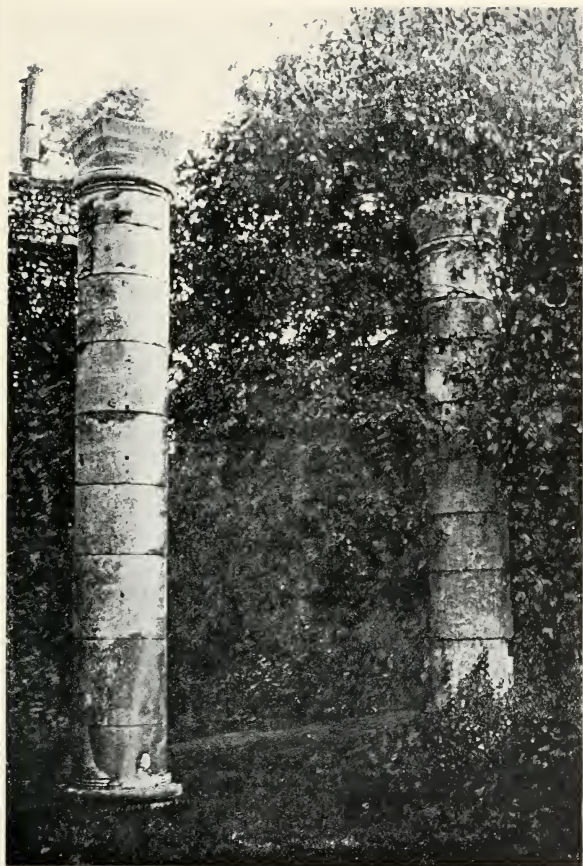
² *Bede*, iv. 2.

³ See Howorth, *St. Augustine the Missionary*, p. 332.

I will now shortly describe them from Mr. Micklethwaite's paper.¹

He says the church was rather wantonly destroyed about the beginning of the present (now the last) century, but we have its foundations and some of its ruins, which Mr. Dowker carefully examined some years since, and described, giving a plan. The early part consisted of a nave 50 feet by 24 feet, opening by four arches on each side into aisles, and to the east was an apse the width of the nave. What may have been at the west was destroyed by later work. The appearance of the plan is quite Italian, except that, in place of the wide arch at the entrance to the presbytery, there was an arcade of three arches, separated by two tall stone pillars, which are now in the Cathedral close at Canterbury. They are rude, but the influence of the Corinthian order may be clearly seen in them. They may properly be described as debased Roman, and the same may be said of the method of building. The one departure from Italian precedent—the substitution of an arcade for the great arch, which was repeated elsewhere—came of the want of experience in such work, on the part of the builders, who were most likely English, and the lack of skill to direct them in the Italian or Italianised amateurs under whom they worked. They seem to have feared to throw an arch over a large space, so when a wide opening was wanted they divided it by pillars. "When there is so much that tells of early

¹ *Arch. Journ.*, 2nd ser., vol. iii. pp. 298-9.



PILLARS FROM THE SAXON CHURCH AT RECVLVER

Vol. I., facing p. 318.

date and Italian influence," adds Micklethwaite, "it is scarcely rash to conclude that we see the remains of the church which we know was built at Reculver."

Mr. Peers, in his paper on Saxon churches, mentions the fact that at Reculver, in common with the Canterbury churches of St. Martin and St. Pancras, the church has the special feature of buttresses, once thought to be distinctly non-Saxon.¹

Let us now turn to what was passing in Mercia. With the death of Oswy, a new departure took place in the affairs of Middle and Northern England. We have seen how, in his latter days, the hegemony of the Anglian race had passed from Northumbria to Mercia, and how Wulfhere, king of the latter country, thus largely occupied the same position as that which had once been held by his father Penda. It is a great pity that we have not more details about him. Mercia was not so fortunate as Northumbria, which had one of the best of all historians, Bede, to glorify its deeds and to describe its political and religious doings. At this time it had, in fact, no annals at all, and we have to pick up and piece together a few fragments only as hints of what a potent person Wulfhere must have been. It is, perhaps, still more strange that being the ruler of the country immediately in contact with Wales, the Welsh annalists should completely ignore him. Nennius does not mention him at all, nor do the *Cambrian*

¹ *Arch. Journ.*, 2nd ser., vol. viii. p. 431.

Annals. It is not improbable that in his reign there was peace with Wales. Peaceful times supply few materials for the chronicler. We have seen how he recovered Lincolnshire and the country of the South Angles from the Northumbrians. With Kent we do not hear of his having had any quarrel, and he, in fact, married Ermenilda, the daughter of Earconberht, king of Kent, which would probably create an alliance between the two states. It was different with Wessex, and it would seem that he had a fierce struggle with Coinwalch, the king of the West Saxons. It will be convenient at this point to turn for a short while to Wessex, and to pick up its story from where we last left it. We have seen how it was conquered by Penda, king of Mercia, and how its king, Coinwalch, who had apostatised and renounced the Christian faith and sacraments, and divorced his wife, Penda's sister, was driven out by that very vigorous person, and sought shelter with Anna, king of East Anglia,¹ whereupon Penda appropriated and annexed Wessex. It then probably included Sussex, and it is not unlikely that he put one of his relatives or dependents over that secluded district, where we find a pagan king still ruling some years later. While he was in East Anglia, Coinwalch was baptized by Bishop Felix. According to the Book of Ely, King Anna was his sponsor. On Penda's death Coinwalch returned home, and was doubtless

¹ *Ante*, p. 46.

welcomed as their now Christian king by many of Birin's disciples, while others who were not Christians, but resented Penda's dominance (not because he was a pagan, but because he was a foreigner), would be also in a friendly humour towards their own king, and be prepared to receive him whether a Christian or not. Coinwalch possibly let it be known among strangers travelling in his country that he was in need of a bishop for his people. At all events, Bede rather abruptly reports the arrival of one. He calls him a certain *pontifex* named Agilbert (*i.e.* Albert), that is, he was a Frank, and speaks of him as of Gaulish birth (*natione quidem Gallus*),¹ and tells us that he had spent some time in Ireland studying the Scriptures. His name has an English look, and he may have been a Saxon from Bayeux. Ireland was at this time the great centre of Christian learning in Western Europe. "Camin of Iniskeltra was at work with numerous pupils in his monastery on an island of Loughderg: he wrote a commentary on the psalms collated with the Hebrew text."² The great school which Carthag had founded at Lismore was in its glory.³ Bangor, in Ulster, was one of the most learned monasteries of the time. Patristic learning had been brought to bear on the Easter question by Cumman, in his letter to Seghine of Hy or Iona and

¹ MSS. A, B, and C of the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle* speak of him as "of Galwealum." MS. E calls him "*þam. Romanisca biscoþ*," and MS. F, "*Se Frencisca*."

² Lanigan, *Eccl. Hist. Ireland*, iii. 11.

³ *Ib.* ii. 353.

others who disapproved of his departure from the Scotie system, and of his successful advocacy of the Catholic Easter in the South of Ireland, while at Clonard a theological college flourished, in which Aileran the Wise, whose tract on the names of Christ is still extant, was chief professor.”¹ Agilbert is styled a bishop. Bright suggests that he was a so-called vacant bishop, *σχολλάζων*, three of whom signed the Council of Macon in 585.² It is pretty certain that he had first been taught in France and doubtless ordained there, and had been to Ireland, like many other scholars, to take advantage of the opportunities for culture to be then found there. He was, however, clearly devoted to the Roman rite and not to the Celtic one.

Bede says he was favourably received by the king, and commenced preaching to his people. His industry and learning presently induced Coinwalch to offer him the see of the West Saxons, and he continued to officiate in it for many years.

A notable event which occurred at this time, as I mentioned in *St. Augustine the Missionary*,³ was the election of a West Saxon to the See of Canterbury. Thomas of Elmham, who gives his epitaph, tells us his real name was Frithonas, but his name “in religion” was “Deusdedit,” a name which the French adopted in the form *Dieudonné*. He became Archbishop of Canterbury in 655.

¹ Lanigan, *Eccl. Hist. Ireland*, iii. 54. Bright, *op. cit.* 184.

² *Op. cit.* 183, note 3, quoting Mansi, ix. 959.

³ *Op. cit.* 336.

At length Coinwalch grew weary of Agilbert, for as he himself only spoke and understood Saxon he could not understand the bishop's foreign tongue (or rather, his strongly marked dialect), *Rex . . . qui Saxonum tantum linguam noverat, pertaesus barbarae loquelae*.¹ It may be, although Bede does not mention it, that the foreign bishop may have also given himself some proud and patronising episcopal airs.

Thereupon Coinwalch brought into his kingdom a certain Wini, of whom Bede says that he was of his own speech (*suae linguae*) but had been ordained in France. Wini is apparently an English name, and a monk of the name was one of Ceadda's companions at Lichfield and came from East Anglia.

The king now divided his kingdom into two provinces (*parochiae*), and separated one of them from the See of Dorchester, and gave "the city of Venta, called Wintanchester by the Saxon people (*i.e.* Winchester), to Wini as his episcopal seat."

When Agilbert heard of this having been done without his knowledge or consent, he was greatly chagrined, gave up his bishopric,² and withdrew from Wessex. He then went to Northumbria. We have seen how he was received there, and how he took part in the Synod of Whitby,³ after which he returned to France.⁴ The departure of Agilbert seems to have taken place immediately on the appointment of Wini,

¹ Bede, *H.E.*, iii. 7.

² *Ib.*

³ *Ante*, p. 186, etc.

⁴ *Bede*, iii. 26.

who had had no time to build a church at Winchester, and who, no doubt, removed to Dorchester on the departure of his rival, and thence governed the whole church in Wessex. The departure of Agilbert doubtless took place in the latter part of 663, or the beginning of 664, for it was in the latter year that he took part in the Synod of Whitby, where it will be remembered that, notwithstanding his having studied in Ireland, he was an active champion of the Roman discipline and ritual. It was while Agilbert was in Yorkshire that he ordained Wilfrid as priest.

While Wini was Bishop of Dorchester he, as we have seen,¹ with the assistance of two British coadjutors, consecrated Chad (Ceadda) as Bishop of the Northumbrians. This was probably in 664 or 665.

Wini did not retain his position long. Florence of Worcester says only till 666, but he gives no authority. His statement is accepted, however, by Haddan and Stubbs. We are told he was driven away from his see by King Coinwalch, who was probably more than justified in doing so. He cannot have been a very reputable or desirable person, since, as Bede says, he repaired to Wulfhere, king of Mercia; and from him bought the See of London which was then vacant. This simoniacal act is duly denounced by later chroniclers, especially

¹ *Ante*, pp. 212-213.

those brought up in the stricter discipline of Norman times. William of Malmesbury condemns it as the first occasion in which the episcopate was bought and sold in England,¹ and Matthew Paris and his copiers declare that his name ought not to occur in the list of bishops of London.² It is found, however, in the list of London bishops given by Florence of Worcester.³ It is certain, says Mr. Plummer, that he was not present at the Synod of Herutford in 673. The same learned writer quotes a passage from Rudborne⁴ to the effect that three years before his death he retired as a penitent to Winchester, continually repeating the saying of Jerome, *erravimus iuvenes, emendemus senes*.⁵

There is some ambiguity in Bede's account of Agilbert's next move. He seems to infer that he returned to Paris directly after the Whitby Synod, and was then appointed bishop of that city, but this could hardly be, for his predecessor, Importunus, signs a document as bishop on the 26th of June 666.⁶ There is no doubt that Agilbert succeeded Importunus, and that he remained Bishop of Paris till his death on the 11th October 680. These dates seem to show that if Wilfrid was in fact ordained bishop in 664 or 665

¹ *G.P.*, i. 78.

² *Chron. Majora*, i. 294.

³ *M.H.B.*, 617.

⁴ *Ang. Sac.*, i. 192.

⁵ *Op. cit.* ii. 147. This, however, like other statements of Rudborne, is doubtful. Bede (iii. 7) says distinctly that Wini held the See of London till his death.

⁶ *Gallia Christiana*, vii. 26 and 27; Bright, 209, note 4; Gams, 596.

by the Bishop of Paris it could not have been by Agilbert but by his predecessor, and it may be that he was not really ordained till 666, which would account more reasonably than some other alleged causes for his long absence from England at this critical time.

Let us now turn to the civil history of Wessex at this time, which is very confused. All we certainly know is that a serious feud occurred between that kingdom and Mercia in which the Mercians seem to have won a very decided victory.

We do not know how the feud arose, but it is possible that the youth of Wulfhere tempted Coinwalch, who was an uneasy and truculent sovereign, to attack him. The details are confused and difficult to follow. As usual, the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle* is very unsatisfactory, and (as a West Saxon document) tries to qualify the distressing condition of Wessex at the time. We read in it, under the year 661, that Coinwalch fought at Easter at Posentesbyrig, but we are not told against whom. Neither the fight nor the place is mentioned by Bede, nor do we exactly know where it was. It has been generally identified with Partesbury in Shropshire; and if so, the battle was probably fought against the Welsh, and not the Mercians. Can an echo of such a war at this time be found in a paragraph in the *Cambrian Annals* dated 665, where we read: *Bellum Badonis secundo, Morcant moritur* (*M.H.B.*, 832)?

Having mentioned this fight at Posentesbyrig the *Chronicle* immediately continues: "And

Wulfhere the son of Penda laid the country waste as far as *Æscesdune*" (*i.e.* Ashdown in Berkshire), which is a long way from Shropshire. It may be that in this war the Mercians and Welsh were in alliance. The alliance between the two peoples may, indeed, have been a close one, which would account for Wulfhere's name not occurring once in the *Welsh Annals*. Ethelwerd, in reporting the event, entirely misreads the story. A West Saxon prince, he doubtless felt aggrieved that his people should have been so crushed by the great enemies of his race, the Mercians, and entirely sophisticates the narrative. He mixes up the fights at Posentesbyrig and *Æscesdune*, and makes out that Wulfhere was defeated and captured.¹ The *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle*, which cannot have been his authority at this time, says expressly, however, that Wulfhere laid waste the country as far as *Æscesdune*. It then goes on to say in the same annals, that he also laid waste the Isle of Wight,² adding that Wulfhere conferred the Isle of Wight upon Æthelwald or Æthelwalch, the King of the South Saxons, for whom he had acted as sponsor when that king was baptized. All this statement is put under the year 661 in the *Chronicle*. It is quite plain that one of these events cannot have taken place so early, for when Wilfrid was thrown on to the coast of Kent in 667, three years after his ordination, the King of Sussex and his people were still pagans. It would, in fact, seem that

¹ *M.H.B.*, 506.

² *Op. cit.*, sub an. 661.

all the statement has been antedated in the *Chronicle*, even if that part of it which is unconfirmed by Bede is to be credited at all. However we may quarrel with the details and the dates in the *Chronicle* at this time, we cannot doubt that Wulfhere completely crushed the power of Wessex then or soon after, and appropriated all its territory north of the Thames, including Oxfordshire, where the old Wessex see of Dorchester was situated, as well as all its eastern portion south of that river and extending through Hampshire to the Isle of Wight.

Among Wulfhere's conquests was also the territory bordering on Wales, comprised in the modern counties of Gloucester, Worcester, and part of Hereford, which had been settled by West Saxons, as we know very positively, from the dialect still spoken there. This portion of West Saxon territory north of the Thames was known as the land of the Hwiccas or Magesaetes. Mr. Kerslake has a notable paragraph on this subject, which I will quote. After speaking of the conquest of the country of the Hwiccas by the Mercians, he says there can be no doubt that its earliest Teutonic settlers were West Saxons. Even now any one of us West Saxons who should wander through Gloucestershire and Worcestershire would recognise his own dialect. He would perhaps say they "speak finer" up here, but he would feel that his ears were still at home. If he should, however, advance into Derbyshire or Staffordshire or East Shropshire, he would en-

counter a musical cadence, or song, which though far from being unpleasant from an agreeable voice, would be very strange to him. He would, in fact, have passed out of Wiccia into Mercia proper, from a West Saxon population into one of original Anglian substratum.¹ On conquering the land of the Hwiccas, Wulfhere did not incorporate it in Mercia, but created a principality subject to himself, over which he put his brother, Merwald, who married a niece of King Ecgberht of Kent, named Eormenburga, and styled Domneva. Merwald is not mentioned by Bede nor in the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle*, except in the forged charter in the *Peterborough Chronicle*. He is first mentioned in the *Life of St. Mildred*, from which Florence of Worcester doubtless derived his notice. He tells us that he reigned in the western part of Mercia (*in occidentali plaga Merciorum regnum tenuit*).² In the appendix to his *Chronicle* he is wrongly called *Westan-Hecanorum rex*.³

Meanwhile let us turn to another sphere of Wulfhere's activity. We have seen that during the time when Wilfrid, although a bishop, had no see, he sometimes officiated in the realm of Wulfhere. The latter fact is not quite clear, for there was at the time a bishop of Mercia, and it was not canonical for one bishop to invade another's see. I think it probable that Wilfrid's services were really employed by Wulfhere in

¹ Kerslake, *Supremacy of Mercia*, 4.

² Florence of Worcester, *sub an.* 675.

³ *M.H.B.*, 638.

the country of the South Angles, and its dependency, the land of the Gyrwas, which formed a separate community subject to, but not in, Mercia proper. This seems to me probable from a circumstance mentioned by Bede. He tells us that Wulfhere gave Wilfrid several estates on which he proceeded to build monasteries. Now the only monasteries with the foundation of which we have reason to believe that Wilfrid had to do at this time were those of Oundle and Castor in Northamptonshire, and probably that of Peterborough in the country of the Gyrwas. In regard to Oundle and Castor, I shall have more to say later on. At present I will limit myself to the very difficult question of the foundation of Peterborough Abbey. The only details which have been published in regard to this have been derived from a series of interpolations in the so-called Peterborough copy of the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle*, otherwise known as Codex E, all of which are now known to have been forgeries of the twelfth century. I have examined the question in the Introduction. The first of these interpolated notices is dated 654; in it we are told that in the days of King Peada, he and Oswy of Northumbria agreed to build a monastery to the honour of God and the glory of St. Peter. This they did, and named it Medeshamstede, because there was a whirlpool or spring close by called Medeswael. We are told they began its foundations and then committed it to a monk called Saxulf.

Not a word of all this is mentioned by Bede (who could hardly have failed to describe an event so favourable to the memory of Peada), nor in any of the older MSS. of the *Chronicle*; while as to any special information in regard to the early time of the Abbey, it is not credible that there should have been such, or so many actual forgeries would not have been invented to fill the void. In addition to which we know that the Abbey was destroyed by fire in 1116, when its muniments were burnt.

The second notice is entered in the Peterborough *Chronicle* in 656, and is also generally accepted as a forgery. In it we are told that in the days of King Wulfhere the Abbey of Medeshamstede became very rich. The King, for the love of his brother Peada and of Oswy his brother by baptism, and for the love of Abbot Saxulf, with the counsel of Æthelred and Merwald his brothers, and Cyneburga and Cynesuitha his sisters, and by the counsel of Archbishop Deusdedit and of his own Witan, both clergy and laity, determined to assist the new foundation. The work was then proceeded with, Wulfhere finding gold and silver for the purpose, and in a few years the monastery was ready. At its consecration King Wulfhere and his brother Æthelred were present, and so were his two sisters above named, and Deusdedit the Archbishop and Ithamar, bishop of Rochester, and Wini, the bishop of London, and Jaruman,

the bishop of the Mercians, and Tuda of the Northumbrians, together with Wilfrid the priest, who was afterwards a bishop, and all the thanes in the kingdom. It was dedicated to St. Peter, St. Paul, and St. Andrew, and was endowed by Wulfhere with a large estate, the description of which in the spurious charter is picturesque and interesting, and worth quoting, since we can hardly doubt that the lands described in it really belonged to the Abbey, and had probably done so from early times. I will quote it in a note.¹

Beside the lands enumerated, Wulfhere is also said to have granted the Abbey exemption from all geld and tribute, and made it subject to Rome alone, and he declared that all his people who could not go to Rome on pilgrimage should visit "St. Peter's" (*i.e.* St. Peter's at Peterborough). Thereupon Saxulf asked him to grant a further favour. He said he had living

¹ "From Medeshamstede to North-burh, and thence to the place which is called Folies, and thence all the fen straight to Esendic, and from Esendic to the place called Fether muthe, and thence along the straight way ten miles to Cuggedic, and thence to Raggewalh, and from Raggewalh five miles to the straight stream which goeth to Aelm and to Wisebece (*i.e.* Wisbeach), and thence about three miles to Throkonholt, and from Throkonholt straight through all the fen to Dereworde which is twenty miles long, and thence to Graetecros, and from Graetecros through a clear water called Bradan-ae, and thence six miles to Paccelade, and thence onward through all the meres and fens (*feonnes*) which lie towards Huntendune port and these meres and lakes, Scaelfmere and Witlesmere, and all the others which lie thereabout, with the land and the houses which are on the east half of Scaelfmere, and from thence all the fens to Medeshamstede, and from Medeshamstede to Welmesforde, and from Welmesforde to Clive and thence to Æstune, and from Æstune to Stanford, and from Stanford even as the water runs to the aforesaid North-burh."

with him some God-fearing (*gode frihte*) monks, who wished to spend their lives as anchorets, if they knew where, and that there was an island there called Ancaret's Isle, and it was his desire that they might build a Minster there, to the glory of St. Mary, where such as wished to do so might live in peace and rest. This boon was also granted by the King.

This document may be accepted as a picture of what the monks in the twelfth century, when they tried to replace their burnt charters, doubtless deemed a reasonable description of the acquirement of their vast Northamptonshire property¹ and the beginning of their brotherhood. The greater part of it is otherwise valueless as history. The only things in it which we may accept with some confidence are that it was doubtless Wulfhere who built the monastery, and that Saxulf was its first abbot. This has the perfectly reliable support of Bede, who speaks of Saxulf as the builder (*constructor*) and Abbot of "the Monastery which is called Medeshamstede in the country of the Gyrvii."² His statement further proves that the original monastery was founded before the year 674, since, as he says, in that year its Abbot Saxulf became Bishop of the Mercians. The charter last

¹ This great estate, in later times, comprised, as we know, a large part of the Fen country, nearly all the paths and roads through which converge on Peterborough, and formed what was afterwards known as the Soke or Liberty of Peterborough, which was nearly continuous with the most northern hundred of Northamptonshire, called Nasburgh, or Peterborough hundred, and included the city of Peterborough:

² *Bede*, iv. 6.

cited says that he was succeeded as Abbot by Cuthbald.¹

It seems to me exceedingly probable that the initiator and moving spirit in the foundation of the monastery was Wilfrid.

The size and importance of the original Saxon church at Peterborough may be measured, as has been well said by Miss Bateson, by the existing church at Brixworth, which was its daughter, and which will occupy us presently. If the daughter was so stately and so important, built as it was within fifty years of the creation of the mother church, we may form some idea of the size of the latter building.²

The remains of the first church at Peterborough were first described by Mr. Micklethwaite in the volume of the *Archæological Journal* for 1896, pp. 302, etc. This notice I shall abstract. He says: "The great church of later times has nothing Saxon about it; but during the work consequent on the rebuilding of the central tower, Mr. J. T. Irvine, F.S.A.Scot., the clerk of the works, found some old foundations which were afterwards traced through the transept. . . . The walls remain for some distance above the old floor, which was of plaster, the degenerate descendant of the Roman *opus signinum*, but all wrought-stone has been taken away. . . . We have at Peterborough the transverse nave or transept with the side wall of the presbytery of a basilican church somewhat

¹ *A.-S. Chron.*, sub an. 657. ² *Vict. Hist. Northants*, ii. 434.

larger, as one would expect it to be, than the daughter church. . . . Perhaps some day more may be found to confirm or disprove my interpretation. The plan seems to require an apse, and the fact that there is one at Brixworth would lead us to expect one; but the place where it might be is now filled by Norman foundations. . . . The ground is not suited for the foundation of a crypt.”

Miss Mary Bateson tells us that there are a few pieces of architectural detail belonging to the Saxon Church in the south triforium of the presbytery and in the new building, among them pieces of door or window-heads with a rib worked on them, and a capital, apparently belonging to a side wall-shaft.¹

Let us now turn to another triumph of the Church at this time, due directly to Wulfhere. It is probable that in his fight with Coinwalch, king of Wessex, Wulfhere had as an ally the pagan king of the Sussex men, called Æthelwalch, and that this drew the two royal stocks together. One result was that Æthelwalch married the niece of Wulfhere and daughter of Merwald, sub-king of the Hwiccas, who was a Christian princess. Her name was Eaba.

It was almost certainly the price of this alliance that Æthelwalch should accept the Faith too. Bede tells us he was baptized in the province of the Mercians, in the presence and by the persuasion of King Wulfhere, by whom he was received as his son when he came up from the font.² As a christening gift Wulfhere presented his god-

¹ *Vict. Hist. Northants*, ii. 434, note.

² *Bede*, iv. 13.

son with a splendid present, namely, the Isle of Wight, which was probably only very nominally his, and a great slice of Hampshire, which, as we have seen, he had lately conquered from the men of Wessex, namely, the province of the Meonwari,¹ "comprising," says Camden, "the three hundreds of Meonsborow, Eastmeon and Weastmeon. A fourth place named from the Meonwari (a Jutish stock) is called Meonstoke. The district extended from the Southampton Water to the South Downs."² Apart from thus securing the firm friendship and alliance of one whose country was virtually impregnable, by a timely generosity, Wulfhere also got rid of a possession very far from home, and doubtless not easy to defend.

The disconnected facts I have here brought together about Wulfhere enable us to predicate with great certainty that he had become a mighty sovereign, and in regard to the extent of his dominions no one among the Anglian princes had hitherto controlled so much power. A good measure of the extent of his Imperial authority may be gained from the facts to be presently mentioned about the cross erected in far-off Cumberland, in the very heart of Northumbria, to the memory of Alchfrid, the luckless King of Deira, on which Wulfhere's name occurs as overlord. It must be further remembered that his marriage with the daughter of the King of Kent gave him excep-

¹ *Bede*, iv. 13.

² See Bright, *op. cit.* 210-1 ; Plummer, *Bede*, ii. 225

tional influence in that kingdom, whose area was not so important as its general culture and prestige.

The death of Oswy had been a more momentous event in the early history of the English Church than has been generally thought. With him disappeared the last powerful champion of the Celtic monks in their struggle with the Roman clergy for the possession of England, and from that event their influence became much curtailed, though, as we have seen, it continued for a long time to affect the ritual and other features of the local Church. One of Oswy's sons, Alchfrid, had not improbably lost his throne and his life, as we have seen, in a struggle to restore Deira to the Roman fold and to secure its see for Wilfrid. Alchfrid's brother Ecgfrid, who succeeded Oswy as King of Northumbria, held the views of his mother and his brother in Church matters, and differed entirely from those of his father.

It was the fact of this change in the sympathies of the ruler of Northumbria which made matters easy or even possible for Theodore in his effort to presently bring all England under one ecclesiastical supervision, and thus for the first time to give the English race the permanent unity, which it would have otherwise taken a long time to bring about, since its different sections were separated by sharp local and tribal differences.

One of the first acts of Ecgfrid's reign, so far as we can gather, was the erection of a splendid monument to his brother Alchfrid at Bewcastle in

Cumberland. Why it should have been planted there it is difficult to understand, unless it was that Alchfrid fled thither from his father, or perhaps met his end there. This cross is so fine and so famous that it deserves a detailed description.

It now stands in the churchyard at Bewcastle in the north-eastern part of Cumberland, about ten miles from the border of Scotland, twelve from Lanercost, and about nine from Gilsland. It will be remembered, as Dr. Browne reminds us, that it was on Bewcastle Moss that Sir Walter Scott makes Dandie Dinmont be nearly murdered by the robbers, and that down to 1830 only women were buried in the churchyard at Bewcastle, the men being usually hanged in Carlisle for horse-stealing, sheep-stealing, and the like.

What remains of the cross is its shaft only, a monolith $14\frac{1}{2}$ feet high from its pedestal. There is a socket at the top in which once stood the head of the cross. In Gough's *Camden*, says Bishop Browne, we read that a slip of paper was found in Camden's own copy of the *Britannia* (1607). On it was written: "I received this morning a ston from my Lord of Arundel, sent him from my Lord William (*i.e.* Belted Will Howard). It was the head of a cross at Bucastle." There cannot be any reasonable doubt about this statement of Camden's. The stone had letters on it which Camden could not read, but the drawing on them shows that they were runes. When complete with this top stone, which

was $2\frac{1}{2}$ feet high, the cross must have been 17 feet high, and with its pedestal 21 feet.¹ The cross is made of the grey freestone found on the neighbouring moors. Mr. Collingwood says that at several places on the moor the outcrop of freestone has been quarried in a primitive way by chipping wedge holes along a line on the surface, and rending off pieces of various sizes. Some of them have never been carried away, though ready for use; in some cases the spot has been abandoned when it was found the stone would not split straight. . . . On White Lyne Common, five miles north of Bewcastle, there is a similar block, 15 feet long, of undressed stone. It is said to lie in the quarry from which our cross may have come.²

¹ Browne, *Conversion of the Heptarchy*, 190.

² *Notes on the Early Sculptured Crosses*, by Calverley and Collingwood, p. 43. The age and artistic lessons to be drawn from this famous cross, as from others of the same class, have been the subject of a great deal of literature, much of which has been fantastic and misleading, and especially what has been written lately. As in other cases of a similar kind, the philologist, the antiquary, and the historian have pursued their several paths, unconscious of dominant considerations pressed by their neighbours. The question has recently, it seems to me, been obscured rather than enlightened by the remarks of some foreign writers who have only a very slight and casual knowledge of our difficult history and archæology, and have published opinions which are simply astounding on the question we are now dealing with. I am satisfied myself that the view maintained by our own older authorities, Kemble, Daniel Haigh, John Maughan, George Stephens, James A. Murray, Frederick Hammerich, Henry Sweet, Gudbrand Vigfussen, F. Yorke Powell, Bishop Browne, William S. Calverley, Wilhelm Victor, William G. Collingwood, Henry Bradley, and Walter Skeat, and which have been quite lately supported by Sir M. Conway and the architect of Westminster Abbey, my friend, Mr. Lethaby, form a mass of solid authority of the first class, which is really overwhelming, upon which I propose to rely in this

While I entirely disagree with the arguments and the conclusions of Professor Albert S. Cook in his memoir on the date of the Ruthwell and Bewcastle crosses as to the date of the stone, I think he has described the ornamentation of the cross much more lucidly and completely than any one else, and I shall rely largely upon his detailed and careful description for my account of it.

“On the west side the shaft contains three full-length figures in recessed panels, one square and the other one round-topped, which are separated from each other by inscriptions in Runic characters. The upper figure, which closely resembles one on the Ruthwell cross, wears a beard and moustache, is clothed in a tunic and mantle, supports a lamb on its left arm, over which one end of a cloak falls and holds a lamb apparently by the fore-legs while the hind-legs seem doubled under it. The lamb wears a nimbus. There can be no possible doubt that the figure represents John the Baptist with the Agnus Dei.

“The middle figure is as unmistakably that of Christ, who faces the spectator with His feet placed on the long heads of two animals” (described

place, while I shall endeavour to analyse, in an Appendix in vol. iii., the position as affected by what I deem to be the quite fallacious results reached by a small group of students of recent years, and which seem to me to entirely ignore the larger issues which have to be met, and to have overlooked many of the canons of scientific archæology. With the old masters and their modern champions, I am strongly of opinion that the Bewcastle cross belongs to the second half of the seventh century, and that its true character has been properly interpreted by those who have looked upon it as a monument erected by King Ecgfrid in memory of his brother Alchfrid.



THE WEST SIDE OF THE CROSS AT BEWCASTLE.

by others as those of swine, which is probable), "they emerge diagonally from the lower corners. The noses of the creatures are crouching, their ears are small, and what may possibly be a foot of each appears just above its head, on the left and right respectively. The head of Christ, wearing a cruciform nimbus, has parted hair which falls on his shoulders. The face appears to be without beard or moustache. He is clothed in a tunic, reaching to the ankles, and a mantle, which, V-shaped at the neck, has its heavy folds caught up and draped over each arm. The right arm, bent upward from the elbow, from which the drapery hangs, is topped by a mutilated hand, in the attitude of benediction. The left hand holds across the front a roll, an end of which touches the right elbow. At each side the folds of the mantle reach the hem of the tunic; the curved fold, falling between the arms, reaches only to the knees.

"Between this figure and the lowest one there is a long space, filled by nine horizontal lines of runes."

The third and lowest figure on this face of the cross is that of a man with a bird of prey on his wrist. Professor Cook calls him a falconer. This is a little ambiguous; every great person in those early days was a falconer in the sense that he practised falconry, and kings were in many cases represented with falcons on their fists. It is not credible to me that on such a very fine

and stately monument as this, a secular figure, forming a trio with the Saviour and "the Baptist," should be any other but a Royal person. The falconer is clearly such. The left forearm of the figure of what I shall call the king is extended horizontally towards the right border of the panel, and the bird perches on it, facing outward. "Though the claws are worn away, it is just above the hand in the conventional position of a trained falcon. Its beak is turned towards the king's left shoulder and higher than his knee stands the perch, shaped like a T. The figure holds a wand which slants down in front of him. His garment looks like a plaid or tippet of heavy cloth, draped across his chest and drawn over the upper arm and across the back, the long end falling down over the right shoulder, and reaching nearly to the ankle."¹ The head is uncovered and the legs and feet appear below the tunic.

This side of the cross is much the most important one, both on account of the figures and of the inscriptions on it.

The opposite face of the cross, that on the east side, is perhaps the most attractive one as a work of art. "On it runs a vine scroll from top to bottom: the main vine starts in the middle of the base, and curves alternately to right and left, touching the right border five times and the left one four times. Above each

¹ A. S. Smith, *op. cit.* 227 and 238.



THE SOUTH SIDE OF THE CROSS AT BEWCASTLE.

contact it throws off a spiral branch, which curves in an opposite direction to the course of the vine, touching the border in doing so. In each curled branch there rests a bird or animal, devouring the bunch of fruit in which the branch ends. They face alternately right and left. The two creatures at the top closely resemble squirrels with bushy tails over their backs; the next two are somewhat like crows; the next two are animals with small ears and no hind-legs, only a tail which is curved to resemble an offshoot. The lowest creature is somewhat hard to make out. These birds and animals are drawn with great spirit. At the juncture of each spiral branch, save the lowest two with the main vine, there is a small shoot, ending in a leaf or a bunch of fruit, which fills up an empty space at the border. The top of the vine is divided into two shoots, which end in two bunches of fruit, side by side, touching the top border.¹

“The south face of the cross is divided into five panels, three short and two long ones.

“First, a pattern of interlaced bands, forming a piece of knot-work just fitting the oblong panel.

“Next, a vine scroll which, starting in the middle of the base, curves first to the left, then to the right, and ends in a bunch of fruit at the upper right-hand corner; above each contact it throws off a branch, which curves in the opposite direction

¹ A. S. Smith, *op. cit.* 239.

to the course of the vine and forms a spiral, ending in a bunch of fruit. Several small shoots from the main vine are interlaced with the two large branches, and two bunches of fruit hang beside the base of the stem. Across the lowest half of the oval space formed by the first spiral branch, there is a sundial's face, resembling an outstretched fan upside down, reaching from border to border. Lines are drawn to its circumference from a hole near the centre of its upper side in which the gnomon now lost was placed. It is clearly of the same date as the rest of the carving, and, of course, faces the south.

“Next is another pattern of interlaced bands, filling a somewhat larger panel than the first.

“The fourth panel contains two vine scrolls, which start obliquely from the lower corners of the base and form a symmetrical design resembling a figure of eight. The left vine crossing the other curves first to the right, then curving again bends to the left. Its end is divided into three shoots tipped with fruit, one of which fills the upper right corner, after crossing a similar shoot from the other vine which fills the left corner. The other two ends bend down into the upper half of the figure eight, and one, continuing, ends in a space outside the figure. The right vine is developed in exactly the same way, in the opposite direction. The two halves of the figure eight are made somewhat heart-shaped by the offshoots which bend in, and, crossing, fill



THE EAST SIDE OF THE CROSS AT BEWCASTLE.

the space with fruit. The upper half has two bunches, the lower four,—two depending from above, two springing from shoots below. The outside triangular spaces left by the figure of eight are filled up with bunches of fruit which tip the ends of the shoots.

“Lastly, there is another design of interlaced bands taller than either of the preceding. . . . Runes, now illegible, once occupied the spaces between successive panels.”¹

“The north face of the cross is divided into five panels of varying heights, separated from one another by a narrow border.

“The top panel is filled by vine scroll. From a thick stem, which starts in the middle of the base, the main vine curves first to the right border, throwing off a spiral branch to the left, then to the left border, making a spiral to the left. Of the three spirals the lowest is the largest and most elaborate, and is separated from the others by a larger space than lies between the two upper ones. At the foot of the vine on either side hangs a short-stemmed bunch of fruit. From below each of the spirals stretches a shoot from the main vine, twined across the spiral, emerges above it, and ends in fruit or foliage. The spiral branches also end in fruit and foliage, which fill the interstices of the other carving.

“The next panel is quite small, and filled with an intricate pattern of interlacing.

¹ A. S. Smith, *op. cit.* 239, 240.

“The third is entirely filled with chequer work, each alternate square of which is in relief.

“The fourth is small and filled with another pattern of interlacing.

“From the two lower corners of the fifth emerge two vines, which come into contact with each other twice, forming a symmetrical figure resembling an urn with two spirals at its base, and two at the top. The right vine curves towards and touches the left vine, then curves to the right border, and, again touching the left vine, it ends in a spiral and a bunch of fruit in the right upper corner. The left vine repeats this in the opposite direction.

“The borders between the panels originally contained runes, now mostly undecipherable.”¹

In regard to the inscriptions on the cross, Bishop Browne says: “They are all in Runic letters, decidedly Anglian runes, differing in conspicuous respects from Scandinavian runes. . . . Beginning with the west side, there is at the top, just where the blowing out of the socket of the actual cross has injured the edge of the socket, one word, perhaps ‘Kristtus.’ Then above the head of Our Lord, in two lines, with an initial cross, ‘Gessus Kristtus’ (*i.e.* Jesus Christ). This gives us the *y* pronunciation of the Anglian *g*, and shows us that our Anglian ancestors pronounced their consonants *s* and *t* very sharply and decidedly in the middle of a word, practically doubling them. Then above the head of the king

¹ A. S. Smith, *op. cit.* 238.



THE NORTH SIDE OF THE CROSS AT BEWCASTLE.

comes the main inscription, which tells us who it was in memory of, when this monument was raised, and who set it up; and telling no more than that."

The runes, says Bishop Browne, read thus: "*This sigbecn thun setton hwaetred wothgar olwfwolthu aft Alchfrithu ean künning eac oswiung + gebid heo sinna sowhula.*" In English, "This token of victory Hwaetred, Wothgar, Olwfwolthu set up after (or in memory of) Alchfrith, once king and son of Oswy."

"Pray for the high sin of his soul."

This last clause is merely a form of the usual prayer for the dead man's soul.¹

Turning to the south and north sides of the cross, there is a horizontal border between each two panels, where the original surface of the stone is preserved. On these borders there are runes inscribed, and all are legible except some of those on the top border of the south side, where the fracture of the edge of the socket has broken away some of the letters. On the lowest of the five borders on the south side we have "*Fruman gear*" (first year); on the next border we have "*Künningis*" (of the king); then "*Rices thæes*" (of this realm); and lastly, "*Ecgfrithu*" (Ecgfrith). Here, then, says Bishop Browne, we have the date. "Not Alchfrid only, but his father Oswy, is dead; and the monument is erected in the first year of Alchfrid's brother and successor,

¹ Browne, *Conversion of the Heptarchy*, 203.

the warrior Ecgfrid. That year is 670 A.D.”¹ This is consistent with the fact that Oswy’s attitude towards Alchfrid would have made it impossible to erect a monument during his life. On the other hand, it is probable that Ecgfrid held a quite sympathetic attitude towards the latter, and, *inter alia*, shared his view on Church matters. On the north side of the cross, beginning with the top, we have three small crosses followed by the words: *Gessus*, *i.e.* Jesus; next we read *Wulfhere*, then *Mürcna Kūng*, *i.e.* King of Mercia; then we read *Kūnesuitha*; and lastly, *Kūnnburug*.²

The two ladies’ names, we can hardly doubt, represent the two royal sisters Cynesuitha and Cyneburga, the daughters of King Penda and sisters of Wulfhere, who, as we have seen, retired together to a monastery at Castor. The latter was the widow of Alchfrid, and it is not impossible that the cross was, in fact, erected on her behalf by *Hwaetred*, *Wothgar*, and *Olwfwolthu*, who are otherwise unknown. The letters on one line of the top stone mentioned by Camden have been read, *Rikaes Druhtnaes*.³

Let us now return to the Northumbrian realm and its doings.

One of the first acts of Ecgfrid was to reverse the policy of his father Oswy in favour of that of his brother Alchfrid, and to strengthen the Roman

¹ *Op. cit.* 208.

² *Ib.* 209.

³ B.M., Cott. MSS., Dom. A, xviii. 37 and Julius F, vi. 313. In Cotton’s letter and in O. Worm’s *Dan. Mon.* 1643, p. 161, *y* is given for *u*. A. S. Smith, *op. cit.* 122, note.



TPIHIXBMNT
 AILMTFFH
 PETRMNPP
 XFRIPPEP
 AFFTEKRR
 ANCHNIT
 MFRHPTD
 TXIETHNNT
 FHTAFHNT

DETAILS OF BEWCASTLE CROSS.

party in Northumbria. This he did by displacing Ceadda (St. Chad) from the See of York, and putting Wilfrid the bishop-abbot in his place. Ceadda thereupon retired to his monastery of Læstingæu. In order to understand what followed, we must turn again to Mercia.

The great King of Mercia, Wulfhere, while he maintained Bishop Jaruman, who belonged to the Celtic rite, in office, had had close and friendly dealings with St. Wilfrid, who, as we have seen, was a bishop without a see. He had apparently given him direct charge of the eastern section of his dominion, comprising the country of the South Angles and the Lindisfaras, and we may well believe that his attitude towards Theodore would be also friendly. When Jaruman died, probably in 667,¹ there was an interval during which there was no Bishop of Mercia, and it seems very probable that (as reported by Bede) Wulfhere appealed to Theodore to nominate a bishop who should fill the bishop's seat with dignity and strength.

It was very natural that under these circumstances Theodore would, as Bede says, take advantage of the situation to put an end to the existing scandal in the Northumbrian see, where there were two bishops at one time. St. Chad was no less a bishop because he had lost the See of York and was living at Læstingæu as a bishop-

¹ See Plummer, *Bede*, ii. 208. He there expresses agreement with Chesterfield, Wharton, and Stubbs. Our oldest authority for the date is Florence of Worcester, who makes it 669, due, probably, to a false inference from *Bede*, iv. 3.

abbot, and if Theodore could arrange for his transference to the vacant see of Mercia it would relieve the Church of a very real difficulty. His action would naturally be grateful to Wilfrid, who would in turn be relieved from the presence of a competitor or rival towards whom he no doubt had quite a friendly feeling, as indeed he could hardly fail to have, for Ceadda was a gentle, humble, and godly man. This friendliness is reflected in the language of Wilfrid's biographer, Æddi. As a matter of fact, Theodore did make the suggestion, which was accepted by Wulfhere.

Bede places the appointment in the reign of Oswy. I have tried to show that this is most improbable, and that it occurred while Ecgfrid, Oswy's son, was King of Northumbria. It was at all events after Ceadda's deposition from the See of York in favour of Wilfrid, and when he was living at the monastery of Læstingæu as a bishop-abbot.

What is remarkable, however, is the condition he is alleged to have imposed upon Ceadda, which, if really exacted, does not seem to have been warranted by precedent or by the canon law, and which could hardly have been accepted if St. Chad's virtues had not been so largely associated with deference and submission, in which he was the antipodes of Wilfrid. We are told that he in fact claimed that Ceadda should be reordained. The previous practice on this point had been in almost all cases clear.

In referring to the bishops and priests ordained

by the schismatic Bishop Meletius¹ the Fathers at Nicæa provides that those who had been anointed by him were to be admitted to communion (on their return to the Church) after having been confirmed, *βεβαιωθέντας*, with a more sacred ordination, *μυστικωτέρα χειροτονία*. The use of the word *βεβαιωθέντας* might, says Bright, only mean an act of benediction, rehabilitating the recipients for the canonical exercise of their ministry.²

Bingham says³ the Donatist bishops were not reconsecrated, nor were those who had been consecrated by the heretical Bonosus, nor those who came over from Macedonianism. Bright suggests, I think reasonably, that the *benedictio impositae manus* ordered by the first Council of Orleans in 511 in the case of converted Arian clerics, perhaps does not mean a new ordination, but only a reconfirmatory imposition of hands.⁴ The same author points out how in much later times, namely, in March 1554, Queen Mary issued regulations to the bishops, one of which directed that as persons "promoted to any orders after the new sort and fashion of orders (*i.e.* the Edwardian Ordinal) *were not ordered in very deed*, the bishop if he found them otherwise competent might *supply* that thing which wanted (*sic*) in them before."⁵ While Pilkington, who became Bishop of Durham in 1561, wrote in a commentary on Haggai⁶ that "in the late days of popery . . . bishops called before them all such as were made ministers

¹ Socrates, i. 9.

⁴ See Bright, 261, 262.

² *Op. cit.* 489.

⁵ *Ib.* 490.

³ iv. 7. 7. 8.

⁶ *Works*, p. 163.

without *greasing* (unction), and anointed them on the ground that oil was necessary to the priesthood.”¹

The line that Theodore took looks as if it had been suggested by Wilfrid, who was very exacting on the point. It amounted to a contention that only Roman orders were legitimate, and that the orders which had been conferred by Celtic bishops were, if not illegitimate, at least incomplete. This appears first from his so-called *Penitential*, where he expressly says so, and secondly from his attitude towards St. Chad. In the *Penitential* he says definitely:—

I. Those who have been ordained by the bishops of the Scots or Britons, who in the matters of the Pash or Easter and of the tonsure are not Catholics, have not been united to the Church (*adunati ecclesiae non sunt*), but are to be again validly confirmed (*iterum confirmentur*) by the imposition of the hands of a Catholic bishop.

II. Similarly, churches which have been consecrated by Celtic bishops are to be asperged with exorcised water with a prayer (*et aliqua collectione confirmentur*), *i.e.* validated by a form of prayer.

III. Theodore further forbade the orthodox either to confirm or communicate with Celtic clergy (*chismam vel eucharistiam dare*) “until they had declared their wish to be ‘with us’ in the unity of the Church.” In regard to these same people and to those who doubted the legitimacy of their own baptism, they were to be baptized afresh.²

What the exact meaning of these phrases was

¹ Bright, 490.

² Haddan and Stubbs, iii. 197.

is not entirely clear. As interpreted by the language of Æddi they would mean that in cases like those in question Theodore actually prescribed the reordination of those who could only claim Celtic ordination. This would be a tremendous claim, involving a critical departure from previous theories. No wonder that it has raised considerable discussion. The question, as Lingard says, is whether Theodore deemed the Celtic ordination void or only irregular in form—*non fuisse rite consecratum*, as Bede says. The word used in his *Penitential* is *confirmare*, which certainly seems as if what was meant was not a complete reordination but the supplying of some technical defect in the ritual of consecration. This is similarly implied in the words used by Bede: *ipse ordinationem ejus denuo catholica ratione consummavit*.¹ To reordain a bishop was, according to the precedents, a very serious matter, and, as we have seen, was not exacted from the unorthodox in early times, save very exceptionally.

If this interpretation is not to be put on Bede's words, it would in fact mean that the whole of the Celtic consecrations before the Celts definitely joined the Roman rite were invalid, and this for secondary matters of discipline only. As Bright says, Bede evidently regards St. Chad as having been a real bishop during his government of the Church of York,² and no wonder, since he had been canonically ordained by Wini, who had been

¹ *Op. cit.* iv. ch. 2.

² *Op. cit.* 262, note 2.

himself regularly ordained in France, and was duly helped by two British bishops who conformed to the Roman Easter.

What Bede was apparently embarrassed by, was the extravagant language of Æddi, doubtless dictated by a very rigid ultramontane, namely, his master Wilfrid, who, as we have seen, refused to be consecrated by a native bishop, since he deemed all those tainted with the Celtic view (really the older view both about Easter and the tonsure) unorthodox and uncatholic, and incapable therefore of conferring legitimate orders. If this contention were sustainable, it would mean that all the Celtic ordinations for a long time must have been invalid. The question would then arise, how so many of them should have been accepted as saints by the Roman Church?

Bede says in regard to Theodore's attitude towards St. Chad that he upbraided him (*his quoque juvantibus corrigebat*) for not having been duly consecrated, whereupon the latter with great humility replied, "If you are persuaded that I have not duly received episcopal ordination, I willingly resign the office, for I never thought myself worthy of it, but though unworthy I submitted to undertake it in obedience to authority." Having heard his humble answer, Theodore said that he ought not to resign the bishopric, and thereupon completed (*consummavit*) his ordination after the Catholic fashion.¹ The language here used by Bede differs materially

¹ *Bede*, iv. 2.

from that of Æddi, from whom he probably took the story, and looks as if it had been accommodated to soften a description which he could not defend. Æddi, probably inspired by Wilfrid, speaks of "Ceadda's sinful ordination (*peccatum ordinandi*) by the Quartodecimans," and of his having planted himself in another's seat, and adds that Wilfrid, according to the Lord's injunction, and returning good for evil, nevertheless induced Wulfhere to put Ceadda into the See of Licitfelda (Lichfield). Thereupon, *they* (in the plural, including Wilfrid) ordained him in all the orders up to that of bishop, and having been honourably received by the king, he was appointed to the see in question.¹

This language is really absurd. The consecrating Celtic bishops had not been Quartodecimans. St. Chad had appropriated no one's seat. He was consecrated before Wilfrid, and was appointed to York by the only person with authority to appoint a bishop in Northumbria at this time, namely, King Oswy, while the reconsecration of St. Chad in all his orders (*i.e.* from that of subdeacon up to that of bishop) could be defended by no known precedent or authority.

If Æddi really represents what was done, it seems to have been entirely contrary to the practice and injunctions of Pope Gregory, and to have initiated an entirely new departure in regard to the validity of Celtic orders, which were made dependent in regard to validity upon complete

¹ Æddi, xv.

adherence with Rome, not merely in dogma and faith, but in matters of mere administration.

Bede tells us that Theodore, having noticed that it was the custom of St. Chad to go about his episcopal work on foot, commanded him to ride when he had to make a long journey. As the latter hesitated, he himself gave him a lift on to his horse. He adds that he administered his diocese with great rectitude, according to the example of the ancient fathers.¹

On his appointment as bishop we are told that King Wulfhere presented him with the land of fifty families (*donavit terram quinquaginta familiarum, i.e. hides*) in order to build a monastery at a place called Adbaruæ, in Lindisse ("aet Bearwe" in the Anglo-Saxon version, probably derived from *bearw*, a wood or grove).² Smith identifies this with Barton-on-Humber, and J. Stevenson with Barrow, near Goxhill, in Lincolnshire, three miles from Barton. Traces of his discipline still remained there when Bede wrote.

St. Chad fixed his episcopal see, as I have said, at Lichfield (Lyccidfelth, the field of corpses; compare the still surviving name of lychgate, for the gate of a churchyard where the corpse rests on its way to the church). It was probably a burial-ground. Where the seat of the Mercian see had previously been is not quite certain. It possibly was at Repton. William of Malmesbury describes Lichfield as a small place in Staffordshire

¹ *Op. cit.* iv. 3.

² Plummer, *Bede*, ii. 208.

(*villa exigua in pago Staffordensi*), far from the bustle of towns (*longe a frequentia urbium*). The church St. Chad built there was placed on a narrow spot (*angusto situ*);¹ this was to the east of the present cathedral. Near it he built a humble house for a dwelling, doubtless made of wood, where he lived with seven or eight companions, with whom he could retire from the world and devote himself to prayer and reading.² This was situated "at Chadstowe, now Stowe, at the end of the Pool."³

Thus did St. Chad initiate a long line of Bishops of Lichfield, whence he ruled a vast diocese, including not only all Mercia, but also Lincolnshire, the land of the South Angles and the Gyrwas.

The cathedral at Lichfield was some time after his death rededicated to his memory, and is so still. So are many churches in the same diocese. Among these, perhaps the most interesting (certainly to myself) is that at Rochdale, in Lancashire, one of the largest in area and formerly one of the richest of English parishes, with a noble parish church, where the author of these pages learnt many lessons from a famous vicar who belonged to the Church militant, Dr. Molesworth.

I cannot resist telling the story of St. Chad's end in the delightful language of Bede, and I have chosen to adopt Mr. J. Stevenson's simple and naïve English rather than translate the tale afresh. Bede speaks thus of the Saint's end:—

¹ *G.P.*, p. 307.

² *Bede*, iv. 3.

³ Bright, 263.

“When he had most gloriously governed the church in that province two years and a half (the Divine providence so ordaining), there came round a season like that of which Ecclesiastes says, ‘That there is a time to cast stones, and a time to gather them’; for there happened a mortality sent from heaven, which, by means of the death of the flesh, translated the stones of the church from their earthly places to the heavenly building. And when, after many of the church of that most reverend prelate had been withdrawn from the flesh, the hour also drew near wherein he was to pass out of this world to our Lord, it happened one day that he was in the aforesaid dwelling with only one brother, called Ouini or Wini, his other companions having for some reasonable cause returned to the church. Now Wini was a monk of great merit, having forsaken the world with the pure intention of obtaining the heavenly reward; worthy in all respects to have the secrets of our Lord specially revealed to him, and worthy to have credit given by his hearers to what he said, for he had come with Queen Ætheldrytha from the province of the East Angles, and was her prime minister, and governor of her household. As the fervour of his faith increased, resolving to renounce the world, he did not go about his work slothfully, but so fully forsook the things of this world, that, quitting all he had, clad only in a plain garment, and carrying an axe and hatchet in his hand, he came to the monastery of that most reverend prelate (*i.e.* Chad),

called Læstingæu; thereby intimating that he did not go to the monastery to live idly, as some do, but to labour, which he also confirmed by practice; for as he was less capable of meditating on the Holy Scripture, so he the more earnestly applied himself to the labour of his hands. In short, he was received by the bishop into the house aforesaid, out of respect to his devotion, and there entertained with the brethren; and whilst they were engaged within with reading, he was without, at work, doing such things as were necessary.

“One day when he was thus employed out of doors, and his companions were gone to the church, as I had begun to state, the bishop was alone, busied in reading or praying in the oratory of that place, when, on a sudden, as he afterwards said, Wini heard the voices of persons singing most sweetly and rejoicing, and appearing to descend to the earth from heaven, which voices,” he said, “he first heard coming from the south-east, that is, from the highest quarter of the east, and afterwards they gradually drew near him, till they came to the roof of the oratory where the bishop was, and entering therein, filled the same and all round about it. He listened attentively to what he heard, and after about half an hour perceived the same song of joy to ascend from the roof of the said oratory, and to return to heaven the same way it came, with inexpressible sweetness. When he had stood some time astonished, and seriously revolving in his mind what these things might be, the bishop

opened the window of the oratory, and clapping his hands, as he often had been wont to do, ordered him to come to him. He accordingly went hastily in, and the bishop said to him, 'Hasten to the church, and cause these seven brethren to come hither, and do you come along with them.' When they were come, he first admonished them to preserve the virtues of love and peace among themselves, and towards all others; and indefatigably to practise the rules of regular discipline, which they had either been taught by him, or seen him observe, or had noticed in the words or actions of the former fathers. Then he added that the day of his death was at hand; for, said he, 'that loving guest, who was wont to visit our brethren, has vouchsafed to come to me also this day, and to call me out of this world. Return, therefore, to the church, and speak to the brethren, that they in their prayers recommend my departure to our Lord; and that they be careful to provide beforehand for their own end, the hour whereof is uncertain, by watching, prayer, and good works.'

"When he had spoken thus much and more, and they, having received his blessing, had gone away in much sorrow, he who had heard the heavenly song returned alone, and prostrating himself on the ground, said, 'I beseech you, father, that I may be permitted to ask a question.' 'Ask what you will,' answered the bishop. Then he added, 'I entreat you to tell me what song of joy was that which I heard sung by beings descending

upon this oratory, and after some time returning to heaven?’ The bishop answered, ‘If you heard that singing, and know of the coming of the heavenly company, I command you, in the name of our Lord, that you do not tell the same to any one before my death. They truly were angelic spirits, who came to call me to my heavenly reward, which I have always loved and longed after; and they promised that they would return seven days hence, and take me away with them.’ Which was accordingly fulfilled, as had been said to him; for, being immediately seized with a languishing distemper, and the same daily increasing, on the seventh day, as had been promised to him, when he had fortified himself for death by receiving the Body and Blood of our Lord, his soul being delivered from the prison of the body, the angels (as may justly be believed) attending him, he departed to the joys of heaven.

“It is no wonder that he joyfully beheld the day of his death, or rather the day of our Lord, which he had always carefully expected till it came; for notwithstanding his many merits of continence, humility, teaching, prayers, voluntary poverty, and other virtues, he was so full of the fear of God, and so mindful of his last end in all his actions, that (as I was informed,” says Bede, “by one of the brethren who instructed me in the Scriptures, and who had been bred in his monastery, and under his direction, whose name was Trumberct) if it happened that there blew a stronger gust of wind than usual

when he was reading or doing any other thing, he immediately called upon God for mercy, and begged that it might be extended to all mankind. If the wind grew stronger, he closed his book, and prostrating himself on the ground, praying still more earnestly. But, if it proved a violent storm of wind or rain, or else that the earth and air were terrified with thunder and lightning, he would repair to the church, and devote himself to earnest prayers and the repeating of psalms, till the weather became calm. Being asked by his followers why he did so, he answered, 'Have not you read—"The Lord also thundered from the heavens, and the Highest gave forth His voice. Yea, He sent out His arrows and scattered them; and He multiplied lightnings, and discomfited them." For the Lord moves the air, raises the winds, darts lightning, and thunders from heaven, to excite the inhabitants of the earth to fear Him; to put them in mind of the future judgment; to dispel their pride, and vanquish their boldness, by bringing into their thoughts that dreadful time, when, the heavens and the earth being in a flame, He will come in the clouds, with great power and majesty, to judge the quick and the dead. Wherefore,' said he, 'it behoves us to answer His heavenly admonition with due fear and love; that, as often as He lifts His hand through the trembling sky, as it were to strike, yet does not let it fall, we may immediately implore His mercy; and searching the recesses of our hearts, and cleansing away the

rubbish of our vices, may carefully behave ourselves so as never to be struck.'

"With this revelation and account of the aforesaid brother, concerning the death of this prelate," says Bede, "also agrees the discourse of the most reverend father Ecgberht, who long led a monastic life with the same Ceadda, when both were youths in Ireland, praying, observing continence, and meditating on the Holy Scripture. But when he (*i.e.* St. Chad) afterwards returned into his own country, the other continued in a strange land for our Lord's sake till the end of his life. A long time after, one named Hygbald, a most holy and continent man, who was an abbot in the province of Lindissi or Lincolnshire, came out of Britain to visit him, and whilst these holy men (as became them) were discoursing of the life of the former fathers, and rejoicing to imitate the same, mention was made of the most reverend prelate, Ceadda; whereupon Ecgberht said, 'I know a man in this island, still in the flesh, who, when that prelate passed out of this world, saw the soul of his brother Cedde, with a company of angels, descending from heaven, who having taken his soul along with them, returned thither again.' Whether he said this of himself, or some other, we do not certainly know; *but the same being said by so great a man, there can be no doubt of the truth thereof.*"¹

The concluding sentence is a good example of

¹ *Bede*, iv. 3.

the kind of evidence that was considered conclusive in those days in regard to eschatological and other mysteries undisclosed to ordinary human beings, but implicitly believed when related by ascetic saints and visionaries who too often had unhinged minds.

St. Chad died on Tuesday, the 2nd of March 672, and was at first buried in the Church of St. Mary, but shortly after, the Church of St. Peter having been built there (*i.e.* at Lichfield), his remains were removed thither. In both places it was reported that miracles occurred. Bede mentions how, not long before he wrote (*nuper*), a distracted person (*freneticus quidam*), who had been wandering about, arrived at the Saint's tomb one evening, unknown to or unregarded by the keepers of the place, and having stayed there all night, it was found that in the morning he had recovered his senses, to the surprise and delight of all. The place of the saint's burial, he adds, was a wooden tomb shaped like a little house, covered, and having a hole in its wall through which those who went thither for devotion put their hands and took out some of the dust, which they mingled with water and gave to sick cattle or to men to taste, on which they were completely cured of their infirmity.¹

In the *Nova Legenda Sanctorum Angliae* there is reference to a Breviary according to the use of Sarum, without place or date, in which was an office for St. Chad, with its proper antiphons

¹ *Bede*, iv. 3.

and responses, and with some lections from Bede.¹ At Lichfield is a famous book known as *St. Chad's Gospels*. They are of later date, however, than the Saint, and are so called because they were kept at St. Chad's Minster.

On the death of St. Chad, a certain Wynfrid, "a good and modest man," was appointed to preside over the bishopric of the Mercians, Southern Angles, and Lindisfari, of all of whom Wulfhere was king. Wynfrid was one of St. Chad's clergy, and had for some time filled the office of deacon (archdeacon?) under him. He was consecrated by Theodore.²

Having carried the history of the Mercian Church down to this point, we must now say a few words about that of Wessex. We left it in a forlorn condition, with its not very reputable bishop, Wini, expatriated, and its king, Coinwalch, in sore straits from the attacks of the Mercians.³ Wessex remained without a bishop for a considerable time (*provincia Occidentalium Saxonum tempore non pauco absque praesule fuit*).⁴ During this interval, says Bede, "Coinwalch, being much afflicted by the attacks of his enemies, at length bethought himself that, as he had been before expelled from the throne for his infidelity (*quod eum pridem perfidia regno depulerit*) and had been restored to his kingdom when he received the faith of Christ, so also his province, being

¹ See *Act. Sanct.* for March, i. 144.

³ *Ante*, pp. 224, 324-329.

² *Bede*, iv. 3.

⁴ *Bede*, iii. 7.

destitute of a bishop (*destituta pontifice provincia*), was justly deprived of the Divine protection."¹ He accordingly sent a mission to Gaul to invite the Archbishop of Paris, Agilbert, to return to his old see, which, as we have seen, he had given up in consequence of Coinwalch's behaviour to him.²

Agilbert excused himself on the ground that he was tied and bound by his new engagements at Paris, but he offered to send his nephew, Chlothaire (Leutherius, Bede calls him), adding that he thought him worthy of a bishopric. This offer was duly accepted, and Chlothaire was honourably received by the king and his people, and was consecrated by Archbishop Theodore in the year 670, and retained his see for seven years. The place where the consecration took place has generally been thought to have been Winchester, and Florence of Worcester puts it there. It seems to me highly doubtful that Theodore, who was a metropolitan, would travel to Wessex, which was then very unsettled, to perform such a function as the consecration of a suffragan. It is a great deal more probable that, like Hæddi, his successor, he went to Canterbury. So Bede, in fact, implies, for just after mentioning the Archbishop of Canterbury, he says, "*consecratus in ipsa civitate.*"³

Let us now turn once more to Wilfrid. Bede does not tell us what happened on his replacement of St. Chad, but merely says, speaking of the latter :

¹ *Bede*, iii. 7.

² *Ante*, p. 323.

³ *Op. cit.* iii. 7.

“He then lived at his monastery, which is at Læstingæu, while Wilfrid administered the bishopric of York, and of all the Northumbrians and likewise of the Picts.”

Now that we have planted him on the episcopal chair at York, it will be well to retrace our steps somewhat, in order to describe Wilfrid's work as a builder and restorer of churches.

His double position of bishop and abbot no doubt gave him unusual prestige, while his resources were, as we have seen, very considerable. He used them to build and glorify the monasteries over which he presided, and especially that of Ripon. We have described the birth of the monastery at Ripon, and how its founder, Abbot Eata, was driven away thence, and Wilfrid put in his place by King Alchfrid. Let us now say a few words about Hexham.

Hexham was called Hægustaldhain by the old writers. The site where Wilfrid built his famous minster was presented to him by his patron and friend, Queen Ætheldrytha.¹ It was not only a very large but a very valuable estate. According to Richard of Hexham, it had formed the dowry or marriage gift of the Queen, and was probably made over to Wilfrid by her on her withdrawal from the world into a monastery. Richard of Hexham dates the gift in 674.² The present was a lordly one, and it was known in later times as Hexhamshire, and was doubtless originally conterminous with the later

¹ Æddi, ch. 22.

² Ric. *Hagust*, ch. 1.

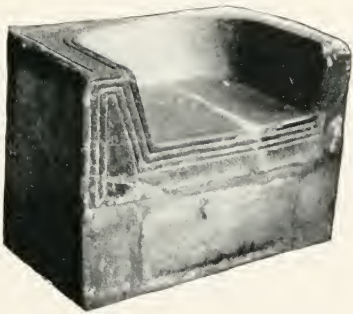
bishopric of Hexham. This last is described by the author just quoted as bounded on the east by the sea, on the south by the Tees, and on the north by the Aln. It extended westward to Wetherhal.¹

On the site thus given him Wilfrid built a church dedicated to St. Andrew the Apostle. We read how he first constructed in a hollow in the ground a building (*domus*, i.e. a crypt or *confessio*) made of polished stones (*politis lapidibus*), while above this vault he put his church, which comprised many pillars and chapels (*columnis variis et porticibus*). The walls were of marvellous height and length, with numerous intra-mural passages going up and down within them. Æddi remarks on the skill with which Wilfrid designed the structure (which he attributes to divine inspiration), and adds that he had not heard of another such building on this side of the Alps.

Bishop Acca afterwards decorated it with gold and silver and precious stones, and ornamented its altars with purple and silk coverings (*purpura et serico induta*).² Richard of Hexham speaks of the depth of its subterranean crypts and of the oratories or chapels, and the tortuous passages in the church, of its squared walls supported by various and polished pillars of great length and height, and of its being of three storeys—meaning, no doubt, the arcades of the nave, the triforium, and clerestory. The walls and the capitals of the columns and of “the arch, or perhaps apse (*arcum*), of the

¹ *Op. cit.* ch. v.

² Æddi, ch. xxii.



WILFRID'S FRITH-STOOL AT HEXHAM.

[Vol. I., facing p. 266.]

Sanctuary" (*i.e.* the chancel arch) were painted with various subjects and ornamented with carved stonework, forming a design of marvellous colour. The body (*i.e.* the nave) of the church was girdled round with recesses and chapels, which were divided by walls and curved passages into an upper and a lower storey. The intra-mural ways were united by staircases, and were so extensive that an innumerable body of men might be hidden away in them without being seen. There were also turrets with circular stairs. The chapels were beautifully decorated and apparelled, and apparently, in some cases, put away in secret places as refuges or fortresses (*turres et propugnacula*). Among the chapels were those dedicated to the Virgin, to St. Michael, to the Baptist, and to the Holy Apostles, martyrs, confessors, and virgins. The church possessed a great body of clergy, of relics, a fine library of books, and a large number of vestments and vessels. It also had an *atrium* or court,¹ surrounded with compact and strong walls. An aqueduct running along a stone channel and flowing through the town supplied water to the monastery, which consisted of a great number of buildings afterwards destroyed by the Danes, but of which the ruins still remained in the time of Prior Richard. In fact, says our enthusiastic author, of the nine monasteries built by our father and patron and of all others besides in England none excelled

¹ This is its usual meaning, but it also meant a cemetery, and Raine thinks this was its meaning here. *Op. cit.* p. 13, note.

this one, nor could such a one be found at this time on this side of the Alps.¹ Æddi tells us that a mason's boy engaged in the building of the walls fell from a height on to the stone pavement below and was much injured, his legs and arms being broken. He was taking his last breath, and the masons were carrying his body away on a hearse, fancying he was dead, when we are told that Wilfrid, standing in the midst of the brethren, said, "Let us pray that God will restore life again to the body of this boy." His spirit was thereupon restored him, and the doctors having bound his broken bones with bandages (*alligantes medici pannis ossa confRACTA*), he mended from day to day, and, says Æddi, is still alive. His name, he adds, was Bothelm.²

Of the two famous basilicas built by Wilfrid at Ripon and Hexham nothing exists above ground, the crypts alone, in fact, remain. Micklethwaite treats of the two crypts together. He says of them that they are so like one another and different from what we find elsewhere, that they must almost certainly have been built at the same time, and under the same direction, if not by the same hands; and at no time is this so likely to have happened as when both churches were under the care of Wilfrid himself. On the other hand, we have the distinct statement of Leland that the "old Abbey" of Ripon stood on a different site from the "new Minster." Mr. Walbran, in his account of the Ripon crypt,

¹ *Op. cit.* ch. iii.

² Æddi, 23.



CRYPTS OF WILFRID AT RIPON AND HEXHAM.

(The Hexham Crypt is from a Plan by Mr. C. C. Hodges.)

- A, A. Passages of access, now partly blocked.
- B, B'. Vestibules.
- C. Main chamber or confessio.
- D. (Ripon) Hagioscope ; (Hexham) stair from the west.
- E. Aperture in crown of vault (there was an opening of the kind also in B at Hexham).

The spaces C, and B (Hexham), are covered with barrel vaults ; B (Ripon) with a half-barrel vault ; B', B' (Hexham) with straight-sided vaults. The passages have flat stone roofs.

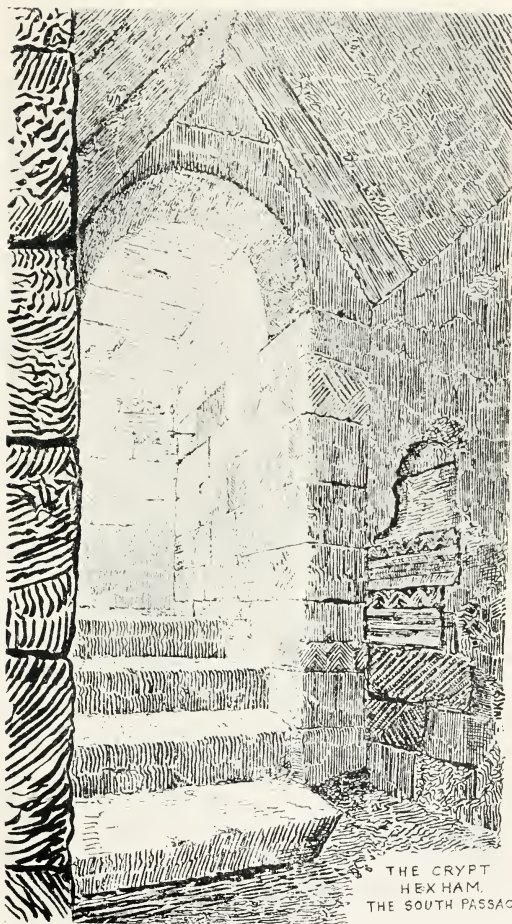
accepted Leland's statement as conclusive, but he nevertheless held it to be equally conclusive that the present crypt, although not that of Wilfrid's cathedral, was Wilfrid's work, and that there were actually two churches built by Wilfrid at Ripon. Micklethwaite, on the other hand—(and I agree with him)—concludes that Leland's statement is based on a mistake.

In one respect Wilfrid was fortunate when he built his basilica at Hexham. He had a rich and ready-made mine of materials close at hand—columns, dressed stones, etc.—in the neighbouring Roman city of Corstopitum, which was no doubt still largely intact. In the latest edition of Murray's *Guide to Northumberland* we read that the crypt at Hexham is built entirely of Roman material brought from Corstopitum. This crypt was probably used for the exhibition of the relics brought from Rome by St. Wilfrid.

Micklethwaite contends that "although the Roman party in the English Church secured a notable triumph at the Synod of Whitby [described in a previous volume on St. Augustine], the Scottish influence remained strong, and it had a large share in the formation of the tradition of our national Church. . . . Wilfrid, the founder and builder of the churches at Hexham and Ripon, was a strong partisan on the Italian side. . . . His churches were in the Roman manner, and that at Hexham was a notable example of it." Turning to the crypts themselves, Micklethwaite very properly

gives their description in the words of his predecessor Walbran, who first unravelled their history :—

“The central chamber at Hexham,” he says, “is rather larger than that at Ripon, measuring 13 feet 4 inches by 8 feet, against 11 feet 3 inches by 7 feet 9 inches. In one, the cells at the west ends of the flanking passages have triangular roofs; in the other, the cells are not defined from the passage by arches, and are covered with flat stones. At Hexham, the western chamber has a barrel vault; at Ripon, a semicircular vault only. At Hexham the heads of the arches are flat, and there are none in the eastern wall. At Ripon they have semicircular heads, and there is one on the north side of the east wall, and another larger one higher up in the middle of the same wall. But both crypts have obviously proceeded from a common type, although the idea is more elaborated at Hexham than at Ripon. Both central chambers have their entrances in the same position. In both the semicircular heads of the doorways, which are of the same height—6 feet 3 inches—are cut out of horizontal slabs. The passages in each agree in width within an inch. Both have funnel-like apertures in the heads of the niches, and deep round basins in the bases. In each the north-east niche is pierced through to the passage behind. Each has a small rectangular opening in the roof of the western chamber, which may have been connected by a



THE CRYPT
HEX HAM,
THE SOUTH PASSAGE

flue with the floor of the church above; and both have been plastered through."

Micklethwaite adds to this account the statement that the flanking passages rise eastwards. "Both of them at Hexham, and one at Ripon, end in stairs upwards. The last has overhead what appears to be the opening in the floor of the seventh-century church by which it was originally entered. The southern passage possibly once went on eastwards like the other, although it is now stopped by masonry with a lamp-niche in it, which seems to be of early date. This passage is continued westwards for some distance, and after turning south, ends in a stair up to the nave. This is certainly a late extension, for there is a thirteenth-century gravestone used up, in its roof. . . . There is also a western stair at Hexham, where it rises direct from the western chamber."¹

"The *confessio* of an Italian church," says Micklethwaite, "such as Wilfrid took for his model, consists of a chamber containing relics under the high altar, either with or without an opening or

¹ Micklethwaite adds in a note that when writing the above he had seen the Hexham crypt, which he had not seen before. "The steps are certainly added," he says, "but the entrances to them from the western chamber, and the walls at the sides to the height of about six feet, are of the original work. It appears, therefore, that there was a cell running westwards from the western chamber and roofed over with stone like the passage; and that in later times the roof has been taken away, the side walls carried up and the stair inserted. The cell was, perhaps, intended to receive a tomb, and the stair was put there, like the western passage at Ripon, because the eastern approaches interfered inconveniently with the arrangements of the church built above in later times."

window to the church on the side towards the people, and a passage running round its other sides and entered by steps at each end, either directly from 'the choir of the singers' or from the aisles or transept as the case may be . . . except for an interruption of the surrounding passage in each case at the south-west corner; this is exactly what we have got here . . . but the passages and stairs of approach come from the east. The churches to which these crypts belonged had, therefore, their high altars at the *west ends*."

The western position of the altar is of very early date, so early indeed that it has been doubted whether it occurs anywhere else in England except at Canterbury;¹ even there, although the altar itself stood, with the Bishop's chair in the apse behind it to tell of its former dignity, "until the fire in 1067, it had long before given place to a newer high altar in a choir built towards the east. . . . In these two churches (Hexham and Ripon) it is certain that the altars were at the west; and as no important works seem to have been done on them between the seventh and the twelfth centuries . . . we are driven to the conclusion that the crypts belong to the first foundation, and they therefore claim our interest, not only on account of their venerable age, which has now passed twelve centuries, but as personal relics of a very remarkable man."

¹ The old church at Lyminge seems to be another example.



FRAGMENTS FROM CROSSES AT HEXHAM.

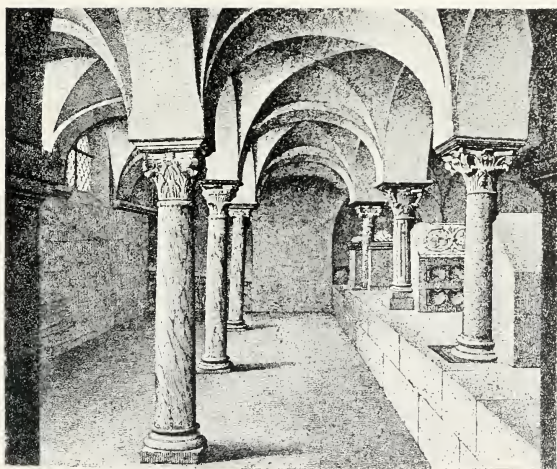
Turning to the details of the crypts. "Although," says Micklethwaite, "the central chambers, and those to the west of them, are about the same size in the two examples, the original passages of entrance spread out widely at Hexham and keep close to the main walls at Ripon." This clearly points to some differences in the forms of the churches to which the crypts respectively belonged. Both Æddi, who was a contemporary, and also Prior Richard, writing in the twelfth century when the early church of Hexham was intact, "describe a basilican church with aisles and galleries, and mention is made of underground work—that is of our crypt. All writers who speak of it extol its great size and magnificence. . . . We have reason to believe that the actual dimensions of the early church at Hexham were really very considerable." Enough remains of the almost contemporary church at Brixworth to show that it was of good size, and as that was not a church of the first class, and the historians who mention it do not wax eloquent upon its bigness, we may justly infer that one which did excite their admiration was very considerably larger. Moreover, the ruins of it which remained in the twelfth century (not a time of small buildings) were large enough to call forth the praises of Prior Richard.

The church at Hexham, then, was a basilica of good size with aisles, and perhaps with a broad transept between the nave and the apse. The entrances to the crypt were wide apart, so as to come outside the enclosing wall of the choir of the

singers just as we find them to have done at Brixworth. On the other hand, we are told that the church at Ripon was large, and we find that there the stairs (or stair, if there was only one) went down straight from the choir of the singers itself.

Both crypts have niches in the walls, with cups or cressets for lights at the bottoms of them and funnels to intercept the roof at the tops, showing us the early use of this simple method of lighting, which was kept up, at least in the conservative abbeys, till the sixteenth century. The piercing of the back of the north-east niche into the passage beyond, cannot be accidental, as it is found in both crypts, "but I cannot," says Micklethwaite, "offer any explanation of it." (The piercing at Ripon forms the well-known St. Wilfrid's needle.) "The hole in the vault of the western chamber in each crypt was probably for ventilation, as Mr. Walbran suggested. Similar ventilators were found in the curious crypt of St. Philibert le Grand, described and figured by Sir Henry Dryden in the first volume of the *Sacristy*."

"At the east end of the Ripon crypt is an opening or window, through which people, by descending a few steps, might look into the *confessio*. There is no corresponding opening at Hexham, perhaps on account of the greater depth of the crypt. In some excavations made not many years ago, described by the Rev. W. C. Lukis, F.S.A., it was found that the outside of the east end wall was so irregular, some of the stones projecting far beyond



THE CRYPT AT JOUARRE, FOUNDED IN 653 BY ST. ADONE.

[Vol. I., facing p. 376.]

the others, that there can be no doubt it was never intended to be seen." Micklethwaite, commenting on this, says that "it is the description of a wall from which the facing stones have been removed. The fair face towards the original church afforded good ashlar stones which could be used again, so they were taken away by those who had the altering of the church into its later shape, of which the *confessio* formed no part.

"In each crypt the surrounding passage is interrupted at the south-west corner; and doorways are so placed that any one entering by one stair and leaving by the other must pass through the west end of the central chamber. This was, no doubt, for the convenience of persons visiting the relics deposited there, but I do not know of any other example with the same arrangement."¹

The most interesting piece of furniture in the existing church at Hexham is the frith stool or *cathedra*, no doubt made for Wilfrid, and forming his episcopal seat and that of his successors. "The marble chair of St. Ambrose at Milan," says Bishop Browne, "has its only ornament down the front, exactly what the frith stool has on the top, but no *triquetra*. The chair is cubical in form, and the seat is in one stone resting on a base of several stones." The right of sanctuary extended at Hexham to a mile from the church.

When the building was complete at Ripon, Wilfrid invited kings Ecgfrith and Ælfwine (two

¹ *Archæological Journal*, vol. xxxix. pp. 347-354.

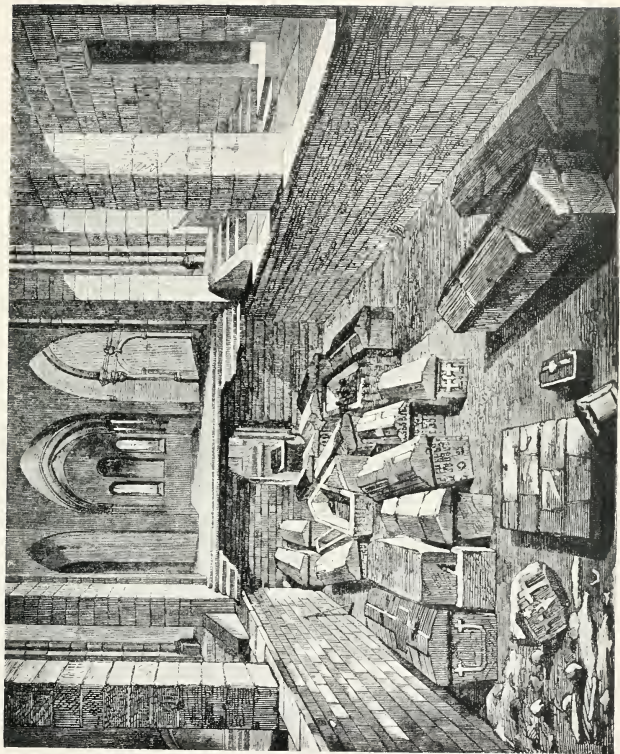
brothers), with the abbots, præfects, the subreguli (? if this means ealdormen), and a large and dignified body of people to the ceremony of dedication. The altar also with its pedestals (*bassibus*) was similarly dedicated, and was ornamented with gold and purple, while the communicating crowd completed the ceremonial in canonical fashion (*populique communicantes omnia canonice compleverunt*). Meanwhile St. Wilfrid, standing, and turning to the people before their rulers, enumerated the estates (*regiones*) which the latter had conveyed to the Church with the consent of the bishops. These included sacred sites on those lands which the British clergy (*clerus Brytannus*), "who had fled from our arms," had abandoned. The estates are thus enumerated by Æddi :—

I. The district near (*regionum juxta*) Rippel.—By which the district north of the river Ribble in Lancashire is doubtless meant, which was afterwards known as Amounderness.

II. Gædyne.—Dr. Raine thinks that by this Æddi means Gilling, near Richmond, but there is reason for supposing it was Collingham, the Ingetlingum where Oswin was murdered in 651.¹ There Æanfleda, wife of King Oswy, founded a monastery in memory of the murdered king, of which Trumhere was the first abbot, a post afterwards filled by Cynefrid and by Tunberht, the latter of whom became Bishop of Hexham.²

¹ *Bede*, iii. 14, and *Vit. Osuini*, Surtees Soc., 9.

² *Bede*, iii. 24. *Bede, Hist. of the Abbots.*



THE CRYPT OF ST. GENEVIÈVE AT PARIS, WITH MEROVINGIAN TOMBS.

[Vol. I., facing p. 37.]

Raine remarks that Trumhere belonged to the Scottish party, and it is probable that this estate was given over to Wilfrid at the same time that he obtained Ripon.

III. The third place named by Æddi was Dun-utinga (described as *in regione Duninga* of Peter of Blois). This, Raine suggests, was the country watered by the river Duddon. It is still called Dunnerdale. This would make the district continuous with those parts of the Archdeaconry of Richmondshire which lay in Cumberland and Westmoreland.

IV. The fourth district was Cætlævum. This Dr. Raine makes a corruption of the later Cartmel-in-Furness, which is very probable.

It seems a rational explanation of this very interesting record, that when King Ecgfrid conquered the country north of the Ribble, and stretching as far as Cumberland and Westmoreland, he either drove out the previous inhabitants, or reduced them to servitude. The conquered lands, however, he conveyed to the Church, just as a wide district in Durham was not long after also conveyed to, and became, the patrimony of St. Cuthberht. This northern part of the modern Lancashire eventually formed part of the Yorkshire Archdeaconry of Richmond, while the southern part, extending from the Ribble to the Mersey, formed a portion of Mercia, and was attached ecclesiastically, in the first instance, to Lichfield and afterwards to

Chester. The former continued to belong to the Richmond Archdeaconry until quite recent times.

To return to Wilfrid and the consecration of his monastery at Ripon. Having finished his sermon, as we are told, there followed a three days' and three nights' entertainment (*magnum convivium trium dierum et noctium*). "The kings held high feast there with all their people, thus proving themselves valiant before their enemies, and humble with the servants of God."¹

Æddi adds that Wilfrid presented his new church at Ripon with a magnificent copy of the Gospels, apparently in four volumes, written in letters of gold on purple leaves, which he had had written for the good of his own soul. It would be curious to know when and how this was written. Possibly it was the work of Irish scribes in the Irish fashion, but it was more probably one of the fine codices Wilfrid brought from Rome. The *bibliotheca* of these volumes, by which Æddi seems to mean their bindings or cases, were made of the finest gold and most precious gems. With other books they were preserved at Ripon, when Æddi wrote, and were kept in his monastery, in the place where the Saint's relics were put. They were referred to always in the daily prayers. In addition to the fine work just named, Peter of Blois also speaks of other books of the Old and New Testament with tables (diptychs), having their backs decked with precious gems and worked in wondrous

¹ Æddi, xvii.

fashion, which were also presented by Wilfrid to the honour of God and in memory of himself.

In the fifteenth century, according to the Act-Book of the Dean and Chapter there, says Dr. Raine, there was still preserved at Ripon a work referred to as *Textus Wilfridi*, which may well have been the purple and gold MS. above referred to; while a short time before the Reformation there were still kept in the Treasury of York Minster two volumes (*textus*) of Saint Wilfrid, with their covers ornamented with silver and gold. On one was represented the Crucifixion, with the figures of the Virgin and St. John on either side in the lower part, and the Trinity with two angels in the upper part, carved out of ivory (*de ebore*); while the other contained a figure of the Crucifixion on the upper part, and of the Saviour in His majesty with "Peter and Paul" (*sic*) on the lower.¹ From Wilfrid's epitaph at Ripon we learn that he gave that minster a large gold cross (*sublime crucis radiante metallo . . . tropaeum*).²

Having described Wilfrid's work at Hexham and Ripon, there remains for us to say something of what he did at York, which had become his metropolitan church, where he had now obtained a position worthy of his manifold gifts as an administrator, a reformer, and a patron of the arts and of culture. We may well believe that

¹ *Fabric Rolls of York*, 223. Raine, *Historians of York*, i. 26 and 27, notes.

² *Bede*, v. 19. See his epitaph, line 7.

one who was anything but a monk and a recluse at heart, and had the gifts of a ruler of men, and was besides a great seigneur and a wealthy man,—a kind of Cardinal Richelieu on another scale,—and surrounded by suitable conditions, would hesitate in horror from going to live, as his predecessors had mostly done, among the ill-dressed, ill-groomed, and ill-equipped Celtic anchorites at Lindisfarne. His fastidious ways, which had been additionally polished and venerated by his residence at Rome, would, no doubt, shrink from joining in their austerities, and he would not hesitate to plant himself and his see at York itself, the traditions of which as an Episcopal centre went back beyond Paulinus to the times of the Romans. We may be sure that such an ambitious person as he was, looked forward to resuscitate York as the see of a second metropolitan to rule the northern dioceses of England, as the Archbishop of Canterbury ruled the southern ones. The first recorded of his works at York was the renovating of his cathedral. He made some notable changes there. Its church had become ruinous: Canon Raine says the stone used in the neighbourhood is so friable that the surface begins to decay after thirty years' exposure. Æddi describes how the summits of the roof were broken, how birds had built their nests in the window openings, and were continually flying in and out, showing that the openings were neither glazed nor otherwise filled, but doubtless, as William of Malmesbury suggests,

closed with linen, or with wooden or stone lattices. The walls were soiled with defilements from the gutter tiles and the droppings of birds. Wilfrid first mended the cracked and broken roofs, and covered them with lead. In order to stop the entry of birds, he filled the window openings and thus protected them with glass (*vitro prohibuit*),¹ which nevertheless allowed the light to enter. This, as we shall see, was probably white transparent glass. He had the walls limewashed and supplied the church and altars with furniture and vases.

For some years Wilfrid now presided over the great Northern See, which then stretched from the Humber to the Forth, and even beyond, for he apparently also had some authority among the Picts. Bede does not waste any words in describing his work as bishop, but we cannot doubt that he was an excellent and vigilant pastor. He was highly qualified for the work, and had it at heart, was rich, and doubtless continued to cherish and help the various foundations which owed so much to him. Æddi, whose name in religion was Stephen, and whose panegyric and apologia combined have been accepted by many historians with too little discrimination, was his companion and helper, and with Æona² had returned with him from Kent in 669. The former calls himself "Stephanus presbyter" in the preamble to his biography, and he became Wilfrid's choirmaster in the North. He

¹ This is the first mention of window glass in England.

² Æddi, ch. 14.

devotes the twenty-first chapter of his work to a description of Wilfrid's work, but unfortunately in such general terms that it is not possible to draw a real picture from it. He says that he ordained many priests and deacons everywhere. He avoided feasts, and was so abstinent that he never emptied his glass, however small it was (*nunquam solus, quamvis parvissima fiala esset, potum consumpsisset*). He was devoted to prayers and vigils, fasts and sermons, and was chaste from his birth. He was, says Æddi, greatly cherished during his life and after his death by the abbots and abbesses of nearly all the monasteries, while kings and nobles entrusted their sons to him for education.¹

¹ *Op. cit.* ch. xxii.

NOTE.—On page 378, line 16, I referred to the appropriation of the possessions of the old British churches by the English under Ecgfrid, in what are now Lancashire and Yorkshire. One notable instance is perhaps to be found at Heysham, on Morecambe Bay in Lancashire, where a small stone Celtic chapel dedicated to St. Patrick still remains.

END OF VOLUME I.

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