ENGLAND
FROM EARLIEST TIMES TO THE GREAT CHARTER

GILBERT STONE

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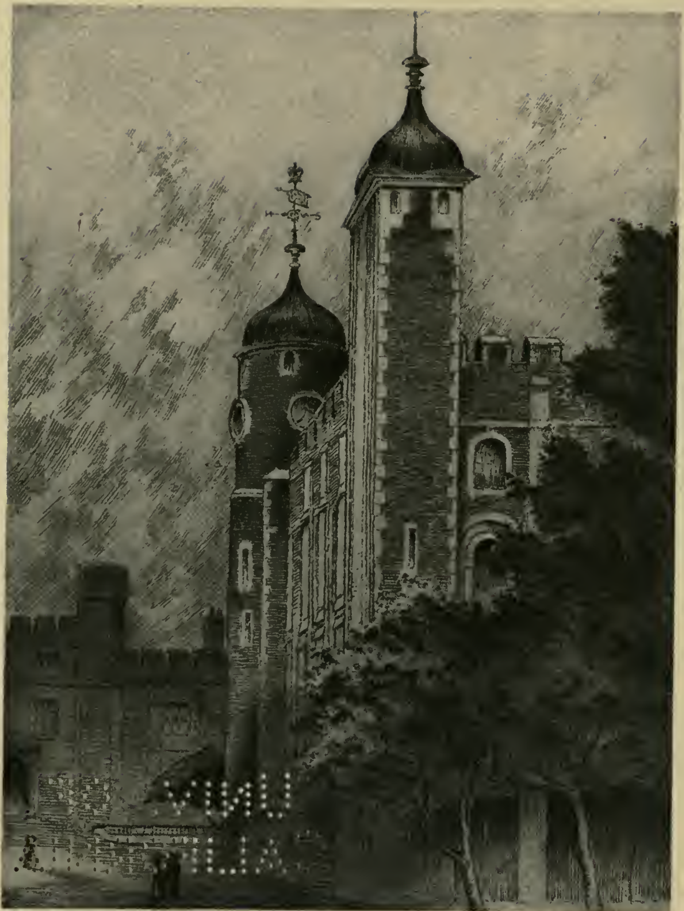

Louis Weirter. R.B.A.

The White Tower

ENGLAND

FROM EARLIEST TIMES TO THE GREAT CHARTER

BY

GILBERT STONE

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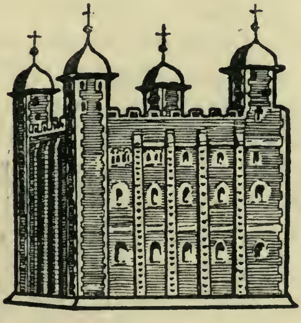
and Caius College Cambridge B.A. LL.B.



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PREFACE

THE present volume, which is the first of a series, treats of the history of England from earliest times to Magna Carta. In this period the English race was being evolved, and the English Constitution, as we to-day know it, was slowly struggling into being.

The volume, indeed, is concerned with the birth of the English State. That splendid creation was not produced without much labour. Civilizations arose and fell away; conquest succeeded conquest; Briton and Roman, Saxon, Dane, and Norman followed one another in possession of the reins of power: but at length, after battles without number, after countless struggles in Church and State, the English found themselves firmly planted in this island, and standing at the threshold of the Empire which in later years was to open its doors to them.

Though we have not, on the whole, to deal with such great events as those which make notable our country's subsequent growth into maturity, that is not to say that our period possesses little movement. The youth of England was a sturdy and striving one. Progress and retrogression alternate, and the social history of the period is both complex and varied. We shall see pass across our stage the early people struggling from savagery into a quasi-civilization; we shall watch the coming of the Romans and their final departure; we shall be concerned with the arrival of the pagan Saxons and their conversion; we shall note the rise of the kingdoms of Kent and Northumbria, Mercia and Wessex, and their commingling under the blows rained upon them by the Danes; we shall finally consider the coming of

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the Normans, the conflicts between King and Church and barons, the gain of great dominions abroad and their loss; and we shall close with the struggle between King and people which placed the keystone in the English arch of liberty.

Besides these political events it is the purpose of this book, as of the series, to consider the social life of the people. The plan adopted in the present volume has been to insert certain chapters solely concerned with the state of literature, art, and society in the period under review.

I must express my great indebtedness to the many brilliant scholars whose researches have made certain many things which formerly were uncertain or unknown. I have drawn largely on the labours of others—in all cases, I hope, making due acknowledgment—in order to be able to give to the general reader an account of the period which is substantially accurate.

The publication of this volume has been delayed owing to the fact that work at the Admiralty has occupied me for many months. The delay must have been yet greater had it not been for the kindness of the publishers in relieving me of much of the labour connected with passing the work through the press. In particular I must acknowledge the care with which Mr C. C. Wood, who has also compiled the index, has read the proofs.

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From *Archaeologia*, by permission of the Society of Antiquaries of London.

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CHAPTER I

PRE-ROMAN ALBION

GLANCING back over the centuries that are past, we may see mirrored in the pages of history the struggles, the deeds, the movements and progressions which have raised our nation to the position of the premier Power in the world. Less than ten centuries elapsed between the time when the ambassadors sent by the small city-state of Rome came back from Greece bearing with them some knowledge of the laws of Solon and the years which saw the final overthrow and utter decay of the Empire raised to greatness by the Antonines. The English, reading their history, go back, not for ten centuries, but for fifteen hundred years, and the story is a continuous one; nor do they read of rise, decline, and fall, but rather in these present years of what would be another nation's old age they see their Empire neither broken nor trembling before some conqueror, but formed of a people in the full vigour of youth, with offspring planted in rich territories rallying with ready eagerness at the first sound of danger.

Nor is this all. With but a little break we can pass beyond the years when Hengist and Cerdic and Ida were changing Britain into Angle-land, and view four centuries more, when Britain was conquered and civilized by Rome, and with our minds projected backward over yet earlier ages can dimly see through the mists of devastating wars the rise in inverse succession of Briton and Gael and Semite, until at last we trace our history to that first fountain-head of all Western culture, the valleys of the Tigris and the Euphrates. Some would have us search still farther, probing with care stalagmite and glacial deposits for some trace of the earliest race of all, a race which roamed over our island in the dawn of history, long before the swing of the poles had caused this land to be covered with a mighty crust of ice almost to its southern shore. Into this ante-room of history we will not penetrate; of those people, men of the Palaeolithic period, who hunted their prey with spears of rude make, cut their food with knives of ill-chipped flint, and drew their pictures of mammoth and reindeer on the walls of the caves in which they lived, we cannot treat, for, though even in those ages man was man, between them and us the Glacial period stands like a barrier. Driven to the south by the ice-packs of the north, it may be they never returned to this island; even if they did, the age is so remote, the distance of time which separates us from them so great, and our knowledge of these people so small that in a history we must but look at them and pass them by in silence.

With the passing of the Glacial period, however, and the entry of Neolithic man upon the stage of history the story is continuous. Of those early ages we now know something. Modern research has wrested sufficient evidence from the graves and buildings and habitations of the New Stone workers for us to see both the rise of a civilization and its overthrow. Our history, indeed, is so long that it has seen in this island alone the sweeping away of two great systems of culture, which we may refer to perhaps with sufficient accuracy as the Semitic and the Roman.

If we believe what we are told by Theophilus Antiochenus of the ancients, and follow the opinion held by a considerable number of the moderns, the men who inhabited this land ages before Caesar landed on our shores had journeyed north from Asia Minor and, perhaps, the northern shores of Africa. This people founded a civilization in Albion and linked up this island with what were then the centres of culture for the Western world. Their priests it was who built our megalithic avenues and circles, and planned those burial chambers known to antiquaries as the simple and chambered long barrows.

Their wise men, the ancestors, it may be, of the Druids, kept in close touch with the philosophers of Egypt, and taught in Albion the worship of Baal and Astoreth, or Venus. Of them, therefore, we must speak, though but slightly.[1]

NEOLITHIC MAN

Having passed rapidly backward through the centuries, we will now retrace our steps and, commencing with Neolithic man, endeavour in a few pages to describe the life of the men who were living in England in the ages before the Roman conquest.

The New Stone workers came into this island at a date which we cannot assign to any particular year or to any particular century, but which was assuredly earlier than even the introduction of bronze by many thousands of years. They, or other stone-users, lived on in considerable numbers in Albion for long ages, each at least equal in point of duration to the time which has elapsed between the coming of Cerdic and the present day. In all those centuries, doubtless, races rose and fell, customs and modes of life changed, battles without number were fought. Of all these we know but little. Appropriately enough, almost our only evidence of those dead ages comes from tombs, or buried villages, or discarded temples or megalithic monuments. But though the kinds of evidence are restricted, the numbers of objects which have come down to us are many, and from them we can piece together some sort of description of the peoples who then lived in Albion.

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[1] A history which attempts to trace the development of a people from the earliest times may pertinently deal with every race which has gone to form the resulting nation. Anything beyond that is impertinent. For this reason we have treated of this early period much more fully in *Wales* (in this series) because the racial connexion between the Welsh and the pre-Christian races in this island (the Brythons, Goidels, and Semites) is much closer than is that of the English. If it were possible to regard the Anglo-Saxon conquest as a war of extermination which obliterated the earlier people from England, our history would necessarily commence with the landing of Hengist, or, it may be, with the appointment by the Romans of the first Count of the Saxon Shore. That no such extermination took place is, however, clear, as we shall see. Many men to-day are racially connected with the earlier people. The French, for example, are probably nearer akin to the pre-Celtics than to the Celts. So to a less extent with the English. We believe there is far less Teuton blood or Teuton characteristics in our people than some historians have suggested. This being our view, it is obviously necessary to consider even these very early times, though not in detail.

As their name implies, the races we are now considering were a stone-using people (metal was unknown in this island until at least 2000 B.C.); but although their weapons and implements were of stone, usually of flint, they were far different in workmanship from those used by the Old Stone workers. Their knives, axes, spear- and arrow-heads, reapers, and wrist-guards were finely worked and fitted with well-contrived wooden handles. Flint-mining and flint-chipping were national industries. Even to-day it is possible to go down the old shafts in the Brandon flint mines, tunnelled out by Neolithic man. Examples have been found of their miners' lamps made out of hollowed chalk in which wick and tallow were placed. Near the Brandon mines one of the most important flint-chipping factories existed, and in various parts of England flint hoards have been found, possibly the stock of early cutlers who carried these wares to the homes of their customers.

The implements thus made were almost all connected either with war or farming. As to the latter, it is probable that the people lived mainly by pasturing cattle and by hunting, and that the tilling of the soil and the growing of crops were but rarely attempted, being unsuited to an age when war with man and beast rendered the state of society perpetually unstable. But although war was probably the main business of life, and although milk and meat were the chief food-stuffs, thus doubly rendering agriculture unnecessary, or at least unimportant, there were other peaceful industries pursued by these early peoples. The potter was modelling his jars and incense cups even in the earliest ages. Examples which have come down to us are coarse in texture, though not without grace of shape. As yet the potter's wheel was unknown, but the hand-moulded designs are in the main symmetrical, and not unlike those produced thousands of years later. Whether

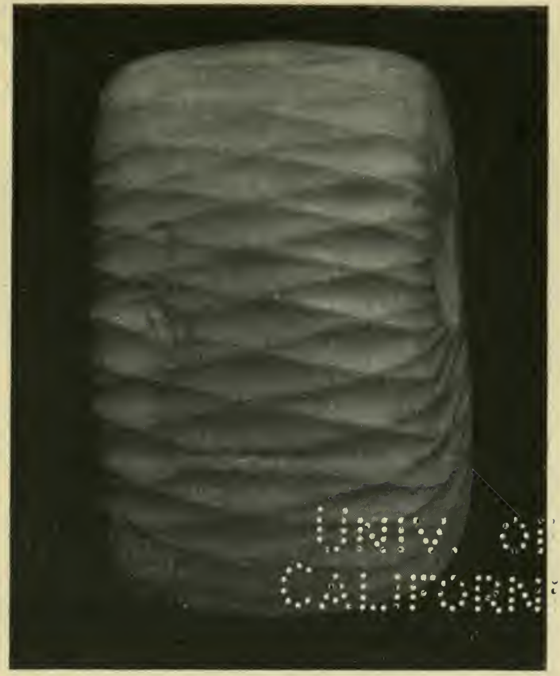

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Plate II. Finely worked Stone Hammer-head

weaving was known at the commencement of the period we cannot say, since no examples have survived; but the earliest examples of carbonized linen which we have show qualities which proclaim that man was weaving long before they were produced. Moreover, Neolithic man, as we shall see, was probably connected either by race or through his priestly and ruling classes with the Egyptians, who are well known to have been wonderful weavers. We must not, therefore, too readily visualize the Neolithic as a skin-clad savage.

It is, however, when we turn to the tomb itself rather than its contents that we begin to see more clearly what manner of men these were. The many skeletons discovered—for cremation burial belongs to a later age—tell us of a people whose males lived a hard life and whose women toiled even more than the men. Their stunted growth shows them to have been hewers of wood and drawers of water; their skulls show us that many races succeeded one another, commingling by conquest and by matrimony to form a resulting composite people. The objects placed with the dead tell us of a belief in immortality, man's last and final hope, for we find the flint weapons and pot pitchers broken or pierced so that their souls might escape to welcome their master when he awoke.[1] All these facts, nevertheless, leave us uncertain as to the real development of these people. When, however, we turn to consider their tombs and their temples, we seem to see no rude savages, but men who were at least in touch with the civilization of the Pharaohs.

Scattered up and down the earth from almost the Arctic

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[1] The same practice was common in Egypt, and we have many examples of jars, etc., 'killed' by having a hole pierced in them. In some barrows skeletons have been found which had obviously been disarticulated before burial; skulls have been found cloven through probably after death. The suggestion has been made that these remains point to suttee or sacrificial practices. We suggest, however, that such remains show that the Egyptian beliefs relating to the soul and its return were clearly present in Britain. Disarticulated skeletons and cloven skulls have been found in early Egyptian tombs, the purpose being to prevent the soul returning to the body and transforming it into a vampire. In the later Egyptian period another method was adopted: the soul was not prevented from re-entering the body, but was propitiated.

Circle in the north to the Great Zimbabwe in the south, from Europe to South America and Japan, megalithic monuments have been found which suggest that they were built at one period or another by people who worshipped similar gods. For our island the raising of the megaliths synchronizes with the New Stone Age. It was in this period that the long barrows were built; it was toward the latter part of the period that Stonehenge was raised. We may perhaps be more definite and give the date of the building of all the avenues and circles in the British Isles as somewhere between 3600 and 1300 B.C. —the avenue being by many hundreds of years more ancient than the circle.

All these buildings—barrow and temple and circle and avenue—possess certain characteristics which show that they were planned by men following the same cult. They were, almost without question, built under priestly guidance, and the priests were almost certainly acquainted with the religious practices common in Egypt. Thus, for example, we find the change from avenue to circle in Egypt followed almost immediately in Albion; we find the change from the May-November year to the solstitial year which was made in Egypt repeated here; we find enormous burial chambers, which must have required the services of thousands of men for their erection, both in Egypt and in these isles. In one of these tombs, that at New Grange, in Ireland, we find cut on the walls the symbol of the solar ship so common in Egyptian tombs; both in Britain and in Egypt the sacred buildings are so planned that their measurements contain the same number of sacred units. Similarities could be multiplied did our space permit, until it became manifest that Britain and Egypt were connected even in the ages before the introduction of bronze.

THE BRONZE-USERS

When it was that this metal was introduced into Albion we do not know. In Egypt bronze was used at least as early as 3700 B.C. Some antiquaries consider that it was not known to the inhabitants of this island until between 1400–1200 B.C.;

others give the date as about 2000 B.C.; others place the innovation in yet earlier ages. We will follow the majority, and fix its introduction at the commencement of the second millennium B.C. At first, of course, it was a great rarity, and centuries, perhaps, elapsed before it became common. In the British Museum a bowman's wrist-guard is preserved, made of well-ground stone studded with gilded pins. It probably belongs to the first few centuries of the new Metal Age, when stone was still used for utility and metal reserved for ornament.

As time passed, and the getting and working of metals became better understood, mines were opened in these islands. Gold was got from Ireland, copper from Wales, tin from Cornwall. The old stone implements were gradually discarded.[1] Metal ornaments became common; not only do we find in the barrows or hut-circles of the Bronze Age daggers and razors and pins of bronze, but gold brooches, rings, and armlets. Other ornaments were also common—armlets of ivory, necklaces of jet and amber, beads of glass or vitreous paste. Gold and glass were, however, rare and expensive, and we find the poorer sort contenting themselves with gilded bronze and with vitreous paste. With improved means of manufacture many other articles of general use were introduced or became more common. Whether it existed or not in the Stone Age, in the Bronze Age weaving was certainly known, and linen and woollen clothes were worn. In pottery, however, there was little development; the cremation urns are still as simple in design, and almost as coarse in make, as in the earlier ages.

If we ignore the material progress due to the introduction of metal, there is little reason to believe that the Bronze Age was much farther advanced than the Stone Age. The mode of living would seem to have been singularly simple, and in strange contrast, in some cases, with the splendour of the personal ornaments worn by both men and women. As time passed, however, wealth became greater, the people were no longer of stunted growth, the women, doubtless, no longer acted as mere beasts of burden, the men had other things to think about besides toiling and fighting. The country was, however, as in earlier times, separated into many tribal divisions, and tribal fighting was probably frequent.

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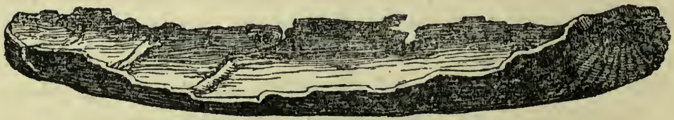
[1] For ages metal was regarded with distrust by the superstitious, and stone amulets were commonly employed to ward off danger. When Taliessin spoke of "the oppression of the metal-workers" he was probably voicing a popular belief which had its origin in the distrust with which the stone-users received the new material.

THE GOIDELS

Our island was probably in this stage of development when the first of the Celtic invaders, the Goidels, or Gaels, reached these shores. There has been some dispute in recent years among authorities as to whether the Goidels first came to that part of these islands now called England, or whether originally they went direct to Ireland, migrating in much later times (*c.* A.D. 270) thence to Wales, the Isles, and Scotland. Accepting what we regard as the better view, we date the irruption of the Goidels into Albion at about 1000 B.C. They were the advance-guard of the Aryan-Celtic movement westward, and were in that stage of development known as the Bronze Age culture, even as were the people whom they conquered. They have left us but few traces of their presence in this island, since they introduced, or their coming synchronized with, cremation burial, a practice which inevitably vastly reduced the chances of their remains coming down to us.



ANCIENT BRITISH CANOE

THE BRYTHONS, OR BRITONS

It was some four centuries after the first Goidelic stream had set out from the Continent that the Brythons, whom we shall hereafter call by their common name, the Britons, commenced that westward movement which eventually resulted in the conquest of both Goidel and aboriginal, and made the new-comer master of the whole of southern and the major part of west-central Britain.

The conquest of the Goidels by the Britons, though it commenced in Central Europe about the sixth century B.C., did not reach these shores until some time between the visit of Pytheas and the coming of Caesar, *i.e.* between the fourth and the first century B.C. Like the conquered race, the new-comers were Celts, but, unlike them, they fought with weapons, not of bronze, but of iron. To their natural advantage of a splendid physique was thus added the possession of what in those days must have been terrible instruments: swords and lance- and arrow-heads of the new metal. Upon the anvil of the Smith the Gaelic race was beaten.

It was, of course, against this race, then in possession of the whole of southern Britain, that Caesar led his legions. The Belgae, the Atrebates, the Parisii, and the Brittani were all British tribes having on the Continent kinsmen who had fought against Caesar in the Gallic wars. Perhaps we shall not be guilty of a false comparison if we liken the Britons to the Gauls of whom the great Roman has so much to say. Clean-shaven save for long moustaches, with fair skins and fair hair, they were a fine, a manly race; of great height (Strabo tells us that British youths were six inches taller than the tallest man in Rome) and powerfully built, gorgeously clad in Gallic breeches, bright-coloured tunics, and woollen cloaks dyed crimson and often of a chequered pattern, with torques, armlets, and bracelets of gold, shields of enamelled bronze, and swords of fine workmanship, magnificent as horsemen, with their chargers gaily caparisoned, they presented a splendid spectacle when prepared for battle. Nor were they simply fighters. Even before Caesar came they had a coinage and carried on a Continental trade. They were acquainted with the potter's wheel, and the weaving industry was certainly widespread among them, much of this work, if not all, being done by the women at home. They were also probably fond of music, for Hecataeus of Abdera informs us that the inhabitants of the western isles [1] were fine players on the harp. It is, however, in art work that they were most advanced.

LATE CELTIC ART

By the commencement of the century which saw Caesar's attempted conquest of Britain the form of art known as Late Celtic had probably reached its highest point. Some extraordinarily beautiful examples have come down to us, of which perhaps the best known are the Battersea Shield and the objects found in the Aylesford Cist. Of course, even before the beginning of the Iron Age the Celts were good workers in metal, but as the centuries passed both the art and the craftsmanship of the metal-worker advanced, so that we find the Briton making his swords and shields, pots and pans, more beautifully and more perfectly than his Goidelic forerunner. Bronze was still the favourite metal, except for instruments of war, but now the curves into which it was beaten were more delightful and the general effect was heightened by the restrained addition of enamel. Philostratus, a Greek sophist who resided at the court of Julia Domna, writing at the commencement of the third century A.D., tells us as matter of hearsay that "the barbarians who live in the ocean pour . . . colours on to heated brass; . . . they adhere, become hard as stone, and preserve the designs that are made upon them." At least three centuries before he wrote the Britons had been enamelling many of their objects of ornament or utility. The Battersea Shield, which we have already mentioned, and which is to-day preserved in the British Museum, still retains, in almost perfect condition, part of the enamel-work with which it was adorned. Perhaps it belonged to a British soldier who fought against Caesar.

It would be tedious to enumerate all the articles upon which the artistic taste of the Britons was lavished. Large bronze

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[1] We assume, what is not certain, that his 'western isles' refers to Britain.

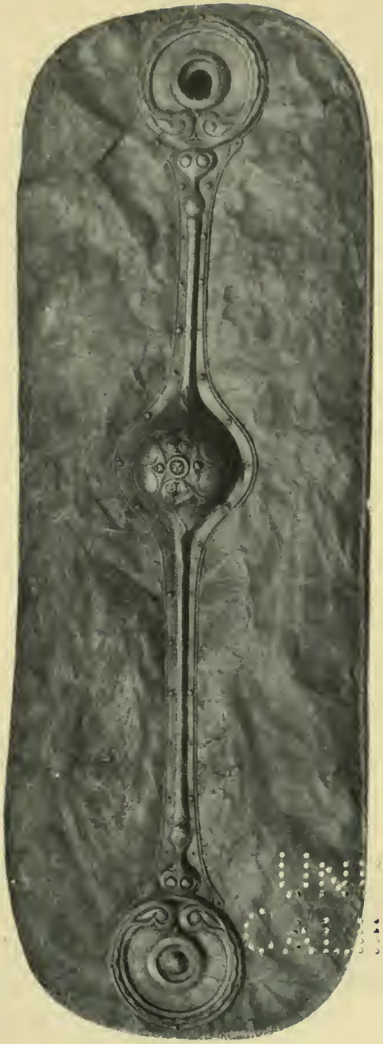

Plate III. Bronze and Enamel Shield of Late Celtic Work

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and gilded safety-pins and brooches, bronze and gold rings, bracelets, armlets, necklets, bronze and silver mirrors delightfully engraved on the back, well designed and proportioned—all these have been preserved to us. Even ordinary utensils like pans were well made, and possessed the same beautiful curves. As we have said elsewhere,[1] we know of no form of art which gives such a feeling of strength as does that of the Late Celtic period. No weak or mean line will ever be found on a piece of Late Celtic work. A mere glance at the weapons of these craftsmen calls up before us the impression of men who were at once good fighters and true artists.

Everyday Life of the Britons

When we turn from their objects of art to their homes, we come nearer to the picture of the barbarian which Caesar with Roman insolence has painted for us. Like the Goidelic dwelling-place, the Briton's hut-like house matched ill his many objects of personal adornment. Circular in shape, these British huts had clay floors with a fireplace in the centre; the walls were of wattle and daub, and the entrance was by a door, which had a doorstep. The occupants slept upon beds of straw covered with skins or blankets of wool. Several such houses would be grouped together to form a hamlet; and the general arrangement, both of house and hamlet, was similar in many ways to that which was adopted by the ordinary Welsh clansmen (the direct descendants of the Britons) more than a thousand years later.

When we consider their occupations we find that we are still dealing with a people whose chief object in life was warfare and, perhaps, hunting. They had also, however, as we have seen, the arts, now well developed, of metal-work, weaving, pottery-making; some trade certainly existed; music was not unknown. The pastoral life of the Neolithics and Goidels had been exchanged for agriculture (we have preserved to us an iron sickle with which they cut their corn). They probably ploughed with oxen and not with horses. Rudimentary towns had doubtless sprung up long before the Christian era, and the tribal system in its crudest form had long passed away and given place to government by chief and priest.

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[1] See *Wales*, in this series, Chapter III, for a reference to Late Celtic art, with illustrations.

The priests of the Britons were, of course, the Druids. This priestly class not improbably carried on the traditions of those early Magi who had planned the circles of Britain. In the writings of Hecataeus of Abdera (*c.* 350 B.C.) we find a temple dedicated to Apollo mentioned as existing in this island, and it may be that he referred to Stonehenge. The ancient Neolithic and the later British forms of worship were not improbably very similar. Megalithic folk-practices lived on among the Britons and Gaels until comparatively recent years. The British Druid gave the same attention to the heavens and the stars as his Neolithic precursor; both were not improbably regarded by the common people as the wise men,[1] the leaders in council, even as the chief was the leader in war.

Such, then, were the people who inhabited this island when Caesar prepared his expedition in the August of 55 B.C. Although the ancient historians have dark tales to tell of a polygamous state and rule by women (and we certainly know that some tribes had queens rather than kings), and although Caesar talks overmuch of barbarians and woad-painted savages, it would seem that we must acquit the Britons both of savagery and of complete barbarity.

DESCRIPTION OF EARLY BRITAIN

Turning now for a moment from the Britons, we will consider the isle they inhabited. Britain seems always to have exercised a curious fascination over the ancient geographers and historians of Greece and Rome. The Greek writers in particular always, or nearly always, refer to the island as a mysterious place, a land of spirits, of evil and danger. We must not, however, accept too readily their stories of strange beasts, customs, religious observances, and savagery. Procopius, writing long after the Roman occupation, could refer to Scotland as a country possessing so evil a climate, and so many wild beasts and poisonous reptiles, that it was quite impossible to live in it for more than a few hours. One of the natural phenomena that struck most forcibly the men from the shores of the tideless Mediterranean was the fact that our seas rose and fell. Thus Libanius, after having spoken of the storms and tempests to be met with around Britain, adds: " But that which is most tremendous is that, when the helmsman has opposed his skill to everything else, the sea retreats on a sudden, and the barque, hitherto aloft on the waves, is discovered lying on the bare sand; and should it quickly flow again, it carries off the vessel." Caesar had cause to dread this same tide, which was largely responsible for the failure of his expeditions. That same narrow strait between Kent and Calais which in recent years has guarded our country from dangers that beset Continental states, in ancient times gave to this island a reputation for isolation and remoteness. Thus St Basil speaks of " that vast and terrific ocean . . . which surrounds the Britannic island"; and St Chrysostom can look upon it as a matter for great wonder that " even the Britannic isles lying without this sea, and situated in the ocean itself, have felt the power of the Word. For even there churches and altars have been erected." Should we translate the *Periegesis* of Dionysius, then we may read that

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[1] Druid = very wise.

Where its cold flood
The northern ocean pours, the Britons there
And white-hued tribes of warlike Germans dwell;

while in the *Sybillae Oraculorum* we are told that

'Twixt the Britons and the wealthy Gauls
Ocean shall murmur, filled with blood profuse.

So mightily did these mysterious seas work upon the ancient imagination that Procopius tells us, rather shamefacedly and under his breath, so to say, how the spirits of the dead are rowed over from Gaul to Britain in a magic ship manned by men doomed to this duty; how the spirits are invisible, their presence being evidenced by the increased draught of the boat, and how when the boat is beached on Britain's sands the spirits depart and the vessel, now lightened, floats again. Alas for these romantic stories! If there be the slightest vein of fact underlying Procopius's tale, the good boatmen were probably smugglers, since King Commius and his successors depended for most of their taxes upon import duties, and Dioscorides speaks of a certain drink called *curmi*, besides wine, which was well liked in Britain and was largely brought over from Gaul.

The *curmi* above mentioned appears to have been made from wheat or barley. Dioscorides tells us that it caused headaches and was bad for the nerves and that it took the place of wine. Apollonius Alexandrinus speaks of grapes in Britain, but he is a doubtful authority, much given to romancing; thus, according to him, no British fruit had kernels or stones. Strabo, who quotes Pytheas as his authority, states that the Britons cultivated fruits and had some animals in abundance; and Bede specifically mentions vines [1] as growing in some parts. Strabo also informs us that the people fed on millet and vegetables, fruits and roots, that they had wheat and honey, of which they made a beverage, and that they bruised their corn in large buildings, since they had no clear sunshine, but always much rain.

Bede, writing in the eighth century, has left us an excellent description of Britain. He tells us how the country excelled in growing grain and trees, how it gave an ample pasturage to cattle and beasts of burden. It would appear that both land- and water-fowl were plentiful, and that the numerous rivers abounded in fish, particularly salmon and eels. In the sea he mentions on the one hand seals, dolphins, and whales, and on the other hand shell-fish, "including mussels in which pearls of all colours, red, purple, violet, and green, but mostly white, are found; cockles of which a scarlet dye is made, a most beautiful colour which never fades with the heat of the sun or the washing of rain, but the older it is the more beautiful it becomes." Other writers also have mentioned the British pearl.[1] Aelian tells us of a British pearl which he describes as being of a golden colour, having rays somewhat dull and dusky. Origen says that these pearls are not the best, but the second best pearls in the world. As to minerals, Bede mentions copper, iron, lead, and silver. Tin, of course, was early found in Cornwall, perhaps by those Arabic or Chaldaic people who, Theophilus Antiochenus tells us, probably with the completest truth, migrated at a remote age from their fatherland in the Tigris valley to the east and north, "as far as the Britons in the Arctic regions." Gold, too, was mined on a small scale in Wales, and on a large scale in Ireland, where was situated in early times the centre of the northern gold-mining industry. Bede mentions also another semi-precious object, and one which he, walking along the shore near his beloved Jarrow, must frequently have seen, and perhaps collected. This was the jet for which Whitby is famous even now. Bede, who must be the first Englishman to give an account of the electrical phenomenon caused by friction between certain substances, speaking of jet, says that it is "black and sparkling, glittering at the fire, and on being heated drives away serpents; being warmed with rubbing, it holds fast whatever is applied to it, like amber."

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[1] Vineyards were common in England in the later Saxon period.

Gildas the Briton, writing rather more than a century after Constantine the Tyrant had led the Roman legionaries from Britain, paints for us a pretty picture of this country which he loved. The Romans, of course, had cut down some of the forests which had covered a considerable part of the land and had drained to some extent some of its marshes, but the words of Gildas give what is probably an accurate picture of the country in its primitive state. Speaking, then, of his native land, he says: "It is surrounded by the ocean, which forms winding bays, and is strongly defended by this ample and, if I may say so, impassable barrier, save on the south side, where the narrow sea affords a passage to Belgic Gaul. It is enriched by the mouths of two noble rivers, the Thames and the Severn, as it were two arms, by which foreign luxuries were of old imported, and by other streams of less importance. . . . Its plains are spacious, its hills are pleasantly situated, adapted for superior tillage, and its mountains are admirably fitted for the pasturing of cattle, where flowers of various colours, untrodden by the feet of man, give it the appearance of a lovely picture. It is decked, like a man's chosen bride, with divers jewels, with lucid fountains and abundant brooks wandering over the snow-white sands; with transparent rivers, flowing in gentle murmurs, and offering a sweet pledge of slumber to those who recline upon their banks, whilst it is irrigated by abundant lakes, which pour forth cool torrents of refreshing water."

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[1] Gibbon suggests that it was the "pleasing though doubtful intelligence of a pearl fishery" which attracted the Romans. He quotes Suetonius, ch. 45. He adds: "The British pearls proved, however, of little value, on account of their dark and livid colour. Tacitus observes, with reason [in *Agricola*, ch. 12], that it was an inherent defect." As we shall see, there were probably other reasons for Caesar's invasion.

Before the Roman occupation we find, of course, none of the "innumerable castles" mentioned by Bede, nor the eight-and-twenty cities of Gildas, the fifty-nine celebrated towns of Marcianus Heracleota, the hundreds of cities, towns, and stations enumerated by Ravennas. Though the later London was already becoming a town, and though Camulodunum, the later Colchester, possessed its mint and was the capital of King Cunobelinus but a few years after Caesar had departed, it is improbable that either Eburacum or Caturactonium, or 'the Winged Camp' (or their British equivalents), mentioned by Claudius Ptolemy, writing in A.D. 120, as the most important towns in Britain besides Londinium, had then been founded. When the Romans first came Britain was its old green, beautiful self; the Britons were a warlike race, given somewhat to the arts, to industry, to trade, and to agriculture, struggling upward from a semi-barbarity. The coming of the legionaries speeded their progress, so that when after four centuries the Roman wave once more receded it left behind a wealthy country with fine cities, a well-organized national life, and an educated and civilized people.

CHAPTER II

THE ROMAN CONQUEST

"CAESAR," says the Greek Dion, "therefore, first of the Romans, then crossed the Rhine, and afterward passed over into Britain, in the consulship of Pompey and Crassus." About a hundred years after this event Pomponius Mela, writing in the reign of Claudius, could express the pious hope that by the success of the Roman arms the island and its savage inhabitants would soon be better known. It was not, however, until after a war lasting for about forty years subsequent to the landing of Aulus Plautius—a war, as Gibbon neatly phrases it, "undertaken by the most stupid, maintained by the most dissolute, and terminated by the most timid of all the Emperors"[1]—that the greater part of the island submitted to the Roman yoke.

The imagination is stirred when we reflect upon that stupendous mind whose very name expressed the utmost limit of rank on this earth, who, having conquered Gaul, stood a victor on the shores of that narrow strait across whose angry surface gleamed the white cliffs of Albion. Mysterious tales borne back by traveller and trader had attracted Roman curiosity. The lust for conquest ever with Caesar demanded the gaining of this strange land, so near and yet so remote. It may be that traders' stories of its wealth, its pearls, its tin, its gold, appealed also to his Roman love for gain. He had met some of the Belgic tribes in Gaul. Bravely had they fought in fair trappings, with their cloaks of plaid and their torques of gold, with necklaces of amber and shields of shining bronze well embossed and enamelled. Doubtless Caesar had learnt from captive Gauls how men of their race were rulers in that mysterious island. Perhaps he had heard in Rome of those whom Cicero had met and conversed with, the Druids, the priests of Gaul, whose rites, he knew, were practised in this land. Whatever his motive, whether greed, curiosity, love of conquest and power, or a desire to cut off from Gaul that steady stream of British auxiliaries which, aiding the Gauls in their struggle with Rome, had made his task the more difficult, he decided in August 55 B.C. to embark for Britain.

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[1] Claudius, Nero, and Domitian. Claudius was perhaps timid and uxorious rather than stupid.

CAESAR'S FIRST EXPEDITION

With about eighty cargo-ships and numerous swifter galleys Caesar set sail on the 26th of that month, accompanied by some eight or ten thousand men of the Tenth and Seventh Legions with full equipment. The cavalry was separately transported. The weather seems to have been rough and the winds contrary, so that the short voyage took rather more than eight hours, and it was some four hours from daybreak when Caesar's ships hove in sight of the steep cliffs of Kent.[1]

Arrived within speaking distance of his goal, it became evident that the embassy of Commius, a chieftain whom Caesar had made king of the Continental Atrebates and had sent to persuade his countrymen of Britain to accept the Roman yoke, had proved fruitless. Commius, indeed, alleged that the Britons had treated him as an enemy, seizing him and loading him with chains. It is significant, however, that of the British coins struck after Caesar's final departure which we now possess a large proportion were struck by British kings who were proud to acknowledge themselves as sons of Commius, and it is certain that a few years hence this Commius, Caesar's ambassador, aided the rebellion of Vercingetorix against Rome in Gaul, and that he was subsequently banished at his own request to some place where he would never be offended with the sight of a Roman. It is probable, therefore, that the British King Commius and Caesar's messenger are the same, and that Commius, instead of advising submission, stirred to resistance. Certain it is that Caesar found awaiting him, marshalled along the cliffs, the manhood of Britain, prepared to contest his landing.[1]

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[1] The exact locality is unknown. Caesar speaks of "precipitous cliffs from the tops of which a weapon could easily be thrown to the shore." It is generally presumed that these were the chalk cliffs near Dover. We may suggest, however, the Reculver neighbourhood.

Volusenus, a Roman officer whom Caesar had previously sent to explore the shore, seems to have reported a more favourable landing-place than that at which the fleet had now arrived. Weighing anchor, Caesar's captains therefore directed the ships to a spot some seven miles distant, where the shore was flat and where no frowning cliffs commanded the sea. Meanwhile the Britons had followed their movements, and, armed with spear and sword, on horseback, in chariot, and on foot, prepared for resistance. Thus opposed and with ships still in somewhat deep water, the legionaries hesitated to disembark. At last, however, the standard-bearer of the Tenth Legion, carrying his precious burden, leapt into the water, calling upon his comrades to prevent the eagle from falling into the hands of the enemy. Thus appealed to, the legionaries hastened to follow his bold example. After a fierce *mêlée* in the shallow water the shore was at length reached, and the highly trained invader soon made good the footing thus gained. As we have seen, however, the cavalry had been separately embarked, and the fleet with that part of Caesar's forces had not yet arrived. It was not, indeed, until four days after the landing that the ships bearing the cavalry came in sight. Even then they were not destined to succeed in their object, for, while yet within sight of their comrades on land, a violent storm arose, and in order to escape utter shipwreck the mariners directed their vessels on another course, and were finally driven weather-beaten back to the coast of Gaul.

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[1] Dion Cassius rather suggests the Thames estuary as the landing-place, for he tells us that the Britons, having already heard of Caesar's approach, had possessed themselves of all the landing-places facing the Continent. He adds that Caesar, "sailing, therefore, round a certain promontory, reached its farther side; and then, having defeated those who attacked him while disembarking on the shallows, he effected his landing before further supports could arrive."

It was this storm, joined with an unusually high tide, that destroyed so many of Caesar's ships, then safely beached, as the Romans thought. The tide, whipped into fury by the storm, broke the cables, dragged the anchors, and flung ship against ship. By the morning the Romans found twelve galleys completely destroyed and almost all damaged. Caesar immediately took steps to avert disaster. Many of the ships were repaired, and supplies were collected so that in the event of communication with the Continent being broken the army should not be starved.

Meanwhile, after the first repulse of the Britons, in the absence of cavalry no attempt had been made to follow up the victory. Commius, however, appeared as ambassador from the Britons to Caesar, asking for pardon and promising submission.[1] Hostages were demanded and some were given, many were promised. After the disaster due to the storm of which we have spoken all such promises were broken; the Britons continually harassed the Romans, whose scouts and foraging parties were attacked and sometimes destroyed. On at least one occasion the legionaries were successfully ambushed. After a number of attacks and counter-attacks, in which the honours were almost equally divided, and during which Caesar and his legionaries observed with admiration the horsemanship of the Britons and their mode of chariot-fighting, after peace had again been patched up and hostages again surrendered, Caesar, now threatened by an ever-increasing number of the enemy, set sail once more, this time for Gaul.

CAESAR'S SECOND EXPEDITION

It was in the year following, 54 B.C., that Caesar returned to the attack. This time five legions and 2000 cavalry were thought necessary. Contrary winds delayed the expedition for some three weeks. At last, however, at sunset on July 23 Caesar's eight hundred ships set sail from the Portus Itius. The wind had now fallen and the currents in the straits swept the ships from the chosen course. The sails were furled and the oars manned, and at last, after many strenuous hours of battling with the tide and currents, Caesar once more landed on the shores of Britain. This time the embarkation was not opposed. Again, however, the elements fought against Rome; again a furious storm and a high tide washed away ships and dashed them against one another.[1] But the Britons, though they had deemed it unwise to attempt to prevent the actual landing, by no means intended to allow to Caesar an unopposed progress.

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[1] We are informed, however, by Dion Cassius that the Britons would not come to terms until they had been repeatedly worsted. It would also appear that the Britons were in league with the Morini, a Continental tribe, who fell upon the Roman cavalry when, after being beaten back by the storm, it made for harbour on the shores of Gaul. It would seem that Britain and

In this hour of danger it was to King Cassivellaunus that the Britons turned for leadership. This British chief seems to have been something of a tyrant; a good soldier and a brave and resourceful leader, he reigned over the Catuvellauni, and his lands probably comprised what is now Hertfordshire, Buckinghamshire, and Berkshire. The first attack took place south of the Thames; there, apparently, the Britons were victorious and Labienus the tribune was slain. Caesar was able, nevertheless, to push on north and to prepare to cross the Thames. Cassivellaunus had, however, made full preparations to resist any such attempt, the ford by which Caesar proposed to cross being protected by a fence of sharp stakes along the bank and under the water. According to Bede, who wrote from hearsay, these stakes, cased in lead, still remained immovably fixed in the bed of the river in his day. However this may be, whether they remained or whether they were removed, the obstacle was avoided,[2] the stream was crossed,

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Gaul had some means of communication which enabled them to keep in touch with one another throughout this time.

[1] These losses were probably due to Roman ignorance of the nature of tides. The Mediterranean, of course, has no tide; the Atlantic has a high one, which is felt particularly in the Channel and the North Sea.

[2] The Greek Polyaenus, who flourished A.D. 180, has a curious story about this crossing. He says: "Caesar attempting to cross a large river in Britain, Cassolaulus, King of the Britons, obstructed him with many horsemen and

and Caesar, aided by Mandubracius,[1] son of the deposed chief of the Trinobantes, a tribe with whom Cassivellaunus had been at war, prepared to attack the principal town of the kingdom of Cassivellaunus. This town, naturally protected by forests and marshes, had been rendered as strong as British wit could make it. Behind mound and ditch the British chief had collected his warriors. Within its shelter their cattle, the chief form of wealth in those days, had been placed. Caesar, however, after a concerted attack delivered on two sides at once, was able to take this stronghold with comparatively small loss; much booty was seized, many Britons fell or were captured. In the meantime Cassivellaunus had commanded the kings of Kent to attack the Roman ships, now but slightly guarded, but protected by a fortified wall. The offensive of the men of Kent proved as unsuccessful as the defensive of their northern neighbours. The Britons lost one of their leaders, many of their men were slain, others were captured, and the attack ended in complete failure.

Although Caesar was more than holding his own, he evidently felt that a long campaign in Britain would be necessary for its conquest. Such a campaign was impossible with Gaul as yet by no means completely subdued. Submission by the Britons was offered and accepted; hostages and trophies were taken; Cassivellaunus was warned against showing active enmity toward Mandubracius; Caesar retired to Gaul. He never returned to the attack. Anxious times were ahead: the massacre by the Eburones, the revolt of Vercingetorix, the sieges of Gergovia and Alesia. It was not Caesar, but Aulus Plautius, a senator in the reign of Claudius, who was destined to bring Britain, in part at least, within the Empire.

chariots. Caesar had in his train a very large elephant, an animal hitherto unseen by the Britons. Having armed him with scales of iron, and put a large tower upon him, and placed thereon archers and slingers, he ordered them to enter the stream. The Britons were amazed on beholding a beast till then unseen, and of an extraordinary nature. . . . The Britons, therefore, fled with their horses and chariots. Thus the Romans passed the river without molestation, having terrified the enemy with a single animal."

[1] This was Caesar's name for him. Other names are Androgius, Andragius, Androgorius.

THE INTERIM

Of the ninety-seven years between the departure of Caesar and the coming of Aulus Plautius we know but little. The researches of Sir John Evans, it is true, have recovered for us some knowledge of the British kings who during these years issued an inscribed coinage in gold and silver and copper. The Commius of whom we have already spoken, or his namesake, seems to have reigned over a considerable part of southern Britain, and left as his successors his sons Tincommius, Verica, and Eppilus. King Tasciovanus was reigning about this time north of the Thames, his capital being fixed where St Albans now stands. It was the son of this Tasciovanus who of all the British kings is best known to us, as the Cymbeline of Shakespeare. Cunobelinus, as this king was called, issued many coins, some of which have been preserved to us. He was living at about the commencement of the Christian era. His subjects, the Catuvellauni, formed probably one of the most powerful of the East Midland tribes. His capital was fixed at Camulodunum (the modern Colchester), and his coins bear evidence of having been minted there. It was his son Caratacus who, as we shall see, so strongly resisted the Roman arms. Four British kings of this period are also known to have fled from the island to the Romans for protection. One, Adminius, a son of Cunobelinus, exiled for some fault, passed over to Germany and threw himself on the mercy of Caligula; another, Dubnovellaunus, who was issuing his money contemporaneously with Eppilus, sought refuge with Augustus, together with a third British king whose name is lost to us. Lastly, toward the end of the period Bericus, who had also been exiled, is found claiming Roman aid in the reign of Claudius, with what result we shall see. A critical study of the ancient coins has enabled Sir John Evans greatly to extend the list of British kings. Their names are but names, however, and of their deeds we know nothing. These coins (which are found mainly in south-eastern and southern Britain, although a few have been discovered in the west and north, and at least one in Scotland) would seem to prove the existence of much trade. Even before the coming of Caesar the Britons had a coinage, in design based on a gold stater of Philip II of Macedon but for the most part of rude manufacture. We know also that the inhabitants of this island were ruled, not by one or two great chiefs, but by many, and we may at least suggest that sons divided the paternal power equally.[1] For the rest, they tilled their land and bred their cattle, milked their cows and sowed their corn as though no Caesar had been and as though no Aulus Plautius was to be.

Aulus Plautius

It was in A.D. 43 that Aulus Plautius led the first truly successful expedition against Britain. At the beginning, or subsequently, he took with him four legions.[2] The actual number of men at his command is unknown to us. We have already seen how Bericus, an exiled British chief, had appealed to Claudius for aid; we must assume that he brought with him followers, and that these must be added to the force which Claudius, promising assistance, sent ostensibly to gain for this Briton his throne. Perhaps we shall not be far wrong if we place the number of the army of Plautius and Bericus at 55,000 men. According to Dion, it would seem that Plautius had some difficulty in persuading his legionaries to follow him

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[1] A critical examination of so-called Pictish inscriptions and British legends made within recent years by the late Sir John Rhys has given some colour of truth to the statements made by several Greek and Latin writers that the more ancient British were a matriarchal people, tracing inheritance through the mother. Aristotle refers to a fierce and warlike nation beyond the Celti as being governed by women. Both Caesar himself and Cedrenus have some dark stories of the relations between the sexes. On the whole, however, we are disinclined to accept the matriarchal theory.

[2] Leg. II Augusta; Leg. XIV Gemina Martia; Leg. XX Valeria Victrix, from Germany; Leg. IX Hispana, from Pannonia, west of the Danube. Under Vespasian the same four were still stationed here; later he called away XIV for the war against Civilis, and its place was taken by II Adiutrix, according to Mommsen. This was later transferred to Pannonia under Domitian. The IX Hispana was broken under Hadrian, and its place taken by VI Victrix. The II Augusta and the XX Valeria Victrix were stationed in Britain, chiefly at Isca Silurum and Chester, throughout the Roman occupation.

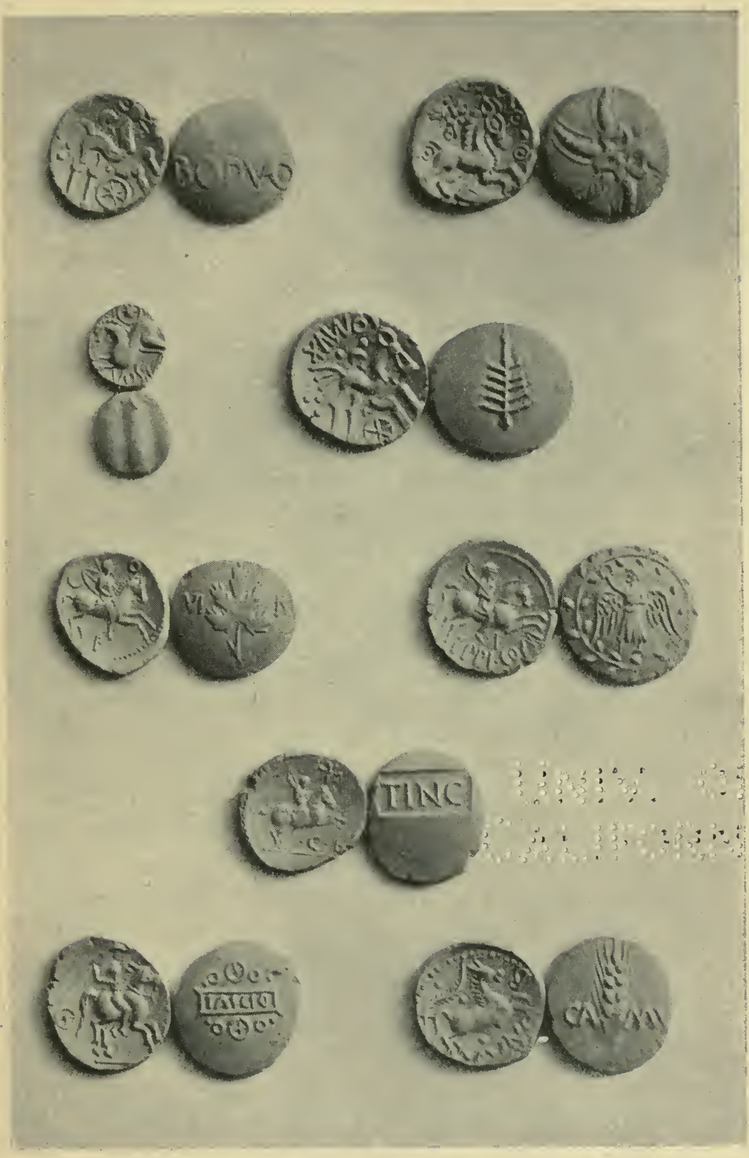
BODVO
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Plate IV. Inscribed British Coins 24

into the unknown Britain. We are told that the soldiers were highly enraged at being required to make war "beyond the habitable world," nor would they obey their leader until one Narcissus, now a freedman high in honour under Claudius, but once a slave, attempted to persuade them with his rhetoric. Then, indeed, the object of their anger ceased to be Plautius and became Narcissus, whom they shouted down with cries of "*Io Saturnalia!*" in reference to the slaves' holiday during the festival of Saturn, and, having thus shown their contempt for the one-time slave, turned with alacrity to their leader and expressed their readiness to follow him. Thus was loyalty won by hatred and devotion by contempt.

After some delay caused by this quasi-defection the expedition at last set sail. Plautius, unwilling to submit the final result to a single issue, seems to have divided the invading force into three parts. Once again during the sea passage the elements fought on the side of the islanders and contrary winds delayed the crossing, but the Romans were encouraged by a meteor which, coming from the east, darted across to the west, thus auguring to a people ever superstitious that they would gain meteoric victories in the West. At first it did seem as though Britain would be brought within Roman rule without serious opposition. The Britons, who had heard of the disaffection among the Roman troops, had not expected them to come and were not prepared to contest their landing. Even when the troops had landed the islanders made no attempt to attack them in the open, but retired to the woods and marshes, intending to wear their enemy out by guerrilla warfare.

Plautius, after some delay, during which time he had sought in vain to find the Britons' retreat, was at last successful in discovering the defences of Caratacus and Togodumnus, the sons of Cunobelinus (who was now dead), and dispersed these chiefs and their followers. Some captives were taken, and the Boduni, a tribe under the dominion of the Catuvellauni,[1] were forced to sue for peace. Leaving a garrison to retain the ground which had now been won, Plautius pushed inland.

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[1] Mommsen doubts this. See *Prov. Rom. Emp.*, vol. i, p. 175 *n.*

Further advance was, however, slow. The Britons, we are told, opposed the crossing of a certain river, the name of which has not been recorded, but which lay between the Thames and the point of disembarkation. Here a stern battle was fought. The Britons, believing that, in the absence of fords, the Roman troops could not cross without a bridge, had taken up their defensive position carelessly. They were to learn, like the Druids of Môn in later years, that the Romans were trained to swim wider rivers than Britain boasted. First the Celti were sent over; these, we are told, were accustomed to swim, though fully armed, over the most rapid rivers with ease. Once across they attacked the unprepared enemy, threw their ranks into confusion, and enabled Vespasian, leading his legions, to effect a passage of the river and make a surprise attack upon the Britons. Many of the islanders were killed, some fled, but the rest held their ground, and on the following day renewed the battle almost on equal terms, until Cneius Osidius Geta by a daring assault completely defeated them. For this victory Geta was granted a triumph, although he had never served in the office of consul.

The Britons now retreated upon the Thames estuary. The country in which they made their stand was peculiarly suited to defence. The mud flats and marshes of what is now South London continued to the mouth of the river, and offered a thousand dangerous obstacles to troops not perfectly acquainted with the district. The Britons knew all the fords and firm places. The Romans, on the other hand, even though they had the services of Bericus, himself a Briton, could make little direct headway, and for the time being the elephants which Dion assures us the Romans had brought with them must have been completely useless. Eventually, however, the Celti succeeded once more in swimming the river, and at the same time the legionaries, making their way cautiously along the southern bank, at last discovered a bridge, and eventually succeeded in forcing a crossing. The Britons were now attacked on all sides. Some were cut off from the main force and captured, the rest broke and fled toward the marshes; these the Romans, too eagerly pursuing, followed on to the treacherous ground, which proved at once the salvation of the pursued and the grave of many of the pursuers. Without guides to point out the firm paths in these trackless wastes, the Romans wandered about seeking safety, losing many men the while.

So far the tide of war had by no means entirely favoured the Romans. They had conquered one small subservient tribe; after two battles and considerable loss they had crossed two rivers; but their enemies were neither broken nor disheartened, while Plautius, we are informed, had become alarmed and had decided to advance no farther.[1] In the late struggle it would seem that Togodumnus had been slain, but Caratacus still lived, and, gathering together his forces, he made preparations to avenge his brother's death. Plautius, realizing his danger, now acted upon the defensive, content for the moment to secure his present gains.

CLAUDIUS IN BRITAIN

The Roman leader, acting upon instructions previously received, now sent for Claudius, who set out for the seat of war. Sailing to Ostia and thence to Massilia, after a journey partly by land and partly along the rivers of Gaul he arrived at the Straits, passed over to Britain, and there joined the Roman forces established near the Thames. According to Dion, the Emperor, taking command, crossed the river, met and defeated the Britons, and took Camulodunum, the seat of Cunobelinus. Many tribes, we are told, submitted; others were reduced to obedience by force, and these, having been disarmed by Claudius, were placed under the government of Plautius, who was ordered to subdue the remainder. Claudius himself hastened back to Rome, was granted a triumph,[2] surnamed Britannicus, and voted annual games, while a triumphal arch in the city and another in Gaul were erected in memory of his victories. Thus after a sojourn of sixteen days in the island Claudius the Timid was acclaimed conqueror, having taken the fruits which Plautius had ripened, and having wisely left to that general the duty of performing what he himself professed to have accomplished—the conquest of Britain.

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[1] Mommsen suggests that the delay was intentional, in order to enable Claudius to pluck the easy laurels in person.

[2] It is interesting to note that in celebration of the conquest of Britain Claudius held triumphal games which were performed in two theatres at

Of the steps taken by Plautius to carry out his Emperor's command we have little knowledge. It would seem that at the time of the visit of Claudius but a small part of Britain had been reduced to subjection, notwithstanding the fact that upon the Claudian Arch the names of eleven subject British kings are engraved. With the aid of Roman money and Roman promises, backed with threats of the Roman sword, Plautius seems slowly to have extended the area of conquest. With Camulodunum as centre he pushed east and north. Some British kings were conquered, others submitted and received in return lands captured from the vanquished. Cogidumnus, King of the Regni (capital, Chichester), and Prasutagus, King of the Iceni,[1] ruled over their subjects as dependent chiefs. Mommsen says that " even under the first governor [Plautius] the whole level country as far as the Humber seems to have come into Roman power." Whether this can be accepted or not, it is clear that on the return of Plautius to Rome to receive a triumph after four years of administration Rome had gained a good footing in the island; it is equally clear that, notwithstanding the lavish grants of honours and orders to the men of the legions and their leaders, an " extravagance in keeping with political dotage," Britain was not yet completely conquered, nor even finally subdued in those parts which now yielded a seeming obedience.

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once; horse-races were run, bears were slaughtered, and wrestlers contended for victory; boys from Asia danced the Pyrrhic dance. In the later triumph awarded with more cause to Plautius gladiatorial combats were waged at which foreign freedmen and British captives fought and died to create a spectacle for that Rome which so contemptuously called the Britons barbarians.

[1] Probably located in Norfolk.

VESPASIAN

It was in this same year (A.D. 47) that Vespasian, now leading the legions in Britain, was hemmed in by the Britons and only saved from complete disaster by his son Titus, who, with the greatest courage, succeeded in beating back his enemies and rescuing his father from imminent danger. Notwithstanding such occasional resistances, however, south-eastern Britain was quickly becoming Romanized. Roman colonies were being founded, Roman towns were being built. In London, off the Strand, a bath exists to-day into which Vespasian doubtless plunged. Trade routes were beginning to be opened up, and within six years of the landing of Plautius bars of lead bearing the Roman marks were being exported from Britain.

CARATACUS

One Briton, however, still remained capable of leadership and insensible to bribes. Caratacus, son of Cunobelinus, bearing in mind his brother's death, and refusing to submit to the Roman yoke, had collected an army and, slowly retreating to the west, finally took up a position in the country of the Silures.[1] Here he prepared to make a lengthy stand against the Roman arms. For years the struggle lasted, and although the ancient historians tell us little of the Britons' victories, it is evident that their successes were considerable. Their resistance was, indeed, so obstinate that the Romans vowed to exterminate them, a proceeding hardly calculated to make their defence less determined. The Ordovices, a people inhabiting the northern part of Wales, equally refused submission. Against these two tribes, therefore, the leaders who followed Plautius mainly directed their efforts.

OSTORIUS SCAPULA

When Ostorius succeeded Plautius he found the plains of central and south-eastern Britain under Roman control. In four years much had been done, but much still remained to be accomplished. Ostorius, leaving behind him these conquered provinces, pushed rapidly up through the central plains, founded at modern Chester a base for the Twentieth Legion, and, advancing still farther to the west, attacked the Ordovices, established a blockhouse at Caerhun, and commenced to work the lead mines of North Wales. Throughout the latter part of this advance he had been continually opposed. He had seen, however, a way, and, as subsequent Welsh history showed, the only way, to bring the mountain-dwellers into subjection. The means taken were effective, but slow. At first, using Chester as base, he commenced to establish a series of blockhouses to the west, south-west, and south ; later, when he was endeavouring to subdue the Silures, he established the camp of the Second Legion at Isca Silurum and began to build a system of blockhouses to the west, north-west, and north.[1] About the same time the camp of the Fourteenth Legion was established near Viroconium (called in later times Uriconium, and now known as Wroxeter).[2] Caratacus meanwhile had probably been regularly opposing the progress of Ostorius. At last, however, the brave Briton was run to earth. The end, for him, came with what we will call the battle of Mount Caradoc.[3] There, behind roughly constructed defences, the Britons awaited the attack of their foes. For a time the issue was in doubt, but at last ill-armed valour was defeated by the well trained, equipped, and armoured legionaries. Caratacus himself escaped, leaving his wife and

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[1] The Silures were a Goidelic or perhaps a pre-Celtic people occupying the eastern part of what is now South Wales. Their country was mountainous and well fitted for a defensive campaign.

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[1] For an account of these blockhouses see Professor Haverfield's *Military Aspects of Roman Wales*, or, for a shorter account, *Wales*, in this series, p. 55. Professor Haverfield dates most of them from the last quarter of the first century (Agricola). Some, as he says, were doubtless earlier.

[2] The remains of Viroconium show it to have been a civil town, not a military camp, though, of course, some military inscriptions have been found ; compare Caerwent, near Isca Silurum. The civil town grew up near the camp. It is extraordinary how similar the steps followed by the Normans were to those taken by the Romans for the conquest of Wales. The Normans made their centres Chester, Shrewsbury, and Hereford.

[3] The site is disputed. Caradoc is the Welsh name for Caratacus. Mount Caradoc overlooks Church Stretton, which is not far from Wroxeter. Some believe the battle was fought near Leintwardine, farther south. Other sites have also found favour.

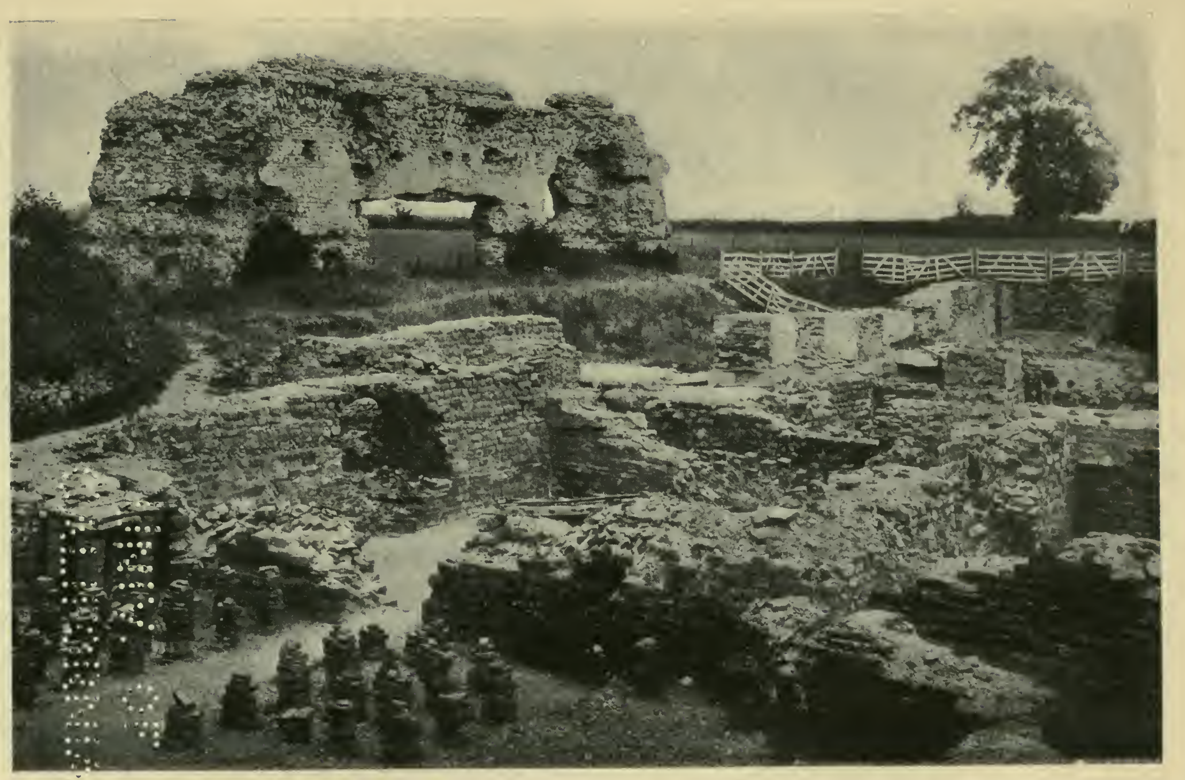

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PLATE V. GENERAL VIEW OF THE EXCAVATIONS ROUND THE BASILICA OF VIROCONIUM

child and kinsfolk captive. He sought refuge with the Queen of the Brigantes, whose territories were in Yorkshire; but she, fearing the Romans, in turn treacherously surrendered him to his conqueror, loaded with chains. He and his people were sent as captives to Rome, where a public holiday was declared, that the citizens might see this most stubborn of British chiefs. He appears while captive to have borne himself with dignity; he was pardoned, but apparently remained in Rome, whose wealth at once exacted his admiration and wonder.[1]

Although Caratacus was now disarmed and a captive, the resistance of the Silures was by no means broken. They seem to have continued a guerrilla campaign, and when Ostorius died a few years later, worn out with the fatigues of constant warfare, the people he had sworn to exterminate were still fighting bravely.

Gaius Suetonius Paulinus

Ostorius was followed by Suetonius, who in A.D. 61 took steps to complete the conquest of North Wales. It was suggested by Theodor Mommsen that Britain was originally invaded by Caesar in order to break the strength of the secret alliance between Britain and Gaul, which had resulted in this island being at once a refuge-ground for the defeated and a recruiting-ground for fresh enemies. What Caesar had thought in Gaul Suetonius imagined in Wales. Môn, later called Ongulsey by the Norsemen and Anglesey by their descendants, had been for years the last retreat of British fugitives, even as it was believed by the Romans to be the chief seat and centre of the Druidic religion. To this island, therefore, Suetonius directed his forces. Though at first checked by the absence of boats, his soldiers, nothing daunted, eventually succeeded in swimming across the channel and in ravaging a part of the island and bringing its inhabitants to a partial submission.

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[1] Dion Cassius tells the following story: "Caratacus, one of the British leaders, being captured, was sent to Rome, and Claudius, wearing his imperial robes, brought him to the tribunal. He obtained his pardon and, with his wife and children, remained in Italy. Once, when perambulating the city, and observing its extent and the splendour of the houses, 'Why,' said he, 'do ye, who possess so many and such splendid buildings, covet our humble habitations?'"

Boadicea, or Boudicca

It was while Suetonius was so engaged that the terrible news arrived of the massacre of the Roman colony at Camulodunum. The causes of the revolt are somewhat difficult to determine. Xiphilene[1] tells us that the cause was the sale of certain property which Claudius had given to the British chiefs; he also confirms the story that that usurious philosopher Seneca, having lent "a thousand myriads of money in expectation of interest, suddenly and violently called in his loan."[2] Other authorities inform us that the daughters of King Prasutagus had been violated and his wife, Boadicea, ill-used.

The British chieftainess determined to lead her people against the Romans. Dion has preserved for us an account both of her appearance and of the speech which she is supposed to have delivered to her people before going into battle. We are told that she was mighty in stature, terrible of aspect; her voice was harsh and her countenance savage; around her neck was a large golden collar or torque, across her bosom a parti-coloured vest was tightly drawn, while over this she wore a thick mantle, fastened with a brooch or clasp. Her hair, which was yellow, fell over all, even down to her girdle.

We will spare the reader the speech with which Boadicea, according to Dion, roused her countrymen to take up arms once more against Rome; it is entirely imaginary. Suffice it that for one reason or another the Britons rebelled. Camulodunum, a thriving and populous city, protected only by some two hundred soldiers hastily gathered together by the procurator Decianus Cato, was sacked and its inhabitants put to the sword. Londinium and Verulamium were likewise laid waste, and in all some 70,000 people were massacred. Decianus Cato, overwhelmed by the disaster, turned coward and fled for his life to Gaul; Quintus Petilius Cerialis, at the head of the Ninth Legion, was utterly defeated and lost most of his men. Suetonius hurried by forced marches with but some 10,000 men, mainly belonging to the Fourteenth Legion, to Londinium. Meanwhile the commander of the Second Legion was ordered to join forces with him. Fear, however, conquered, and the Second Legion remained at Isca. Suetonius had thus to meet a numerous and victorious foe. The Second Legion having failed him, Suetonius abandoned Londinium to its fate, and Verulamium was now beyond hope of succour. Turning, therefore, to the east, he sought to join forces with the remnant of the Ninth Legion, which had succeeded in retiring upon Lincoln. Boadicea, meanwhile, was advancing northward, harassing him and endeavouring to prevent the junction of the Roman forces. At last the Romans decided upon battle. The result was an overwhelming victory for them. Boadicea herself died either by poison self-administered or by disease. At about the same time the leader of the Second Legion killed himself with his sword. Suetonius, who was regarded as responsible in some measure for rendering the outbreak possible, was recalled.

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[1] Xiphilene, or Joannes Xiphilinus, may simply be regarded as an editor of Dion Cassius, but since he took the liberty of altering his original, the learned editor of the *Monumenta Historica Britannica* was doubtless correct when he placed many of his excerpts from Dion under the heading Xiphilene. He wrote toward the end of the eleventh century.

[2] He lent 10,000,000 sesterces at ruinous rates. It was a disgrace for a Roman to lend to a Roman for interest. They were permitted, however, to lend to a foreigner.

SEXTUS JULIUS FRONTINUS

Vespasian, who, as we have seen, had in his early years taken part in the conquest of South Britain under Plautius, had become Emperor in A.D. 70.[1] Four years later he appointed that admirable strategist and military engineer, Sextus Julius Frontinus, who had already attained the position of *praetor urbanus*, to succeed Cerialis as Governor of Britain. It was he who at last succeeded in breaking the resistance of the

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[1] It was he who, according to Suetonius (Tranquillus), conquered the Isle of Wight.

Silures, probably by building or extending the system of blockhouses commenced under Ostorius. The men of North Wales, however, the Ordovices, were still untamed; but it would seem that Frontinus had taken the necessary steps to reduce them to subjection by A.D. 78, since in that year his successor, Gnaeus Julius Agricola, was able to push on almost unopposed and effect the final conquest of Môn, or Anglesey.

AGRICOLA

As yet few steps had been taken to conquer the northern part of Britain. The position of three of the four legions, at Chester, Wroxeter, and Isca Silurum, shows that until now the chief efforts had been directed against the west. The powerful tribe of the Brigantes, in Yorkshire, was still practically unconquered, and although its rising in A.D. 50 had been suppressed, its queen, Cartimandus,[1] who had been no party to the insurrection, was restored to power by the Romans. In short, so far as North Britain was concerned the early governors had been content to leave the Britons free. The fall of Nero and the civil dissensions at Rome had, however, been reflected in much disaffection in the outlying provinces. The Brigantes again rose, and were only subdued by Cerialis, Vespasian's first governor, after much stern fighting.[2] Cerialis's successor, Frontinus, as we have seen, concerned himself mainly with Wales; and although two legions, one from the west (probably from Wroxeter) and one from the east (Lincoln), had been moved up to Eburacum, it is to Agricola that we must assign not merely administrative reforms throughout the parts already conquered, but also the conquest of the north.

Of this great general and administrator we know much, since he had the good fortune to betroth his daughter to the

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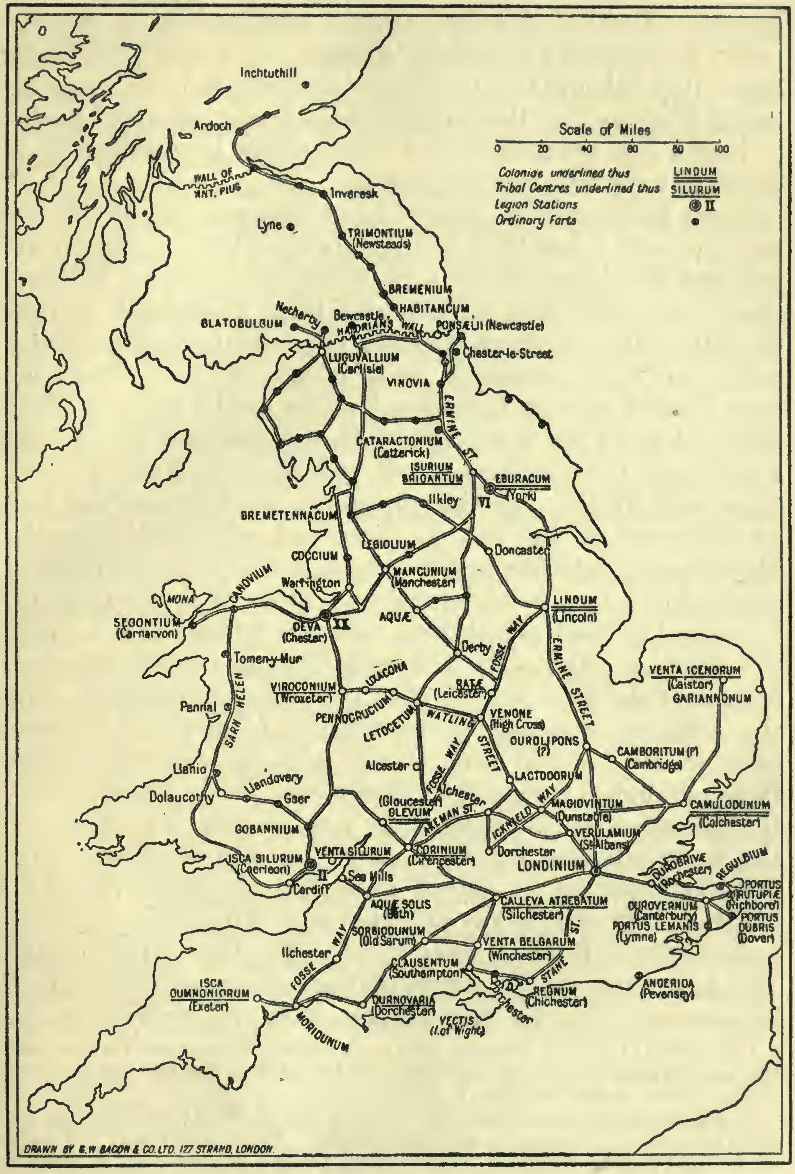
[1] It is interesting to note that this tribe, like the Iceni, was governed by a woman.

[2] Tacitus rather states that the Britons took no part in the civil war following the death of Nero, but that in the subsequent year (A.D. 69) the dissensions among the legions encouraged Venusius, the discarded husband of Cartimandus, to lead the malcontents of Britain in revolt.


Inchtuthill
Ardoch
WALL OF ANT. PIUS
Inveresk
Lyne
TRIMONTIUM (Newsteads)
BREMENIUM
HABITANCUM
Netherby
Bewcastle
BLATOBULGUM
HADRIAN'S WALL
PONS ÆLII (Newcastle)
Chester-le-Street
LUGUVALLIUM (Carlisle)
VINOVIA
ERMINE ST.
CATARACTONIUM (Catterick)
ISURIUM BRIGANTUM
EBURACUM (York)
VI
Ilkley
BREMETENNACUM
LEGIOLIUM
Doncaster
COCCIUM
MANCUNIUM (Manchester)
Warrington
MONA
CANOVIUM
SEGONTIUM (Carnarvon)
DEVA (Chester)
XX
AQUÆ
LINDUM (Lincoln)
Derby
FOSSE WAY
Tomen-y-Mur
SARN HELEN
VIROCONIUM (Wroxeter)
UXACONA
RATÆ (Leicester)
ERMINE STREET
VENTA ICENORUM (Caistor)
GARIANNONUM
Pennal
PENNOCRUCIUM
LETOCETUM
WATLING STREET
VENONE (High Cross)
DUROLIPONS (?)
CAMBORITUM (?) (Cambridge)
Llanio
Llandovery
Alcester
FOSSE WAY
LACTODORUM
Dolaucothy
Gaer
Alchester
(Gloucester) GLEVUM
AKEMAN ST.
ICKNIELD WAY
MAGIOVINTUM (Dunstable)
CAMULODUNUM (Colchester)
GOBANNIUM
VERULAMIUM (St Albans)
ISCA SILURUM (Caerleon)
II
VENTA SILURUM
CORINIUM (Cirencester)
Dorchester
LONDINIUM
DUROBRIVÆ (Rochester)
REGULBIUM
Cardiff
Sea Mills
AQUÆ SOLIS (Bath)
CALLEVA ATREBATUM (Silchester)
PORTUS RUTUPIÆ (Richboro')
DUROVERNUM (Canterbury)
PORTUS LEMANIS (Lymne)
PORTUS DUBRIS (Dover)
SORBIODUNUM (Old Sarum)
VENTA BELGARUM (Winchester)
STANE ST.
Ilchester
FOSSE WAY
CLAUSENTUM (Southampton)
REGNUM (Chichester)
ANDERIDA (Pevensey)
ISCA DUMNONIORUM (Exeter)
DURNOVARIA (Dorchester)
VECTIS (I. of Wight)
MORIDUNUM
Chichester
Scale of Miles
0 20 40 60 80 100
Coloniae underlined thus LINDUM
Tribal Centres underlined thus SILURUM
Legion Stations II
Ordinary Forts ●
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ROMAN BRITAIN

historian Tacitus. He had already seen service in Britain before he succeeded Frontinus, having served under Suetonius some time about A.D. 60, returning afterward to Rome to marry Domitia Decidiana and to hold many important posts, including the quaestorship of Asia, where he established a reputation for integrity and honour.

In his first campaign, undertaken in the year 78, he had, as we have seen, completed the conquest of Wales. The work was well done, and the men of Wales never appear to have risen in revolt. His second and third campaigns, carried through in the two years following (79 and 80), resulted in the subjection of the whole of what is now England. Agricola even pushed up into Caledonia [1] as far as the Firth of Tay, and in A.D. 81 the new territory then gained was secured by a chain of forts between Glota and Bodotria (the Firths of Clyde and Forth). To this expedition must be assigned the establishment of the fort at Newstead, which has recently yielded such valuable evidence of the nature of the Roman occupation. In A.D. 82 Agricola was engaged in bringing the tribes on the coast of Caledonia opposite Ireland into a state of subjection. In his sixth campaign he yet further extended his conquests by a victory over the united Caledonians. In the next year (A.D. 84) this success was followed by an even more decisive engagement fought near the Grampian Hills (Mons Graupius), where the Caledonians, 30,000 strong, under the command of Galgacus, were heavily defeated, 10,000 of the enemy falling for the loss of but 340 Romans. The victorious general for the moment had the whole island at his feet. If we follow Tacitus and Xiphilene, we must believe that in the preceding year he had sailed round Britain in pursuit of a cohort of Usipians, auxiliaries [2] raised in Germany, who had deserted and, after an eventful voyage, were wrecked, sold into slavery, and eventually brought back to Britain. He is certainly credited with being the first Roman to circumnavigate the island. However this may be, we find his fleet after the victory in Caledonia sailing as far as the Orkney Islands.[1]

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[1] Mr Curle (*A Roman Frontier Post*, p. 7) tentatively suggests that he took the line through Carlisle up the valley of the Liddel, and the route of the modern North British Railway to Melrose.

[2] It is of interest to note that in A.D. 85 the Cohors I Brittonum appears for the first time in a Pannonian military diploma. The Romans were following their usual plan of deporting enemy youths to fight as auxiliaries in Rome's armies.

Agricola had now overrun the whole of Britain. He seems to have advised the spending of sufficient money to establish a complete system of defensive works and camps whereby the territory gained could be retained. A chain of forts, in fact, as we have seen, was built by him between the Firths of Forth and Clyde. There is reason to believe that he contemplated a more extensive scheme of frontier protection. On this point, however, his advice was not followed, and the jealous Domitian, seeing danger in so powerful and successful a general, having granted him a triumph, arranged his recall. Toward the end of A.D. 84 he resigned his command in Britain and returned to Rome.[2]

It having been decided not to extend the boundaries of the Romanized part of Britain far into Scotland, we can understand that the building of the walls under Hadrian and Antoninus Pius would appeal to the Romans as a satisfactory method of consolidating their conquests. Though expensive, these material obstacles were, as we shall see, when efficiently garrisoned, extremely effective.

The years which intervene between the departure of Agricola and the arrival of Hadrian are more or less a blank to the historian. The direct successor of Agricola, Sallustius Lucullus, had not occupied the propraetorship one year when he was slain by Domitian. In the year following the Britons, under the leadership of Arvirgus, rose in revolt, but were subdued. Apart from the mention of Neratius Marcellus as being praefect in Britain about A.D. 106, the events of the years between the British revolt in 86 and the accession of Hadrian in 117 are but little known to us.

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[1] Orosius and Eutropius are probably wrong when they speak of the Orcades being subdued in the time of Claudius.

[2] Another reason for Rome's refusal to pursue the progressive offensive policy was the Roman defeats near the Danube, which apparently necessitated the weakening of the legions in Britain. Mommsen (*Prov. Rom. Emp.*, vol. i, p. 184) suggests several other reasons.

HADRIAN

Hadrian is, of course, famous for the journeys he made through his Empire. His main purpose was probably to become acquainted personally with the manner in which the provincials were being governed and to impress upon his subjects the interest which Rome took in her people. For his journey to Britain, however, there was another reason. We are told by Spartianus that about this time the Britons sought to free themselves from subjection to Rome, and there is now a significant disappearance of the Ninth Legion from Eburacum, its place being taken by the Legio VI Victrix. The subsequent building of the great wall by Hadrian might be thought to point to an inroad of barbarians from Caledonia, but it would seem that the trouble rather arose from another rising of the Brigantes. Whether the more northern people also joined in we do not know.

This revolt certainly had one result. It persuaded Hadrian that the further extension of Roman territory in Britain was, for the time being, undesirable. The Romans now set out to consolidate the territory already gained. The means taken seems to have consisted in dividing the imperfectly conquered Caledonia by a great defensive wall from the more southern parts of Britain. We have seen that Agricola had already (A.D. 81) thrown up a defensive line of forts between Glota and Bodotria. Hadrian now planned a much more effective system of defence. Caledonia was to be practically abandoned, a new chain of forts was to be built from the Tyne estuary to Solway Firth; along the seventy miles of land separating those two inlets a great wall was to be built, designed to protect the Roman legionaries both from the ravages of the Picts and the snowstorms of the north. The description of this wall we shall attempt in a succeeding chapter. This mighty structure, running continuously over moor and hill for mile after mile, in size about 16 feet high and 8 feet thick, and strengthened by turret and mile-castle and camp, succeeded in keeping the Picts of Caledonia at bay for centuries. Along its line some 10,000 to 12,000 soldiers, many of them doubtless auxiliaries, were gathered for many succeeding generations; inscriptions and coins found there tell us that it was garrisoned and used after the more northern wall of Severus was built. To it we must look for much of the evidence which tells us of the Roman occupation in the second and third centuries.

Revolts under Antoninus Pius and Commodus

The years following Hadrian's return are singularly free of recorded events in Britain. We know that in A.D. 124 A. Plaetorius Nepos, the friend of Hadrian, was propraetor in Britain, but of his acts little is recorded. Six years later, however, we read of a much more significant office. In 130 M. Maenius Agrippa was appointed Praefect of the Fleet on the shore of Britain. His duties were probably similar to those of the later and more famous Carausius, which were at once to protect Britain from attacks and to prevent the Celts of the island and the Continent from combining together against Rome.

On the death of Hadrian in A.D. 138 the Brigantes rose once more. The revolt was put down, and we find Antoninus Pius, Hadrian's successor, depriving them of a great portion of their land because they had overrun the territory of the Gemini, who were tributary to the Romans. In the following year another outbreak seems to have occurred, for we find Lollius Urbicus, who had probably succeeded Priscus Licinius Italicus as legate in Britain, subduing the Britons and, according to Capitolinus,[1] building a wall of turf between the barbarians and the Roman province. He it was, it may be, who brought once more the Roman eagles to the hills of Caledonia and re-established the forts which had been abandoned as the result of an earlier disaster. A very similar rising to the one subdued by Lollius Urbicus seems to have

[1] *Per legatos suos plurima bella gessit* [*Antoninus*]. *Nam et Britannos per Lollium Urbicum legatum vicit, alio muro cespiticio submotis barbaris ducto.*

occurred upon the death of Antoninus Pius in A.D. 161. This time Marcus Aurelius, his successor, sent Calpurnius Agricola as his lieutenant against the revolted tribes, with the apparent result that the disturbances were suppressed. On the death of Aurelius in 180 precisely the same thing happened. In the first year of the reign of Commodus (181)[1] we find an insurrection raised in Britain. Our sole account of this event is given to us by Dion. He tells us, under date 181, that "Commodus was also engaged in several wars with the barbarians who dwell beyond Dacia; . . . the Britannic war, however, was the greatest of these. For some of the nations within that island having passed over the wall which divided them from the Roman stations, and, besides killing a certain commander with his soldiers, having committed much other devastation, Commodus became alarmed, and sent Marcellus Ulpius against them." Of this general Dion has much to say in praise of his energy and abstemiousness. To convince his soldiers of his wakefulness he was in the habit of writing on twelve tablets and every evening commanding them to be taken to different persons at uncertain hours, thus keeping his subordinates constantly awake. His warlike qualities were eventually successful in "grievously worsting" the barbarians, though they also nearly resulted in his murder by Commodus. This war in Britain, which was quite possibly fought against the Picts of Caledonia rather than against the Britons, seems to have lasted two years, being terminated in A.D. 183. Commodus, taking credit for his general's achievement, adopted the title of Britannicus. Two years later, however, we read in the pages of A. Lampridius Spartianus of a war in Britain, and of how Perennis, praefect of the Praetorian Guard, having removed senators and set men of the Equestrian Order over the legionaries engaged in this conflict, was attacked by the soldiers and slain as the enemy of the army. Still later, in 187, it was found necessary to send

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[1] In this year, we are informed, Leven Mawr ('the Great'), King of the Britons, sent an embassy to Pope Eleutherius, and the Britons received the Christian faith. In 202 Tertullian testifies that Britain had now received the faith of Christ.

P. Helvius Pertinax, who had gained great renown in the Parthian wars, to Britain to quell the revolt then raging. It is probable that this rising was among the legionaries rather than the Britons. Pertinax succeeded in suppressing the mutiny, though at the peril of his life. He was at last recalled at his own request in consequence of the attitude of the soldiers, who had in one of the tumults attacked and wounded him and left him for dead. Throughout the remaining years of the reign of Commodus the condition of affairs in Britain was extremely unstable. On his death in 192, and that of his successors, Pertinax and Didius Julianus, who were both slain in 193, the Imperial power was obtained by Lucius Septimius Severus. He immediately took steps to obtain the pacification of the province.

Septimius Severus

It was in A.D. 207 that this Emperor, then sixty-one years of age, whose life had been so full of movement and success, who had ravaged the valleys of the Euphrates, laid waste Byzantium, defeated the hosts of Albinus in Gaul, who had sacrificed seven hundred wild beasts and more men to celebrate his marriage with Plautilla, who had taken with him on his campaigns that murderous wretch Caracalla and his younger brother Geta, turned his attention toward Britain. The revolt in the north was, indeed, beginning to wear a grave aspect. In 193 he had sent Herclitus to recover the portions of Britain which had been lost during the reign of Commodus. In 201 the Caledonians broke the truce which apparently had been arranged, and prepared to join Rome's enemies, so that Virius Lupus, now propraetor in Britain, was compelled to purchase peace from these foes (the Maeatae [1]). Six years later Septimius himself determined upon a campaign to reduce Britain to final obedience. He may have had other reasons for action. His legions were inactive and were murmuring, his sons were leading a life of complete profligacy. Septimius by his British campaign doubtless sought at once to subdue a rebellious province, advance the fame of his name yet farther, and restore the discipline of his legions and the moral sense of his sons. Whatever his dominant motive, after a journey through Gaul he reached these shores early in the year 208. The result was the loss of 50,000 legionaries, the gaining of the title of Britannicus and a death-bed in this island, the building of a wall, and the further insurrection of Maeatae and Caledonians.

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[1] The Caledonians' southern neighbours.

With his usual energy, having undertaken the punishment of the northerners, Severus, on landing, pushed rapidly up to Caledonia. He penetrated, we are told, to the very extremity of the island, the inhabitants retreating without offering battle, leaving want and disease to fight for them. We cannot but admire the spirit of this Emperor, already old for a Roman, accompanied by his vicious sons, one of whom had already attempted his murder, racked with gout, pressing on and on through the pathless forests and trackless mountains of Caledonia, bridging rivers, raising causeways over swamps, constructing roads—all that the barbarian might feel the power of Rome's arm. The adventure was magnificent, it was not war. After untold hardships and without having met the foe in battle, Severus had lost at least as many men as in the battle of Lyons fought against Albinus. The barbarians, on the other hand, were hardly affected. No sooner had Severus retraced his steps and commenced to build his wall than the old insurrection of Maeata and Caledonian broke out afresh. Severus was preparing to carry out his threat to exterminate the whole northern race when he was attacked by a violent disease of the joints and died at Eburacum on February 4, 211.

CARACALLA

Severus was succeeded by his sons Bassianus (or M. Aurelius Antoninus, nicknamed Caracalla) and Geta. The two brothers immediately hastened to their beloved Rome, Geta to be slain, by command of his brother, in his mother's arms. Caracalla himself, one of the most infamous profligates who attained the purple, handed over the government of Britain to the eminent Papinian, who had followed his Imperial master Severus to these shores. Meanwhile Caracalla had, according to Zonaras, patched up a peace with the Britons, and refrained from any other acts of war. One memorial he left to us eloquent of the hate which he bore his brother Geta. In the crypt of the Abbey Church at Hexham there exists to-day an inscription which once contained the names of both brothers, but from which, by the murderer's command issued from Rome, that of Geta was expunged. No inscription in the Empire was allowed to bear the name of Geta.

DIOCLETIAN

After the assassination of Caracalla, at the instigation of Macrinus, in 217, the Imperial purple was worn for some eighteen more years by unimportant members of the family of Severus. In 235, however, the dynasty came to an end with the murder of M. Aurelius Alexander Severus, the son of Gessius Marcianus and Julia Mamaea, at the command of Maximinus, who succeeded to the throne. The years which had elapsed between the deaths of the older and the younger Severus had seen many follies committed that were to result in the weakening of the Empire, which had already passed its zenith. The remorse of Caracalla, bringing in its train frightful visions and dreams, so that he believed himself bewitched, caused him to plunge into every form of expensive amusement and display. The Empire was weighed down with taxes, Roman citizenship was freely sold, the Imperial exchequer was denuded to enable the Emperor to drug his conscience into forgetfulness. Discontent was rife, and was soon to show itself in the assassination of the Emperors. The last Severus, it is true, had he lived, might have undone much of the evil wrought by Caracalla; though his life was but short, he has left a reputation as noble as Caracalla's is odious. His thriftiness, prompted by his mother Mamaea, might have stopped Rome's economic disruption, but he was followed by the shepherd-bred barbarian Maximinus, whose reign of three years is well epitomized in his maxim, *Nisi crudelitate imperium non teneri.*[1] With such men at the helm Rome's ship of State was being driven rapidly on to the rocks, when once more a great leader came forward in the person of Diocletian, who, ascending the throne in the year 284, contrived with much art to weld the various factions in the Empire into a seeming unity. He it was who divided the Empire into four praefectures, governed by four partners, two senior and two junior, called respectively *Augusti* and *Caesares*. The first two Augusti were Diocletian in the East and Maximian in the West; the first two Caesars were Galerius in the East and Constantius Chlorus in the West. So far as Britain was concerned, the main incidents of the rule of Diocletian and Maximian centre round the persecution of the Christians, which we shall shortly consider in the next chapter, and the revolt of Carausius.

CARAUSIUS

Maximian, who, among other enemies, had to contend against the piratical raids of the Franks, and probably of the Saxons, had established a strong naval force at Boulogne. The command of this force was given to a man of humble origin, born in Menapia[2] and trained as a pilot, by name Carausius. He had already distinguished himself as a soldier in the war against the Bagaudae when this high preferment was conferred upon him. His mode of stopping piracy was distinctly original, for, by no means deeming prevention better than cure, he allowed the pirates to seize their booty and then, attacking the robbers, took their plunder for himself. The plan had two results at least: it made Carausius immensely

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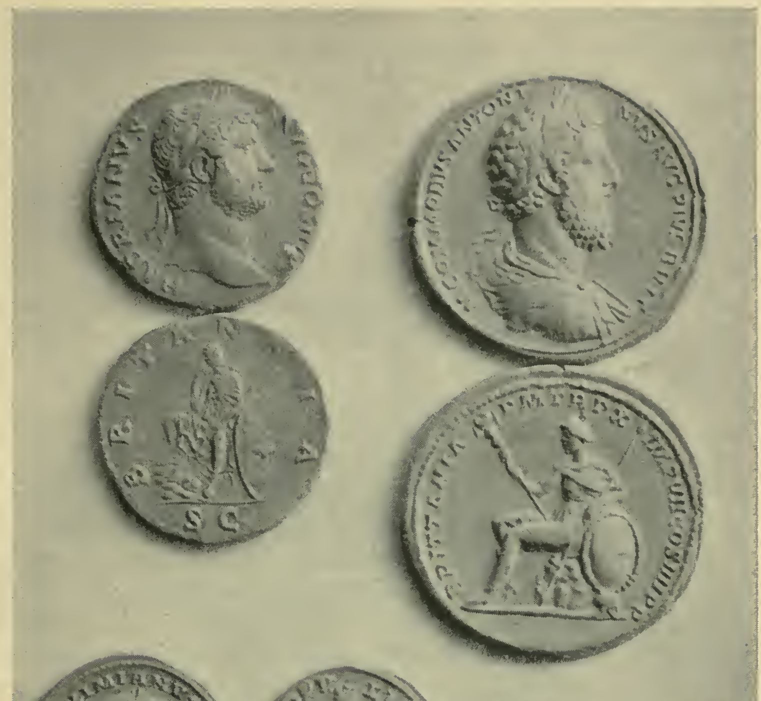
[1] "Brutality buys Imperial power."

[2] It is not clear whether the Menapia mentioned by Sextus Aurelius Victor was the district between the Scheldt and the Meuse or Ireland. Sir John Rhys and Sir David Brynmor Jones, in *The Welsh People*, have shown that Carausius can possibly be identified with the Irish romantic hero Cú-rói ('Hound of the Battlefield'), in which case he came from Kerry. Menapia could refer equally to Flanders or Ireland. The matter is at present unsettled.



UNIV. OF CALIFORNIA

PLATE VI. ROMANO-BRITISH COINS 44

wealthy and it caused Maximian to command his death. The intended victim was, however, vigilant, and, ignoring the Emperor's summons to appear before him, he gathered his fleet together, crossed the Channel, won over the troops in Britain, possibly by bribery, and assumed the title of Augustus.

The usurper now, perhaps for the first time, showed the world how impregnable Britain was when defended by an adequate fleet. After several attempts to break his power ending in humiliating failure, Diocletian and Maximian were constrained in 287 to acknowledge him their colleague in the Empire. We still have preserved to us mementoes of this recognition in the form of medallions showing the busts of the triumvirate and bearing the legend CARAVSIVS . ET . FRATRES . SVI. Carausius was, indeed, a great coiner; and he probably bore sway over the whole of Britain, for a bronze strainer found near Laugharne, in Wales, contained a variety of his coins. For six years his power was undisputed; Boulogne was his, and the British soldiery accepted his leadership with eagerness; not until Constantius Chlorus was made Caesar (March 1, 292) were any vigorous steps taken to bring him to subjection. Boulogne was then blockaded, and fell after a lengthy siege. But the usurper's power was still undiminished in Britain when he was murdered by his chief officer, Allectus, in the year following. Of the man himself or his government we know little, and what is known comes from sources obviously antagonistic and biased. From his portraits on his coins we get the impression of a bull-necked, heavy-visaged man, whose character was probably marked with a certain rough energy. He was followed in the leadership of the men of Britain by his murderer, who was finally defeated (296) by Asclepiodotus,[1] the general sent by Constantius against him. London was taken after some street fighting, and Allectus himself, stripped of his Imperial robes, was found almost naked and was slain, having enjoyed but three years of power.

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[1] The Court writers, who were simple flatterers, assign the whole credit to Constantius, but we doubt their evidence.

Constantius and Constantine

It was some nine years after the fall of Allectus, and as a result of the abdication of Diocletian,[1] unwillingly followed by Maximian, that Constantius Chlorus, now in his fifty-sixth year, was raised with Galerius to the position of Augustus. He had already distinguished himself in many wars, particularly against the Alemanni, and shortly after his elevation to the highest position in the State he undertook an expedition into Britain, probably directed against the Picts of Caledonia. This pale-faced Emperor was a worthy father of his great son Constantine, and merits the name awarded to him by Theophanes.[2] His expedition against the Picts was probably not concluded before he retired to York, sinking under his last illness. It was in this city that he passed away on July 25, 306, gladdened in his last hours by the presence of Constantine, son of that Helena [3] whom he had been forced to repudiate when raised to the rank of Caesar.

It was from his father's death-bed at York that Constantine hastened to give effect to the declared will of Constantius that he should succeed him. Acclaimed by the soldiery, reluctantly made Caesar by Galerius, strengthened by his marriage with Fausta, the daughter of Maximian, always aided by his own energy, astuteness, and boldness, he succeeded, after Maximian had been put to death, in seizing the Empire three years after his hurried departure from Britain.

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[1] He retired to his native Dalmatia and spent the last years of his life in gardening.

[2] *χριστιανόφρων*, or a man of Christian principles.

[3] The late Thomas Hodgkin, whose authority is so great for this period, refers to Helena as the 'concubine' of Constantius (*Pol. Hist. of Eng.*, vol. i, p. 66). It is true that she was of low origin, that Zosimus informs us that she was not married, and that Orosius does not deny the story. She earned, however, the title of 'the Saint' in her own time, was treated with the utmost respect by her son, gave her name to cities (and perhaps to the Roman way known in Wales as Sarn Helen), and was probably responsible for Constantine's support of Christianity. Finally, it is extremely odd, if she were unmarried to Constantius, that he was required formally to repudiate her before marrying Maximian's daughter. In any case, such a saintly and noble lady deserves our respect. There is also a dispute as to the birthplace of Constantine. Perhaps Schöpflin may be regarded as having definitely negatived the story that he was born in Britain. Geoffrey's mention of King Cole of Colchester as Helen's father is, of course, worthy of Geoffrey.

But though the succeeding rule saw the Roman Empire once more blaze into splendour, saw Constantinople founded and Christianity supreme, few doings of moment transpired in Britain of which we have any knowledge. Though Constantine's son Constans probably visited these shores before the middle of the fourth century, it is not until the arrival of the senior Theodosius in Britain in 367 that the veil is again lifted.

Theodosius the Elder

There is reason to believe that the state of Britain during the preceding years of the fourth century had been declining. If we follow Libanius, we must believe that her soldiers were unpaid, corrupt, and disloyal, her commanders avaricious, overbearing, and extortionate. Discipline was relaxed and robbers infested the highways. The Picts and Scots,[1] and probably the Saxons and Scandinavians, were also frequently raiding the country, attracted by its wealth. At last tidings reached the ears of Valentinian (now Emperor) which demanded a reply. The reply took the form of a considerable army under the leadership of the general Theodosius, father of that Theodosius called 'the Great.' The legionaries, made up of troops of Heruli, Batavii, Jovii, and Victores, landed at Sandwich. The barbarians, who had penetrated into Kent, were attacked and defeated. Their plunder was retaken, their captives liberated, and London was relieved. After some further campaigns, in which the country was cleared of the invaders and order restored, and as a result of which and of certain wise edicts the mutinous soldiery once more went back to their commands, Theodosius returned to win fresh laurels against the Alemanni and the Moors, and finally to lose his head on the headsman's block at the command of Valens.[1]

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[1] If we, with Gibbon, follow Hieronymus (St Jerome), we must regard the Scots or Attacotti as being cannibals who "selected the most delicate parts, both of males and females, for their repasts." Gibbon adds: "Such reflections tend to enlarge the circle of our ideas, and to encourage the pleasing hope that New Zealand may produce, in some future age, the Hume of the Southern Hemispheres." We have often wondered whether Hume would have appreciated the compliment. For our own part, we have some difficulty in believing the saintly Jerome.

MAXIMUS

Theodosius the general had been put to death at Carthage in 376; two years later Valens lost his life and two-thirds of his army in the terrible disaster inflicted upon him by the Goths at Hadrianople. Theodosius I (' the Great ') by wonderful generalship succeeded after several years of grave anxiety in saving the Roman Empire, but signs were not wanting that its disruption was near. Britain, being one of its outlying provinces, was almost the first to break away. The end of the fourth and the beginning of the fifth centuries are marked by the uprising of numerous pretenders, who, gathering their forces in this island, added yet another to Rome's numerous enemies. Of these perhaps the one who had the greatest effect on the subsequent history of our country was Maximus, a man of obscure parentage and probably a native of Spain. He had come with Theodosius the elder into Britain, possibly in the service of his son, afterward Emperor of the East, and, remaining in the island after the return of the Roman forces, had married Helen (or Ellen), the daughter of a noble Briton, a chieftain of North Wales. It is probable that during these years he held some military rank, and he was certainly regarded as a man of much ability and some integrity. In 383, however, the soldiery, incensed by Gratian's partiality for Scythian favourites, rebelled against that Emperor (now partner with Theodosius, and head of the Western division of the Empire), chose Maximus as their leader almost against his will, and under his guidance crossed over to Gaul to contest with Gratian for the leadership of the West.

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[1] Ammianus and Sozomen tell us between them an extraordinary story of how it was predicted to Valens that he would be succeeded by a person whose name began with Theod, and that thereupon he put to death every one whose name permitted of the fulfilment of the prophecy. Theodorus and Theodosius were of the number. Valens was, in fact, succeeded by Theodosius the Great after he had been shot by an arrow in the terrible and bloody defeat near the walls of Hadrianople (378).

The task imposed upon Maximus so far was an easy one. Gratian, forsaken by his army, fled toward Lyons with a small bodyguard of three hundred cavalry. South of that town, at Vienne, he was caught up by Andragathius, one of the foremost supporters of Maximus, seized as he rose from supper, and slain, the same fate being reserved for his general Mellobaudes, King of the Franks.

Maximus denied that the murder had been commanded by him, but rather cast the blame on his lieutenant Andragathius, whom, however, he retained in his high office. This explanation, weak as it was, was of necessity accepted by Theodosius, who, dissembling his anger, bided his time. To the question put by Maximus to Constantinople whether he was regarded as a friend or an enemy (a request supported by threats of armed opposition to the last in the latter event) a favourable reply was returned. Theodosius, feeling himself too weak to fight successfully, pardoned his benefactor's murderer and acknowledged him as Emperor of Britain, Gaul, and Spain. The new Emperor now established himself at Treves, and from 383 to 388 ruled his wide territories with moderation and wisdom. He had already embraced the Christian faith; many of the older historians, though antagonistic to him, testify to the vigour and honesty of his rule, and St Martin of Tours was even won over to pardon his usurpation.

Throughout this period Maximus's power was supported, in the main, by his British followers, and as yet Britain had to mourn nothing worse than the absence of her bravest sons. When, however, Maximus determined to pursue a still higher ambition and to snatch from Valentinian II (who had succeeded his brother Gratian) the remaining provinces of the West, the youth of Britain was led over the Alps to find a grave in Italy. At first the attempt was successful. By a bold dash to Milan (387), where the Court then resided, Valentinian was taken completely by surprise. He fled, and Maximus entered Milan, the rest of Italy submitting without a struggle. Valentinian, however, had escaped, and his friend Theodosius hastened to join forces with him at Thessalonica. Both sides immediately prepared for the inevitable combat. Maximus and Andragathius for their part marshalled both ships and soldiers to defend the territories they had gained. After two heavy defeats and after Theodosius had broken through the Noric Alps, Maximus, realizing that his position was hopeless, fled to Aquileia, was pursued, seized, and dragged in chains before Theodosius, and by that Emperor's command was decapitated on the very day on which he was captured (August 27 or 28, 388). His son Victor, who had shared his good fortune, now shared his unhappy fate; Andragathius, his brave general, heart-broken at the tidings of his downfall, flung himself into the sea and was drowned; the British soldiers who had followed him from Britain never returned to these shores, if Gildas is to be trusted. Thus ended the career of the Maxen of the *Mabinogion* and his followers. The result of it all was five years of power for the usurper, a few months of Imperial greatness, the further weakening of Rome, the more complete severance of Britain from the Empire, and the loss to this island of many of her best fighting men.

End of the Roman Occupation

We have now reached the year 388. The last decade of the fourth century saw the death of Theodosius and the succession of his sons Arcadius and Honorius, and the strong hand of the great Emperor being removed, the tottering Empire once more began to shake. The Vandal Stilicho, guardian of Honorius, for a time beat back Rome's numerous enemies, but Britain was already almost severed from the Western praefecture before the fifth century had begun. What few strands were left to bind her to her old allegiance were severed by the successive usurpations in the first decade of that century of Marcus, Gratian, and Constantine the Tyrant. The first two, both Britons,[1] were acclaimed by the legions in Britain and murdered by their quondam supporters in 407. In the same year, and following on the death of Gratian, Constantine, a person of obscure origin, was raised from the ranks and acclaimed Emperor. Fearing the fate of his unfortunate predecessors, he hastened to employ the army lest on reflection they should repent their choice. Hastening, therefore, to Gaul with perhaps the last remnants of the legionaries once so numerous in this island, he embarked on an adventure which resulted in the gaining of Spain, the winning of the title of Augustus for a few months, the death of his son Constans, the rebellion and death of his general Gerontius, and finally, in 409, in his capture by Constantius, the general whom Honorius had sent against the usurper, and the death of the captive and his son Julian.

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[1] This is only conjectural.

With the departure of the legionaries under Constantine the Roman occupation of Britain came to an end. So far we have seen how Britain was conquered and raised to prosperity ; we have seen how barbarians attacked this wealthy province and were beaten back : we have related how in Rome's declining years this, her most western possession, gradually broke away. In a later chapter we shall recount how another people, this time coming from the north, broke in upon her, swept away the Roman civilization, devastated her cities, slaughtered her people, and on the ruins founded a new State which after centuries of fighting was united into one kingdom under blows rained on the new-comers by the Danes ; we shall see how the young race was drawn once more into fellowship with the Continent by the Normans, and at last grew into that vigorous people from which our present nation is derived. Before, however, we pass to the wars which stamped out Rome's culture from this island we will pause awhile and consider the state of Britain between the years when Aulus Plautius came and Constantine the Tyrant departed.

CHAPTER III

THE NATURE OF THE ROMAN OCCUPATION[1]

MODERN man, firmly entrenched behind the printing-press, has some difficulty in appreciating the ease with which ancient civilizations declined, crumbled, and were completely swept away. In our own country and in all Western Europe thousands of years before the Christian era men were civilized even as we to-day are civilized, save that their material resources were far, far less. The irruptions of barbarian hordes broke in upon that civilization and blotted it out so completely that its very memory has all but faded from the mind of man. Like all good things, however, it had not existed entirely in vain. The barbarians, by contact with higher and more cultivated minds, were rendered less barbarous; the conquering tribes, though they had destroyed a culture, had in the process themselves become more cultured. As a result of such movements, by the time of the Roman conquest Britain was inhabited, at least in the plains and the south, by a people, the Britons, who had already emerged from barbarity; a people who knew Latin,[2] who carried on an extensive trade with the Continent, and who had taken a considerable part in the Gaulish wars; a people who had an ordered system of government, a well-developed art, and wealth though not luxury. Beyond this they were men of the Aryan race, of blood similar to the Romans (who, but four centuries before, had in fact, and not merely in legal fiction, been weighing out their unminted blocks of bronze in payment, and had been, in cases, buying corn with cattle—in a word, had been barbarians themselves), and with minds eager for culture. It is easy, owing to the stubborn nature of the English language, to state a proposition too high. We must not be understood to suggest that the Roman of Augustus's time and the Briton of Tincommius's period were equally cultured; the very comparison is ridiculous. Rome, as the consequence of numerous and successful wars, was becoming immensely wealthy and was the political centre of the Western world; Britain was an unimportant little country containing many tribes and many chiefs, and politically occupying a position not dissimilar from that assigned to it geographically by Pomponius Mela—on the very edge of the world. It is a great mistake, however, to calculate the development or the potential powers of development of a people by eyeing their material gains or possessions. Epictetus penned some of the most superb thoughts by the flickering light of a common clay lamp, his means being insufficient to enable him to buy an iron one. So with Britain: her possessions were small, but her potentialities were great.

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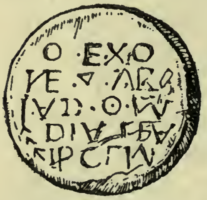
[1] Throughout this chapter we are largely indebted to the labours of Professor Haverfield, and in particular to his *Romanization of Roman Britain* and *Catalogue of Roman, etc., Stones in the Grosvenor Museum*; also to the *Victoria County Histories*, and the *Cambridge Medieval History*, chap. xiiiA.

[2] Their coins are inscribed in the Latin tongue and the word *rex* is used. *Rex* is not used on Roman coins, so that it is not mere slavish copying. The moneyer, of course, might have been a Latin, but Professor Haverfield believes that before the coming of Plautius the Britons were acquainted to some extent with Latin.

It was among this people that the Romans established their legates, propraetors, and legions from A.D. 43 until the early years of the fifth century. For some 366 years—a period of time equal to that which separates us from Henry VIII's reign—Roman citizens, soldiers of Rome who came from all parts of Europe, North Africa, and Asia Minor, Roman judges, doctors, grammarians, and lawyers, were continually in Britain. The result was that in time the Britons became completely Romanized: their children learnt to recite Virgil at school, their potters wrote their scrawls in the Latin tongue, their very brickmakers were acquainted with that language and used it as a matter of course.[1] As Gibbon said many years ago, "The language of Virgil and Cicero, though with some inevitable mixture of corruption, was so universally adopted in . . . Britain . . . that the faint traces of the . . . Celtic idioms were preserved only in the mountains, or among the peasants."[2] Thanks to the encouragement given by Agricola to the British youths to learn Latin, the inhabitants of this island as early as the first century were proficient in that language and were capable of delivering orations in the tongue of Rome. Nor must it be imagined that this applied only to the children of the wealthy and noble. As Professor Haverfield says, "There is much truth in the remark that in the lands ruled by Rome education was better under the Empire than at any time since its fall till the nineteenth century." There were schools in Britain eighteen hundred years ago. What they taught is almost lost to us, their lesson-books not having been preserved; but we have a tile covered with cursive lettering which is believed to be part of a writing lesson and which ends with a Latin tag taken from the pages of Virgil. The dates used were certainly entirely Roman. The Coligny Calendar, or its



MEDICINE STAMP FOUND AT WROXETER, 1808

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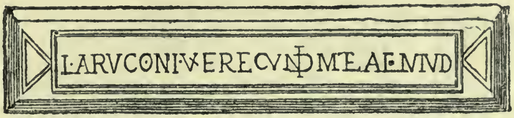
[1] In the account of the Roman remains in London given in *Archaeologia* for 1912 there is mentioned a Latin jibe scratched on a tile, referring to a fellow-worker of the tile-maker.

[2] Gibbon relies on Tacitus for this. Hallam (*Middle Ages*, vol. iii, p. 314) disputed this statement, saying with equal conviction: "Nor did the Romans ever establish their language—I know not whether they wished to do so—in this island, as we perceive by that stubborn British tongue [Welsh] which has survived two conquests." The same divergence of opinion still exists. Modern research, in our opinion, has shown Gibbon to be right and Hallam to be wrong. As to the survival, unchanged, of Welsh, it should be remembered that by the early eighteenth century Welsh was almost a dead language. To-day it is as vigorous and as uncorrupted by English as in the time of Owain Glyndwr. Nor must we only look to Wales. Old Cornish lived on for centuries after Cornwall was completely English, and to-day shepherds on the Cumberland mountains count their sheep in the British tongue. Nor are the old Celtic tongues free from Roman loan-words. For an account of these reference may be made to M. Loth, *Les Mots latins dans les Langues brittoniques*, or to the short analysis of this subject contained in Professor Lloyd's *History of Wales*, vol. i, pp. 84–88.

British prototype, was evidently early discarded, and British workmen soon began to talk, and write, of the calends of October.[1]

The upper classes probably received what even we should regard as a good education. The British schools were good enough to attract the grammarian Demetrius of Tarsus to this island, and Juvenal tells us that British lawyers were taught by Gaulish masters. The many court-houses which were scattered about Britain show, indeed, that the Roman judicial system was in full swing. Some of these town-halls, basilicas, or judgment houses which have been unearthed were fine buildings adorned with columns well shaped and carved, floors of marble,[2] courtyards paved with mosaics, and walls decorated with colours. In such surroundings British lawyers argued their cases before Roman civilian administrators.[3] They learnt the meaning of Roman justice, they learnt the details of Roman law.



ROMANO-BRITISH PIG OF LEAD

What the British public buildings suggest their domestic arrangements confirm. Up and down Britain there were many towns built, some of them fine cities earning the title *municipia*, some of them *coloniae*, residential districts for veterans with special privileges; some were small towns, some villages. Ravennas[4] mentions some 224 cities, camps, or inhabited places of note.[1] Many of the places he gives were obviously the capital towns of tribes, *e.g.* Isca Dumnoniorum, Venta Belgarum

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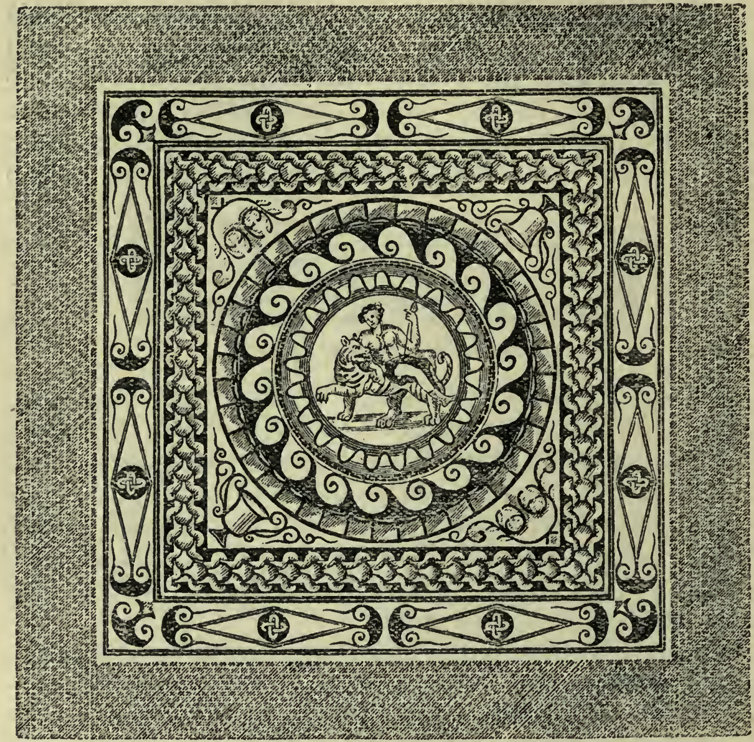
[1] A tile has been found with "vi K. Oct." scratched on it by the maker; that is, *vi Kalendas Octobres* = the sixth day before the calends of October.

[2] Sometimes of foreign marble, not the more common Purbeck stone or cheap local stones, *e.g.* Atwalton.

[3] The *praetor* settled the pleadings; the *judex*, an ordinary citizen, heard the case; the lawyer appeared before both.

[4] The writer of the book called Ravennas's *Cosmographia*, etc., is unknown. He wrote at Ravenna; hence the name. We use the 1860 ed. (Berlin), ed. M. Pinder and G. Parthey. He spells Viroconium, Utriconion Cornoviorum; Glevum, Glebon, etc.



A Roman Tessellated Pavement
discovered in Leadenhall Street, London

(Winchester), Corinium Dobunorum (Cirencester), Caleba or Calleva Atrebatum (Καληούα ’Ατρεβατίων of Ptolemy, now

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[1] Marcianus Heracleota, writing some time about the commencement of the fifth century A.D., has left us a somewhat full account of Britain. He informs us that it contained fifty-nine celebrated towns. Claudius Ptolemy, writing early in the second century A.D., gives Londinium, Eburacum, Caturactonium, and ‘the Winged Camp’ as the four chief towns in Britain in his day. Gildas, himself a native of Strathclyde, who penned his *Tearful Discourse concerning the Ruin of Britain* in the first half of the sixth century A.D., tells us that Britain "is famous for eight-and-twenty cities, and

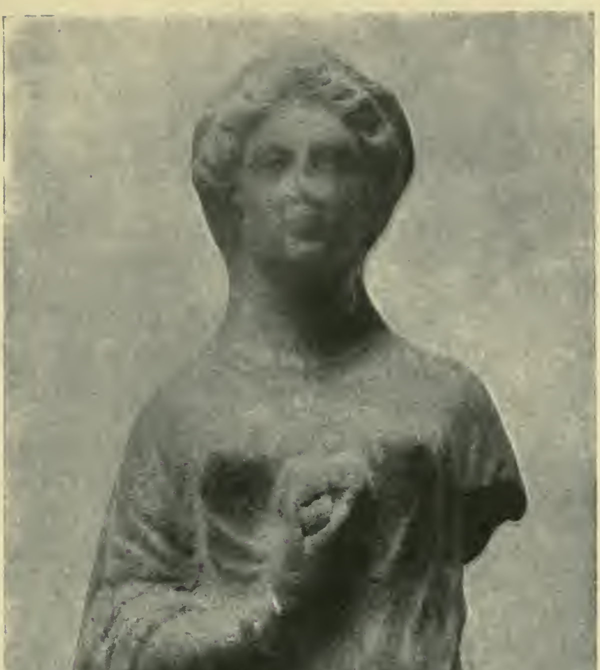

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PLATE VII. EXAMPLE OF SCULPTURE OF ROMANO-BRITISH PERIOD

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CALIFORNIA

Silchester), Durovernum Cantiacorum, and Venta Cenomum or Icenorum. Here we have, among others, the capitals of the Belgic, Atrebatic, and Icenic tribes. We find colonies at Lindum (Lincoln), Manulodulum or Camulodunum (Colchester), and Glevum (Gloucester). Virolanium or Verulamium (St Albans) was certainly a *municipium*, as was probably Londinium.[1] Britain is thus seen to have contained a considerable number of towns; at the same time it would appear to have been by no means thickly populated, while town-dwellers were not improbably few compared with the farmers and tillers of the soil.

The remains of many of the places mentioned by Ravennas have now almost disappeared. The sites of a few of the old Roman cities and stations, however, are slowly being uncovered by excavators. Of these perhaps Silchester, Chester, Caerwent, Wroxeter, the Wall, and the Scottish and Welsh frontier posts tell us most of Roman life in Britain. From the remains which have already been brought to light we know that the Roman towns had fine public buildings, temples, houses built in the Roman manner but according to a provincial rather than the Italian plan, shops and warehouses, market-places, walls and gates. The sanitary system was fairly good, consisting as a rule of a main sewer (in Lincoln it was 2 feet 4 inches wide and 4 feet 6 inches high) connected up with smaller branch drains; suitable manholes were provided for inspection, etc. In Chester some 15 feet of lead piping has been unearthed bearing an inscription showing that it was laid when Agricola was in

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is embellished by certain castles, with walls, towers, well-barred gates, and houses with threatening battlements built on high and provided with all requisite instruments of defence." Bede in his account condensed Gildas. Gibbon, who tells us that "Under the protection of the Romans ninety-two considerable towns had arisen in the several parts of that great province; and, among these, thirty-three cities were distinguished above the rest by their superior privileges and importance," adds as a note the information that "Two cities of Britain were *municipia*, nine *coloniae*, ten *Latii jure donatae*, twelve *stipendiariae* of eminent note." Unfortunately he relies upon the spurious chronicle of Richard of Cirencester, which had been forged but a few years before Gibbon himself wrote.

[1] See, however, as to this Haverfield, *Romanization of Roman Britain*, 3rd ed., p. 62.

Britain. It was used to carry water. Many of the buildings were fitted with hypocausts, stoves which heated them by means of hot air passing through air passages in the walls, a system which Giraldus Cambrensis observed in the half-ruined buildings of Caerwent in the twelfth century and which struck him as especially worthy of notice.[1] Of course, in every town, village, and camp the Roman bath was to be found, and so firmly did the bathing habit get hold of the Britons that they seem to have carried it to Wales with them after the Saxon invasion, for we find in the tenth-century Laws of Howel Dha frequent references to heated baths (probably of a rude type), which were apparently as common in Wales as smithies and which existed in every hamlet.

Space forbids us to enter into a detailed account of the Brito-Roman house; we can, however, give a rough description which will enable us to visualize the state of society in those times. Unlike the Italian villa, which, as a rule, was built around a courtyard, with windows looking inward, the Roman house in Britain was either built in corridor fashion with windows looking on to the street, or, in more pretentious, or more rural, dwellings, was built partly round a courtyard with windows looking, not inward, but outward. As to the quality of the buildings, they varied from luxurious mansions to rude

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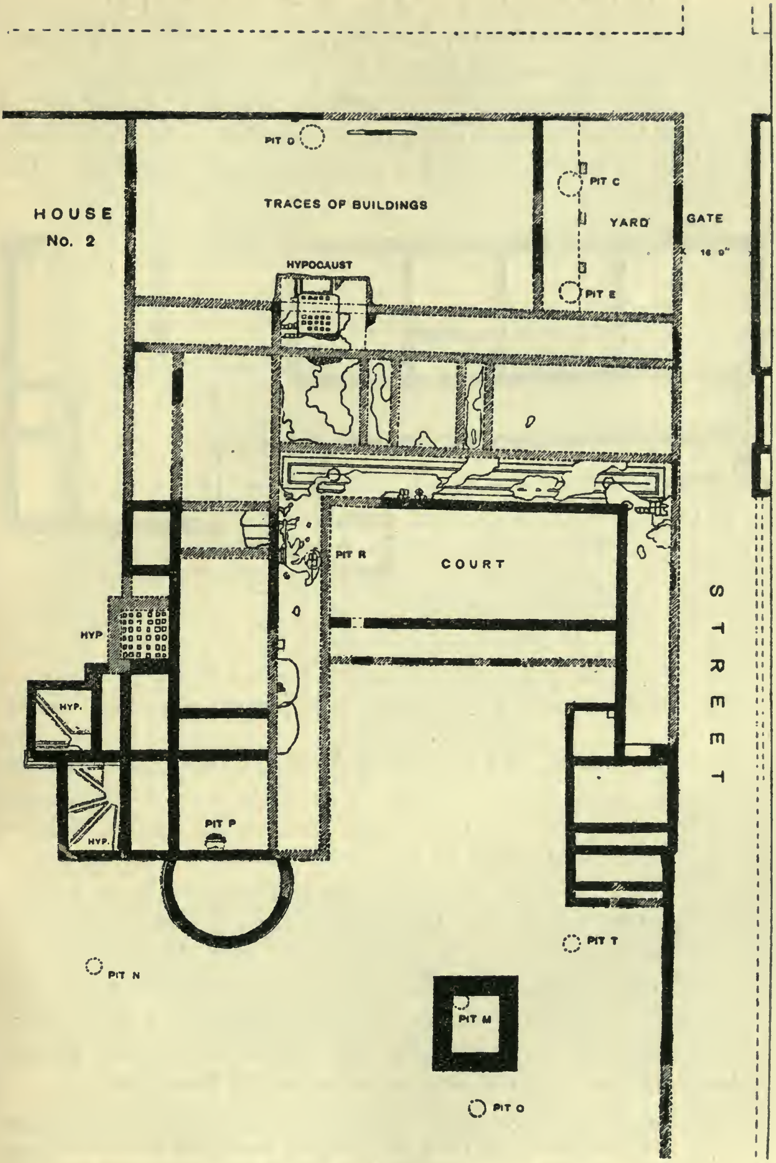
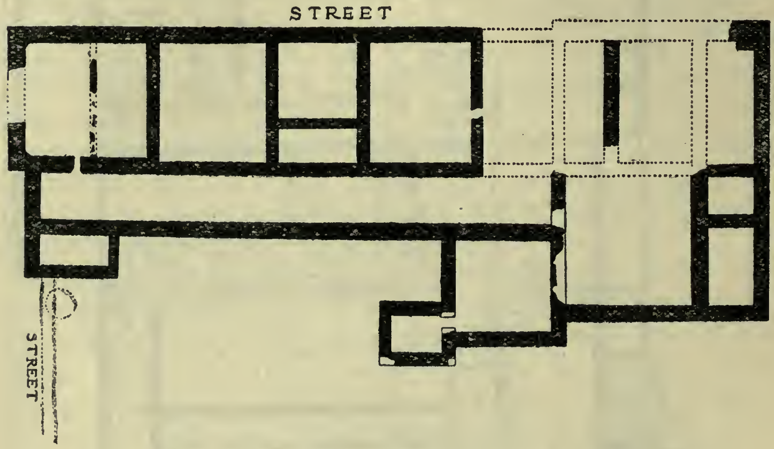
[1] Giraldus's description of the Caerwent (Venta Silurum) of his day is as follows (we give the translation): "Many signs of its former splendour are still visible: great palaces ornamented in past times with gilded roofs in imitation of Roman magnificence, for they were first raised by Roman princes, and beautified with fine buildings; a town of immense size, remarkable hot baths, remains of temples and theatres, all encircled by fine walls, parts of which still remain. You may find there on all sides, both within and without the walls, underground buildings, aqueducts, subterraneous passages; and, what I think deserves notice, stoves contrived with strange art to transmit the heat insensibly through narrow tubes passing up the side walls." Less than three hundred years later, in 1485, Caxton penned his introduction to Malory's *Morte d'Arthur*, and in searching for proof that Arthur did actually live and was not a mere hero of romance, he points to "the town of Camelot" in Wales (Caerwent or Caerlegion ?) and "the great stones and the marvellous works of iron lying under the ground, and royal vaults, which divers now living have seen." So much for a thousand years of ignorance. More than three hundred years of busy, thriving life had Caerwent and Caerlegion seen, and this was all their memory!


HOUSE
No. 2
PIT D
TRACES OF BUILDINGS
PIT C
YARD
GATE
16 0"
PIT E
HYPOCAUST
PIT R
COURT
HYP
HYP.
HYP.
PIT P
STREET
PIT T
PIT N
PIT M
PIT O

Plan of a Large Romano-British House

From "Archaeologia," by permission of the Society of Antiquaries of London dwellings; the majority, however, were marked with signs of solid comfort rather than with either wealth or poverty. Many were adorned with columns, many had mosaic or tessellated floors; some few paved their halls and rooms with marble, the poorer sort with wood or rough concrete. The walls of the rooms were as a rule coloured, sometimes a classical or conventional pattern being used, sometimes a simple flat wash being adopted. In the richer houses the walls may have been lined with marble.[1] As to the rooms, these varied in number and size as much as they do to-day; as a rule, however, the number of the rooms was greater, perhaps to provide accommodation for the slaves. Of the contents of the houses it is not possible here to speak at length. Of furniture or hangings or pictures little is left to us. From the pieces of glass and pottery which have been found we can judge that the contents were worthy of the dwellings.



Plan of a Simple Romano-British House

From "Archaeologia," by permission of the Society of Antiquaries of London

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[1] The Romans were very partial to marble for house decoration. Mamurra, Caesar's *praefectus fabrûm* in Gaul, was the first to set the fashion of lining the walls with marble. It would suit the Italian sunshine better than the British climate.

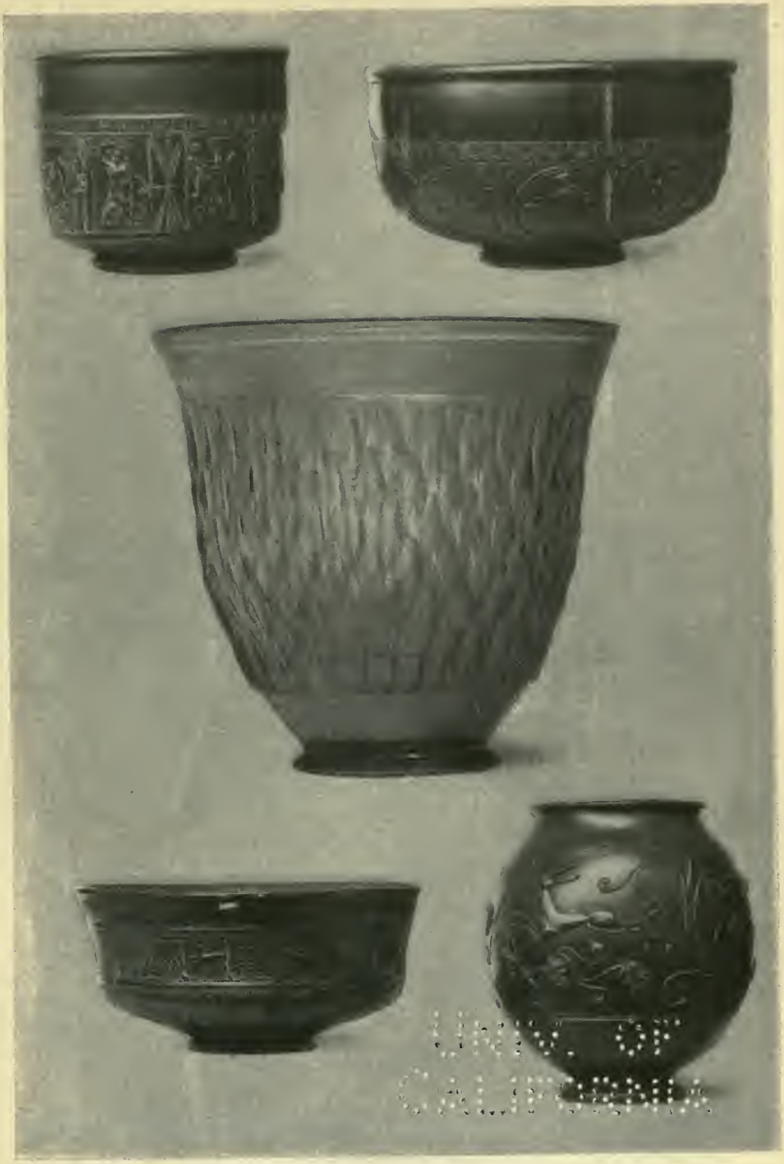

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PLATE VIII. EXAMPLES OF 'SAMIAN' WARE AND ROMAN CUT GLASS

It would be a fundamental mistake to think that these houses were inhabited solely by Romans from Italy or that the Britons had no share in the wealth and civilization which Roman rule had introduced. The men who built these houses were either retired soldiers, or traders, or professional men. The nationalities of all three classes were very diverse.[1] Men came either to fight, or teach, or cure, or trade from every part of the Empire. All these, of course, were not Roman citizens, but we find whole districts being granted that great right, and the inhabitants of the *coloniae* were probably Roman citizens, though none of them may ever have seen Rome. In the later years of the Empire, when citizenship had been given to almost all the provincials in order to bring more taxes into the Imperial treasury, we may say that probably the majority of people in Britain were Roman citizens. Even in the early years, when it was not a mere phrase, but imported great rights, many children born in Britain of British mothers would be Roman citizens. We have an inscription found near the Wall which records that Antoninus Pius granted Roman citizenship to certain regiments stationed in Britain, with the "right of lawful marriage with the wives they had when the citizenship was given, or with those they may afterward take, provided one at a time." The grant was important. Henceforward those wives would be Roman matrons;[2] the children of the union would be Roman citizens, with the right to hold any office in the State which their ability could win for them. There is evidence that many men born in Britain succeeded in later life in obtaining high and honourable employment in Rome itself. Indeed, when we remember that at the time of the Roman occupation this island was not thickly populated, and when we remember that for centuries tens of thousands of Roman troops, many drawn either from Italy itself or from the more Romanized parts of the Empire, intermarried with the British and, having obtained their discharge from the army, retired to spend the evening of their days in ease and plenty with their British wives and Brito-Roman children, it will, we believe, be clear to the reader that the Roman occupation affected very vitally the lives of the people of these islands.

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[1] We have made an analysis of the inscriptions on the inscribed stones found in Chester; from these alone we find references to the following: Soldiers (four separate references) from Aprus or Apri in Thrace, Celea or Celeia in Noricum; (three separate references) Savaria in Pannonia; (two separate references) Aequum in Dalmatia, Emerita in Spain, Brixia in N. Italy; (one reference) Virunum in Noricum, Forum Iulii on S.E. coast of Gaul, Vienna (Vienne, S. of Lyons), Milan, Thrace (Bessian tribe), Cordova in Spain, Cremona in N. Italy, Ulpia Thracia on the Rhine (date fixed between A.D. 110–150), Arles in S. France, Lyons in Gaul. Other sources (particularly the *Notitia Dign.*) refer to Moors and Palmyrians, Greeks, Frisians, Batavians, Dalmatians, Dacians, etc.

[2] Or rather *uxores*, since even by the time of A. Pius marriage *in manum* was almost obsolete save among the priestly class.

How vitally the Roman changed the mode of life in Britain has only been appreciated within recent years. It was known, of course, long ago that Christianity was early introduced.[1] Side by side with this best of philosophies the Roman system lived. We find altars raised to the gods of Rome and to gods of other races, some Gaulish, some Greek. We have constant

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[1] The exact date of the introduction of Christianity into Britain is uncertain. Dorotheus would have us believe that Simon Zelotes was crucified in Britain and was buried here. Again, in the *Menologii Graecorum* we read that Peter himself, after having sent Aristobulus to Britain, went there in the reign of Nero. In 181 we are informed that a British king sent an embassy to Eleutherius and in that year the Britons received the new faith. Probably by the end of the third century Christianity was well established in this country, for in the persecutions which followed the decrees of Diocletian and Galerius martyrs suffered for the Christian faith in Britain. It was while the savage decrees of the quondam Dalmatian slave were in force that St Alban, the first British martyr, is supposed to have been put to death; to the same period dates the legendary persecution of Aaron and Julius of Isca. It is certain that under Constantine the Great Christianity was established here as in other parts of the Empire. St Chrysostom (A.D. 347–407) was recording fact when he wrote of the churches and altars which had been erected in Britain. As we shall see, when the pagan Saxons came these sanctuaries were in many cases destroyed, and in some cases utilized as pagan shrines. St Athanasius is also giving us accurate history when he speaks of British bishops being present at the Synod at Sardica, an ecclesiastical council convened by Constantius and Constans in 343 to attempt a settlement of the Arian controversy which was then dividing the Christian world. We shall hereafter have to consider the later heresy introduced at the beginning of the fifth century at Rome by the British (or perhaps Irish) monk Pelagius, a philosophy which was condemned in 418 and which caused the bishops of Gaul to send (in 429) Germanus of Auxerre and Lupus of Troyes to Britain to persuade the wandering flock to return once more to the orthodox fold.

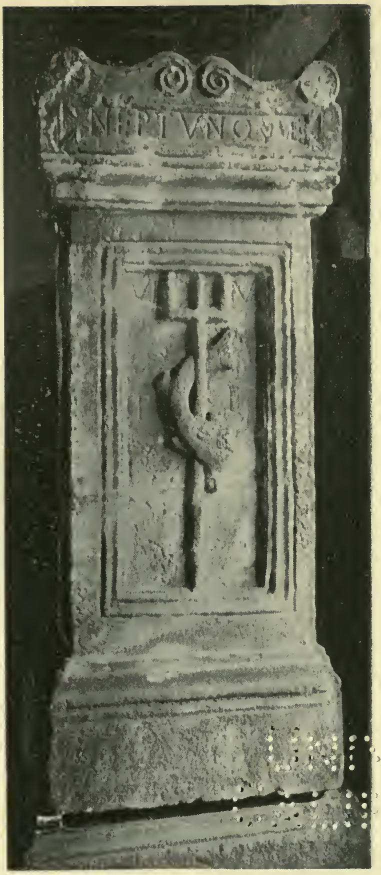

PLATE IX. THE NEPTUNE ALTAR

allusions to the old mythologies: Actaeon changes into a stag, Adonis dies, Cupid plays with a dog, a Triton and Sirens and Harpies pass before us. Neptune is thanked, and Oceanus invoked, by bold mariners thankful to have crossed the angry seas, or trembling before the perils of a future voyage. Dolphins dance round Venus or disport themselves round Neptune's trident.[1] On numerous altars and tombstones the men of those days have told us, speaking as it were from the grave, of their beliefs, of their gods, of their hopes. Of the religions beloved by the soldiers in Britain, not the least popular was that manly and soldierlike faith which came from the East and was called after its deity Mithras. Thus upon a Chester tombstone we find the figure of a boy, erect, with crossed legs, dressed in a tunic to his knees, wearing on his head a Phrygian cap, his left hand on his chest, the right hand holding a staff downward. He represents an attendant of the god Mithras. On other tombs a lion's head is carved; this probably [2] refers to the fact that the man there buried had attained the fourth degree, the degree of Lion—had, indeed, been fully initiated into the rites of Mithraism.[3]

Slaves were, of course, common. On numerous tombstones of the better sort we find that the freedmen had contributed to the monument, and, on the other hand, we have several examples of monuments erected by masters to their slaves, some of which are inscribed with words of real affection. Thus in Chester we have, among others, two tombstones to slaves, the one erected by Pompeius Optatus to three slave boys, and the other by Gaius Asurius Fortis to his deserving freedman Etacontius.

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[1] In this connexion we may add that the references, direct or otherwise, to the sea are very numerous in the Roman remains. It is fairly clear that the Romans must have left a considerable fleet round Britain. That they had a fleet is, of course, as we have seen, well known. It is also evident that this fleet was constantly cruising round the island. It was, we believe, largely engaged in preventing barbarian inroads from quite early times.

[2] Haverfield doubts this.

[3] Mithraism was the great opponent of Christianity. It was limited to men; no women could be admitted. It was a manly religion, similar in many ways to its rival. Mithras may be regarded as the god of armies and the champion of heroes. The cult contained seven degrees. It is to be noted that the more exotic religions were often limited to the military portion of the inhabitants.

It is, indeed, manifest that wherever Rome conquered Rome had slaves. They were for her an economic necessity, and, as Professor Buckland has pointed out, they occupied much the same position in the Roman business world as the limited liability company does in ours.[1] To what extent the Britons were enslaved we know not, but that there were many slaves in Britain is more than probable. It would, however, be running directly against what we know of Roman policy to assume that these slaves were taken from native races at peace with the Empire. By war, after insurrection, by purchase, it may be, the class was augmented; but it is inconceivable that a large part of the British race, which was at peace with Rome almost throughout the occupation, at least in the south, could have been reduced to servitude.

Roman Forts

Although, as we have seen, Britain was completely Romanized comparatively early, it is still true that the Roman occupation of Britain, especially of northern and western Britain, was largely a military occupation. The centre of the Roman influence was the Roman camp. In the south it was perhaps different. London from an early date, if not a *municipium*, was a trade centre organized according to the principles usually adopted by Roman commercial towns and independent to a large extent of the military. Places like Verulamium, Calleva Atrebatum (Silchester), and Camulodunum were cantonal capitals which owed little of their importance to the military element. When, however, we journey to the *limites* of the territory occupied by Rome, when we reach the Wall and the frontier posts, the military element is almost the only one that matters. Round the camps and forts were established annexes in which the civilian population, traders, women, and children dwelt, but they dwelt under the shield

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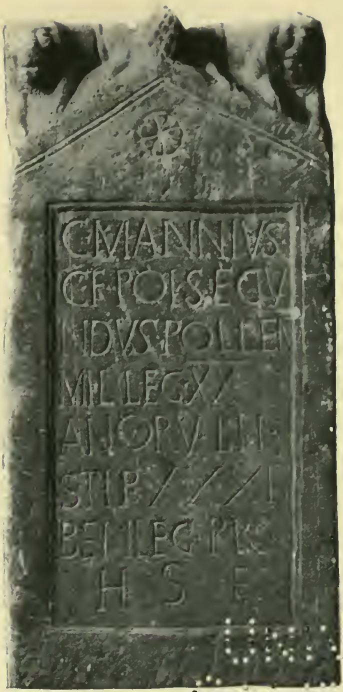
[1] Professor Buckland has developed the theme with his usual lucidity and insight in his work *The Roman Law of Slavery.*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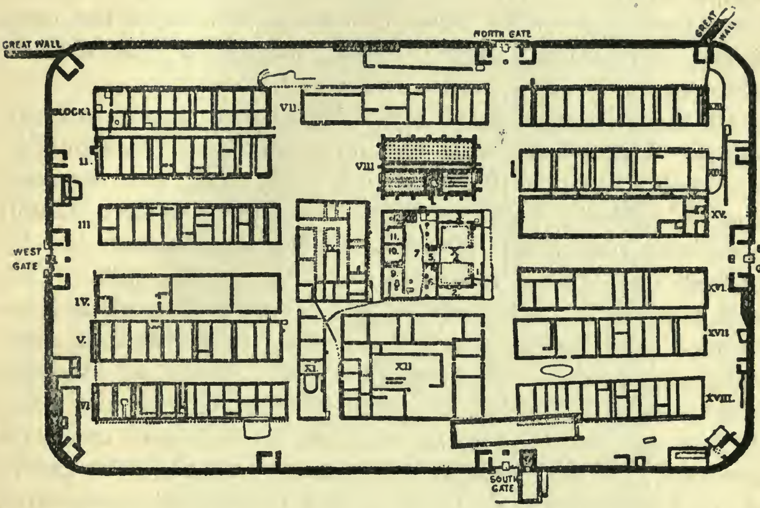
C F POL SECV
NDVS POLLE
MIL LEG X
ANOR LII
STIP
BEN LEG PR
H S E

PLATE X. THE GRAVESTONE OF
CAIUS MANNIUS SECUNDUS

of the fort; the inhabitants might almost be described as perpetual camp-followers. The writer of the *Periplus*, who had examined officially a Roman fort while yet it was a fort, speaks of the land beyond the ramparts as occupied by non-combatants and traders. Here we see the Roman camp occupying the same position in the life of that period as the Norman castle did in the Middle Ages. Sometimes these civilian quarters grew into large and prosperous cities, though where we have a city (as at Viroconium) near by a camp we generally have some reason other than the proximity of the camp for its growth. Viroconium, for example, according to Ravennas, was a cantonal capital.


GREAT WALL
NORTH GATE
GREAT WALL
BLOCK I
II
III
IV
V
VI
VII
VIII
XI
XII
XIII
XIV
XV
XVI
XVII
XVIII
WEST GATE
EAST GATE
SOUTH GATE
1
2
3
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6
7
8
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10
11

PLAN OF A ROMAN FORT AT HOUSESTEADS, ON HADRIAN'S WALL

From Professor F. J. Haverfield's "Military Aspects of Roman Wales," by permission of the author

When we consider the nature of these Roman military stations we find that they were of three kinds: (1) Legionary fortresses, capable of holding 5000 men or more with equipment. Such forts were founded at Isca Silurum, near which grew up the town of Venta Silurum, the later Caerwent; Viroconium; Deva, or Chester; Lindum, now Lincoln; Eburacum, known in after years as York.[1] (2) Forts held by a cohort or two, together with an ala of cavalry, perhaps in all some 500 to 1500 men. (3) Blockhouses manned by outposts, whose number would vary according to necessity. Besides these forts there were many thousands of men of the most diverse nationalities grouped along the line of the Wall in minor camps, stations, mile-castles, or bases.

All these frontier posts had, of course, a purely military object. As we have seen, the non-combatants lived outside the walls. Within the ramparts everything was designed from a military point of view. Generally square, though sometimes rectangular, the Roman fort was surrounded by ditches and earthen ramparts lying outside the wall. This wall was the boundary of the fort proper; its corners were rounded, and its sides were pierced by four gateways symmetrically placed. The gateways and corners of the fort were usually strengthened by towers or artillery platforms. On the east was the *porta praetoria*, to the west the *porta decumana*. From north to south, cutting through the centre of the fort, was a wide road, the *via principalis*, terminating in the *porta principalis dextra* and the *porta principalis sinistra*. In the centre of this main street was situated the *principia*, the equivalent of the *praetorium* of the movable camp. In most of the forts unearthed in Britain, particularly at Newstead, Housesteads, Birrens, and Gellygaer, this building comprises an outer courtyard (which often contains a well) surrounded by pillars and opening into the *via principalis* on the one side and an inner courtyard on the other. On the side of the inner courtyard remote from the street were a number of rooms. Some of these rooms were used as regimental offices; the centre one contained the regimental

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[1] Very temporary legionary camps existed at other places, *e.g.* at Newstead, where, however, the later and more permanent forts held but two cohorts and an ala.

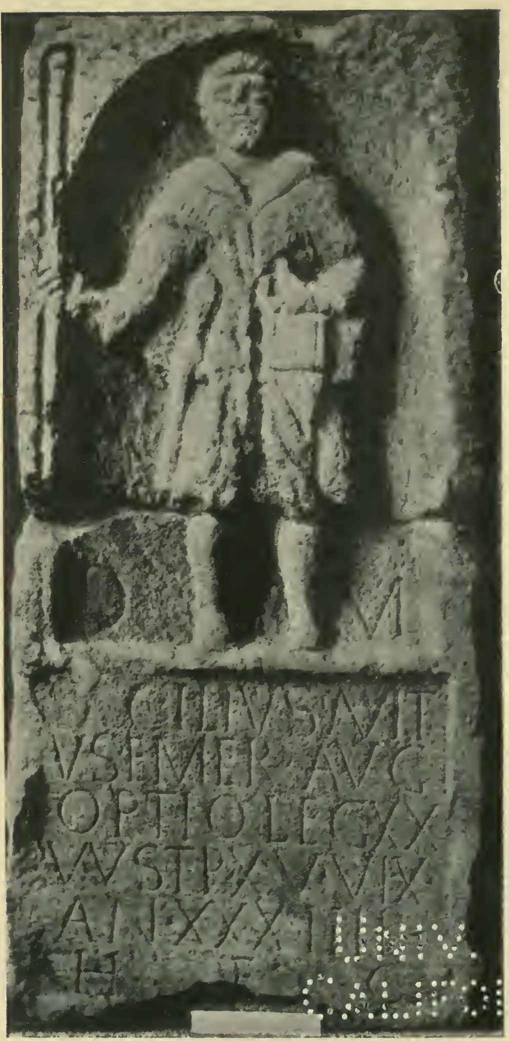
D M
OPTIO LEG

PLATE XI. ROMAN TOMBSTONE, CHESTER

66

UNIV. OF
CALIFORNIA

colours and money-chest and a statue of the Emperor. Below the ground level was often a cellar, in which case the money-chest was kept there. The *principia* is thus seen to have been the regimental headquarters. By its side was the granary or regimental storehouse, where the corn was stored and milled. Next to it was a large building which is generally called the commandant's house, though Dr Macdonald,[1] following Rittenburg, suggests that it may have been the workshop of the fort. On the same side of the *via principalis* were to be found the officers' quarters and the drill-ground and stables, while on the opposite side, occupying nearly the whole space, were the men's barracks, wooden or stone structures divided up into small compartments, each occupied by a group of men, who slept and messed together.

Outside the walls, often near one of the gates, was the bath, which, besides being used for cleansing purposes, was also utilized by the soldiers as a means of rendering their muscles supple and keeping themselves 'fit.' If we are to give a meaning to the various altars to Fortuna which were erected there, the bath also seems to have taken the place of a club, where men could meet together and play at games of chance.

Such, then, was the general nature of the Roman fort. When we consider the remains which have been discovered in these military posts we find much which enables us to understand the life lived by a Roman frontier soldier. We can also visualize the fort as it appeared, say, in the time of Hadrian Thus we know that the buildings within the fort were often handsome structures. At Corbridge in 1909 and at Newstead in 1910 granaries were discovered which had evidently possessed porticoes supported by handsome stone columns; in the latter case the columns (only one of which remains) were of red sandstone. Again, the commandant's house was generally a place of some pretension.

Occasionally excavations have brought to light remains which are full of interest as being descriptive of the life in these Roman forts. Thus in or near the great pit at Newstead near by the bath, so admirably described by Mr Curle in his monograph *A Roman Frontier Post*, were found a beautiful bronze oenochoë[1] with a lotus decoration, a bronze camp-kettle, a tankard-handle, playing ‘men’ of bone, enamelled fibulae, a strigil, a bronze helmet-mask, swords broken and twisted, bronze pots, pieces of ware, iron rings for wheel-hubs, a rake. When we examine this and the other pits at Newstead, dozens of which have yielded similar objects, we see that a terrible disaster must have befallen the garrison at some time—a disaster when valuables were hastily flung aside, when men fled for their lives, when the *via principalis* was strewn with corpses, with weapons, with treasures. Here is the skull of a legionary, there his twisted sword, yonder his smashed-in helmet. When the Romans came again these sorry remains were gathered up, the corpses were buried, the useless articles were flung into rubbish-pits, which were in turn filled up with soil, well pressed down. As a result we have come into possession of a splendid collection of Roman remains, some of an ordinary type, but many of an unusual quality, and nearly all in a wonderful state of preservation.

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[1] *The Roman Wall in Scotland*, p. 80.

Thus from these Newstead pits alone we may learn that the Roman soldiers in Britain had fine equipment, including bronze and iron visor-masks and helmets highly decorated and embossed; they had also all the necessary implements of agriculture; they had many a pretty article of domestic use and ornament—bowls of claret-coloured glass, amphorae, ware of all kinds; they had leather shoes and horse-trappings, and always swords and shields, smiths' anvils and implements, axes and spears. Altogether we see before us the relics of the busy, far-off life of the Roman frontier soldier. Self-reliant, self-contained, he turned his hand to war or husbandry, to dice-throwing or altar-raising. He ploughed well and fought well, and in his leisure time dressed well and fed well and surrounded himself with many an object of utility and ornament.

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[1] A cup for carrying wine from the bowl to the glass.

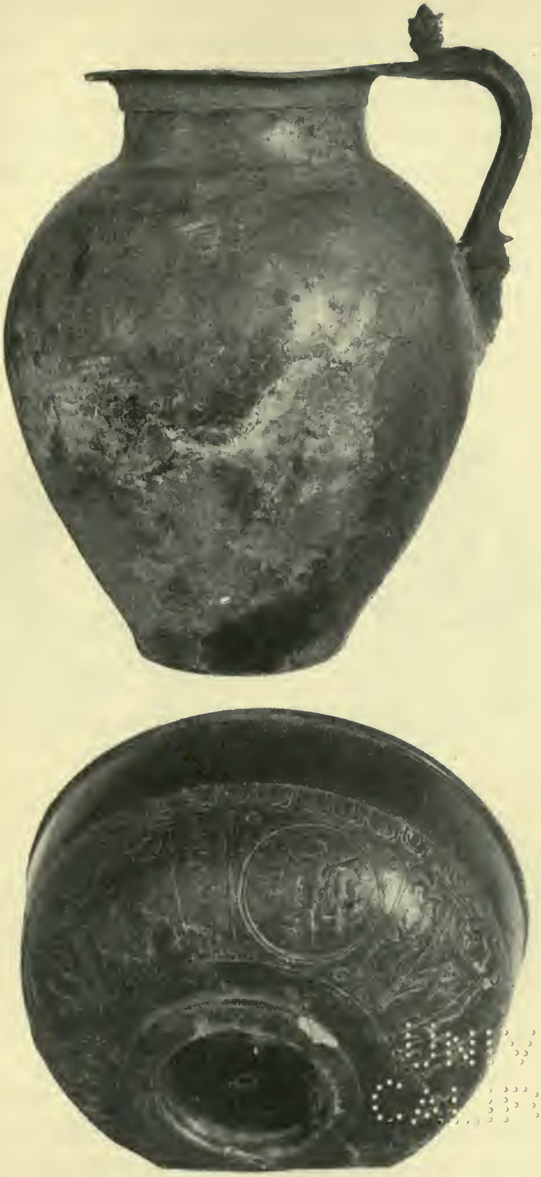
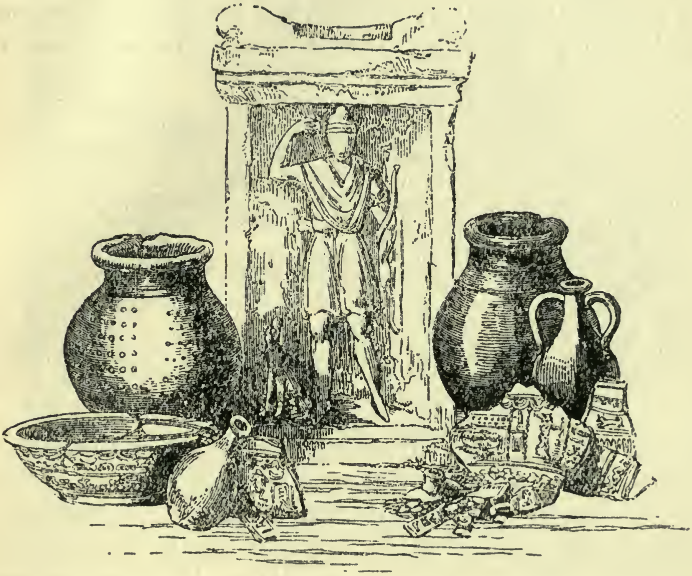


PLATE XII. BRONZE JUG AND BOWL OF 'SAMIAN' WARE

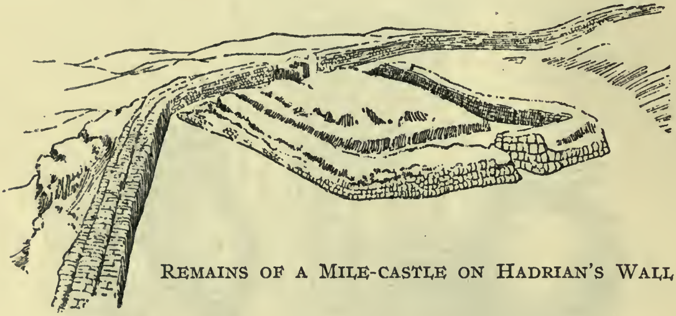
It was by means of these camps and forts that the Romans were enabled to keep in check both the inhabitants of what is now Wales and the Maeatae and Caledonians of Scotland. For the greater protection of the north and to save valuable Roman lives the system of wall-building was early adopted. The basis, however, of the wall fortification was still camp and blockhouse, each acting as a *tête de pont* or *point d'appui*, the whole series being connected by the wall, which took the form of an artificial and continuous barrier giving support and shelter to the soldiers as they paced from turret to turret or from blockhouse to blockhouse.



ALTAR TO APOLLO, AND VASES

THE ROMAN WALLS

It was Spartianus who told us that " Hadrian visited Britain and in that island rearranged many things that were at fault," and that "he was the first to build a wall for eighty miles[1] for the purpose of dividing the barbarians from the Romans." It was probably the annihilation of the Ninth Legion, which, as we have seen,[2] disappeared about this time, that prompted this extensive, expensive, and lengthy work. Dr Bruce has calculated that it must have cost £1,000,000 and have occupied 20,000 men for two years. His estimate of its cost appears to us to be by no means excessive, but for Rome the expense was almost a necessity. The increasing pressure on the frontiers was beginning to make her careful of her soldiers' lives. Men were now far more valuable than much money, and Rome was wealthy. This wall of Hadrian, which extends from Wallsend, near Newcastle, to Bowness, on the Solway Firth, is certainly a remarkable piece of work. Dr Bruce describes for us how it pursues its straight course over moor and hill, looking like a white ribbon on a green ground, departing only to right or left to scale some high point, sinking with the valleys, however sharp the incline, and climbing the hill-sides, however steep. Its steady, continuous course, unconscious, apparently, of natural obstacles and natural advantages, seems to symbolize Rome's history.



REMAINS OF A MILE-CASTLE ON HADRIAN'S WALL

Not only is one struck by its length and continuity, but also by the size and thickness of the wall. Bede's measurements are probably too small; Dr Bruce suggests that it was 18 feet

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[1] 73½ English miles.

[2] *Ante*, p. 38.

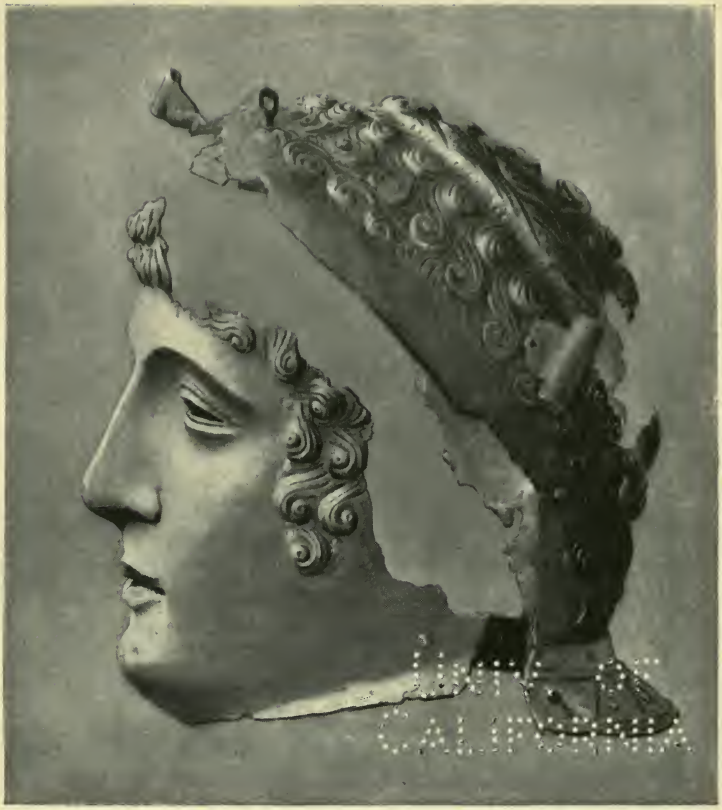

PLATE XIII. IRON VISOR-MASK AND HELMET

high and 8 feet wide. It was also frequently strengthened by buttresses. Bruce tells us that " the wall usually seizes those positions which give it the greatest advantage on its northern side ; the *vallum* [earthen wall], on the other hand, has apparently been drawn with the view of occupying ground that is strongest toward the south." It is curious that its builders appear to have accepted no help from nature. As Dr Hodgkin says : " The line of the wall once fixed, its builders seem to have pursued a nearly uniform plan, regardless of the help which they might have derived from natural defences. Thus in one place it crowns the heights of some steep basaltic cliffs at whose feet lies a small Northumbrian lake. No desperation of bravery would ever have caused a Brigantian chief to dash across that lake and climb those pinnacles of columnar basalt ; still, even here the wall pursues its undeviating course." It may be, however, that the wall had to be held against attacks from both sides, in which case it would save the legionary from being hurled by some barbarian chief into the lake beneath. In any case, it would prove, as Dr Hodgkin points out, a great protection against the weather, which must have seemed very bitter to the Moors, Spaniards, and Dalmatians who, according to the *Notitia Dignitatum*, were to be found among the men who were stationed *per lineam Valli*.

As time went on the wall seems to have been broken through by the barbarians. How this happened it is extremely difficult to see. Antoninus Pius, Hadrian's successor, had built his wall between the Firths of Forth and Clyde, and it would appear that the mere building of such a barrier showed a more settled state in southern Caledonia, and its existence should have removed all pressure from the more southern barrier. After the revolt of the Maeatae and the Caledonians we find Septimius Severus repairing or building another wall in 209. At least one of the lesser Roman historians assigns a wall to him which stretched from sea to sea. Some moderns have, indeed, suggested that this was the great wall, and that Hadrian built the earthen wall which we have previously referred to as the *vallum*, and which follows the line of the great wall, being separated from it by less than a hundred yards. Those, however, who are most competent to speak declare that the great wall was built by Hadrian and that the work of Severus was merely that of repairing it.[1]

These, then, were the barriers which protected Britain from her more barbarous neighbours of the north. For centuries Roman soldiers paced up and down the wall. Inscriptions, bronze records, bits of tombs, altar-pieces, coins, tell us something of the lives of those men gathered by Rome from all parts of her Empire to guard this most western of her provinces. Generations passed away, old Rome's gods were abandoned and Christianity was accepted, weddings were solemnized, children were born, grew up, and died, and still the Roman legionary paced the wall. Into one Holy Well of the nymph Coventina coins have been dropped as votive offerings by succeeding generations of Roman soldiers, commencing in the first and continuing into the fourth century. At last, however, the ranks were thinned. The Thirty Tyrants arose; Maximus, the honest usurper, led many a legion to his Gaulish wars; Constantine the Tyrant a few decades later took the rest; the wall was but slightly guarded, and in time Pict and Scot broke down the defences and fell upon the unprepared Britons, now reduced in fighting strength by the Continental wars. Even in this period, before the coming of the Teutonic tribes, a change is noticeable in the culture of Britain. Rome was receding farther and farther away. Not only the military but also the material and intellectual bonds between Britain and the East were weakening. A Celtic revival set in; the Britons, now virtually masters of their own country, shook off Roman tutelage in almost every department of life. As a result, when the barbarians came to plunder and to conquer Britain was already beginning to be an insular, isolated state. Under the pressure of these attacks the Britons, it is true, sought once more fellowship with the Empire, but now it was too late. The barbarians made good their footing; not only Roman but British culture was well-nigh destroyed.

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[1] Gildas, who gives an incorrect account of the building of the walls, dates them both after the departure of Maximus. The first wall, he tells us, was built to keep out the Scots and Picts, "but this wall, being made of turf instead of stone, was useless." Later he says: "With the help of the unhappy natives [the Romans] built a wall different from the former with public and private subscriptions." Both walls, he informs us, extended from sea to sea. It is possible, as we have said, that the *vallum* was built to protect the garrison of the wall from an attack in the rear.

CHAPTER IV

THE ANGLO-SAXON CONQUEST

THE end of the fourth century and the commencement of the fifth saw the beginning of the dissolution of the Roman Empire. Gerontius, having caused an insurrection in Spain by substituting barbarians for the legionaries, had been replaced by Justus. Gerontius replied by raising up a new Emperor. At this time, as J. B. Bury says, " besides Theodosius ruling at New Rome and Honorius at Ravenna, there were Constantine and his son Constans at Arelate ; there was Attalus at Old Rome, who had been set up by Alaric ; and Maximus at Tarragona, who had been set up by Gerontius." The Roman Empire was, indeed, in a state of disintegration. More than a century hence, it is true, it was revitalized by the genius of Belisarius and the political common sense of his master Justinian, but at the beginning of the fifth century Rome was weak ; she was opposed by numerous enemies ; the patriotism of Old Rome had faded ; her civilization was decadent, her men effeminate, her men of mind debased, her statesmen impolitic, her rulers numerous but divided. The pressure on her frontiers was ever increasing, and now, with enemies on all sides and with civil strife and discord at home, she is found relinquishing one by one her provinces and slowly surrendering the more western parts of her Empire.

With the withdrawal of Britain's best fighting men under Maximus, the Prince Maxen of Welsh romance ; with the departure of the Sixth Legion for the wars against Alaric ; with the passing of Constantine the Tyrant and the Twentieth Legion, Rome's power in Britain declined and passed away. With her abandonment of Britain the natives, who had lived for so many years at peace through the efforts of others, who, indeed, were at once peaceful and wealthy and unused to war, by which such goods are purchased, were exposed to the attacks of the barbarian swarms now busy devastating Europe. Under the miseries of succeeding years of plunder and pillage, massacrings, burnings, and battles, the ancient Britons were driven finally from their ancient homes, and the new-comers, Saxons, Angles, Jutes, occupied the larger part of England; the older people, who had experienced the civilization of Rome, fled to the hills of the west and north, or, remaining in the lowlands, were made bondmen to their conquerors. The result was the infusion of new blood into the English stock, the death of Roman civilization in Britain, the overthrow of cities and towns, the enslavement or dispersal of a people. On the other hand, the new-comers brought with them sturdy barbarian minds and bodies. They were a manly, if uncultured, race, good fighters, possessing a certain genius for government. As the years passed by the admixture of the older inhabitants with the new-comers became more common; the old pagan religions were abandoned; Christianity, that creator of our modern civilization, in time smoothed away the rougher practices of the Woden-worshippers; subsequent conquests brought England into nearer touch with the wider life of the Continent, so that when our present period ends we find already in England a new people rising up, and showing a greater gift for government than even Rome herself.

All this, however, was far in the future. The years which saw the conquest of this country by those warlike people who came from the Baltic coasts were years unredeemed with any ray of light and hope. The Briton Gildas, reformer and writer, saw all around him devastation and shipwreck. This man, who was a perfect example of the Romanized Briton, looks back with longing eyes to the old days when Rome's legionaries held back the "unwarlike, plundering vagabonds" who had wrought such havoc in his land. With a breaking heart and through his sobs he searches round for some reason, some excuse, which would account for his countrymen's failure to stem the tide of conquest. He finds the reason in the wickedness of her people and the folly of her kings, but to the modern writer the causes are seen to lie much deeper. Centuries of protection had weakened Britain; her men were untrained to arms; her ramparts of stone and the swords of Rome's legionaries had lulled her into security; her youth had been slaughtered in their thousands in the Gaulish wars of Maximus; disease had still further reduced the nation's strength; they had no native fleet, having depended on the Romans. All these causes exposed Britain to conquest by a resolute enemy. On the other hand, the Teuton invaders were savage, warlike, barbarous, excellent fighters, brave with the recklessness of men who had nothing to lose save their life and who worshipped the god of valour. They bore down upon Britain as their kinsmen bore down upon Rome.

Sources

When we attempt to write of this present period we find that the authorities are unfortunately extremely few. In the great days of Rome eloquent writers were penning accounts of her deeds. Now, in her decline, few were to be found either with inclination or capacity to recount for us the story of her fall. Even those who did attempt to write history thought little, or knew little, of Britain. It was the age when a priest seemed more important than a province, when a people could be destroyed unnoticed, but the miraculous deeds of saints must be fully recorded.

We have, however, some slight guidance from the older writers. The Britons themselves have left us two works which give us some small knowledge of the feelings of the vanquished. Gildas and Nennius, the writers of *The Tearful Discourse concerning the Ruin of Britain* and the *British History* respectively, were men of widely different types who lived in very different periods. Gildas the Wise was a native of Britain and a lover of his country. He was a Christian and a great admirer of the Romans. Born about 516, in the year when King Arthur is supposed to have won the famous victory of Mount Badon, he was probably a native of Strathclyde. Excellently educated, he wrote a Latin which, though somewhat overborne with adjectives, was immeasurably superior to that employed by Nennius. Brought up in a Christian atmosphere, he lived to work great reforms within the British Church, and, dying, left at least some traces of an increased spiritual life among his people. On the other hand, Nennius, who is supposed to have lived in the late eighth century, is a much poorer figure. Whether a person of the name of Nennius ever did live has, indeed, been disputed, and even though we follow Professor Zimmer and acknowledge his existence, we must confess that his contribution to the world's knowledge is minute. He wrote very debased Latin; his knowledge of history is small, and of the duties of an historian smaller; he is superstitious, relating as facts incredible events of soothsayers and enchanters. Indeed, as an authority he is completely untrustworthy, and would be almost useless to us had he not for some reason introduced into his narrative a work by another hand known to the moderns as *The Saxon Genealogies.* These pedigree lists are perhaps incorrect, but they bear the mark of being trustworthy and are generally relied upon.

As to the Continental writers who have touched on the conquest, we receive but slight information from their scanty references. The Dark Ages were already beginning to throw their shadow on Constantinople and the West. Such men of learning as there were had little interest in this remote province of Britain. Some few scraps, however, can be gathered from their writings. Thus Zosimus[1] the Greek tells us that when Constantine the Tyrant departed with his soldiers the Britons revolted. He seems to suggest that Britain broke away from the Empire rather than that the Empire became too weak to continue to protect Britain. Sozomen [1] tells us something of the usurpation of Maximus, and Pacatus informs us that it was the British followers of Maximus who suffered most and accomplished most in Gaul. The chronicler known by the name of Prosper Tiro [2] recounts for us how thirty-three years after the sickness which wasted the strength of the Romans (A.D. 409), and in the reign of Theodosius, the province of Britain was conquered by the Saxons. Constantius recounts for us many marvels performed by St Germanus, whose name we shall have cause frequently to mention in the pages which follow, but he adds little to our knowledge of historical events. On the whole, we have but little help from the Greek or Roman scribes.

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[1] *Fl.* 430. His work largely follows Eunapius, Olympiodorus, and Dexippus. He was a pagan.

Our third group of authorities are the men who belonged to the conquering race and who wrote of their people's victories. The two great authorities here are the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle* and the works of the Venerable Bede, that monk of Jarrow who, without doubt, was the best historian and most learned man in North-western Europe in the eighth century. Bede is, indeed, in many ways excellent; for his period, marvellous. He lived, however, three centuries after the invasion and consequently speaks with no first-hand knowledge. As Mr Plummer says in his edition of Bede's works: "We could heartily wish that [he] had given us more of his own observation and less of ancient writers'." The modern historian has, indeed, to lament that the great Northumbrian did not recount for us the legends which had passed from father to son relative to the invasion. To do so, however, was not his purpose; rather he sifted with much care what other and earlier writers had said before him. Those authorities we still have, and, as we have seen, they tell us but little. When we move forward a few years and reach the time of St Augustine, then, indeed, Bede's transcriptions from papal letters and other

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[1] A lawyer of Constantinople, who wrote an ecclesiastical history about the middle of the fifth century.

[2] It has been doubted whether this is not another name for Prosper Aquitanus, the Anti-Semi-Pelagian.

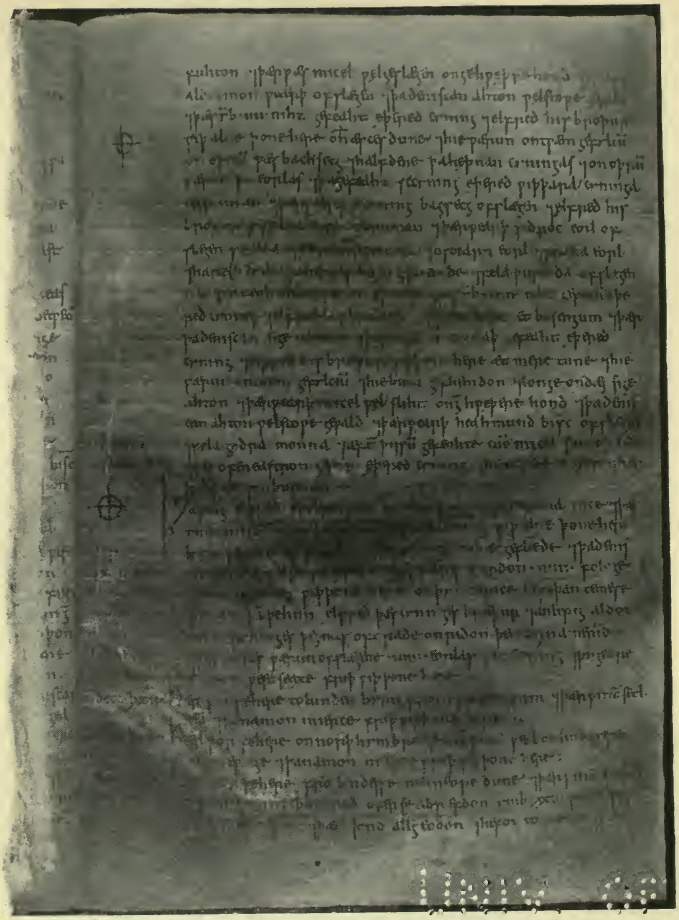

PLATE XIV. A PAGE FROM THE MANUSCRIPT OF THE "ANGLO-SAXON CHRONICLE" 78

epistles are invaluable. For the story of the actual invasion he is comparatively useless.

What we have said of Bede applies, as regards the period of which we are now speaking, with even more force to the *Chronicle*. As Mr Plummer[1] has pointed out, the earlier part of the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle* is based on Bede. It is later in time and it is cast in the mechanical form commonly adopted by the annalist. However, the compilers have preserved to us some new facts, and for such we must be thankful.

PICTS AND SCOTS

Though handicapped by lack of authority, we will yet endeavour to give some sort of coherent account of the steps leading up to the invasion; of the deeds which followed and which changed Brythonic Britain into Teutonic Angle-land. As with all great historical events, the causes which led up to the change were not the product of a year or even decades of years. For more than two centuries the Romans had found it necessary to protect the shores of Britain with their navy. The revolt of Carausius had shown how dependent Britain was on sea-power. Not only had the barbarians been beaten off from the coasts; they had been kept at bay by the wall and *vallum* built, as we have seen, by Hadrian and Severus. All these expensive forms of defence had certainly not been undertaken save under a pressing necessity. Appointments of fleet commanders were made at least as early as A.D. 130.[2] Two hundred and seventy years later there appears in the *Notitia* (A.D. 400) the significant title of 'the Count of the Saxon Shore.'[3] Already the district from the Wash to the south coast had been fortified. Some time before the Second Legion had been removed from Isca Silurum to Rutupiae, or Richborough, on the Kentish coast.

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[1] In his preface to vol. i of his edition of the Saxon chronicles. It has recently been suggested that the early part of the *Chronicle* is based on Celtic sources and is generally untrustworthy. This, however, is not established.

[2] See *ante*, p. 39.

[3] It does not follow that this office was first established then; probably it was created much earlier.

It is not, however, to the Saxon or Angle sea-rovers that our own early historians would have us look for the disasters which befell the Britons. It is the Picts and Scots who are regarded as responsible for the downfall, together with the folly of the British king Vortigern.[1]

Gildas, it is true, regards Maximus as largely responsible for Britain's undefended state, for, as he says, " Britain was left deprived of all her soldiers and armed men . . . and of the flower of her youth, who went with Maximus . . . and never again returned." Nevertheless, it is the Picts and Scots whom he speaks of as having taken advantage of her unprotected state. These people having constantly oppressed and attacked the Britons, letters were sent to Rome asking aid. Rome replied [2] by sending her legions, who beat back the enemy; but the danger having passed, the Romans returned. Again the barbarians swept down upon Britain, " like hungry and ravening wolves, rushing with greedy jaws upon the fold now left without a shepherd." Again embassies were sent to Rome imploring aid. Once more help was given, but this time the Romans warned the provincials that aid could not always be rendered. The islanders were advised to arm themselves, to practise the art of war, and to prepare to protect themselves from their enemies. Yet again, the Romans having returned, the Picts and Scots, " like worms which in the heat of midday come forth from their holes, hastily land again from their canoes . . . differing from one another in manners, but inspired with the same thirst for blood, and all more eager to cover their vile faces in shaggy hair than to hide with decent clothing those parts of their body which required it."

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[1] It is worth remarking that Theodosius the Elder fought against these Picts and Scots (see *ante*, p. 47) in *Kent* and relieved London, which they were threatening. We can hardly believe that his opponents had marched right through Britain from Caledonia or that they had come from Ireland. It is probable that they were sea-rovers.

[2] Gildas now introduces the walls. His account of the giving of aid reads as though the Romans came from Italy and then returned. His treatment of these years is confused, but Zosimus states that Honorius wrote to the cities of Britain bidding them defend themselves, which looks as though appeals had been made.

By this time, however, the second and stronger wall (according to Gildas) had been built, and the Britons were keeping watch. But it was all useless. The barbarians dragged the defenders from the walls and slew them; a way was made by the attackers across the defences; cities were ravaged and laid waste; the Britons were butchered like sheep, and the wail of women and children was heard throughout the land. Once more the Britons appealed to Rome, sending to Aëtius the letter which commences "To Aëtius, thrice consul: the groans of the Britons," and recounting how "the barbarians drive us to the sea; the sea casts us back to the barbarians: two forms of death alone await us—we are slaughtered or drowned." Now, however, they appealed to deaf ears. Alaric was knocking at the gates of Rome itself. The brave Vandal Stilicho, after keeping hosts of enemies at bay by his doubtful and dangerous policy, had been put to death. Less than three decades later Aëtius was facing the Huns under Attila. Rome, herself now in great danger, had little aid to give to that Britain which, in a few years, had produced four pretenders to the Imperial power.[1]

VORTIGERN

Britain, thus left to her own resources, seems to have availed herself of an expedient not dissimilar to that adopted in earlier years by Stilicho; the barbarians were called in as a protection against the barbarians—the Angles from the Baltic were appealed to for help against the Picts of Caledonia and the Scots of Ireland.

As we have said, the authorities for this period are slender and none too correct; but if we follow Gildas, who is certainly our primary authority, we must believe that after Aëtius had refused aid the people of Britain began to suffer famine as a result of the depredations of their enemies, the Picts and Scots. Eventually, however, the Britons gained a victory which drove back the invaders. Peace reigned for a time, and with peace plenty. With wealth grew up every kind of luxury and licentiousness. The Britons became once more easy victims for their enemies to plunder.

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[1] J. B. Bury would seem to suggest (*Roman Empire*, vol. i, p. 111) that Stilicho had intentionally set the barbarians to the attack upon Britain to prevent British usurpers from doing more harm.

Soon it became evident that a new and more terrible danger threatened. Messengers arrived bringing the news that their enemies were rapidly approaching with intent to devastate the whole country. Rapidly a council was called by Vortigern,[1] the leader of the British, and it was decided to call in the aid of the Saxons to repel the invasion from the north. Then indeed does Gildas pour out the full torrent of his anger. " What dense darkness must have enshrouded their minds—darkness desperate and cruel ! " we hear him cry. " The very people whom, when absent, they dreaded more than death itself were invited to live . . . under the selfsame roof. A multitude of whelps came from the lair of this savage lioness, in three *cyuls*, as they call them—that is, in three ships of war—with their sails wafted by the wind and with omens and prophecies favourable."

The leaders, Hengist and Horsa,[2] having been invited by Vortigern, now landed in Britain, leading their Saxon and Angle followers. According to Roger of Wendover, "When at last they [Hengist and Horsa] stood before the King, he asked them respecting the faith and religion of their ancestors, on which Hengist replied : ' We worship the gods of our fathers—Saturn, Jupiter, and the other deities who govern the world, and especially Mercury, whom in our tongue we call Woden, and to whom our fathers dedicated the fourth day of the week, which to this day is called Wodensday ; next to him we worship the most powerful goddess Frea, to whom they dedicated the sixth day, which, after her, we call Friday.' ' I grieve much,' said Vortigern, ' for your belief, or, rather, for your unbelief ; but I am exceedingly rejoiced at your coming, which, whether brought about by God *or*

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[1] Gildas calls him Gurthrigern ; the *Brut y Tywysogion*, Gwrtheyrn ; the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle*, Wyrtgeorn.

[2] Bede first introduces these names.

otherwise, is most opportune for my urgent necessities.' " Whatever we may think of Vortigern's cross-questioning of Hengist concerning his religious beliefs, we may probably accept as an historic fact the statement that about the middle of the fifth century the Angles and Saxons began to settle in the eastern part of the island.

The first-comers, finding the land to their liking, are found sending to their countrymen accounts of the fertility of the land and the nothingness of the Britons. The glowing accounts thus received caused more and yet more of the barbarians to cross the seas and establish themselves with their unhappy hosts.

For a time it would seem that the new-comers kept the pact which the Britons had made with them. The men of the North had been met in battle and defeated. But soon the victors began to make new demands upon the Britons. Food and clothing were given in abundance, and for a time the allowance of provisions, being plentifully bestowed, " stopped their doggish mouths," as Gildas puts it. Little by little, however, larger claims were made, new quarrels created. Finally, they followed up by deeds their threats to break their treaty and plunder the whole island.

By this time the messages of the first-comers had brought into the island more of their kinsmen, Angles, Saxons, and Jutes. According to Bede, the Jutes, in time, occupied the Isle of Wight, Kent, and a part of the province of Wessex. The Saxons were the ancestors of the men of Essex, Sussex, and the West Saxons of Wessex ; the Angles, of the people of East Anglia and Mercia and Northumbria. As we have seen, the invaders came originally under the leadership of Hengist and Horsa, who landed, according to the *Chronicle*, at Ypwines-fleot (Ebbsfleet, in Thanet) in A.D. 449. At last, when their numbers began to terrify the native Britons, an alliance was entered into between the new-comers and the very people whom they had been invited to subdue. According to Nennius, the cause of this change of attitude was to be found in the Saxons' increased demands, which had moved the Britons to request their return to their old homes. The same writer informs us that Hengist persuaded the British king, Vortigern, to allow him to send for more men so that the common enemy could be completely destroyed, that Vortigern assented, and that sixteen vessels of warriors came over the seas, with them being Hengist's beautiful daughter, whom Vortigern, we are told, " at the instigation of the devil, and enamoured with the beauty of the damsel," demanded, promising Hengist " to give for her whatever he should ask." Hengist demanded the province of Kent, and this being granted, " the maid was delivered up to the King." Again Hengist advised Vortigern to assent to more men being summoned, and again new ships, now to the number of forty, came oversea to Britain. Hengist, indeed, continued, according to Nennius, sending for men from his native country, so that some of the islands from which they came were completely denuded of inhabitants.

SYSTEMATIC CONQUEST COMMENCED

At last the Angles and Saxons seem to have felt strong enough to commence a systematic conquest of the island.[1] The treaty with the Britons was broken, and the Pict of the north, who had probably long before joined with the Angle for the devastation of North Britain, was looked upon rather as an ally than as an enemy.

Now indeed, according to Bede, who echoes for us the words of Gildas, the whole island was subjected to a pitiless ravaging: buildings were overthrown, temples desecrated, towns levelled to the ground, women and children murdered, and the people who had once dwelt in the fertile plains of central and southern Britain were driven to the mountains and forests of the west and the north. As Gildas writes, "All the columns were levelled with the ground . . . all the husbandmen driven away, together with their bishops and priests and people, whilst the sword shone, and the flames burst out around them on all sides. Grievous to behold in the streets lay the tops of stately towers, tumbled to the ground, stones of high walls, holy altars, parts of corpses smeared with livid clots of coagulated blood, appearing as though they had been squeezed together in a press. No burial was possible unless in the ruins of the houses, or in the ravening bellies of beasts and birds of prey. . . . Some . . . of the miserable remnant of the people, being seized in the mountains, were slaughtered in great numbers; others, compelled by famine, surrendered to their foes and yielded themselves to perpetual slavery, exposing themselves to the risk of instant death, which, in truth, was the greatest boon that could be granted them; others crossed the seas with loud lamentations."

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[1] We dismiss without comment the story introduced by Nennius of the murder of the Britons by the Saxons. According to Nennius, Hengist gave a feast to celebrate the ratification of the treaty of alliance between Saxon and Briton. He invited thereto the King and many nobles and leaders to the number of about three hundred. The Saxons too were invited, each man being warned to bring with him a dagger and to be ready to use it to stab his neighbour when at the appropriate moment the cry should be raised : " Saxons, seize your daggers ! " The King was to be spared. The feast proceeded for some time, until the Britons began to get merry and, at last, drunk. Then the bold Hengist called out : " Saxons, seize your daggers ! " and instantly his followers drew their daggers and, falling each upon his neighbour, slew him. The King, we are told, was made captive, and only purchased his freedom by surrendering the provinces of Essex, Sussex, and Middlesex, " besides other districts to be chosen by his betrayers."

Though Gildas speaks of these disasters as if they had befallen within a short space of time, it would seem that the Saxons did not extensively conquer Britain for many years. Gildas, indeed, speaks with authority, for he was born but a few years after the events he was recounting had occurred. When we turn to the chronicles left by the invaders we find, however, that the progress made was slow. Many a battle was fought and lost or won before the Angles and Saxons and Jutes succeeded in driving the Britons from England to Wales, to Cornwall, and to Strathclyde.

GERMANUS

Before we can relate the various battles which were fought against the Britons by the invaders we must mention the name and deeds of the famous bishop Germanus, for he it was who was deemed in later years responsible for a great and decisive victory won by the Britons—probably the victory which, according to Gildas, held the barbarian at bay for a time and heralded a period of plenty and luxury. Germanus, Bishop of Auxerre,[1] was a well-known saint of the fifth century whose deeds have been preserved to us in large part through the writings of Constantius of Lyons. Gildas appears to have known nothing of the holy Bishop, but both Bede and Nennius have much to say of the marvels worked by him.

According to Bede, some years after the Pelagian heresy[2] had corrupted the Britons, Germanus, Bishop of Auxerre, and Lupus of Troyes were sent into Britain to confirm the people's faith. The subsequent journeys of the missionaries, if we believe Constantius, were marked from the very outset by many miraculous manifestations. Even while crossing the sea we find Germanus, by his prayers and the sprinkling of holy water, quelling a tempest. On landing he expelled many evil spirits, gave sight to the blind, quenched fires, and cured diseases.

In spite of these triumphs of faith the Britons obstinately continued in their unorthodox beliefs, even after the return of the Saint. But although blind to his manifold perfections as a priest, and while spurning his spiritual aid, the Britons yet sought his leadership in battle and his guidance in the affairs of war. At this time the Picts and Scots were threatening. The opposing forces met at Rhual, near Mold, in Flintshire, some time about the year 429. The Britons, led by Germanus, took up their position in a valley surrounded by hills, and the Saint, choosing the most active of his followers, sent them out as scouts. By this means news of the advance of the enemy and knowledge of his dispositions were ascertained. The good Bishop, who had prepared for battle by prayers and whose host was still wet with the water of baptism, awaited the approach of the foe, the Britons lying in ambush. At the appropriate moment Germanus, bearing the standard, ordered his men to repeat his words after him in a loud voice. As the enemy advanced, unaware of the existence of the hidden foe, the Bishop's men three times cried out, "Hallelujah!" The shout, taken up by their followers and re-echoed by the surrounding hills, swelled out into a roar of triumph, so that their enemies, deeming themselves surrounded and overwhelmed by numbers, fled panic-stricken, abandoning their arms, desiring only to save themselves by flight. The disordered foe were drowned in great numbers while attempting to cross a river. The victory was, indeed, decisive, and, as Bede tells us, "the scattered spoils were gathered up, the devout soldiers rejoiced in the victory which Heaven had granted them."

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[1] An account of this saint was published in 1908 by the monk R. P. Germain-Marie des Noyers, entitled *Saint Germain l'Auxerrois*.

[2] See *ante*, p. 62 *n*. Germanus made two visits to Britain, the first in *c*. 429–430, the second in *c*. 446–447.

FIRST BATTLES BETWEEN SAXON AND BRITON

It was after this victory that the Britons enjoyed, as we have seen, the period of plenty which, according to Gildas, only served to create civil discord, new vices and wickedness. Within sixteen years the victors were constrained to appeal to Aëtius, and, on his refusing aid, to call in the Saxons. Within twenty years of the departure of Germanus the people who, cleansed with the water of baptism, had, under the leadership of the Saint, driven back the Picts, were compelled to ally themselves with the pagans. This was, as we have seen, in 449. For six years the Saxons fought in support of the Britons, but in 455, the *Chronicle* tells us, "Hengist and Horsa fought against King Vortigern at the place called Aegaelesthrep;[1] his brother Horsa was there slain, and after that Hengist and Aesc his son obtained the kingdom." In the year following[2] another sanguinary battle was fought, this time at Crayford. Some 4000 of the Britons were slain, and the inhabitants of Kent fled in terror and took refuge in London (*Lunden byrig*). After this victory there seems to have been a lull for some nine years. In 465 (466) we find Hengist and Aesc once more returning to the attack, when twelve Welsh (that is, enemy) chiefs were slain near Wippedes-fleote.[1] The Saxons on their side did not escape without loss, losing a thegn whose name, we are told, was Wipped. As yet nothing very decisive had taken place, notwithstanding the flight to London in 456. In 473, however, the Saxons inflicted a decisive defeat upon their enemy. In that year Hengist and Aesc defeated the Britons and took countless booty, " and the Welsh fled from the Angles as from fire." It is probably from this battle that we should date the conquest of Kent. Four years later another leader landed in Britain. The new-comer, Aelle, accompanied by his three sons, Cymen, Wlencing, and Cissa, came in three ships with his followers and disembarked at Cymenes-ora.[2] For some years we hear nothing of Aelle, but in 485 he fought against the Welsh near Mearcraedes Burn, a battle of which Henry of Huntingdon says so much, but of which we really know nothing, not even the result, which was probably adverse to the invaders.

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[1] Aylesford and Elstree have been suggested; Plummer seems to favour the former.

[2] One text gives 456 and another 457 as the date. The dates throughout cannot be given correctly within more than one year.

Three years later (488) Aesc apparently succeeded his father Hengist and reigned as King of Kent for twenty-four years. Meanwhile Aelle and his son Cissa continued to harass the Britons. Of the next two years we know nothing. In 491 the Saxons are found besieging the Roman town of Anderida. This city, which had enjoyed centuries of peace, was stubbornly defended ; but at last the besiegers obtained an entry, and, having the inhabitants at their mercy, they put them to the sword, " so that not a single Briton was there left."[3] Roman Anderida, which had flourished for centuries, was left desolate, so that to-day its very site is doubtful.

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[1] Unidentified. Ebbsfleet has been suggested, but Plummer doubts. The whole entry appears to us to be doubtful.

[2] Earle suggests Shoreham as the modern equivalent. Plummer points out that Wlencing's name is preserved in Lancing and Cissa's in Chichester.

[3] It has been argued from this that the war was a war of extermination. As Plummer points out, however, the total destruction is mentioned as something exceptional. The Teutonic invasion of Britain in the fifth century was about as brutal as, and no more so than, the Teutonic invasion of Belgium in the twentieth.

ARRIVAL OF THE WEST SAXONS

Four years after this massacre, in 495, the West Saxons first came over the seas in five ships, which were beached at a place called Cerdics-ora. Their leader was Cerdic; it is he who is generally regarded as the founder in England of our Royal House, and it is this people, in conjunction with the Angles, which is supposed to have contributed so largely to the formation of the people of England.[1] We find them being immediately opposed by the Britons and read of a battle being fought "on the same day." Presumably the Saxons were victorious and the landing was accomplished.

BATTLE OF MOUNT BADON

It was about this time that the famous battle of Mount Badon was fought.[2] According to Gildas and Bede, the leader of the Britons was Ambrosius Aurelianus, a Roman who, alone of that nation, had survived the misfortunes of the preceding century, in which his parents, who were of the royal race, had perished. Nennius, however, discards the Roman leader and boldly tells us that it was the British hero Arthur, who now enters the pages of history for the first time, who led his people to victory. Whether he was the descendant of one of the Roman tyrants or usurpers, or of the *Comes Britanniae*, or whether he was some British chief who had gathered his countrymen around him, the victory seems to have been an important one and probably stopped a further advance by the invaders for some years. The struggle still continued, however, and although it is clear that the Britons were fighting valiantly, fresh hordes continually came from over the sea and slowly but surely pressed back their foes ever to the west and north.

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[1] It is extremely easy to give too much prominence to the Teutonic part of the English race. The English people are very composite in nationality. The Saxons and Angles were conquered by the Danes, and the Danes by the Normans. The Angles were, indeed, serfs rather than rulers in England by the thirteenth century. There is quite as much Celtic as Teutonic blood in the average Englishman of to-day.

[2] Bede's date works out at 493; *Annales Cambriae* gives 516. The site is doubtful; some say Bath, some Badbury, some place it in South Wales, some in Scotland. The last-named locality, we believe, is certainly wrong, since there was a second battle of Badon fought in or near Wales.

Wessex and the Battle of Cerdicsford

For thirteen years after the landing of Cerdic we have no reference to any battles which the Saxons won.[1] In 508, however, Cerdic and Cynric slew a British king and five thousand men with him. Six years later still more ships sailed to Britain, and new leaders, Stuf and Wihtgar,[2] fought against the Britons and put them to flight. By 519, according to the *Chronicle*, Cerdic and Cynric had obtained the kingdom of the West Saxons, and in that year fought against the Britons at Cerdicsford. Henry of Huntingdon's imagination [3] tells us that sunset stopped the slaughter, but the cold pages of the earlier chronicler give us but little knowledge of the nature of the fight. We read, however, that from this year onward the royal offspring of the West Saxons reigned, and it is possible that the battle was decisive and established Cerdic and his line firmly in the land which later grew into the kingdom of Wessex. Two more battles was Cerdic destined to fight against the Britons before he died in 534, one being decided at Cerdic's-lea, with what result we are not told, the other at Carisbrooke, in the Isle of Wight, where the Britons were defeated with much loss.

On the death of Cerdic, Cynric and his son succeeded to the leadership of the West Saxons, and granted to Stuf and Wihtgar the conquered lands in the Isle of Wight. The years which followed were completely uneventful, and the chronicler devotes much of his space to recounting eclipses of the sun. In 544 Wihtgar died and was buried at Carisbrooke.

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[1] Under date 501 the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle* talks of a certain Port who effected a landing at Portsmouth, but we cannot accept the statement.

[2] Nephews of Cerdic *or* Cynric. The *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle*, under date 534, says ' and,' but this is impossible. Probably the correct translation is ' relatives,' not ' nephews.'

[3] It may be, of course, that Henry of Huntingdon had resort to fuller chronicles, now lost, than those we possess.

NORTHUMBRIA

Three years after the death of this Wessex chieftain another movement on the part of the invaders began. So far, as we have seen, they had limited their efforts to the conquest of the south. It can hardly be, however, that during these years the Picts and Scots, aided by the Angles and Saxons, had left the Britons of the north in peace. The first mention of an attempt to conquer the province which in later years was called Northumbria is made in the *Chronicle* under date 547, where we read that "this year Ida[1] began to reign, from whom arose the royal race of Northumbria; and he reigned twelve years, and built Bamburgh, which was at first enclosed by a hedge and afterward by a wall." During his reign he established the Angles in a firm position in the north, and on his death in 559 he was succeeded by Aelle the Yffing, who reigned over his people for twenty-nine years. The year following saw the death of Cynric, who throughout his reign had fought but two battles, one in 552 and the other in 556. He in turn was succeeded by Ceawlin, who, like Aelle, reigned for many years. Some years later Ethelbert succeeded to the kingdom of Kent, over which he ruled for more than fifty years. We have thus, rather more than a century after the first coming of the Saxons to aid the Britons whom they slew and whose land they devastated, three Saxon or Angle kings reigning over established kingdoms in Kent, in Wessex, and in Northumbria. What the misery of those years had been for the earlier inhabitants of Britain we can only imagine. Of the constant fights for liberty and for life we have only partial records. That the Britons fought bravely is manifest. Many a battle was to be waged before they finally surrendered the fairest shires of England, but at last, as we shall see, the conquest was complete. The Saxon had taught the meaning of terror to the Briton, even as the Dane was to teach it to the Saxon.

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[1] Ida, like most of the other Saxon and Angle kings, *e.g.* Cerdic, Edwin, Penda, Hengist, claimed descent from Woden.

CHAPTER V

ST COLUMBA AND ST AUGUSTINE[1]

WE have now reached a stage in our history at which we find three pagan kings established on the thrones of Kent, Wessex, and Northumbria respectively. The moment is therefore opportune at which to break in upon our narrative with some short account of the two missions, one from Rome and one from Ireland, which planted the seed destined to grow into that vigorous tree the English Church, and started a movement that ended the worship of Woden.

For centuries, of course, the Britons had been Christianized. It is possible—certainly the early Fathers state it—that missionaries had come to preach the faith even as early as the first century. Of this we have already spoken. With the coming of the Teutons, however, the religious life of Britain was profoundly changed. The old British Church was subdued by pagan rites ; the ancient churches were destroyed, the Christian altars broken, the Christian inhabitants, the Britons, reduced to slavery or driven to the mountains of Eryri, of Cumberland, of South Wales, forced to retire into Cornwall or beyond the seas. By the date we have now reached (560) it is true that the whole of what is now England was by no means conquered by the pagan invaders, but already large tracts of land had been lost to the Christians, and, as we have seen, three pagan kings now ruled in Britain.

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[1] Throughout the rest of this history we shall use the popular spelling of Anglo-Saxon names where there is one.

COLUMBA AND AUGUSTINE

Columba

The first step toward the conversion of the pagans was taken from Ireland. The leaders of the British Church doubtless felt themselves impotent to minister to their country's enemies; with the Irish, however, no such obstacle existed. Yet, even so, there seems to have been some degree of chance in the events which led to the mission of St Columba and the eventual conversion of the Picts and pagans of the North.[1]

Though admitting the partiality of our authorities, we may still weave a coherent story of these ancient Christian missionaries. The first movement, as we have said, came from Ireland. The Celtic Christians were, of course, great missionaries. St Columban, a contemporary of St Columba, had led an expedition to the Continent, and Celtic centres of piety and learning had been established at Luxeuil in the Vosges, St Gallen and Reichenau in Switzerland, Bobbio in North Italy, and elsewhere. St Columba himself was less ambitious.

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[1] We would add a note of warning relative to the writing of the lives of these ancient saints. In olden days men, even admirably educated, learned, and acute men such as Bede, were intensely superstitious; they were also possessed of unbounded faith, and regarded the Deity and His servants as being not only able but willing to perform the most marvellous miracles for the slightest purpose. They also possessed an unbounded belief in the divinity of man; the saint was regarded as having earned a perpetual rest in Heaven, his likeness to the angels was acknowledged, his presence in Paradise was presumed, doubt as to existence after death was never even entertained. We, to-day, living in a civilization so complex that it tends to subjugate men's minds, have *receded* to the opposite extreme. We no longer worship or believe anything save facts capable of demonstration. In such an age the pathetic beliefs of the ancients may seem grotesque: we may be tempted to regard Bede or Adamnan or Eddius as wilfully inventing when they tell us of the miracles their saints performed. The truth is, they sincerely believed that they had occurred. Whatever we may think of the other early writers, the monk of Jarrow cannot be accused of *carelessness*. Bede was, indeed, the most painstaking of historians. Before he published his life of Cuthbert to the world he had sifted the evidence most carefully, as he tells us. He relied on the statements of men who had known the Saint personally. Having written down the details, he showed his book to, among others, Herefrid the priest, an intimate friend of Cuthbert's. He deleted, or corrected, all inaccuracies thus discovered; finally, he read it to the elders of the church, by whom it was carefully examined, and they found no inaccuracies. Despite this care, the work is crammed with miracles, so that we moderns, who worship the sense of touch, are compelled to say that it is full of glaring inventions and inaccuracies.

Born about 521, and having received a good education, mainly in monasteries, he had just reached manhood when the yellow plague swept through Europe, thinning the monasteries and vacating the schools. Columba, who seems already to have been filled with religious zeal, founded several monasteries, and it appeared as though he were destined to live a life of placid usefulness in his native country, when the murder of a youth who had taken sanctuary with him suddenly changed the whole course of his life.[1] The saintly monk now turned soldier, went to his own people, the Hy Neill, in the north of Ireland, and roused his tribe to take revenge upon the murderer, King Diarmaid. The forces met and Columba's party was not completely successful. Columba himself we next find in exile, whether self-imposed or not we do not know. The place of his retreat, the isle Iona, was one whence he could not see his country's coasts. There he settled in 563.

Columba as Missionary

It was in this small island, three miles long by one and a half broad, that the Saint founded his mission, destined in time to bring the Picts and the men of North Britain to the faith. He seems to have chosen three methods of persuading the heathen : (1) example, by leading a holy life ; (2) precept, by preaching the religion he would have them adopt ; (3) influence, by seeking the aid of their king. As Dr Plummer [2] says : " Just as St Patrick attacked the heathenism of the Irish at the Court of King Laoghaire, and St Augustine attacked the heathenism of the English at the Court of King Ethelbert, so St Columba attacked that of the Picts at the Court of King Brude. At first the King of the Picts closed his gates against him ; but Columba made the sign of the Cross, and the gates opened of their own accord. The Druids, like Elymas the sorcerer, with the proconsul, Sergius Paulus, tried to turn away King Brude from the faith ; but Columba in the end prevailed."

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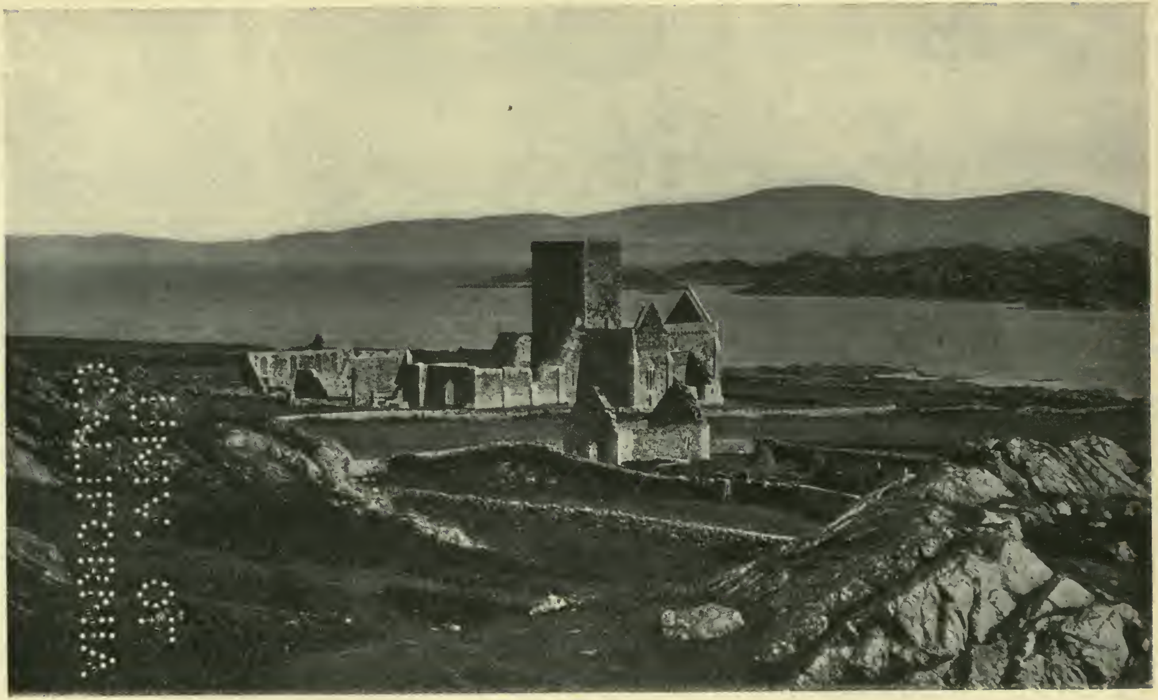
[1] The story about the copying of another saint's gospel and the consequent disgrace is not accepted by the best modern authority.

[2] *Churches in Britain*, vol. i, p. 90.



UNIV. OF CALIFORNIA

PLATE XV. IONA CATHEDRAL FROM THE SOUTH-WEST

UNIV. OF
CALIFORNIA

By 565 the King had embraced Christianity, peace was established between him and Columba's countrymen where before there had been war, and the way was open for a more extensive conversion of the Picts. In 574 the throne of Dalriada was occupied by Aidan, Prince of Strathclyde, who owed his elevation largely to the influence wielded by Columba, and the way was now clear for the conversion of North Britain.

In the meantime Columba had established monasteries in the Hebrides; his reputation had become widespread; his eloquence and his piety had caused his name to be venerated even by the pagans; and in Ireland, to which he returned on short visits, he was no longer regarded as an excommunicated provoker of war, but rather as a holy man.

The Church established by Columba was, as the late Dr Hodgkin pointed out,[1] tribal rather than urban, monastic rather than episcopal. The later Augustine introduced into Britain the more centralized Italian system, but Columba relied rather on planting monasteries in rural places, whence irradiated on all sides some knowledge and much piety. Augustine, who had, unlike Columba, a country to work upon which possessed cities and some sort of governmental system, sought rather to found bishoprics and dioceses, a hierarchy of priests and an ordered system of Church government. Considering the people whom they were endeavouring to convert, it is probable that both Columba and Augustine took the best means to attain the desired result.

The monastic order established by Columba certainly wrought many good works among the people of his adoption. Guests were received with the fullest hospitality; the sick were tended; the monks were devout and spent much time in prayer and fasting; all property was in common and celibacy was observed; the needy were given their necessities: in a word, the Order sought to live a life of simple piety, devotion, and usefulness. In such an age and among such a people such example cannot but have had a mighty effect.

It was in the year 597, the very year in which Augustine landed in England, that Columba died. As Dr Hodgkin says, "He is one of the most vividly seen personalities of the early Middle Ages; a man of somewhat hot temper in youth, softened and controlled in later life, with a stately beauty of feature which seemed to correspond with his princely descent, and with a kind of magnetic power of attracting to himself the devotion of his followers, a lover of animals and beloved by them . . . he might, perhaps, not unfittingly, be called the John Wesley of the sixth century."

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[1] *Political History of England*, vol. i, p. 149.

AUGUSTINE

As we have said, it was in 597 that Augustine first reached these shores, having started for Britain at the instance of Pope Gregory early in June 596.[1] Since it was this Pope who was responsible for the mission, we, like the Venerable Bede of old, will give some account of him. Gregory, the first of the Popes bearing that name, called 'the Great,' was born in Rome in 540. His father was a wealthy senator, his mother, Silvia, was a saintly lady; the child was able and his abilities were directed by the best teachers available. By the age of thirty-three Gregory had attained the high position of prefect of the city, but in the year following he resigned that post and became a monk. His rise in the Church was rapid. Successively appointed archdeacon and *apocrisiarius*, or ambassador, at Constantinople, he was, on the death of Pelagius II, unanimously elected Pope on September 3, 590. Once elevated to the papal chair he devoted all his manifold talents and his great energy to the service of his children in the Church and became truly "the slave of the slaves of God." As Bede says, "Other bishops applied themselves to building churches and adorning them with gold and silver, but Gregory's whole time was devoted to the winning of souls."

It was some years before the death of Pelagius II that the event happened, the tradition of which has been preserved to us by Bede, which resulted eventually in St Augustine's mission. In the words of the monk of Jarrow: "It is said that one day, when some merchants were newly arrived, and many articles for sale were collected in the market-place, and many purchasers assembled, Gregory came among the rest, and saw, among other objects, some boys exposed for sale, with fair complexions, beautiful faces, golden hair, and comely forms. When he saw them he inquired[1] from what region or territory they were brought. He was told that they came from the island of Britain, the inhabitants of which all presented the same appearance. Again he inquired whether the islanders were Christians or whether they were lost in the errors of paganism. He was told that they were pagans. On receiving that answer he heaved a heavy sigh from his inmost heart, saying: 'Alas, the pity that men with such glorious faces should be possessed by the Prince of Darkness and that the grace of outward form should hide a want of grace within!' Once more he inquired by what name this people were called. He was told that they were called Angles (*Angli*). Whereupon, 'Good,' said he; 'for they have angels' faces, and such ought to be co-heirs with the angels in heaven. What is the province called from whence these boys were brought?' They replied that the people of that province were called Deiri. Whereupon, 'Good,' said he, 'Deiri; *de ira eruti*—rescued from wrath and called to the mercy of Christ. What is the king of that province called?' They replied that he was named Aelle (*Aelli*). Whereupon, playing on the name, he said: 'Alleluia; it is necessary that the praise of God our Creator be sung in those parts.'"

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[1] For what follows we have largely relied upon the authorities collected by Canon Mason in *The Mission of St Augustine to England*, and Plummer's *Baedae Opera Historica*.

The mention of Aelle as king enables us to fix the date of this meeting between Gregory and the slave-boys from Britain in Rome's market-place. Gregory had returned from Constantinople in 585 or 586, and Aelle died in 588, so that it was a year or two before he became Pope that Gregory determined to send a missionary to Britain.

Gregory's first step toward converting the pagans of Britain seems not to have been taken until 595, when he wrote to the presbyter Candidus requiring him, among other things, to buy British boys of the age of seventeen or eighteen years—"that they may be given to God in the monasteries, to their profit." Moreover, a presbyter was to be sent over to Britain lest any heathen should die unbaptized on the journey.

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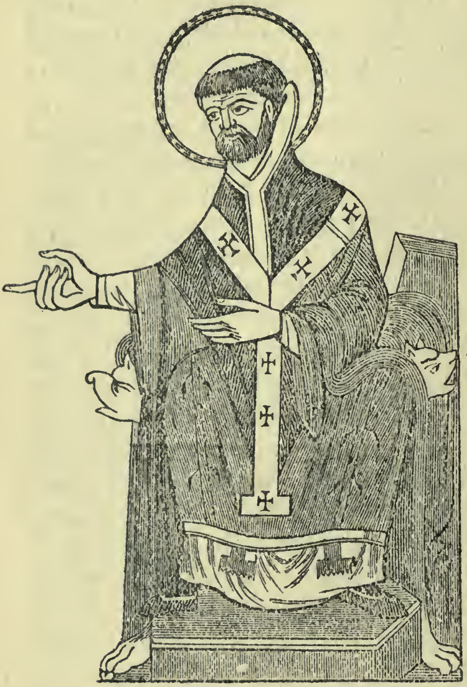
[1] "As they say," cautiously adds Bede.



St Augustine
Royal MS.

It was not, however, until the year following that a decided effort was made by Gregory to convert the English. In that year (596) the monk Augustine, "a servant of God," and with him a number of other monks, was sent to preach the Gospel to the English nation.

At first the missionaries were terrified at the thought of having to venture among the barbarians, of whose nameless cruelties they had been doubtless well informed. As Bede tells us: "Smitten powerless with fear, they desired to return home rather than to go on to a barbarous, fierce, and unbelieving people of whose very language they were ignorant." Having considered the matter fully, they did eventually come to the inglorious conclusion that safety rather than honour should be served. Augustine was sent back to obtain leave from Gregory to abandon an expedition so perilous, laborious, and uncertain. Gregory, however, was made of sterner stuff;

the weaklings were exhorted to proceed, their Pope saying most truly that " it would have been better never to have begun good works than to turn from them in thought when once begun." Augustine, now an abbot, was sent back armed with letters commendatory, and his followers were strictly enjoined to obey him. Vergilius, Bishop of Arles, Arigius, Patrician of Gaul, Theoderic and Theodebert, Kings of the Franks, Brunichilda, Queen of the Franks and aunt by marriage to Bertha, Queen of Kent, were requested to give all aid in their power to Augustine, and every step was taken to smooth the path of the missionaries.

Augustine's Arrival

Augustine, thus exhorted to effort and strengthened by help and guidance, appears to have persuaded his followers to accompany him into the unknown. After a lengthy journey he reached Britain, with some forty companions, in the spring of 597. It was upon the island of Thanet that Augustine and his followers first landed. At that time, according to Bede, " there was a very powerful king named Aedilbert [Ethelbert] in Kent, who had extended the confines of his empire to the banks of the mighty river Humber, which divides the southern from the northern Angles." At this time Thanet was indeed an island, being divided from the mainland by the river Wantsum.

The missionaries, as we have seen, were ignorant of the language of the people they had come to teach. They had taken with them, however, interpreters of Frankish nationality, and these Augustine sent to Ethelbert to inform him that one who had come from Rome brought to him the best of messages and the promise of eternal joys hereafter. Ethelbert received the message cautiously. The new-comers were ordered to remain in the island of Thanet, necessaries were supplied them, and the King treated them with the consideration due to strangers who had travelled far, until it was decided what should be done with them. It appears that Ethelbert had already some knowledge of the new religion; indeed, it could hardly be otherwise, for his wife Bertha was of the royal house of the Franks, being daughter to Charibert, King of Paris, and was a Christian. Moreover, she had in her suite a private chaplain, Liudhard, Bishop of Senlis, who had been sent with her to her pagan husband as a preserver of her faith. We must also remember that Bertha's relative, the notorious Brunhild or Brunichilda, had been specially requested by Gregory to aid Augustine. With such friends at Court it is not surprising that Augustine's reception was by no means unfriendly.

At last after much deliberation the King came to Thanet, and, taking his seat in the open air, he ordered Augustine and his companions to come and talk with him there. Bede tells us that the King " was careful not to allow them to come to him indoors in consequence of an ancient prophecy, and fearing that if they were possessed of black arts they might overcome him within doors." Augustine, thus summoned, made haste to attend the King in the chosen place. The missionary was, however, as we shall see, fully aware of his own dignity and sought to impress the pagan with a brave display. He and his followers approached singing litanies and carrying as a standard a cross of silver and a picture of our Lord and Saviour painted on a panel. Having arrived, at the bidding of the King they took seats and proceeded to expound their teaching to Ethelbert and his Court.

The King, having listened with attention, at last said : " You speak fair words and bring bright promises ; but since they are new and uncertain I cannot render my assent to them, nor relinquish those beliefs which, for long time, I and the whole of the English people have held. But since you are strangers who have travelled far and who, as I plainly perceive, desire to tell to us those things which you yourselves believe to be truest and best, we do not wish to injure you ; rather we desire to welcome you with friendly hospitality, and we shall make it our care that you are supplied with food according to your wants ; nor do we prohibit your gaining all the adherents to your faith whom you can by means of your preaching."

This fair speech was followed by deeds. The missionaries were allowed to leave the island of Thanet and were given lodging in the city of Canterbury, Ethelbert's capital, "in the parish of St Alphege, on the other side of Palace Street, toward the north."

CONVERSION OF ETHELBERT

Augustine and his followers, having been thus favourably received, left nothing undone which might advance the object for which they had come. Bede tells us that they served God with continual prayers, vigils, and fastings, preaching the living Word to those who would hear them and abandoning worldly things. Their preaching and example were not without effect, and many believed and were baptized. An ancient church, dedicated to St Martin, which had been built in olden times and which had survived the pagan devastations, was used as a sanctuary, and here the little band of Christians met together, Masses were celebrated and sermons delivered.

As time went on the devoted lives of the missionaries attracted the notice of the King. Pagan though he was, he knew that one good deed is worth a thousand silky sentences. Unmoved by Augustine's arguments or rhetoric, unpersuaded by his promises, the King saw in him an upright man who contrasted, favourably no doubt, with the priests of his own faith. Urged to become a convert by his Christian wife, precept and example at last persuaded him, and he was baptized on June 2, 597,[1] only a few months after the landing of the mission.

AUGUSTINE'S CONSECRATION

His purpose having prospered so wonderfully, Augustine, who was a typical monk of the Italian school, seems to have decided to organize the Church he had established. The presbyter Laurentius was sent to Gregory to announce the conversion of the English nation [2] and Augustine's appointment as bishop. At the same time the Pope's advice was desired upon certain important points. According to Gregory's letter to Eulogius, Bishop of Alexandria, we learn that Augustine had, by the Pope's leave, been made a bishop by the bishops of Germany, and it was with their aid that he had reached Britain, " that nation at the end of the world." We read that by Christmas (presumably of 597) more than ten thousand English people had been baptized by Augustine, and that this nation, which had hitherto been pagan, worshippers of trees (*lignorum*) and stones, was now converted to Christ. To Augustine himself the Pope wrote a long epistle full of gladness for the past and hope for the future.[1] Had Augustine listened to his superior's advice to " crush the risings of boastfulness in your heart," the later breach with the British Church might not have occurred. It is evident, indeed, that Gregory had studied his missioner and saw in him two faults—weakness and pride.

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[1] The date is uncertain.

[2] A complete overstatement of the facts; there were many pagans in Britain of the Angle race centuries after Augustine was dead.

Gregory realized that Augustine's mission had gained much support from the Christian Bertha; we therefore find him sending a letter to that Queen replete with sentences that must have brought the blush of pride to the cheeks of this almost barbarian lady. We find him linking her name with that of the saintly Helena, mother of Constantine the Great; we find him attributing the conversion of the English to the Queen rather than to the monk and expressing the hope that through her exertions the English race may be won over from paganism. Her learning is praised, and she is urged to " confirm the mind of [her] illustrious consort in his attachment to the Christian faith." Her deeds, she is told, had already made her name famous in Rome and in many countries, even in far Constantinople, where the Emperor had heard the news. Such fulsome flattery had its effect, and Bertha, we doubt not, laboured hard for the cause in the years which followed.[2]

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[1] He does not, however, fail to remind Augustine of his earlier weakness: " . . . *in Anglorum gente fortia dignatus est per infirmos operari.*"

[2] Another letter was also sent to Ethelbert, who is urged to " redouble his upright zeal in the conversion of his people."

Organization of the Church

Augustine's messengers had now returned, bearing the Pope's answers to the questions addressed to him. As Hodgkin has said, "The questions asked are of an extraordinary kind, and startle us by their strange juxtaposition of things momentous and things indifferent. . . . However, if the archbishop's questions seem to us rather surprising, the Pope's answers are noble and statesmanlike."[1] Of Augustine's nine[2] questions and their answers we cannot speak at length: they refer to such diverse things as the manner in which bishops should treat their clergy; how it was that different customs existed in different Churches; whether two brothers might marry two sisters; whether a bishop might be ordained without the presence of other bishops and how the bishops of Gaul and Britain should be treated; whether a pregnant woman might be baptized, and so on. It has been doubted whether the document which preserves for us these questions and answers is not a forgery.[3] If they are genuine, they cast rather a strong light upon the character of the questioner, who seems to have been overwhelmed with the importance of his position as bishop, and at the same time somewhat unacquainted with the teachings of the Scriptures.

Despite, however, the feebleness of the missionary, his labours were certainly amply rewarded. So numerous had his followers become that we find him sending to Gregory for more fellow-workers. Gregory, instantly acceding to his request, sent a new mission headed by Mellitus, Justus, Paulinus, and Rufinianus. With them he also sent ceremonial vestments and vessels, church ornaments, relics, and books, and, greatest gift of all, a pall with the intimation that Augustine might make twelve bishops in Britain. To York was to be sent another bishop with power to ordain a further twelve bishops and with the right to enjoy the metropolitan dignity. The two heads of the English Church were now the Bishops of

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[1] *Political History of England*, vol. i, p. 120.

[2] Some texts delete the ninth and give only eight.

[3] See Canon Plummer, *The Mission of Saint Augustine*, preface, p. ix.

London[1] and York, each holding equal powers,[2] the senior by ordination of the two being granted the precedence. Apart from details of place and organization which were developed later, we may say that this letter of Gregory established in England the foundations of the present system of Church government.

The new mission, like its forerunner, was armed with letters commendatory, and to Abbot Mellitus excellent advice was given as to the treatment to be meted out to the heathen temples, which evidently existed in England in some numbers.[3] This letter of advice, which commences, " To my beloved son Mellitus, an abbot, Gregory, the slave of the slaves of God," enjoins him not to allow the pagan temples (*fana idolorum*) to be destroyed, but rather to destroy the idols which were in them, to sprinkle the buildings with holy water, and to place altars and relics there. Gregory's purpose seems to have been grounded in utility and to have striven at preventing any sharp break between the old and the new, a break which, as he well understood, would stand in the way of many converts. Even the pagan sacrifice of animals was permitted. No longer in this case, however, was the offering to be made to pagan gods (or, in Gregory's word, *diabolo*), but to the Christian God. " So by retaining for them external joys they may the more easily be won to rejoicings of a spiritual nature."

CHURCH-BUILDING

So far the first mission had been devoting their energies mainly to the capital of Ethelbert (Canterbury) and the surrounding country. The church which they had originally used as their meeting-place, and which had been consecrated to St Martin of Tours, had doubtless been the centre of their labours. Now, however, it became necessary to occupy a more imposing structure. Consequently, with the consent of Ethelbert, a church which had been built in Canterbury in Roman times was repaired and used ; a monastery was also founded near the city. The church itself was consecrated in the name of Christ. Afterward the King was persuaded to raise the Church of Peter and Paul. Over the new monastery Abbot Peter, who was later drowned off the coast of France, was placed. Besides these adaptations of old churches and the building of new ones, Augustine, profiting by the Pope's advice to Mellitus, commenced to cleanse the pagan temples of their images. Such a temple, situated between St Martin's Church and the walls of Canterbury, was early purified, its idol was broken, and the building thus prepared was dedicated in the name of St Pancras the Martyr.

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[1] Augustine was Bishop of London, not Archbishop of Canterbury. It was in after years that Canterbury gained the Primacy.

[2] Augustine himself had a personal precedence granted him.

[3] Doubtless the pagans had utilized the temples built by the Romans for Christian and other worship.

Augustine and the British Church

We have now reached the opening years of the seventh century.[1] Augustine and his followers had by this time firmly established themselves under Ethelbert's protection. The pallium had been granted ; metropolitan sees at London and York had been established ; churches had been built and monasteries founded. As yet, however, but a comparatively small part of the people of this island had been brought within the Church. North of the Humber the invaders were still pagan ; to the west, where the Britons still existed, the rites of the Church of Rome were not used, but the ancient British Christians persisted in their own practices and were wicked enough to date Easter Sunday from the moon's fourteenth day to the twentieth instead of according to the 'proper time.'[2] In consequence of this and certain minor differences the two

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[1] The dates are very doubtful; no reliance can be placed on the order of Bede's chapters. See Plummer, *Baedae Opera*, vol. ii, p. 73.

[2] In view of the stand taken by Augustine and the leaders of the British Church over the date of Easter, it is amusing, if the dispute were not so regrettable, to observe that the name of this day of days, this yearly memorial of the resurrection of Christ, upon which the hopes of all Christians are founded, is as follows in the various languages : Greek, *πάσχα* ; Latin, *Pascha* ; French, *Pâques* ; Italian, *Pasqua* ; Spanish, *Pascua* ; Danish, *Paaske* ; Dutch, *Paaske*—all from the Hebrew or allied languages. The ENGLISH *Easter*, like the German *Ostern*, comes from the name of the Anglo-Saxon goddess of spring, Eastre, or Ostâra. The BRITISH (now Welsh) name for the day is *Pasg*.

Churches, Roman and British, had been at war and had found it impossible to work together for the salvation of the pagans.[1] Augustine now, however, with the assistance of Ethelbert, who would thus seem to have had some power over the Britons, persuaded the bishops and leaders of the nearest British province, probably the men of South Wales, to attend a conference, which was held at the spot called, in later years, Augustine's Oak, which was probably situated at Aust, on the Severn, opposite Chepstow.[2] The meeting was a failure. Neither entreaties, exhortations, nor reproofs would make the Britons leave their traditions. Not even a miracle worked by Augustine convinced their stubborn minds; but it shook their certainty, and they asked that a synod should again be held that more of their number might attend. The new meeting was arranged, and to it came seven British bishops and many men of great learning from the famous monastery of Bangor-on-Dee (Bangor-is-coed, in Flintshire). Before coming, however, the new delegates fortified themselves with the counsel of a holy man, an anchorite, of whom they inquired whether they ought to surrender their practices and follow the teachings of Augustine. He wisely answered: "If he be a man of God, follow him." "But how," said they, "can we prove that?" He replied: "*Tollite iugum meum super vos, et discite a me, quia mitis sum et humilis corde.*[3] If this Augustine be meek and lowly of heart, we may well suppose that he bears Christ's yoke himself, and is offering it to you to bear; but if he be harsh and haughty, it is plain that he is not of God and we may be careless of his teaching." Again they said: "But how shall we discern even that?" "Make sure," he replied, "that he and his companions come first to the meeting-place, and if upon your approach he shall rise to receive you, then you shall know that he is a child of

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[1] Another reason, already suggested, is that the Britons so hated their conquerors, the Saxons, as to render missionary effort impossible.

[2] Malmesbury and 'The Oak,' in Down Ampney, near Cricklade, have also been suggested. See Plummer, *Baedae Opera*, vol. ii, p. 74.

[3] "Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart."

Christ and you shall hear him with reverence; but if he slights you and will not rise to meet you, though you are the more numerous, then you may treat him with disdain."

The Britons, thus advised, did as the anchorite suggested. Augustine, overwhelmed it may be with the importance of the pallium, received them seated; the Britons, incensed, contradicted everything he said, and finally, after a heated wrangle, Augustine gave vent to his anger and disappointment in a savage prophecy that if the Britons would not preach the Way of Life to the English people they should find death at their hands—a prophecy which, if ever made in fact, was amply fulfilled at the battle of Chester, when more than a thousand of the monks of Bangor were slaughtered by the Angles.

The conference was a complete failure. A golden opportunity had been lost of welding together in a strong bond of unity the Anglo-Saxon and the British Church.

It was shortly after this attempt at unity had so completely broken down, in the year 604, that Augustine, after having ordained two bishops, Mellitus and Justus, died, and was buried in the open near the Church of Peter and Paul, which was then being built, but was neither completed nor consecrated. When it was at last completed and blessed the poor relics of Augustine were exhumed and suitably interred in the north aisle. His place as Archbishop of Canterbury was taken by Laurentius, whom the Saint in his lifetime had ordained for that purpose.

Criticism of Augustine's Mission

It is perhaps impossible at this period of time and on the evidence at our disposal to determine the true worth of Augustine and his work. On the one hand we find him laying the foundations of the Christian Church among a pagan people with considerable success; we find him living a life of piety; we find him forsaking worldly things, energetic in church-building, capable in Church organization. On the other hand he appears to have been somewhat cowardly, decidedly haughty, and even pompous; he tactlessly destroyed any hope he might have had of winning over the Britons to his side. At the same time he was apparently eager for unity, and was certainly no more wanting in discretion than his successor Laurentius, who also made certain futile attempts to bring about a reconciliation. Though a good monk, he was, as we have said, if the questions and answers are genuine, by no means learned in the Scriptures. He was always too careful over dignities and details, and too careless over the broader questions that might make for success or failure. Finally, we see the Church he founded almost overwhelmed by the tide of paganism which surged over the country on the death of his protector Ethelbert in 616.

Whatever we may think of Augustine, one thing at least is clear : his claim early in his mission to have driven away the darkness of error from the English nation was unfounded. The work had but commenced when he died, and it was not for many a year, not, indeed, until the battle of Winwaed, won by Christian Oswy over pagan Penda on November 15, 655, that the Christian religion could be said to be in any degree paramount in Saxon England ; even then many pagans lived on here and much work remained to be done before England could be regarded as completely Christian.

CHAPTER VI

THE SEVENTH CENTURY

FIRST PHASE: TO THE BATTLE OF WINWAED

BEFORE attempting to describe the two great movements which took place in the England of the seventh century—the overthrow of paganism and the final conquest of the Britons—we must travel backward for half a century and shortly sketch out the events which had occurred during the years when Columba was converting the Picts and Augustine was establishing Church government in Kent.

We left the political history of England at the date 560–565. Ceawlin had succeeded to the kingdom of the West Saxons; Aelle, or Ella, was ruler of the Northumbrians, or rather of the men of Deira; Ethelbert had become King of Kent.[1] Notwithstanding the fact that the ancestry of Aelle the Yffing extended to Woden the Highest, we find his reign slumbering on in apparent uneventfulness until the King died in 588, leaving to Ethelric his kingdom and to his country a little son, then but three years old, but destined in the future to bring to the throne qualities which have made the name of Edwin of Deira stand as high as any in early English history.

Passing from the North to southern Kent, we find Ethelbert then reigning. As yet but a young man, his long reign was to see him advance from the position of a weak king, whose territories were invaded and whose ealdormen, Oslaf and Cnebba, were slain by Ceawlin and Cutha (568), to that of a Bretwalda, holding sway over the larger part of Britain, especially south of the Humber. It was also to see him turn from paganism to the new religion, rather more than twenty years before the Hegira of Mohammed had taken place. Notwithstanding the importance of Ethelbert's rise to power, we know but little of the means by which it was accomplished. Of the conversion to Christianity we have spoken ; of the battles which doubtless were fought before Ethelbert finally established his sway in the southern half of England ignorance commands us to be silent.

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[1] The *Chronicle* gives 565 as his date; Bede, 560.

Wessex

When we pass to the infant kingdom of Wessex we are more fortunate. The new-comers who had so lately completed the conquest of the Isle of Wight were engaged for many years in consolidating their power, mainly at the expense of the Britons. Ceawlin's reign was, indeed, one long fight against the earlier people, who were still struggling manfully to preserve their lives and their liberty. The struggle did not cease with the flight of Ceawlin from the field of battle in 593 and his subsequent death. After him arose others : Ceolwulf, Ethelfrith, Wulfhere, and many more. Their task, however, was but to complete what he had commenced, for by the great battle of Deorham, fought in 577, the Britons of Cornwall and Somersetshire (the West Welsh) had been separated from their kinsmen of the north. Thus divided, the British opposition weakened and the way was paved for the destruction of British independence in the peninsula and the advance of Wessex to predominant power in England.

In 571 Cutha,[1] who three years before had aided Ceawlin in his attack upon Ethelbert, fought against the Britons at Bedford. As a result of this battle " four royal cities " [2] were taken by him. Six years later the victory at Deorham gave to the victorious Saxons " three [of the Britons'] most distinguished cities ": Gloucester, Cirencester, and Bath. Having thus cut off the South Britons, Ceawlin seems to have felt strong enough to push on up the Severn valley, slaughtering, destroying, and plundering as he went. We read that he reduced a multitude of cities and took immense spoils. He was only checked at last by the indecisive fight at Fethan-lea, fought probably near the borders of Cheshire. It is to his great campaign of devastation that we may perhaps assign the reduction and destruction of Viroconium, the Roman city which for centuries had been the centre of civic life on the Welsh border; in the disaster perished the family of the British prince and poet Llywarch Hên ('the Aged'), who himself escaped from the ruins to pen one of the most inspired and mournful of early poems, recounting his sorrows and those of his country.

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[1] *Chronicle*, Cuthwulf. See Plummer, *Two Saxon Chronicles*, vol. ii, p. 16, as to the identity of Cuthwulf.

[2] Tygeanbyrig (Tenbury), Aeglesbyrig (Aylesbury), Benesingtun (Bensington), Egonesham (Eynsham).

With the battle of Fethan-lea Ceawlin's victorious progress came to an end. Cutha there fell, and seven years hence, after a great battle fought at Wanborough, near Swindon, in Wiltshire, Ceawlin himself was put to flight, while two years afterward we read that "this year [593] Ceawlin and Cwichelm and Crida perished." The tide of advance had thus been beaten back from the borders of Cheshire to Wiltshire. But for the Britons the evil work had been done; the fertile valley of the Severn had been laid waste, their populous and thriving cities had been seized or destroyed. The first steps had been taken which finally led to the overthrow of the Britons by kings other than those who ruled over Wessex by the victory of Winwaed, a victory which caused the British chroniclers to end their Chronicles of the Kings and commence their Chronicles of the Princes.

On the death of Ceawlin in 593 the crown of Wessex seems to have lapsed for a few years. It was not, indeed, until 597, the year that saw the landing of Augustine, that we find Ceolwulf reigning over the West Saxons. Of this king the *Chronicle* informs us that "he fought and contended incessantly against either the Angles, or the Welsh, or the Picts, or the Scots." So contending we will leave him and journey eastward to the kingdom of Kent, now the dominant power in southern Britain.

KENT

During all these years when Ceawlin, Cutha, and Ceolwulf had been carrying fire and sword through the provinces of the Britons the King of the West Saxons was probably the most powerful leader in Britain. In the *Ecclesiastical History* we read that Ceawlin was second of the Bretwaldas, the first being Aelle, King of the South Saxons. This means, probably, that he was recognized by his contemporaries as the strongest chief among the Angles and Saxons, a chief whose power was absolute over his own territory and who possessed some vague overlordship over the rest of the land.

On the death of Ceawlin this somewhat indefinite paramount chieftaincy passed to the King of Kent. Why Ethelbert should have been chosen for this position we know not. That he had ruled long is certain; that he was an admirable king in many ways we can hardly doubt when we recall his treatment of Augustine; that he had entered into an alliance with the King of the Franks, through his wife Bertha, is probable; but of actual battles fought or victories won by him we have no record. While Ceolwulf was fighting his numerous enemies and Ethelfrith was building up a formidable power in the North Ethelbert was permitting the conversion of his people and was ruling his considerable territories in apparent peace.[1] On his death in 616 the frail Christian Church which Augustine had succeeded in establishing in Kent was overthrown almost instantly. The new king, Eadbald, was a pagan at heart and soon forsook his baptismal vow. The Queen, Bertha, was now dead, and so was Sigebert, or Sabert, Ethelbert's nephew and King of the East Saxons, who had been converted to the new faith in 604. Eadbald celebrated his return to paganism by wedding his widowed stepmother. Sabert's son, now reigning in Essex, was little better. Consecrated bread he coveted, but solely because it was nice to eat, and when poor Mellitus, now Bishop of London, refused to allow him to partake of it unless he would consent to baptism, he seems to have looked upon him as a mean old man who was abusing his hospitality. Mellitus was driven from his kingdom. We can sympathize with Aidan's predecessor, who complained that it was impossible to teach such rough barbarians the true nature of the new religion.

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[1] During his lifetime we find Ethelbert losing his position of Bretwalda to Redwald, King of the East Angles.

Laurentius and Justus meanwhile were having a hard struggle to hold their own in Kent. So disheartened did the timid three become that they debated once again whether to continue their labours or seek safety in flight. Once more they determined to choose the easier part. Mellitus and Justus fled to Gaul, and Laurentius would have joined them had he not seen a vision and received a nocturnal spirit visitor (who, we need hardly add, was the Apostle Peter), who upbraided him for his weakness and terminated the address by thoroughly thrashing the Archbishop. Thus invigorated, or trebly terrified, Laurentius determined to continue his labours in Britain, and seems at last to have touched the flinty heart of Ethelbert's son, though we do not hear that he succeeded in persuading him to put away his unlawful wife. Worn out by his manifold troubles, the worthy Archbishop of Canterbury shortly afterward (619) died.

The Rise of Northumbria

We must now leave the uxorious Eadbald and the ferocious Ceolwulf and travel northward to the rising state of Deira. In 588, as we have seen, Aelle had died, and had been succeeded by Ethelric, who reigned but five years. Following Ethelric came Ethelfrith, an energetic and able man, who, after reigning twenty-four years, was finally slain by Redwald the Bretwalda, King of the East Angles. He was succeeded by Edwin.

Such, in brief outline, were the men who linked up Aelle and Edwin, but the intervening years were important ones for the North, and we must consider them more in detail.

Ethelfrith

The Venerable Bede informs us that it was the "valorous and energetic King Ethelfrith" who "despoiled the Britons more than any other English chief. He could truly be compared with Saul of old. . . . He gained more British territory than any other warrior or king. He either vanquished the ancient inhabitants and compelled them to pay tribute, or he expelled them from their lands and established the English in their stead." Nor was it only the Britons who felt the edge of Ethelfrith's sword. The Scots of Dalriada also had cause to fear the growth of his power. Thus alarmed, we find Aidan, their king, gathering a mighty army together with which to oppose the Northumbrian. The two forces met at Degsastan, which has been identified with Dawstane Rig, in Liddesdale. The battle which followed was fierce and furious. Bede tells us that Aidan "was defeated and fled with a few followers; for almost all his army was destroyed. . . . From that time no king of the Scots durst come into Britain to make war on the English." The victory was decisive. The losses, however, were not all on the Scottish side, for we learn that Theobald, Ethelfrith's brother, was slain, together with almost all his men.

For some time after the battle of Dawstane (A.D. 603) Ethelfrith was allowed quietly to strengthen his position. His marriage with the daughter of Aelle of Deira had doubtless secured his sovereignty over both branches of the North Anglian settlement.[1] Even before his accession to the throne his father Ethelric of Bernicia had, as we have seen, succeeded Aelle on the throne of Deira, a position he had probably won by conquest. As a result of this joining of the two kingdoms by conquest and by marriage Ethelfrith probably occupied a stronger position than any of his predecessors.

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[1] The reader may find it convenient to have the limits of these kingdoms marked out with more precision. Bernicia probably included all the three Lothians, the counties of Berwick, Peebles, Roxburgh, Durham, and the eastern half of Northumberland. Deira included the North and East Ridings of Yorkshire. Elmet, or Loidis, was a British kingdom embracing the valleys of the Wharfe, Aire, and Calder. 'Leeds' is connected with 'Loidis.' The boundary between Bernicia and Deira was the Tees. Between Bernicia and Deira on the one hand and Elmet on the other the Pennines stood guard for the most part.

BATTLE OF CHESTER

Powerful, then, Ethelfrith pursued his way, destroying the Scots and conquering the Britons. "Benjamin shall ravin as a wolf: in the morning he shall devour the prey, and at night he shall divide the spoil"—these are the words which Bede felt were most applicable to him. He had been on the throne ten years, however, before he broke the power of the Christian Aidan, King of the Scots. Some ten years later (*c.* 613) he was the instrument whereby Augustine's frightful prophecy was fulfilled. "If ye will not give life to the heathen, ye shall receive death at their hands," the priest had said to the stubborn monks of Bangor. Little more than a decade had passed when Ethelfrith led his hosts of heathen Angles to the gates of Chester. Opposed to him was Brochmail, chieftain of the Britons, and supporting Brochmail were a great number of monks from the monastery on the Dee, holy men who had fasted long that their prayers might find favour. Thus led by a priestly vanguard, the British army took the field. The pagan Ethelfrith, according to Bede, "being about to give battle . . . observed these priests who had congregated together to offer up prayers. . . . He inquired who they were and what they came together to do. . . . Being informed of the occasion of their coming, 'If then they cry to their God against us,' said he, 'in truth, though they do not bear arms, yet they fight against us with their imprecations.'" Having thus decided to regard them as combatants, the pagan ordered them to be attacked first. This decision once made, the result was not in doubt. The unarmed and unprotected monks were butchered; their horror-struck leader fled; the "impious army" (to use Bede's expression) of the Britons was dispersed, though not without loss to the Angles; Roman Chester was laid waste, to remain a forlorn and deserted ruin for centuries. Beyond and above these results the Britons of Strathclyde were separated from their kinsmen of Gwynedd, or North Wales. Ethelfrith had accomplished in the north what Ceawlin in the battle of Deorham had achieved in the south.

Ethelfrith now ruled wide territories from powerful Bamburgh, a true Teutonic fortress perched on high near Beadnel Point and built, according to Nennius, by Eadfered Flesaurs as a present for his wife Bebba, whence it got its name, Bebbanburg.[1] Two of his enemies he had conquered; he was destined to fall before the third.

Edwin of Deira: Early Days

We have already seen that when Aelle died he left a child of the name of Edwin as sole heir to his throne. In those warlike times no infant would have been capable of holding the sceptre, and consequently Edwin was passed over for Ethelric, and later for his brother-in-law Ethelfrith. Between these two men, each noteworthy in Northumbrian history, there seems to have existed a bitter enmity. Edwin at first, youthful, unimportant, and powerless, is found wandering from Court to Court. It is even suggested that he received his early upbringing at the Court of that Welsh chief, Cadvan of Gwynedd, whose deeds are now forgotten, but whose tombstone is still preserved to us, having later been built into the church of Llangadwaladr, in Anglesey. Later he journeyed to the Court of Mercia, now slowly rising to power. Having attained to manhood, he contracted matrimony with a princess of Mercia. His wife appears to have died before very long, and Edwin once more, like a youthful Lear, set out a royal wanderer in search of a friend. At last he found refuge at the Court of Redwald of East Anglia, now Bretwalda in succession to Ethelbert. According to Bede, the royal fugitive, after years of wandering, came to Redwald and besought him to give him protection. Redwald gladly received him and promised to fulfil the fugitive's request. Ethelfrith, however, soon made attempts to destroy this last refuge of his enemy. Great bribes were offered to Redwald to allow the murder of his guest, but, though oft repeated, they were offered in vain.

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[1] We need hardly warn the reader against this story. The *Chronicle* attributes the building of it to Ida, but according to Mr Bates this particular passage is an interpolation.

At last Ethelfrith passed from promises to threats. The fugitive must be surrendered or war would be declared; at the same time even greater gifts were offered for the surrender of Edwin.

Redwald; torn between fidelity, fear, and greed, at last surrendered his honour and promised to give up his guest. Edwin, however, was warned by a friend, who offered him safe-conduct to a place "where neither Redwald nor Ethelfrith shall ever find you." Edwin despairing of a life which promised nothing but continuous flight, refused the proffered aid and prepared himself for death. The unhappy Prince, we are told, after his friend had gone, "remained alone without, and, sitting with a heavy heart before the palace, began to be affrighted with many thoughts, for where to go, or which way to turn, he knew not." "Suddenly," the good Bede informs us, "in the stillness of the dead of night he saw approaching him a man whose face and figure were unknown to him." The new-comer, though unknown to Edwin, knew all of Edwin's sorrows. After recounting to the future king the misfortunes he had suffered he prophesied a happy issue and promised to deliver him from his enemies, establish him on his father's throne, make him the most powerful king in Britain, and show him a better and more profitable counsel for his life and salvation than any of his ancestors ever knew if he would, when king, follow the advice and guidance of his new-found friend. Edwin having readily promised all that was asked, the stranger placed his right hand on the Prince's head, saying: "When this sign shall be given to you, remember this time and these our words, and those things which you now promise do not fail to perform." Thus speaking he vanished.

Meanwhile Redwald had spoken to his Queen of his proposed betrayal of their guest, and she had succeeded in dissuading him from degrading his fame. The King, heartily ashamed that he had ever listened to the temptation, lost little time in preparing for war. Sending back the messengers with a curt refusal, he raised a mighty host and prepared to subdue the Bernician, upon whom he fell unprepared. Then on the banks of the river Idle the two chief leaders in Teutonic England fought out their fight. At the end, when the battle was over and Ethelfrith lay dead, legend would have us believe that the waters of the river ran foul with English blood.[1] Redwald had conquered, Ethelfrith was dead, and Edwin, now in his thirty-third year, became King of the Northumbrians.

EDWIN KING

The reign of this great and attractive king must detain us for some time. Lacking the capacity for cryptic and terse inaccuracy possessed by Nennius, we cannot dismiss him with the notice that "Edwin, son of Alla, reigned seventeen years, seized on Elmete, and expelled Cerdic, its King. Eanfled, his daughter, received baptism, on the twelfth day after Pentecost, with all her followers, both men and women. The following Easter Edwin himself received baptism, and 12,000 of his subjects with him. If any one desires to know who baptized them, it was Rum Map Urbgen.[2]" This account of Edwin, however, though short and not very correct, does bring into prominence the chief event of his reign—the conversion of Northumbria to Christianity.

At first, however, Edwin had little leisure to give to matters religious. There were his persecutor's athelings to be driven out; there was a kingdom to be won and a capital to establish before Edwin, now wedded to Ethelberg the Darling, could give ear to Paulinus—before, indeed, the Bishop could venture as far north as York in search of souls.

Ethelfrith had left behind him many sons, or athelings. Eanfrith, Oswald,[3] Oswy,[3] Oslac, Oswudu, Oslaf, and Offa were each ready and prepared to contest with Edwin for the fruits of victory. Of the details of the struggle we have little knowledge. The athelings appear to have been driven from Northumbria, to seek refuge with the Picts in far Iona. Both Deira and Bernicia were brought within Edwin's sway. York was occupied and made his capital, and, as Nennius has told us, Elmet was seized and Cerdic, its king, defeated. We must not, however, imagine that this Cerdic was of the royal house of Wessex, despite the Saxon look of the name in Nennius's Latin pages. The King of Elmet was a good Briton, by name Ceredig, a name preserved in modern Cardigan, erstwhile called Ceredigion.[1] Cerdic appears to have been driven from his kingdom, and Edwin, not content with this conquest, pushed on to the west and crossed to the Isle of Man. It is probable that he also harried North Wales and advanced as far as Anglesey, which he seems to have conquered, and which is wrongly supposed to have derived its name from this invasion by Angles.[2] Having thus ill repaid his British foster-parent, and earned his title, given him in the *Triads*, to be regarded as one of the " three oppressors of Môn [Anglesey]," Edwin turned his attention from the Britons and prepared to subdue the Saxons of the south.

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[1] Henry of Huntingdon preserves the story: "*Amnis Idle Anglorum sanguine sorduit.*"

[2] Rhun, the son of Urien.

[3] Of Oswald and Oswy we shall speak at length later. Oswy's second wife was Edwin's daughter Eanfled, so that the enmity between the houses was soon healed.

Of the nature of this later struggle also we know but little. Bede informs us that its result was the reduction by the Northumbrian of all parts of Britain except Kent. In 626 Edwin was at bitter feud with Cwichelm, King of the West Saxons, and in that year we find the southerner sending an assassin, Eomer, to stab his northern enemy with a poisoned dagger. Edwin's life was, indeed, only preserved by the devotion of his thegn Lilla and one Forthhere, who sprang between the dagger and their King. Even so, however, the King was wounded. In those fierce days such deeds were not allowed to pass unavenged. Edwin at once collected an army and, advancing against the West Saxons, killed their five kings and slew a multitude of people.

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[1] Supposed to be derived from Ceredig, son of Cunedda.

[2] Anglesey is a corruption of Ongulsey, and means 'the island on a fiord.'

CONVERSION OF EDWIN

Meanwhile other deeds of equal importance had taken place in Edwin's kingdom. Laurentius, Mellitus, and Justus had been chosen the successors of Augustine. Laurentius had died in 619, and Mellitus followed him to the shades five years later. In the year 624, therefore, Justus became Archbishop of Canterbury. Almost at the same time Edwin, who, it will be remembered, had early lost his first wife, a child of Mercia and a pagan, sent ambassadors to Kent to request an alliance and the hand of Ethelbert's daughter Ethelberg. Eadbald, her brother, who then reigned over Kent, and who, as we have seen, had turned pagan and had married his stepmother, had since been converted, and, like all converts, was very stubborn with unbelievers. He returned to Edwin the answer that "it was not lawful to give a Christian maiden in marriage with a pagan husband, lest the faith and mysteries of the Heavenly King should be profaned by her union with a king who was a stranger to the worship of the true God." Edwin, however, soon succeeded in persuading Eadbald to entrust his Christian sister to a pagan king, and it was agreed that the maiden should be permitted to profess the Christian faith and that her followers, or court, should be allowed a like liberty of conscience. A promise was even given that the King would embrace the new religion himself if on examination he found it superior to his own form of worship. Her beliefs thus safeguarded, Ethelberg the Darling journeyed north to her royal wooer, taking with her, besides many attendants, the priest Paulinus, whom for the purpose Justus had newly consecrated Bishop of York, twelve days before the calends of August (July 21, 625).

Of Paulinus's struggles for the salvation of Northumbria we do not propose to treat at length. We have reasons for this reticence. In the first place, the mission, though for a time successful, was in the end a failure, and the converts who were obtained recanted their faith on Edwin's death. In the second place, Northumbrian Christianity was obtained in the main, not from the rigid Augustine missionaries, but from the holy men of the Celtic Church; Aidan, not Paulinus, has chief claim to the honour of having Christianized northern England. In the third place, much as we venerate the Venerable Bede, we cannot believe his account of the mission of Paulinus, for his story refutes itself. We therefore pass by the promise of Edwin to renounce his idols and serve Christ if the God of Paulinus would grant him life and victory over his enemy of Wessex; the baptism of the infant Eanfled, born on the fatal night when the assassin's dagger struck down Lilla, "the King's most faithful follower," in earnest of that promise; the King's subsequent refusal to embrace the new faith, though victorious, without full consideration. Nor can we stay to consider Pope Boniface's letter to the wavering Edwin urging him to follow in the footsteps of Eadbald and his own consort and thus win the reward of eternity, adding to much pious exhortation a gift in kind, to wit, "a shirt of proof with one gold ornament, and one cloak of Ancyra"—gifts, we may observe, which ill consorted with the majestic promises of eternal glory; gifts which, as Montalembert said, testify either to the Pope's poverty or to the simplicity of the times. Nor can we stay to consider the same Pope's letter to Queen Ethelberg urging her to persuade her consort to abandon his "abominable idols" and fulfil the Scriptures where it reads, "The unbelieving husband shall be saved by the believing wife"—exhortations which were aided by the gift of the blessing of St Peter, a silver looking-glass, and a gilded ivory comb! We must say something, however, of the final cause of Edwin's conversion.

We have already seen that Edwin, when threatened with death at Redwald's Court, had been visited by a stranger who, after promising him victory, gave him a sign whereby he should know him. Time passed and the blessings promised had all been fulfilled, but as yet no one had made the sign. In the intervening years, at least since Christian Ethelberg had journeyed north, Paulinus had in vain sought to turn the King from the worship of Woden, god of valour, to the teachings of Christ, Arch-Priest of pity and of love. The Teuton mind stood firm, until Paulinus, despairing of the King's conversion, at last made the long-expected sign, asking his lord whether he remembered his promise. The story is preserved to us by Bede, who tells us that "The King, trembling, was ready to fall down at his feet, but he [Paulinus] raised him up and, speaking to him with the voice of a friend, said: 'Behold, by the gift of God you have escaped the hands of the enemies whom you feared. Behold, you have obtained of His bounty the kingdom which you desired. Take heed not to delay to perform your promise; accept the faith, and keep the precepts of Him Who, delivering you from temporal danger, has raised you to the honour of a temporal kingdom.'"

For his own part Edwin now recognized that he was in honour bound to accept the new religion; he sought, however, to make the conversion, not personal, but national. Calling together his Witan, he demanded of them, each one separately, what they thought of the new faith. The answers given are to us of great interest, for they show the mind of man in its simplest state. First spoke Coifi, Edwin's chief priest, and right worthy of his craft was his answer. He, on his own confession, had served his gods for what earthly gain he could get; alas! he had got less than he deserved, therefore away with the gods and on to others. Following this candid knave came, however, a counsellor of a different stamp, who in words of living symbolism painted his picture of man's life on earth: "The present life of man upon earth, O King, appears to me, in comparison with that time which is unknown to us, like to the swift flight of a sparrow through your hall, where you, with your ealdormen and thegns, sit by the fire, at supper, in winter. The hall is warmed; without are storms of wind and rain and winter's snow. The sparrow passes swiftly in at one door and out at another, gaining awhile a short safety from the wintry blast; but soon after a little calm he flies once more into the unknown, passing from winter to winter again. So this life of ours appears for a moment, but whence or whither we are wending we know not. If, therefore, this new faith can teach us aught more sure, it seems truly to deserve to be followed."

Ah! brave Northumbrian who anticipated by more than four centuries Omar's complaint, now preserved to us in FitzGerald's inspired verse:

> There was the Door to which I found no Key;
> There was the Veil through which I might not see;
>   Some little talk awhile of ME and THEE
> There was—and then no more of THEE and ME—

worthily did you speak in England's first Parliament, and wonderful had it been if the problem you propounded had then been solved! At least one thing was gained: idolatry was renounced; Christianity, best of religions, was adopted; and, after Coifi had flung his spear at the gods he once had worshipped, the way was open for Paulinus to preach the new faith, even in what had once been pagan temples. King and Witan embraced the new religion, and Edwin, together, doubtless, with his wise men, was baptized in the little wooden church he had built to St Peter at York. Soon the good Paulinus was busily engaged baptizing converts as far north as the Cheviots, and to-day, as Mr Travis Mills[1] has pointed out, "the memory of this great religious revolution is preserved by the place-names and traditions of northern England. Pallinsburn, near Flodden Field, Jordan, near Malton, the Cross at Easingwold, [and] the Cross which once existed at Dewsbury, with the inscription, *Hic Paulinus praedicavit et celebravit*, . . . all bear witness to the first ardour of Christian enthusiasm."

This was in 627. For years the good work went on. Royal princes, Edwin's sons by Quenberga, his first wife, and children by Ethelberg, were baptized; churches were founded, one at Doncaster, which was afterward destroyed by the pagans, and one at York, of stone, in place of the little wooden church previously erected. This later stone erection was still incomplete when Edwin was killed; its site is now covered by York

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[1] *Great Days of Northumbria*, p. 29.

Minster, and of the Saxon building only a small part of the crypt remains.

PAULINUS AND THE EAST AND MIDDLE ANGLES

The zeal of Edwin and Paulinus was not limited to Northumbria. The King early persuaded Earpwald, King of the East Angles, the son of his protector Redwald, to abandon paganism. The attempt was, however, but partially successful, for Earpwald's wife, a good pagan, persuaded her consort to renounce his new-found faith. At last he seems to have compromised the matter by serving both the old gods and the new, having, in the words of Bede, "in the same temple an altar for the Christian sacrifice, and another small one at which to offer victims to devils." Earpwald was shortly afterward slain by Ricbert, a pagan, and it was not until 636, when Sigebert, "a most Christian and learned man," ascended the throne of the East Angles, that the province began generally to abandon idolatry. Sigebert, indeed, was in many ways an exceptional man, for, according to Roger of Wendover, he "instituted schools in various places, that the rustic people might taste the sweetness of literature."[1] He ended his life, like so many of the higher-minded nobles of those ages, by abandoning the vestments of a king for the garments of a monk, leaving his kingdom to his kinsman Ecgric.

Paulinus, meanwhile, had not been content to rely upon the exertions and influence of Edwin, but, pushing southward beyond the Humber, sought to convert the Middle Angles and Mercians. He preached in the province of Lindsey, converted Blaecca, reeve of the city of Lincoln, and built in that town a "stone church of beautiful workmanship," the walls of which were still standing in the time of Bede, though it had been attacked and partly destroyed by enemies. Bede has much to say of this mission, for he had met an old man who

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[1] He had in early life been exiled and went to live in Gaul, where doubtless he had seen the benefits flowing from the combination of religion and education. It was in Gaul that he was, in Bede's words, "initiated into the mysteries of the faith."

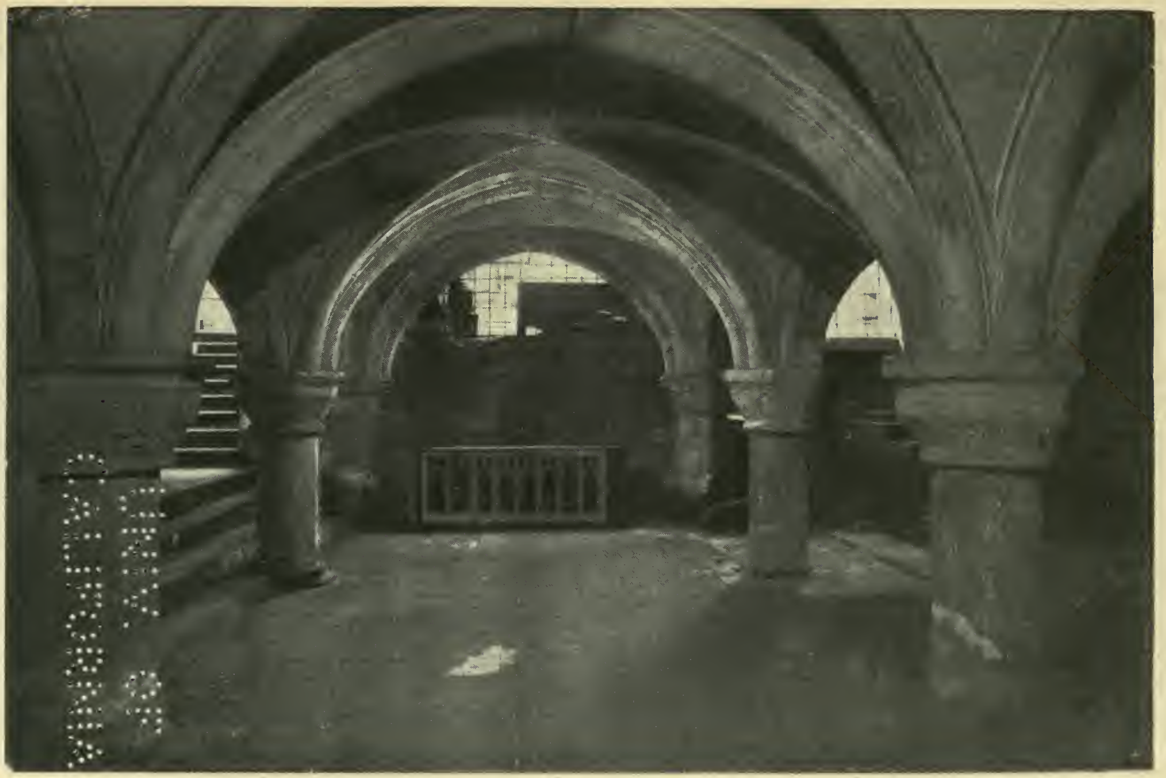

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PLATE XVI. THE CRYPT OF YORK MINSTER

had related how he himself had been baptized at noonday by the Bishop in the presence of the Bretwalda; at the same time great multitudes of people had likewise turned from paganism. The man, who must have been very aged,[1] had carried in his memory a pleasant picture of Paulinus; tall of stature, with bowed shoulders, black hair, a thin, ascetic face marked with a slender and aquiline nose, his aspect seemed to him both venerable and awe-inspiring. With him had gone as his constant companion in good works James the Deacon, "a man of zeal and great fame in Christ and in the Church."

State of Northumbria under Edwin

With the new religion of mercy winning its way, with peace all around, won by Edwin's earlier triumph, the lot of Northumbria was now a happy one. Men in future years were wont to look back on Edwin's reign as to a Golden Age. Then, we are told, there was such peace that a woman might walk from end to end of England with her new-born babe without receiving injury; then copper drinking-vessels were fixed to wayside fountains and no thief durst touch them, "either through the great dread they had of the King, or for the love they bore him"; then, indeed, an English king who possessed some of Rome's ancient administrative ability rode about his cities, townships, and provinces with something of Roman magnificence, with standard-bearers before him carrying as banner the *tufa*.

Edwin's Downfall

Thus Edwin, fifth in the line of Bretwaldas, had won for himself a predominant place in seventh-century England. His power, however, like everything terrene, was soon to end. It was the Briton Cadwallawn who was primarily responsible for the downfall. As we have seen, the Northumbrian at the commencement of his reign had gained the British province of

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[1] The event took place in 628. Bede, who finished his history in 731, was born about 673.

Elmet and had won his way to Anglesey. Cadwallawn, following Cadvan, was then his opponent, and, on being defeated, fled for safety to Ireland. Thence he later returned, determined to work the ruin of his enemy. In 633, after having formed an alliance with Penda of Mercia, whose brother-in-law the Briton possibly was, he and the Mercian advanced into Northumbria and met, defeated, and slew Edwin at the battle of Hatfield Chase (Heathfield). The years that followed were bitter ones for Deira. The British leader, with two centuries of wrong to redress, with the massacre of his people, the slaughter of Chester, the defeats he himself had suffered, and his own exile well remembered, flung himself upon the Angles of Deira, now unprotected, and slew and tortured man, woman, and child. The new churches were laid low, the country-side was devastated, Elfric's son Osric, who had succeeded to Deira, was slain, and the once prosperous kingdom was brought to the dust. The turn in the tide came with the battle of Oswald's Cross (Heavenfield), but in the meantime Christianity was dead in Northumbria. Paulinus had fled by ship to Kent, taking Ethelberg with him, and it seemed that Edwin's reign, which once had been so full of bright promise for the future, had passed leaving nothing stable behind it.

OSWALD

The year 633 had been a sorry one for Northumbria. Edwin being dead, his kingdom had been split into the old divisions of Deira and Bernicia. To the throne of Deira Osric, son of Elfric, had succeeded, only to be slain while besieging Cadwallawn in the walled town of York, which the Briton had now seized. According to Bede, the attack on York had been a complete disaster, for not only was Osric slain in a sudden sally made by the British, but, with him, his whole army was put to the sword, so that for a whole year the victor raged through the conquered province "like a furious tyrant." Meanwhile Eanfrith, Ethelfrith's eldest son, had succeeded to the throne of Bernicia. He too, however, soon fell before Cadwallawn's conquering host, for, coming to the Briton with but twelve chosen warriors in order to sue for peace, he and his bodyguard were attacked and destroyed. It did, indeed, appear as though the Briton's oath to drive the Angles from Britain would be fulfilled.

After the death of Eanfrith Bernicia had as ruler Oswald, a king whose life we must stay to consider for a space, for, although he reigned but nine years and fell at last before the sword of Penda the king-slayer, his own qualities and the religious movements which took place under his rule mark him out from the generality of chiefs who fought and conquered, or died, in the England of the seventh century.

His first act was to engage Cadwallawn in battle. Collecting the largest army he could, which was but a small force compared with Cadwallawn's mightier host, he came up with his enemy near the Roman Wall. Oswald, good Christian that he was, had prepared for battle with prayers to Heaven before a symbol of the Cross. His piety and the valour of his men were rewarded, for with the first dawn of day he fell upon his enemy, possibly as he advanced along the Roman road which ran between the Wall and the *vallum* over the northern moors, and having caught his opponent almost in an ambush, he inflicted a complete and decisive defeat upon him. The Britons were driven northward, and at last brought to bay at Denisburn, beside the small brook Denis, not far from Rowley Water. There the fierce but brave Cadwallawn fell, having waged almost the last fight fought by the Britons for the sovereignty of this island.

Tranquillity and freedom from foreign foes having thus been gained, Oswald now set himself the task of repairing the material and spiritual ravages which the war waged by the Briton had wrought in his kingdom. Of the steps he took to secure the material welfare of his people we know little; but of his efforts to turn them again from paganism we must speak.

As we have seen, some seventy years before Columba had set out from Ireland and had founded the centre of a widespread mission in the small island of Iona, on the west coast of Scotland. From the monastery there established, and from many others, Celtic missionaries, whose lives are famous for their perfect sanctity, had journeyed among the Picts, and by their shining example had converted these barbarians, whom the Romans had found so intractable, to the faith of Christ.

It may seem strange that it was to these missionaries of the Celtic Church that Oswald, who had been brought up in Gaul, should have looked for teachers of the new faith. We must remember, however, that it was probably at some Celtic centre of religion and learning that Oswald had been reared. Certainly Bede informs us that Oswald and his followers had received baptism, when in banishment, from the elders of the Celtic Church, perhaps in some monastery founded by Columban on the Continent. On the other hand, we must presume that the Roman bishops had almost despaired of Northumbria.[1] Paulinus had been forced to fly for his life, and was now occupied with his labours at more congenial Rochester. However this may be, we find the King desiring the elders of the Celtic Church to send him a bishop to teach and convert his people.

This appeal made by a Bernician king to a bishop of the Picts for help to turn from idolatry a people who had returned to paganism because of the devastations inflicted by a British and a Christian king is a curious example of the changes which occur in this world's affairs. Over two centuries before Bishop Ninias, a Briton, had come, full of zeal, from Rome, and from that circle of which St Martin of Tours was the centre, to preach the Gospel to the southern Picts. His mission was successful, and before his death he had consecrated a church to St Martin and had converted the southern Picts from paganism. The Briton was now dead these two hundred years, his people had been driven from the fairest provinces of Britain by the Angles and the Saxons, pagans; the northern Picts had been Christianized by Columba, a Celt; the Angles had been Christianized by the Celt Paulinus, a Romanist, and paganized by the Christian Briton Cadwallawn, and now they looked to a bishop of the northern Picts for salvation!

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[1] Paulinus when he fled left behind him at York the faithful James the Deacon. This holy man still laboured on, not without effect, living for the main part in the little village of Cataract, once one of the four chief Roman cities, now identified with Akeburgh, a corruption of Jacobsburgh—'the town of James.' He still taught and baptized the rustics, gaining fame by his singleness of purpose, his beautiful voice, and his knowledge of Church music—a subject upon which he was one of the first to give instruction in England.

The answer to the appeal was immediate. Corman, "a man of harsh disposition" (to be distinguished from the later Colman), was at first sent, but he, after preaching for some time without success, returned, complaining that he could do nothing with this intractable, stubborn, and barbarous people. A council of elders was consequently held, and after having heard Corman's description of his mission and its failure, Aidan, who was of the council, spoke thus: "Perhaps, my brother, you were somewhat too harsh with these untutored folk, unmindful of the Apostolic rule about milk for babes." The justice of the remark was observed, the wisdom of the speaker perceived, and Aidan was chosen as the successor of the despairing Corman.

AIDAN

The life of the new missionary is one of the most noble in English history. It has been remarked as matter for surprise that, of all the saints of the Church, Aidan is least borne in memory and has fewest churches dedicated to him. The fact should not surprise us; he lived the life of a saint, but his creed was unorthodox, he, alas! belonging to those barbarians who could not, or would not, calculate Easter according to the Roman manner. If we may apply the strictures contained in the letters of Pope Honorius and that other priest who later became Pope John IV to this member of the Church against which they were directed, we must also regard him as tainted with the Pelagian belief. Such a man, however good, has not been thought by the Church a convenient person to consecrate buildings to. His life, however, was successful in winning over Northumbria from paganism, and when he died he died blessed by King and peasant, rich and poor alike, and the place where he fixed the centre of his mission, wild, windswept Lindisfarne, is to-day known as Holy Island in peculiar remembrance of the holy man who once walked in humility along its strand, thinking of new ways to touch the heart of his flock, endeavouring to set an example of simple piety which all might follow.

Of Oswald and Aidan Bede has left us many pictures. Thus when the good Bishop had first come to Lindisfarne we read that he was not perfectly acquainted with the English tongue, and to aid him in his work the King acted as interpreter. " It was a fair sight," says Bede, " to see the King himself interpreting the Word of God to his ealdormen and thegns." On another occasion we find Aidan, whose charity and benevolence to the poor were quite Franciscan, blessing the hand of the King which had given his own food to the needy multitude without. Throughout Oswald's short reign we find, indeed, the King looking up to his Bishop as to a saint, accepting his strictures if given, welcoming his rare visits to Court and treating them as an honour, ever ready to bow before and follow this man of whom Bede could say, " He taught nothing that he did not practise " ; who gave nothing but hospitality to rich and powerful men, but who gave all his wealth to the poor ; who ransomed slaves, yet made a slave of himself by his arduous mode of life in the high cause he had embraced ; who fasted himself, yet could be cheerful when others feasted ; who walked the bare shores of Holy Island rather than the courts of kings, and who looked for no reward for himself save the salvation of his fellows. The tree he planted was of more stubborn growth than that tended by Paulinus ; the sword of Penda might lop off a few of its branches, but it did not uproot it, even though it slew the saintly Oswald and ravaged his kingdom.

OSWALD BRETWALDA

As for Oswald, we must not regard him as another Edward the Confessor, nor solely as a pious king intent on his devotions. He was distinctly a man of action. By his victory at Oswald's Cross he had gained predominant power in Britain, and had become the sixth Bretwalda. We cannot believe that he allowed Cadwallawn's ally, Penda, to escape without reprisals. Doubtless he waged successful war in many parts of Britain, for both Bede and Adamnan suggest that he obtained a very definite lordship over the other kings, and we are distinctly told that through his exertions the inhabitants of Deira and Bernicia, who had before been at variance, were peacefully united into one people. We also know that during his reign all England was quiet and free from other wars. The *Chronicle*, indeed, for these years has but few entries, and what few there are are mainly concerned with the mission of Birinus, who had been sent by Pope Honorius to teach the West Saxons, and who succeeded in baptizing King Cynegils at Dorchester (Oxon.), Oswald being godfather to the new convert. In the next year another West Saxon leader, Cwichelm, followed in Cynegils's footsteps, and in 639 King Cuthred also abandoned paganism.

MASERFIELD

Three years after Cuthred's conversion Oswald met his death at the hand of Penda. What the cause of the dispute was we do not know, but on August 5, 642, the Bernician and the Mercian led their opposing hosts to battle at a place called Maserfield, near Oswald's house at Winwick, north of the present Warrington, in Lancashire.[1] The day went against the Bernician, and "by diabolical aid," to use Nennius's phrase, the Mercian gained the victory. Eawa, Penda's nephew, was among the slain. Oswald died worthily, praying for the souls of his men, and in the place in which he fell many miracles were believed to have been worked in later years. From the references made by Bede it was probably a spot only frequented by travellers, some of whom at least were Britons; but, it is said, so great was the holiness of the dead King that the grass there growing, and even the very dust, were powerful to cure men and cattle of all sickness. The King's bones, which, we are told, were preserved by his niece Osthryth—now Queen of the Mercians, and destined to be murdered by her own people—became holy relics and worked many a miracle in the province of Lindsey, whither they were carried.

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[1] Oswestry is perhaps more commonly referred to as the place of the battle. Nennius gives Cocboy. For evidence one way or the other reference may be made to Mr Travis Mills's *Great Days of Northumbria*, p. 48 *n.* (Winwick), and Professor Lloyd's *History of Wales*, vol. i, p. 189 (Oswestry). Other places have also been suggested.

PENDA OF MERCIA

With the victory at Maserfield the chief interest shifts for a moment from Northumbria to Mercia, and we must consider some of the deeds of this pagan Penda who had already slain five kings of Northumbria. Of his career, however, but little is known; he had no interest for the ecclesiastical historians, and none of the chroniclers had especial interest in Mercia. Nennius tells us that he was the son of Pybba, or Wibba, and traced his descent to Woden, and that he slew by treachery Anna, King of the East Angles. We also know from the *Chronicle* that in 628 the Wessex chiefs Cynegils and Cwichelm fought against him at Cirencester, and from the later chroniclers we learn that after a great slaughter on each side the opposing forces made a truce and retired. It is certain that the thirty years of Penda's reign (626–655) saw the rise of Mercia to a position of great power. Allied with Cadwallawn, greatest of early Cymric kings, both by marriage and for war, the pagan king time after time pitted himself with no small success against the Bretwaldas of Northumbria. All his fighting was done in his later years, for he was fifty years old when he ascended the throne, and almost an octogenarian when he was finally defeated and slain at the battle of Winwaed.

With the defeat of Oswald it is probable that Penda's power was considerably augmented. In the preceding years he had without doubt been kept in some sort of subjection by the powerful Bretwaldas, and appears to have consented to a marriage between a member of his family and a daughter of Oswy of Bernicia. He also seems to have entered into a close alliance with the East Anglians and with the Middle English, but details relating to these alliances have not been recorded.

OSWIN AND OSWY

Against this energetic and diplomatic old pagan warrior Oswin[1] and Oswy, who succeeded Oswald on the thrones of Deira and Bernicia respectively, soon found themselves ranged. Few characters could be more diverse than those of Oswin and Penda. The Northumbrian, possessing every grace of face and figure, pleasant of speech, courteous in manner, Christian in spirit, open-handed, had little likeness to the Mercian, save that both were brave. Their fortunes were even more dissimilar. Penda ruled his people for thirty years, and at last died at the age of nearly eighty. In his day no one had expressed any great love, though much respect, for the warrior. He fell at last on the field of battle to the sword of an enemy. Oswin reigned over Deira but seven years, in which time he won the hearts of all his subjects, and gained for his people great prosperity, being engaged in benefiting his own country rather than in devastating others. He died a young man, murdered by assassins hired by his partner in the kingdom of the Northumbrians, Oswy of Bernicia. Penda was a leader of the pagans; Oswin was the faithful disciple and friend of saintly Aidan, and many tales are told of their friendship: how, for example, the King gave to his bishop from his stables a fine horse gay with royal trappings; how the Saint, meeting a poor man asking alms, gave him the horse, "for he was full of compassion, a true friend to the poor and, in some sort, the father of the wretched." The story proceeds to inform us that the King was annoyed at this action, protesting that if the Bishop wished to give horses to beggars, he, the King, would have supplied him with a cheaper one; to which Aidan replied: "What say you, O King? Is, then, a mare's son dearer to you than a son of God ?" Later the King, having thought about the matter, saw the true meaning of the Bishop's words, and, kneeling at his feet, begged for forgiveness, promising that in future he would not complain of his benevolence, whatever form it might take.

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[1] Oswin did not succeed until 644.

It was but a short while after this event, and as Aidan had prophesied, that this life of much promise was ended. Oswy, we are told, "could not live at peace with Oswin." Their quarrels became more and more frequent, and at last open warfare broke out between them. Oswin, however, finding himself outnumbered, decided to avoid a present conflict, disbanded his forces, and, with but one trusty thegn, Tondhere by name, withdrew from Wilfar's Hill, near the village where James the Deacon had laboured so long, and took refuge in the house of Hunwald, a noble (*comes* [1]), whom he believed to be a true friend. "But, alas!" says Bede, "it was far otherwise." Hunwald proved a traitor to his King, and Oswy had his enemy foully slain by one Ethelwin, a reeve. The murder was committed on August 20, 651, at a spot called Ingetlingum,[2] where afterward, in atonement for his crime and at Queen Eanfled's request, Oswy built a monastery wherein prayers were offered for the souls of the two Kings, the murdered and the murderer.

The death of Oswin must have been a mortal blow to the good Aidan, who had now seen the violent deaths of two saintly kings, his friends and followers. He did not long survive the unhappy event, for eleven days later, on August 31, 651, he died.

Oswy

We must now retrace our steps a little and see what had been happening in Bernicia. At the time of Oswy's succession to the throne of that kingdom he was but thirty years of age; he ruled for twenty-eight years, and before his death he had become one of the most powerful of the Bretwaldas and had curbed the power of Mercia and slain the pagan Penda. We must not, therefore, measure him by the one foul blot on his reign—the murder of Oswin. That, it may be, was an unwonted and impetuous act of folly for which the guilty Oswy did full penance; throughout his later years he certainly endeavoured to govern firmly and wisely, not without success.

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[1] The position of a *comes* or of the *comitatus* was almost that of a bodyguard. As Plummer points out, ancient feeling would have regarded it as disgraceful for a *comes* who was present at the time to survive the murder of his lord. This makes Hunwald's treason all the worse.

[2] Identified with Gilling, in the North Riding. Collingham has also been suggested, but Plummer regards this as unlikely.

At the beginning of his reign his land was constantly being harried by the victorious Penda, who at one time was even in a position to attack Northumbria's capital, Bamburgh. This stronghold was, however, too strong by nature for either Penda's siege or attack to prove successful. Nothing daunted, the Mercian pulled down all the surrounding villages, collected great masses of combustible things—wooden beams, wattles, thatch—and, gathering them together, fired them so that the wind would blow the flames against the town. It was now that Aidan came to the help of his King. Seeing from the Isle of Farne, some few miles distant from the attacked city, the preparations made by Penda, he lifted up his eyes to heaven and with tears cried: "Behold, O Lord, what mighty evil is done by Penda!" The result, according to Bede, was a change in the direction of the wind, so that the flames, instead of consuming Bamburgh, drove back the besieging army.

Oswy had already experienced something of Aidan's power, for when, some time between 642 and 645, an embassy was sent to Kent to bring back by sea Eanfled, daughter of King Edwin, as wife for Oswy, the priest foretold storms and tempests, and, giving the sailors a bottle of holy oil, commanded them, when the tempest was most furious, to cast the oil overboard, when, he predicted, the sea would become calm. The tempest happened as he had said. Anchors were dragged, waves swept over the ship, and all hope had been abandoned, when one of the number remembered the holy oil, and, seizing the bottle, cast some of it into the sea. At once the sea grew calmer and at last port was reached. Many miracles were performed in those days at which we are now pleased to smile, but this one we can the more readily believe, since the same mode of mastering the waters is practised still.

OSWY AND PENDA: WINWAED

The position of Oswy in these years was not improbably one of great danger. We have seen how he had made war on Deira and murdered its King; we have seen how Penda, now master of Mercia, the Middle Angles, and East Anglia, had attacked him from time to time and reached even the walls of Bamburgh. Efforts were clearly necessary for the consolidation of his power. Oswy seems to have seen a way out of his difficulties by marriage alliances. Alchfrith, Oswy's son, was therefore married to Penda's daughter Cyneburga; Penda's son Peada, now King of the Middle Angles, also sought Oswy's daughter Alchfleda for his consort. Difficulties were, however, raised, for Peada was a pagan. At last the stumbling-block was removed by his baptism, and the first important step was taken in the conversion of Mercia and the Middle Angles—a step to which Penda raised no objection.

By these marriages Oswy seems to have kept peace with Penda, but it was otherwise with Deira. Exactly what was transpiring in that country or what claims were being made to that throne we do not know. Again, toward Penda's later years the desire to devastate became too strong. Perhaps the old Mercian, who is known to have had hatred and contempt, not for Christians, but for hypocrites, could little tolerate the murder of Oswin; perhaps he was supporting Ethelwald's claims in Deira; perhaps he was once more in league with the men of Gwynedd; we hardly know. Certain it is that Oswy, after unsuccessfully attempting to bribe his enemy to make peace, determined to conclude the matter one way or the other by battle. On Penda's side there fought Ethelwald of Deira; Ethelhere of East Anglia; Cadafael, or Cadwaladr,[1] of North Wales—all Christians; and Peada of the

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[1] See the author's *Wales*, in this series, p. 98.

Middle English, a late convert. Penda himself was still an unrepentant pagan. The rival forces met at Winwaedfield, at the place where "the Ermine Street crossed, and still crosses, the [river] Went, near the modern Standing Flats Bridge, some two miles to the south of Pontefract."[1] There, on November 15, 655, the most important battle in pre-Norman England was fought. Against Oswy's small force a mighty army was arrayed, but it seems as though Penda's subject-kings fought as vassals rather than as allies. Throughout the battle Ethelwald held aloof, and before the fight began the British king deserted with his whole force, thus earning the title of 'the king who ran away.' The direct result was an overwhelming victory for the Northumbrian. Penda and Ethelhere and many a Mercian chief were slain; thousands of the beaten host were drowned in the river Winwaed, then swollen into a torrent by the November rains. Penda had fallen, and Oswy had risen to be chief of the English kings. The indirect results were even greater. The struggle between Teuton and Briton was finally decided in favour of the former; the policy which, in Cadwallawn's time, had nearly resulted in the overthrow of the Angles was now definitely at an end; yet further, the struggle between Christian and pagan was, for early England at least, now definitely concluded. Northumbria was all-powerful, and, with Northumbria, Christianity.

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[1] Mr Travis Mills's *Great Days of Northumbria*, pp. 53, 54.

CHAPTER VII

THE SEVENTH CENTURY

SECOND PHASE

THE latter part of the seventh century, though it contains no such great events as the battles of Heavenfield, Maserfield, and Winwaedfield, or the conversion of Northumbria, Mercia, and Wessex to Christianity, is yet important from certain points of view. Thus it saw the political centre of gravity shift southward; it saw the Celtic Church conquered by the Roman system; it saw a healthy recrudescence of lawgivers and donors of charters, who followed in the footsteps of Ethelbert, now dead for some two generations.

So far as the political history of this period is concerned we may soon dismiss it. After the battle of Winwaed Oswy, the most powerful king in Britain, bore sway over Northumbria and Mercia. For some time the war dragged on in the district of Loidis, around modern Leeds, but the power of the Mercians was already broken; Peada, Penda's son, was permitted by Oswy, as by an overlord, to rule the South Mercians, and Oswy himself for three years reigned over Penda's subjects, converting them to Christianity, apparently by force rather than by persuasion. Peada did not live long to benefit by his foeman's generosity, for in the year following (656) he was murdered by his wife Alchfleda, Oswy's daughter, at Easter-time. A little later, some three years after Winwaed, a rebellion was started in Mercia against Oswy, who appears to have been seeking out the Mercian princes for slaughter, for we read that the leaders of the revolt, Immin, Eafa, and Eadbert, produced, as claimant to the throne, Wulfhere, one of Penda's sons, "a youth whom they had concealed." The result of the rising was the end of Oswy's power in the south, and though he won some further successes at the expense of the Britons and Picts, Northumbria slowly abandoned its supremacy and became a centre of interest from the ecclesiastical rather than from the military side.

WULFHERE OF MERCIA

In 658 the youthful Wulfhere made good his claim to the throne of Mercia. The subsequent years showed him to be an energetic prince. In combination with his brother Merewald, he drove deep into Wales, and extended the borders of Mercia almost to the line marked out in later years by Offa's Dike.[1] He also enlarged his power in the east by reconquering Lindsey, rendered subject to himself Kings Sighere and Sebbi, of the East Saxons, and reduced the power of Wessex. When we reach the eighth century we shall find Mercia the strongest kingdom in England, and Wulfhere, together with the later Offa, appear to be mainly responsible for that position.

Wulfhere, having established his temporal power, seems to have eagerly seconded the efforts of the Christian missionaries and became a good son of the Church. Four bishops in succession he appointed—Trumhere, Jaruman, Ceadda, and Wynfrith. Wynfrith was, however, eventually deposed by Archbishop Theodore of Tarsus.

WESSEX

Turning for the moment from Mercia, we will journey southward to Wessex, now ruled over by Kenwalk (Cenwalh), son of Cynegils. The successor of that Cuthred who had been baptized by Birinus at Dorchester in 639,[2] Kenwalk mounted the West Saxon throne in 643, and there reigned for twenty-nine years. Though professing Christianity[3] like his predecessor, and though the founder of St Peter's at Winchester, he deserted his consort, a sister of Penda. The result was a war between the middle kingdom and Wessex, in which Kenwalk was beaten and driven for a time to seek refuge in East Anglia. By 648, however, he was back again in Wessex, and in that year gave three thousand hides of land to his kinsman Cuthred, and was probably present at the hallowing of the now completed St Peter's Minster.

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[1] See for evidence Professor Lloyd's *History of Wales*, vol. i, p. 195.

[2] See *ante*, p. 131.

[3] According to the *Chronicle*, Kenwalk himself was baptized in 646.

During these years Birinus had been bishop of the West Saxons; he died, however, in 650 and was succeeded by Agilbert, who was a native of Gaul and was unacquainted with the English language. Shortly afterward we have a hint of civil war in Wessex in the notice under the year 652 that " this year Kenwalk fought at Bradford-on-the-Avon." Ethelweard in his *Chronicle* tells us definitely that the battle was fought against his own people. Kenwalk's next campaign was against the Britons, ancient enemies of Wessex, and a battle was fought at Pen-Selwood. Near by there exists to-day a large earthen fortress known as 'Keniwilkin's Castle,' a name which, as Earle pointed out, is very similar to Kenwalk. At Pen-Selwood Wessex triumphed over Wales, driving the Britons as far as the river Parret.[1] Three years later Kenwalk crossed swords with Wulfhere at Pontesbury. What happened we hardly know. According to the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle*, Wulfhere ravaged Wessex as far as Ashdown, and later laid waste the Isle of Wight, which he gave to Ethelwald, King of the South Saxons; we also read that King Wulfhere " was the first man who brought baptism to the people of Wight." The entry does not, however, quite convince us, and although Bede confirms the Wight story, we cannot but believe that the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle* is unfair to Kenwalk, as Ethelweard's *Chronicle* is to Wulfhere, for there we read that " Kenwalk . . . took Wulfhere prisoner at Ashdown when he had defeated his army."

Whatever may have been the exact result of Pontesbury and Ashdown, we find Kenwalk reigning in apparent peace until 672, when he died, leaving a tranquil kingdom to his Queen, Sexburga, who ruled for one year. She was succeeded, in 675, by Escwin, who shortly afterward renewed the conflict with Wulfhere. Again of the result of the battle of Beadanhead we know nothing, but in the same year Wulfhere died and Ethelred of Mercia succeeded him. The next year Escwin also passed to the shades, leaving his kingdom to Kentwine, son of Cynegils.

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[1] Petherton has also been suggested. The *Chronicle* uses the word 'Pedridan.' Ethelweard has 'Pederydan.' For the Parret identification see Plummer, *Saxon Chronicle*, vol. ii, p. 28.

In this same year Ethelred of Mercia is found waging a devastating war on Kent, a kingdom which during these troublous years had politically been peculiarly quiet. This refuge-place of Ethelberg and her children had indeed been fortunate to escape from the many bitter quarrels which had been fought out between Northumbria and Mercia, Mercia and Wessex.

EGFRITH

Some few years before, in 671, Oswy, last of the Bretwaldas mentioned by Bede and a king who had made tributary the Picts and Scots, had died. He was succeeded by his son Egfrith, who had in his youth been a hostage at the Court of Queen Cynwise, wife of Penda. Almost at once Egfrith seems to have turned his attention to the Picts, whose "bestial hordes," to use Eddius's expression, were preparing to regain their liberty. The two forces met under the leadership of Egfrith and Bernhaeth respectively. So great was the slaughter of the Picts that two rivers were filled with the fallen corpses, and the soldiers of the victorious Angle passed over them as by a bridge. A few years later the Northumbrian met Wulfhere of Mercia and inflicted a defeat upon him, as the price of which the province of Lindsey fell to Egfrith for a time. Four years later (679) the two kingdoms were again at war, the Mercian hosts now being led by Ethelred. Of the result of the battle then fought near the banks of the Trent we have little knowledge, but Elfwine, Egfrith's younger brother, a popular prince, was slain. The quarrel lingered on some time longer, to be eventually healed by the good counsel of Archbishop Theodore. Compensation was made for Elfwine's death, and Lindsey, not improbably, was handed back to Mercia.

Egfrith's next step was against the Scots. He had already succeeded in imposing the yoke of Northumbria upon some part of the Britons of Strathclyde and had subdued the Picts as far as the Firth of Forth. He now looked farther afield, and, disregarding the advice of St Cuthbert and his counsellors, determined to wage a devastating war against the Scots. We read that he spared neither churches nor monasteries, but miserably wasted a harmless nation who had been most friendly with the English. This was in 684. In the year following, once again disregarding advice, he fell upon the northern Picts dwelling beyond the Firth of Forth. This time, however, the issue was different. Led by a stratagem of the enemy to believe they were fleeing, the hot-headed Egfrith hastily followed his foes in order to complete their destruction. They drew him, however, into a narrow fastness among their mountains not many miles distant from Forfar. There, trapped and unable to manœuvre, he and a large part of his army perished. We are told how the saintly Cuthbert, while standing amid the ruins of Roman Carlisle, declared that even then the great battle was being decided, a battle fought between two races each equally dear to him. It was as he had said. Soon messengers came bringing the woeful news that Egfrith and the flower of his army lay slain on the battle-ground of Nechtansmere. The defeat was decisive. Northumbria lost her former greatness, and Egfrith's successor, Aldfrith, his illegitimate half-brother, occupies no prominent place in seventh-century history.

Caedwalla of Wessex

With the decline of Northumbria the chief interest shifts to Wessex. For some years after the death of Kenwalk few important events had befallen the West Saxon kingdom. In 682, it is true, Kentwine had led an attack against the Britons, which, we are informed, resulted in their "being driven to the sea." With the appearance of Caedwalla, however, events move more quickly. We first find him establishing his right to the throne by force of arms, and shortly afterward carrying on an energetic war against the South Saxons, whose king, Ethelwalch, he slew. Under the leadership of Berthun and Andhun, however, the Sussex men got the upper hand for a time and Caedwalla was driven back. It was but for a time. Soon the West Saxon returned to the attack and "reduced the province to grievous slavery," a woeful condition which continued to some extent under Ine.

About this time Sussex was again attacked by Caedwalla and his brother Mul. Later Mul, who had carried the expedition against Sussex beyond its border into Kent, was caught by his enemies, the men of Kent, who burnt him and twelve of his followers alive. Such a deed could not pass unavenged. Kent and the Isle of Wight were laid waste (687).

Notwithstanding the constant and devastating wars he waged, Caedwalla seems to have been a good son of the Church. Inspired by Wilfrid, he followed up his devastation of Wight by an attempt to conclude what Wulfhere had commenced—the conversion of the pagans. He even delayed the execution of the death penalty passed upon two youthful pagan enemies until, but only until, they should be baptized. Finally he abdicated his throne, turned to religion, and made a pilgrimage to Rome, where he was baptized "on the Holy Saturday before Easter in the year of our Lord 689." [1] He died a few days later, at Rome, on April 20.

On the abdication of Caedwalla, Ine succeeded to the throne of Wessex. This king, who reigned for thirty-seven years, is famed as a lawgiver rather than as a military commander. We find him, however, continuing the campaign against Kent, but in 692 "the Kentish-men came to terms with Ine and gave him 30,000 pounds" (? *sceatta*) to purchase peace and by way of blood-money.

It was in this same year that Wihtred became King of

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[1] *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle* under date 688.

Kent. As to the other kingdoms, Ethelred still reigned over Mercia and Aldfrith over Northumbria. Over other smaller states other princelings ruled. For the moment, however, we will leave them all in peace and pass to a consideration of the religious controversy which had been raging around the date of Easter.

The Synod of Whitby

For our present purpose it is desirable once more to retrace our steps and pass rapidly in review the religious condition of this island. Kent had long been Christian and followed the Italian system. The Britons had for centuries been of the faith, but held their own opinions on important details of doctrine. The Picts of the south had many years before been converted by a follower of St Martin, the Picts of the north by Columba, of the Celtic Church. The Northumbrians had abandoned paganism, firstly in consequence of the teaching of Paulinus, a Romanist; secondly, and finally, because of the missionary zeal of Celtic Aidan and his fellow-workers. The men of Mercia had lately turned Christian under the rule of Penda's Christian sons, Peada and Wulfhere, who had intermarried into the royal house of Northumbria, and whose Christianity was probably partly of the Celtic, the British, and the Italian type. As to Wessex, the Romanist Birinus had, as we have seen, baptized two of its kings, and the faith was now almost established, although but lately, if we are to believe Bede, Wight had been forcibly converted by Wulfhere. As to Essex, we have seen how Mellitus had been driven from the kingdom by the son of King Sabert because he refused to pagans blessed bread.[1] In later times, however, Essex and Northumbria were on friendly terms; an East Saxon king, Sigebert, was baptized by Aidan's successor, Finan of Lindisfarne, and in 653 a missionary, Cedd, who had been working in Mercia was sent to the East Saxons. But after the accession of Sighere and Sebbi, Sigebert's successors, and after England had been ravaged by plague, the weak plant of Christianity shrivelled in Essex; Sighere and his people turned back to paganism, and had it not been for Wulfhere's influence idolatry might once more have claimed Essex for many years. So far as it was Christian, Essex had followed the Celtic Church. The same may be said of the Middle Angles and the inhabitants of Lindsey, where, however, long ago a Roman church had been built. Sussex was still to a large extent pagan, and it was reserved to Wilfrid in later years to turn it from its errors.

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[1] *Ante*, pp. 112–113.

As to the breach between the Roman and the British Church, no serious attempt seems to have been made to unite the two sects after the failure of the conference with Augustine. A similar dispute had arisen between the Roman and the Celtic Church under Augustine's successor, Laurentius,[1] from whose letter we gather that the Italian missionaries complained rather of the fact that Bishop Dagan of the Celtic Church refused to eat in the same house with them than of differences of faith. There did exist, however, the difference in the dating of Easter, and in later years, as we learn from the letters of Pope Honorius and Pope-elect John (afterward the Fourth), there had been a recrudescence of the peculiar Celtic, or British, belief known and condemned as the Pelagian heresy. Tonsures also varied. As to the Easter controversy, the matter had been settled for a large part of the Christian world by the Council of Nicaea,[2] but neither Celts nor Britons had accepted the finding of that Council. To us the point in dispute seems minute in essence, turning as it did upon different lunar calculations, the one of which fixed the vernal equinox at March 25, the other at March 21. From the point of view of Church ceremonial, feast-days, and the like, it did, however, result in some little confusion. As Mr Mills neatly puts it: "King Oswy, with all his lords and thegns, found himself keeping the Paschal Feast while Queen Eanfled and her servants were fasting for Lent." [3]

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[1] For his extraordinarily tactless letter to the Scots see Bede, *Ecclesiastical History*, Book II, chap. iv.

[2] Which, however, aimed rather against the Quartodecimans.

[3] *Cf.* Bede, *Ecclesiastical History*, vol. iii, p. 25.

More important still (from the purely political point of view), it struck across the Roman idea of centralization and unity.

Whether it appears important or unimportant to us, to the early Christian workers in England the Easter controversy gradually assumed a position of the greatest moment, and as time went on it was realized that a final settlement could not be indefinitely delayed. At this time, of course, the later Hildebrandine claims had not been made by the See of Rome. No Pope presumed to dictate to kings, and already an English king had ignored a papal Bull. The matter could not, therefore, be decided in Rome, and it became necessary to hold a local Ecclesiastical Council or Synod. The place of meeting was fixed at Whitby.

Looking back on early English Christianity, it is remarkable what a prominent place is occupied by women. Bertha of Kent, Ethelberg and Eanfled of Northumbria, had each taken a prominent part in the conversion of their subjects. Other less royal ladies were doing equally good work, ruling monasteries[1] and nunneries rather than kingdoms. The saintly Ebba (Aebba), whose name is preserved in St Abbs, had early founded a religious house, and at the time of the Synod Whitby's mixed monastery was under the control of the dominant abbess Hild, a woman of singular piety and wisdom. In the final controversy the two women Hild and Eanfled occupy almost as prominent a position as the disputing kings and bishops.

During the lifetime of Aidan all parties seem to have agreed that no open dispute was possible. His great piety, his lovable life, his enormous personal influence, had closed the mouths of his opponents. Even after his death the question was allowed to slumber during the rule of Finan at Lindisfarne, but already the matter was being canvassed within the Celtic Church itself. Ronan, a Scot, was even now disputing with Finan and the monks of Lindisfarne about the rival systems, and at least persuading them to give the Roman dating of the Easter feast consideration.

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[1] Women are occasionally found at the head of mixed monasteries. Men, however, never presumed to rule nunneries.

Such was the condition of affairs when Oswy of Northumbria and Aldfrith sub-king of Deira, his son, called the council together at Streanaeshalch, or Whitby, in 664. To this 'Bay of the Lighthouse,' there came Oswy and Aldfrith, Bishop Agilbert the Frank, Wilfrid of Ripon, James the Deacon, Romanus of Rochester, and the priest Agatho. Of these all were supporters of the Roman Church except Oswy, who, having been baptized by the Scots and being well acquainted with their language, inclined toward the Celtic Church. Even he, however, there is reason to believe, desired union with the Roman Church, if only for political reasons. On the other side were Colman of Lindisfarne and his Celtic clerks, Cedd the missionary bishop, and Abbess Hild and her followers.

The discussion which followed, including Colman's speech and Wilfrid's discourteous and pompous answer, we pass by. In the result the King, Oswy, having by questions ascertained that it was agreed that St Peter held the keys of Heaven, decided to make friends with the doorkeeper and follow the practice of Peter's Church ! The more important consequences were a present disunion and an ultimate centralization. Rome had conquered. Colman retired to Scotland, " his doctrine rejected and his party despised," taking many a holy man with him. Bishop Cedd and Abbess Hild both adopted the Roman view, the latter, however, always cherishing a grudge against Wilfrid, whose tactless and blatant speech had prevented perfect unity. The good monks of Lindisfarne, whose piety, humility, and love for the poor had raised many a seventh-century St Francis in their midst, were sadly reduced in number and in influence, and the way was open for Wilfrid to play for bishoprics, to make visits to Gaul, to struggle and fret and fume for temporal gain, to barter with the dying Oswy for guidance to Rome—a journey never undertaken, since, before Oswy could set out, on February 15, 671, he died, and Egfrith his son ascended the throne. The last years of Oswy's reign had been noted for no great events, except for a plague which devastated England, attacking with especial violence, like the Black Death in later centuries, the monasteries and religious foundations. So great had the loss been at Jarrow that only two of the choir were left to sing the services. These two, Abbot Ceolfrith and a small boy, struggled on, however, and contrived to perform the duties of a choir until others were trained to help them. The name of the small boy was Bede.

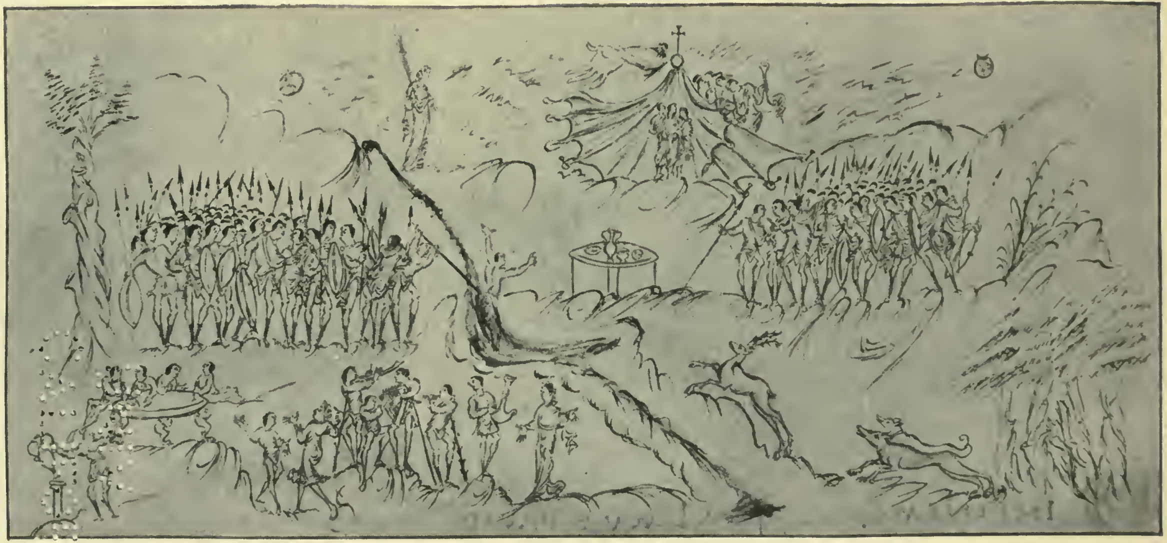

PLATE XVII. ANGLO-SAXON SPORT: HUNTING THE HART

CHAPTER VIII

THE SOCIAL CONDITION OF SAXON ENGLAND

WHEN the Angles and Saxons first invaded Britain at the end of the fourth and the beginning of the fifth century they were rude barbarians. As the centuries rolled by, as wars decreased in ferocity and frequency, as the more fertile counties of England were reduced to a more perfect state of tranquillity, as the Christian Church spread its doctrines, tamed savagery, spread education, and brought this island once more into communion with the politer world of south-western and southern Europe, as monastic libraries were founded and stocked with books by such men as Benedict Biscop and Aldhelm, as schools were established and a system of local jurisdictions, courts, and judges elaborated, the barbarians were softened in their barbarity and became in time civilized in a certain strong and virile way. War was still the main business of life, but commerce became more and more developed, music had its place, literature commenced to grow, Latin verse, satiric and enigmatical, became popular, riddles, puns, and jests were passed from guest to guest at the noble's banqueting-table and thence out to the lower order, bringing to men that gift of the gods—humour.

As early as the beginning of the seventh century Ethelbert of Kent had promulgated some rudimentary laws, and the end of the seventh and the beginning of the eighth century saw three important sets of dooms passed by Church-influenced Witans—those of Lothaire (Hlothhaere) and Edric, Wihtred, and Ine, the last-named king being responsible for laws comparable with those of Alfred in the ninth century. From very early times we have also grants of land and rights by charter being made, manumissions by deed and at the altar, and wills of property. We find slavery in existence throughout the period and lasting until long after; but though in Aelfric's *Homilies* we hear the complaint of the bondman, it is hardly the cry of the too greatly oppressed.

Through all these years there seems to have been a general and, in the main, a steady increase in material possessions. In matters of religion and morals the eighth century was worse, perhaps we may say far worse, than the seventh, but in the ninth, under the hammer-blows of the 'white' and 'black' pagans, the Danes and the Norse, the national character was strengthened.

The ninth century, indeed, witnessed a temporary decline in learning and in the arts, but it saw an improvement in the national character, and under the leadership of that most marvellous of early mediaeval kings, Alfred the Great, Saxon England reached its highest state from the point of view alike of morals, of learning, and of military power.

It is rather of ninth-century England, particularly of the England under Alfred, that we at present speak; at the same time much of what we say is derived from sources written at earlier or at later periods. In the following short generalizations we must be content to regard Saxon society as more or less stationary, attempting merely to take a bird's-eye view of the period as a whole.

General State of Society

Status in early days was much more prominent than in our time. As Sir Henry Maine said many years ago, the trend of society is from status to contract. In all early societies men were gracefully graduated from the king to the lowest slave; each man was put in his niche, given his price, and told how to dress. Sumptuary laws were in existence throughout our period, and long after the thirteenth century had been reached

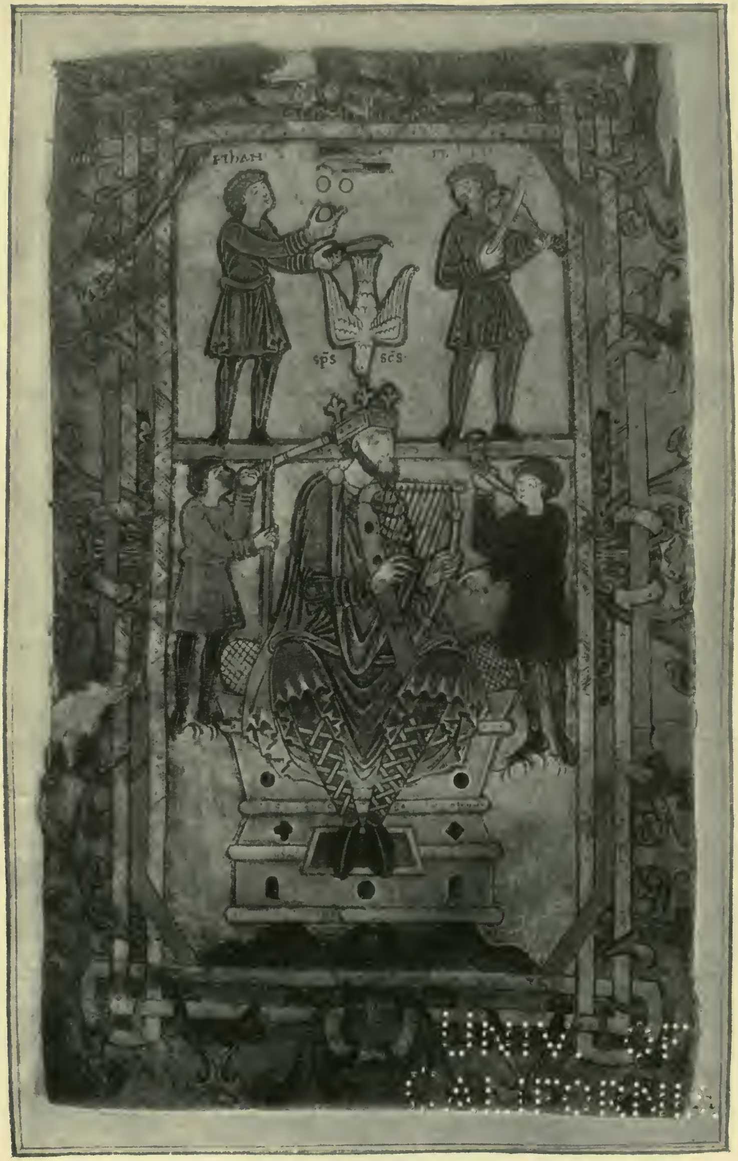

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PLATE XVIII. ANGLO-SAXON MUSICIANS AND A JUGGLER

women in London were told whether they might or might not wear fur on their dresses. In earlier times status not merely affected one's social position, but very vitally affected one's life. The she-slave could be killed for the price of two cows; the thegn, on the other hand, was almost inviolate, save at dreadful cost; and the morals of his kitchen-maid were protected more rigorously than the life of an unattached cotter.

We do not propose to enumerate the many social grades which existed in Saxon times, but men fell under four great heads: the Royal, the Noble, the Free, the Unfree. The noble included thegns and the higher clergy. The free included the lower clergy, the larger farmer holding his land by charter, the smaller landowner holding by custom, the merchant whose ships sailed the seas,[1] many tradesmen, fishers, smiths. Some of these latter, on the other hand, were unfree. The unfree included all the agricultural labourers, the menials, and the lower workpeople. Some of the unfree had a certain liberty, being bound to do definite duties and no more; others were absolute slaves, at the beck and call of their masters for all purposes; all were attached to the land and under a lord.

There is a considerable amount of evidence to show that the wealthier Saxon houses contained very many slaves. If a reference be made to Wynflaed's will (p. 155 *n.*), it will be seen that this lady on her death freed a very large number of slaves indeed. The same sort of wholesale manumission may be seen in other documents, and of isolated cases of slave-freeing we have a considerable number preserved. Sometimes the slaves were freed by their masters, or more frequently by their mistresses, "for their souls' sake." Often the slaves purchased their own freedom, as where Aegelnoth's son bought himself and his children from Abbot Aelfsige for five oras and twelve head of sheep. Occasionally the redemption price was almost nominal, as where Aluric, Canon of Exeter, redeemed Renold for two scilling. In many cases the full price was paid. Thus Brihtmaer at Holcombe had to pay two pounds for his liberty and that of his wife and their children. Sometimes the freedom was purchased by an outsider. In such cases the slave was generally a woman and the redeemer a man; we imagine that they married as a rule. Thus we find Godwig the Buck buying Leofgifu, the dough-woman of Northstoke, and her children for half a pound, in perpetual freedom; the document adds: "May Christ blind him who shall ever set this aside." In another case the following curse was attached: "Whoso shall alter this and bereave her [the manumittor's] soul thereof, may God Almighty bereave him of this life and of the kingdom of Heaven; and be he accursed, dead and quick, even to eternity." In nearly all these cases of purchases of freedom the port-reeve was present to take toll, which generally amounted to a few pence. This, of course, was a tax which went either to the king, as was the case in the sale in Tovi's chamber, or to the lord or priest who had the right to the market toll. Some of these records of purchase are instructive as showing us the grades of people who would be found in company one with another. Thus when Livega the barber was redeeming Edith, probably to marry her, we find that Edric the chapman witnesses the document. We expect Edric had his hair cut by Livega, and doubtless the two were excellent good friends, and it would be remarkable if Edith did not, in the years to come, pour out many a stoup of ale for Edric's benefit.

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[1] After a certain number of voyages he might become a thegn.

There is another institution which we must touch upon before we pass on to consider the position of women. This is the guild, or gild. This type of brotherhood did magnificent service in the early and later mediaeval period.

When the guilds commenced we do not know. Trade and social guilds had existed long before in Rome, but the Teutonic brotherhoods in certain features differed from the Latin ones. We know, however, that from comparatively early times, certainly not later than Athelstan, guilds were flourishing in England. From the records we have of the London Guild, Orky's Guild at Abbotsbury, the Woodbury and Exeter Guilds, and the Thanes' Guild at Cambridge, we find that

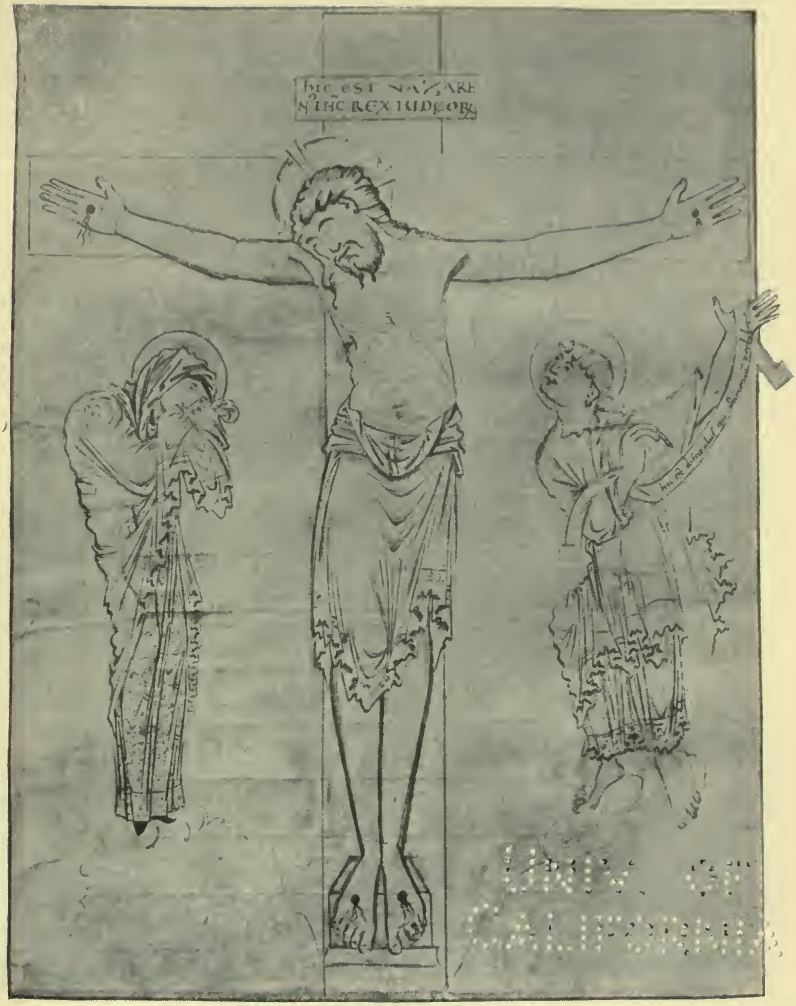
hic est Nazare
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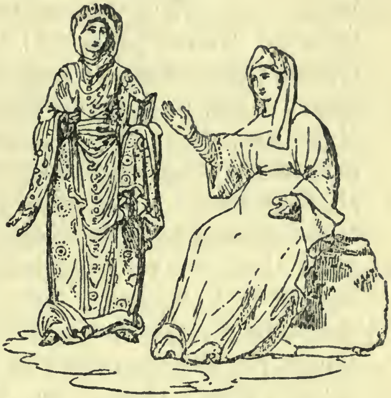
PLATE XIX. ANGLO-SAXON ART

the purpose of these organizations was to form fellowships whose members could feast together, help fellow-members in trouble, aid each other to trace stolen property, and help in the matter of burial, prayers for the souls of the dead, etc. In a word, they were instituted partly for social, partly for business, partly for religious purposes, and their influence seems to have been almost entirely for good.

The Position of Women

Women among the Saxons held the position generally assigned to them by Teutonic peoples—they were subservient to man. The Christian Church, however, which throughout the ages has glorified woman, greatly improved her position as time went on. As we have seen, women took no small part in the conversion of England, and were thought fit to rule monasteries as well as nunneries; the examples are rare, however, and none too well authenticated in some cases cited, of women ruling states. Descending lower in the scale, we find them largely under the control of their husbands and possessing no capacity to contract, except by virtue of rare customs such as existed in the city of London. In early times in Saxon England, as elsewhere, the purchase of wives with cattle or money was very common,[1] and in one of our earliest dooms we find it laid down that if a man buy a maiden with diseased cattle he is to return her if there be guile present. The marriage ceremony was, indeed, in this period purely



Anglo-Saxon Women

1. Etheldrytha, a princess of East Anglia. From the *Benedictional* of St Ethelwold.

2. From Abbot Elfnoth's *Book of Prayers* (Harl. MS. 2908).

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[1] See Émile Stocquart, *Aperçu de l'Évolution jur. du Mariage*, pp. 17–50; Huvelin, *Essai sur le Droit des Marchés*, p. 139, *n.* 1.

contractual, the putting on of the wedding-ring, which early appeared, being an overt act not unlike the more common hand-clasp and having as purpose the evidencing of the bargain. It is true that Sharon Turner said many years ago: "It is well known that the female sex were much more highly valued and more respectfully treated by the barbarous Gothic nations than by the more polished States of the East. . . . They were allowed to possess, to inherit, and to transmit landed property; they shared in all the social festivities; they were present at the witanagemot and the shire gemot; they were permitted to sue and be sued in the courts of justice; their persons, their safety, their liberty, and their property were protected by express laws; and they possessed all that sweet influence which . . . they will ever retain in those countries which have the wisdom and the urbanity to treat them as equal, intelligent, and independent beings." We confess, however, that in our opinion that is putting the woman's position in Saxon times too high. Though we accept the statement of the learned authors of the *History of English Law*[1] that "the 'bride-sale' of which Tacitus tells us was no sale of a chattel. It was a sale of the *mund*, the protectorship, over the woman. An honourable position as her husband's consort and yoke-fellow was assured to her by solemn contract"; and again: "When light begins to fall upon the Anglo-Saxon betrothal, it is not a cash transaction by which the bride's kinsmen receive a price in return for right over their kinswoman; rather we must say the bridegroom covenants with them that he will make a settlement upon his future wife"—we must still remember that early Saxon marriages were extraordinarily rudimentary, the so-called 'rape-marriage,' *i.e.* marriage by capture, was not unknown, and wife-purchase was one of the staples of the early markets. We do not suggest that the wife was her husband's slave, but it does appear that the circumstances of their conjunction were crude, and in the earlier times we believe the wife was actually bought from her kinsmen, the *morgen*, or morning-price, being also paid to the woman in exchange for her consent, just as it was in Wales. As to the legal position between husband and wife when once married, we cannot even touch on this singularly complex subject. Stobbe in his *Privatrechts* has pointed out that in Würtemberg there were sixteen different modes of succession, and there is equal diversity on other points. It was largely a matter of custom varying in different places.

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[1] Sir Frederick Pollock and the late Professor Maitland, *History of English Law*, vol. ii, pp. 364, 365.

When Turner says that the Saxon woman had the right to possess, to inherit, and to transmit landed property, we find less difficulty in agreeing with him. We have many wills of Saxon ladies and many manumissions made by women of their slaves in those times. Women do occasionally, but, apart from Mercian queens, only very occasionally up to the ninth century, sign charters, though, on the other hand, quite frequently the lady's signature is dispensed with. Thus in a charter given by King Cenwulf and Queen Cenegitha, in which both King and Queen are joined as donors, we find no signature or mark or seal belonging to the Queen attached, although the signatures of the King's son and of many bishops, abbots, and nobles appear.[1] On the other hand, it is well known that women—that is to say, highly placed royal or noble ladies—did attend meetings of the Witan and the lower councils and did participate in arbitrations. At the same time it is almost certain that the average woman's property, if she had any, was largely controlled by her male kinsmen or husband.

We must not deduce too much from the woman's admitted power to make a will and to free slaves.[2] Both these powers probably came to her in the first place through the Church, which early interested itself in the final gifts of the dying and in manumissions.

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[1] The grant was to Christ Church, Canterbury, under date July 17, 799. It is to be found in Birch's *Cart. Sax.*

[2] We give some portions of the will of Wynflaed, *c.* 995 (see *Dipl. Ang. Aevi Sax.*, p. 553). After gifts of gold to the Church, she wills : " And let Wulfwarn be freed, and follow whom it is most agreeable to her ; and ——thryth also. And let Wulfflaed be freed, on the condition that she follow Aethelflaed and Eadgyfu. And she bequeaths to Eadgyfu one weaveress

When we touch on the Church we have, indeed, an entirely different picture of woman's position presented to us. The great abbesses Hild and Ebba and their lesser-known compeers, Bertrana, Abbess of Bath, Bernguidis, who received estates near the river Cherwell from Aethelmod in October 681, Cutswida, Hedilburga, Mildryth, Abbess of Minster, Sigeburga, Selethryth, sister of the thegn Ealdbeorht, and many others, constantly appear as the donees of charter rights. We find recorded no fewer than seven separate grants of land in and around Thanet made to the Abbess Ebba. Nor do the good ladies appear to have been bad business-women. Not content with grants of land, we find them obtaining remissions of a tax on ships in the port of London. They also shared

and one sempstress; the one is named Eadgufu, the other is named Aethelgyfu. And let Gerburg be freed, and Miskin . . . and Burhulf's daughter at Chinnock, and Aelfsige, and his wife, and his elder daughter, and Ceolstân's wife. And at Charlton let Pifus be freed and Eadwine. . . . And at Faccancumb let Aethelm be freed, and Man, and Johanna, and Sprow and his wife, and Enefaet, and Gersand, and Suel. And at Coleshill let Aethelgyth be freed, and Bicca's wife, and Aeffi, and Beda, and Gurhan's wife; and let Wulfwarn's sister, Byrhsige's wife, be freed. . . . And to Aelfwold [she gives] her two buffalo horns, and one horse, and her red tent. And she bequeaths to Eadmaer one covered cup. . . . And let be given up to Eadwold his own two silver cups; and she bequeaths to him her gold-decorated wooden cup, that he may enlarge his torque with the gold. . . . And she bequeaths to him two boxes and therein one bed-furniture, all that belongs to a bed . . . and the serfs she gives to her son's daughter Eadgyfu. . . . And she bequeaths to Eadgyfu, on the other hand, Aelfsige the cook, and Aelfwarn, Burga's daughter, . . . and her double lamb's-wool kirtle, and another of linen or linen web. And to Eadgyfu two boxes, and therein her best bed wall-hanging, and a linen rug, and all the bedclothes which thereto belong . . . and her best dun tunic, and her better mantle, and her two wooden spotted cups, and her old wire brooch of vj mancuses. And let four mancuses be given her for her soul-shot . . . and one long hall wall-hanging, and another short one, and three seat-coverings. And she gives to Ceoldry whichever she prefers of her black tunics, and her best holy veil, and her best binder, and to Aethelflaed her white striped kirtle, and cuffs and binders. And let Aethelflaed afterward find one of her nun-habits, the best she can, for Wulfflaed and Eethelgifu, and eke with gold. . . . Then she gives to Aethelflaed all the things that are there unbequeathed, as books and such little things . . . and there are also wall-hangings. . . . And she bequeaths to Cynelufu her share of the wild horses that are with Eadmaer. . . . And let Eadwold and his sister have the tame horses in common."

with the monks the right to work some of the salt mines of Cheshire, and probably, even in early times, got control over the tolls of neighbouring markets.

All this power, however, was gained by the abbess, not because she was a woman, but because of her position in the Church. As we have said, the Church has throughout the ages glorified women, and it was the Church which in time exerted its power to break off the rough edges of the old pagan marriage. The ceremony was made religious, and plight of faith before the altar was substituted for the older, more barbaric practices. Apart from marriage, many laws were promulgated tending to repress immorality.[1] The early dooms are full of rules providing fines and penalties for insults to women. In the earlier dooms, however, the wrong was regarded as done to her master, as reducing her value, rather than to herself; but as time went on the woman herself was protected. Throughout the period, as we have indicated, the position of women was Teutonic; it was not so high, for example, as the place occupied by the fair sex in the laws of Howel Dha—that is, among the Britons.

STANDARD OF LIVING

The standard of living varied then, of course, as it does to-day, with the position occupied by the person under consideration. Looking at the matter broadly, however, we find no great luxury, and, among the low, little absolute destitution, but plenty of hard work, frugal fare, and absence of liberty.

The domestic architecture was simple; the houses were built of wood and thatched with rushes or with straw. Even in the early days, when many handsome Roman houses and buildings existed intact and untenanted, the Saxons rarely occupied them, apparently not knowing how to utilize them, or how to live in them. In Lincoln evidence exists which proves that buildings were allowed to rot away and fall from disuse scores of years, perhaps centuries, after the Romano-Britons had been driven from them.

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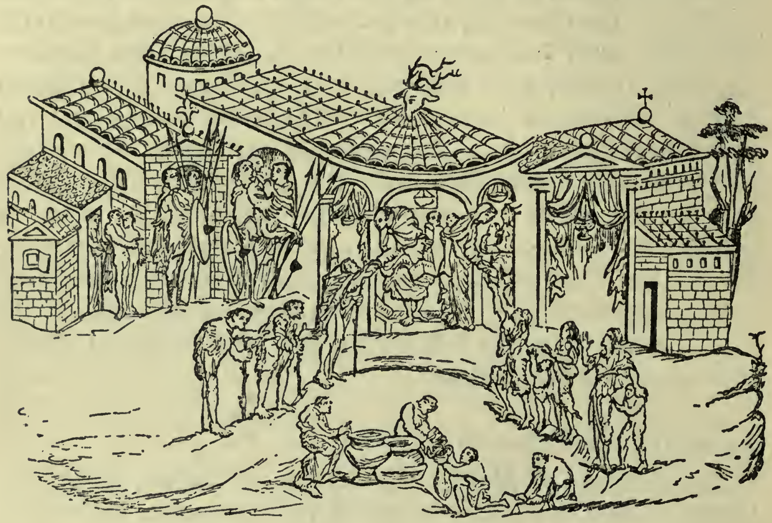
[1] 'Immorality' hardly expresses the position, since it suggests a breach of conventional morality, and in the early years of Saxon England there was no conventional morality.

The houses, being built of wood, were in many cases far from wind-proof, especially as the Saxons seem to have been indifferent carpenters. Even King Alfred had to resort to lanterns in order to prevent his candles being blown out by the wind. To remedy the faulty construction of the walls and keep the wind out hangings were largely used. In Wynflaed's will wall-hangings and bed-hangings are referred to several times, and we know from other sources that considerable attention was paid to the weaving and designing of tapestries, wall-hangings, and curtains.



Residence of a Saxon Nobleman
From a manuscript

In another direction the Saxons were distinctly luxurious. In all things appertaining to the table they appear to have spared no expense. As Sharon Turner has told us, their tables were sometimes very elaborate, being occasionally

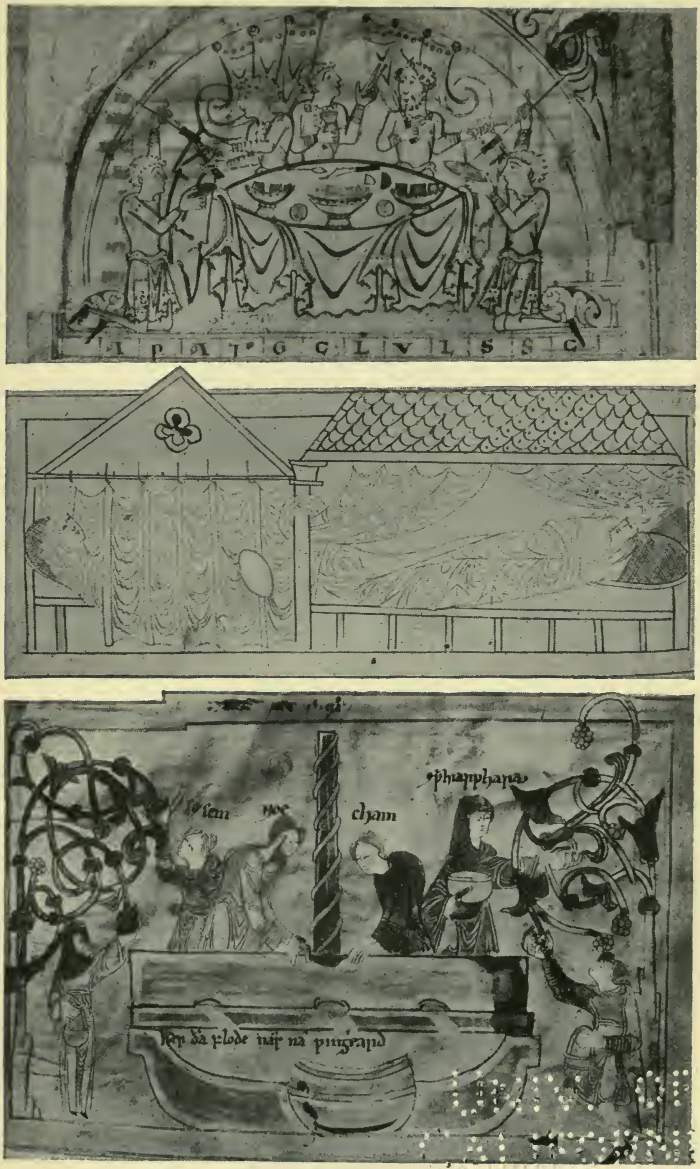

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Plate XX. (1) A Dinner Party. (2) Beds with Curtains. (3) Wine-press

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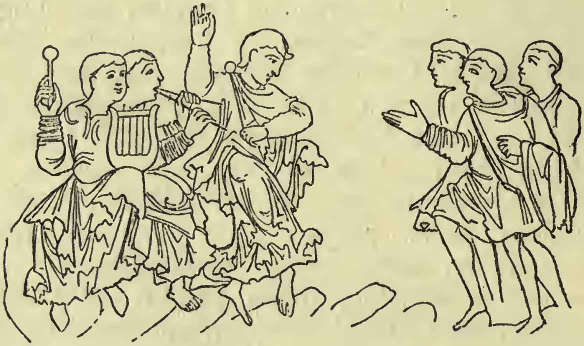
made of silver and gold. Aethelwold, in Edgar's reign, had a silver table worth three hundred pounds.

In food and drink, also, the Saxons were not backward. In *The Anglo-Saxon Leechdoms* we have references to a large number of fruits and vegetables and articles of food and drink. Of fruits we find mention made of sweet apples, pears, peaches, medlars, plums, and cherries; many of these had been introduced by the Romans, and had lived on and been utilized. Thus the peach had come from Persia, and the cherry, which was introduced by Lucullus into Italy, had come, *via* Rome, from Cerasus, in Cappadocia. For flesh foods they used beef, mutton, calf, pig, goat, deer, and wild boar, as well as peacock, swan, duck, goose, culver, pigeon, water-fowl, and wild fowl generally, the latter being caught by hawking. Many kinds of fish were caught; indeed, fishing was a separate art. We are told of salmon, trout, eels, sturgeon, hake, plaice, sprats, pilchards, lampreys, herrings, lobsters, crabs, oysters, periwinkles, etc. Aelfric mentions others, including whales, but he was a landsman, and he makes his 'Fisher' express a preference for river or pond fishing over sea fishing, which he says was less easy. To these meats the Saxons added many vegetables, prepared dishes, and drinks to complete their menus. To recount all the food-stuffs available would be tedious. We may add, however, that cooking was something of an art. They knew how to make oyster patties, and stuffed their fowls with bread and parsley. Invalids had special dietaries, including eggs, chicken, and broth. Honey was largely used, and bees were extensively cultivated both for the honey (which was used as sugar is to-day to sweeten food and ferment liquor, as well as for salves and face-dressings for women) and the wax, which was used for seals and for lighting. Salt was considered a necessity, and was mainly produced by brine evaporation in Cheshire.

Drinks, of course, hold a very prominent place in the Saxon *ménage*. Beer, ale, and double-brewed ale (made from malt, sometimes from malt and hops); mead, a sweet intoxicating drink fermented with honey; wines, clear, austere, sweet, etc., sometimes made from vines grown in England, but generally imported from the Franks and always rather expensive; drinks of a special kind, *e.g.* hydromel and 'the southern acid drink,' oxymel, which was made of vinegar, honey, and water, and was regarded as having medicinal qualities, being used as a cure for the 'half-dead disease' and epilepsy; mulled wine and claret-cup, were all available.



Dance

From the Cotton MS., in the British Museum

Banquets were not infrequent among the richer classes, on whose tables dishes of silver and vessels of glass were to be found. At such gatherings musicians, gleemen, or actors, jugglers and buffoons would sometimes appear to amuse the guests. In some cases dancers also attended, but their art would appear to have been, as a rule, crude and to have savoured less of the artistry of the Greek than of the rough horseplay of the knockabout comedian—they preferred, in other words, tumbling to dancing. The more elegant forms of dancing were, however, known. In the less formal functions the guests themselves would sing, and it was customary for the harp to be sent round so that the singer could accompany himself. The priests were ever good trencher-men and table companions, the first Goliards, and by no means unhandy with the bumper. We find in Edgar's reign the priest forbidden to be an *ealuscop*, or ale-poet, but we expect they managed to fire off a few after-dinner stories of the lesser sort notwithstanding.

Of the sports hawking and hunting were the chief. Boar-hunting on foot was common, the hunter taking with him a boar-spear, a sword, an unarmed attendant with two dogs in leash, and a hunting-horn. Hawking was done on horse-back, with an attendant on foot carrying a hawk. In later years the best hawks came from the mountains of Eryri (Snowdonia).

MEDICINE

The practice of medicine was a special art to which much attention was paid from early times. We find King Alfred sending to the Patriarch of Jerusalem for some good recipes. The emissary returned with scammony (juice of the Syrian convolvulus), *gutta ammonica* (like sal volatile), spice, gum-dragon, aloes, galbanum, balsam, petroleum, alabaster, and *θηριακή*. The Saxon physicians also had some knowledge of the Greek and Latin works on medicine, but much of their healing was based on superstition, and their surgery was elementary. The love-philtre was common, as was its converse, the knot. None of their charms or herbal remedies were able to stay the ravages of the plague. As to sanitation, not even the rudiments of the science existed; especially was this true of the monastery, where, owing to the connexion between dirt and religion which existed among the early Christians, the plague had full scope and always claimed hundreds of victims.[1]

The Saxons seem to have studied nightmares and dreams, elves, demons, and dwarfs, and were learned in charms. We have recipes preserved to us for concocting "a lithe drink against a devil and dementedness," and for a cure where a man has been 'overlooked' by the evil eye; we have full details given for curing the elf disease and for "doing away a dwarf"; we know how they exorcised elves and goblins and women with whom the devil had had commerce; there is also a recipe for curing an elf-shot horse. We are informed that wolves' flesh was a specific against devil sickness and for an ill sight, and that salt, rue, ivy-leaves, and honey made a good cure for "a very old headache" (as distinguished from a 'headache' and an ache of half the head, or megrim).

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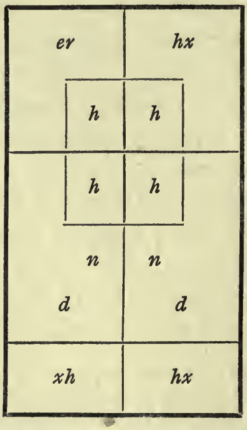
[1] Small-pox is treated of at some length in *The Anglo-Saxon Leechdoms*. It first appeared in France A.D. 565, in Arabia A.D. 572. Rhazes wrote a monograph upon it in Arabic in 923. It is interesting to see the attempts at herbal treatment of serious diseases such as cancer and leprosy. The recipes included almost every herb the mediciner could think of, mixed together and pounded.

Not only were charms and superstitious remedies good as cures, but, if desired, they could harm. Aelfric tells us what happened to the man who drank in Lent without Bishop Aelfheah's blessing. This man had a mind to drink in Lent, we are informed, so one day he requested the Bishop to bless his cup. The Bishop refused, and "the silly fellow" drank without a blessing and went out. "Well," Aelfric continues, "somebody set a dog upon a bull out there, and the bull ran at the man and gored him so that he lost his life, and bought the untimely drink at that price."

We also have charms for preventing or disclosing crime. Thus we are told: "If a man stealeth anything write this in silence:



and put it into thy left shoe, under thy heel. Then thou shalt soon hear of it." Other remedies existed for curing "savageness in hounds and contrariness." The cure was to carry a hound's heart about with you. If, unfortunately, you had left it at home and the contrary hound went mad, it was desirable to catch him, kill him, cut off his head, and keep it. Pounded, it made an excellent remedy for the "kingly disease," the jaundice.

The mediciner not only desired to cure disease; he aspired to paint the lily and devised face-salves for the ladies. "For blemishes," we read, "to remove them from the face, if a woman take a dust made of ground elephant bone or ivory, pounded with honey, and smear the face daily, it will purge away the spots." The Saxon women were, indeed, most careful of their appearance. We find that they had their hair curled with curling-irons and generally were attentive to the dressing of their locks. They also painted their faces, using the red colour of stibium.[1]

LITERATURE

The Saxon period, when we remember that it extended over many centuries, cannot be regarded as fruitful in literature, either prose or verse even though we allow for the loss inseparable from a written literature in a warlike age. Of poetry the greatest epic in Old English literature is undoubtedly *Beowulf*. Beowulf was a Jutish hero whose fights and struggles are portrayed with much vigour and virility. According to Dr Heath, "the poem is of pure English origin, and first sprang into poetic form in Northumbria. One lay from Bernicia, and another from Deira, each dealt with distinct incidents in the hero's career." In subsequent years the foundation verses were elaborated and augmented in the manner so common with early stories, as we see in those strange medleys, culled from different ages by the British, now so well known to the world through Lady Charlotte Guest's translation of the *Mabinogion*.

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[1] Antimony salts were largely used by the ancients as beautifiers, but generally for darkening the eyebrows and eyelashes. There are few red antimony salts like the mercuric salts, but the hydrated sulphide is orange-red and could have been prepared in olden times, being easy to make.

CAEDMON

The author of the original part of *Beowulf* and the authors of the subsequent additions are unknown, and our first poet whose name has lived was the unlearned cowherd Caedmon, who, blessed with the gift of song, woke the hills and dales of Northumbria with his impromptu verses. Flourishing about the year 670, the details of his life are but little known to us. He was a man of great piety and humility, and in later life lived in the monastery of Whitby under the Abbess Hild. Though early, his poems are in many cases truly magnificent; and though a ready composer—we are told that his gift for sacred poetry was so great that he was able after a little thought to turn into verse whatever passages in the Bible were translated for him—he was by no means a shallow one. His verses on the Creation, so admirably and faithfully translated by Dr Stopford Brooke, are Miltonic in their breadth and intensity:

> Nor was here as yet,   save a hollow shadow,
> Anything created;   but the wide abyss
> Deep and dim, outspread,   all divided from the Lord,
> Idle and unuseful.   With His eyes upon it
> Gazed the mighty-minded King   and He marked the place
> Lie delightless—   [looked and] saw the cloud
> Brooding black in Ever-night,   swart beneath the heaven,
> Wan, and wasteful all.[1]

Caedmon, indeed, was a true poet, and, being the first of English poets, is entitled to a high place in our literature. His poetry, however, being entirely sacred, is less useful to the historian of those times than the political and satiric verse and riddles of later writers, who give us in their lays some peeps into the life of the age.

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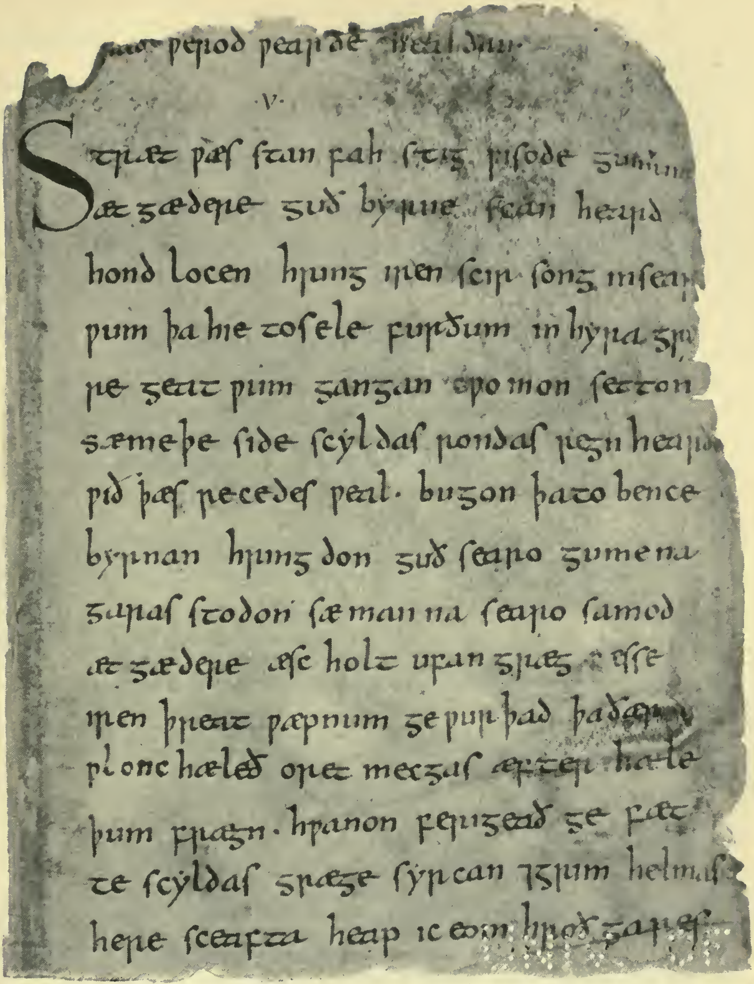
[1] We quote from Stopford A. Brooke's *Early English Literature*, vol. ii, p. 84. He admirably compares *Paradise Lost*, Book VII:

> "They viewed the vast immeasurable Abyss,
> Outrageous as a sea, dark, wasteful, wild,
> Up from the bottom turned by furious winds
> And surging waves."

We are also indebted to Dr Stopford Brooke's work for the quotations from Cynewulf on the next page.



ƿerod ƿearde healdan

V.

Stræt ƿæs stan fah stig ƿisode gum
ætgædere guð byrne scan heard
hond locen hring iren scir song in sear
ƿum þa hie to sele furðum in hyra gry
re geatƿum gangan cƿomon setton
sæmeþe side scyldas rondas regn hear
ƿið þæs recedes ƿeal· bugon þa to bence
byrnan hringdon guð searo gumena
garas stodon sæmanna searo samod
ætgædere æsc holt ufan græg ƿæs se
iren þreat ƿæpnum geƿurþad þa ðær
ƿlonc hæleð oret mecgas æfter hæle
þum frægn· hƿanon ferigeað ge fæt
te scyldas græge syrcan ⁊ grim helmas
here sceafta heap ic eom hroð gares

PLATE XXI. A FRAGMENT OF THE MS. OF "BEOWULF." 164

CYNEWULF

Such a one was Caedmon's successor, Cynewulf. In his later years he seems to have restricted himself to sacred verse, but from his early period, when he was journeying round England as a travelling bard, experiencing life in all its forms, he has left us several verses, of which his *Riddles* and *Crafts of Men* are the most important for our purpose. Thus in the *Crafts of Men* we seem to see the armourer busy at his forge turning out his weapons :

> One, a clever smith, may for use in war,
> For the weapons' onset, many [arms] make ready
> When he forges fast for the fighting of the warriors
> Either helm or hip-seax, or the harness of the battle,
> Or the sword sheer-shining, or the circle of the shield,
> For to fix it firmly 'gainst the flying of the spear.

Again, in his *Riddles*, darkly describing the Sword and the Shield, he does something more than depict an object ; he shows how men of his age valued and treasured their weapons ; he pictures the love of battle and the main duty of life—fighting. Thus of the Sword :

> I'm a wondrous wight for the warstrife shapen ;
> By my lord beloved, lovelily adorned :
> Many-coloured is my corslet, and a clasping wire
> Glitters round the gem of Death which my Wielder gave to me.

And the Shield thus sadly speaks :

> I am all alone, with the iron wounded,
> With the sword slashed into, sick of work of battle.

Besides these earlier works, we have from this poet several important poems, viz. *Juliana*, *Christ*, *Fates of the Apostles*, and *Elene*. It is curious that of a poet who has left us so much from such a barren period our knowledge should have been so small until within comparatively recent times. Kemble discovered his name, and since then accumulating evidence has told us many facts about his life, but even now we are not sure whether certain other poems are by him or by men of his school. Such poems as *Guthlac*, *Descent into Hell*, *Phoenix, Dream of the Rood,* and *Andreas* cannot definitely be ascribed to him. Of these perhaps *Andreas* is the most doubtful. Aldhelm and Cynewulf have each been suggested as the author, but there are good reasons for believing that the poem was the work of some anonymous writer. It is certainly powerful for those times, its scenes painted by one who could hear the voice of Nature.

> Snow bound the earth
> With whirling flakes of winter, and the storms
> With hard hail-showers grew chill, and Frost and Rime—
> Grey gangers of the heath—locked closely up
> The homes of heroes.

THE EPICS

Of the later epic poems, undoubtedly the finest is *The Battle of Maldon,* produced toward the end of the tenth century, and possessing that same vigorous tone so noticeable in the Norse sagas. Owing to the form and the use of alliteration a translation loses much of the force of the original, but we adventure the following English version of a part of *The Battle of Maldon* :

> The flowing flood-tide came, following the ebb,
> Linking lordly streams which leaped between,
> Holding awhile apart each eager warrior.
> For see by Panta's stream the armies proudly stand ;
> Now meet the Essex men the host of the ashen boats.

Of earlier epics of the intermediate period we have such pieces as *The Battle of Finnsburg* and *King Waldere's Lay,* both by unknown writers.

SAXON PROSE

Of prose literature the Saxon period is even more barren.[1] Bede, who wrote elegantly, wrote, of course, in Latin, yet has been deemed by some to be, in a sense, the Father of English Prose. Aldhelm also wrote in Latin, and that in a turgid

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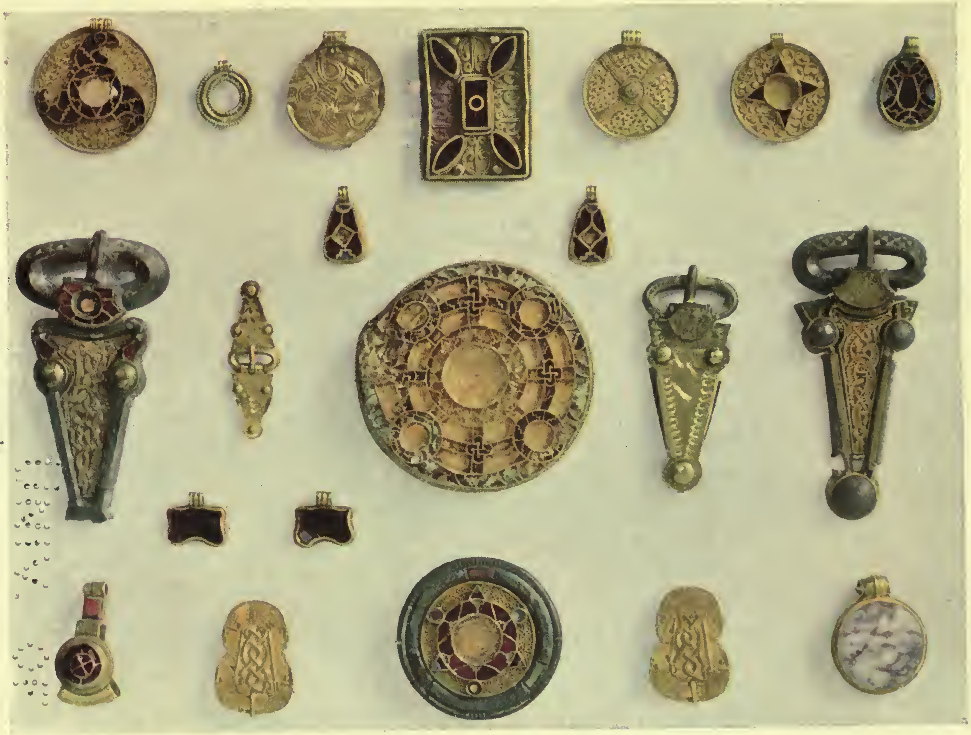
[1] As Wyatt points out, however, the earliest English poetry and prose belong to a period when no other nation of modern Europe had either a vernacular poetry or a vernacular prose, and although this may require slight modification, it does bring out the important point that we are dealing with a barbaric people and uncultivated times.



ANGLO-SAXON JEWELLERY IN THE BRITISH MUSEUM

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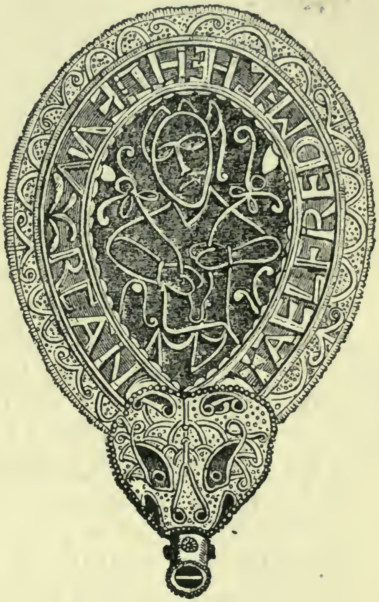
style. The chief prose-writers who worked in Anglo-Saxon were King Alfred and the chroniclers. Aelfric and Wulfstan were, however, producing Saxon prose toward the end of the tenth century, and Alfred had probably around him men who could compose; but Latin was so entirely the language of the learned—and Latin frequently so base that it is an imperfect foundation for literature—that Saxon writers in the vernacular are rare. We must also remember the ignorance of the times; even kings and nobles often found it convenient when subscribing their charters to dispense with the writing of their names and substitute the sign of the Cross.



Alfred's 'Jewel'

Arts and Crafts

Of the lesser arts and crafts the period was almost equally barren. Architecture was rudimentary, and Benedict Biscop found it necessary to import Frankish workmen to teach the Saxons the art of glass-making—an art which had flourished in Britain for centuries before the Saxon invasion. Even in Bede's time glass had to be imported. The goldsmith's art was almost as neglected, though as time progressed the Saxon craftsman developed a certain aptitude for gold-work; thus the settings of jewels are sometimes found to be of a type of filigree work, fine yet strong. Many of the ornaments, however, especially brooches, are extraordinarily massive, and toward the end of the period rather beautiful in design. The silversmiths also were turning out dishes and chalices, but again the designs are strong and plain rather than highly developed. We have preserved to us, however, a fine bronze bowl which shows much taste in its curves.

Of the smiths the most important was doubtless the armourer, or ironsmith. His skill was expended, of course, upon the strength rather than the elegance of his swords and spears and helmets. The general design of the swords is, in a manner, grand, breathing out the spirit of slaughter and ruddy strength. We can see that the wielders of those weapons were men of action.

But though smithcraft aimed at strength rather than at decorative effect or elegance, the weaver combined with utility something of an artistic spirit. The English were, indeed, so admirable at weaving that men from Germany and even from Italy came here to learn the trade. Silk and wool alike were woven into noble garments, sometimes of purple hue intermixed with gold, sometimes patterned with various colours, golden threads, and precious stones. The same taste for gorgeous groupings of colours is shown in the Saxon enamels or minor mosaic work, and in their illuminating—an art much practised in the monasteries. There the monks learnt to apply gold to parchment and knew how to burnish. They were also masters of the art of embossed gold-work, in which the gilded parts are made to stand up from the paper. Here again their art was hardly refined;[1] it was the art of an unpolished people who liked plenty of sparkle and violent contrasts. On the other hand, it was at least worthy of the age in which it was produced.

Music, of course, was also rudimentary. The harp existed in Saxon as in British and pre-Celtic Albion. One of the Cottonian MSS. shows us David playing on the harp, and Alfred is known to have performed on that instrument. We have also seen how the youthful Bede helped Ceolfrith to sing the antiphons in Jarrow Monastery, and we know that there did exist a simple form of organ in England both in Romano-

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[1] There were doubtless exceptions. The drawing of the Christ now in the Manuscript Department of the British Museum is both fine in line and restrained in treatment.

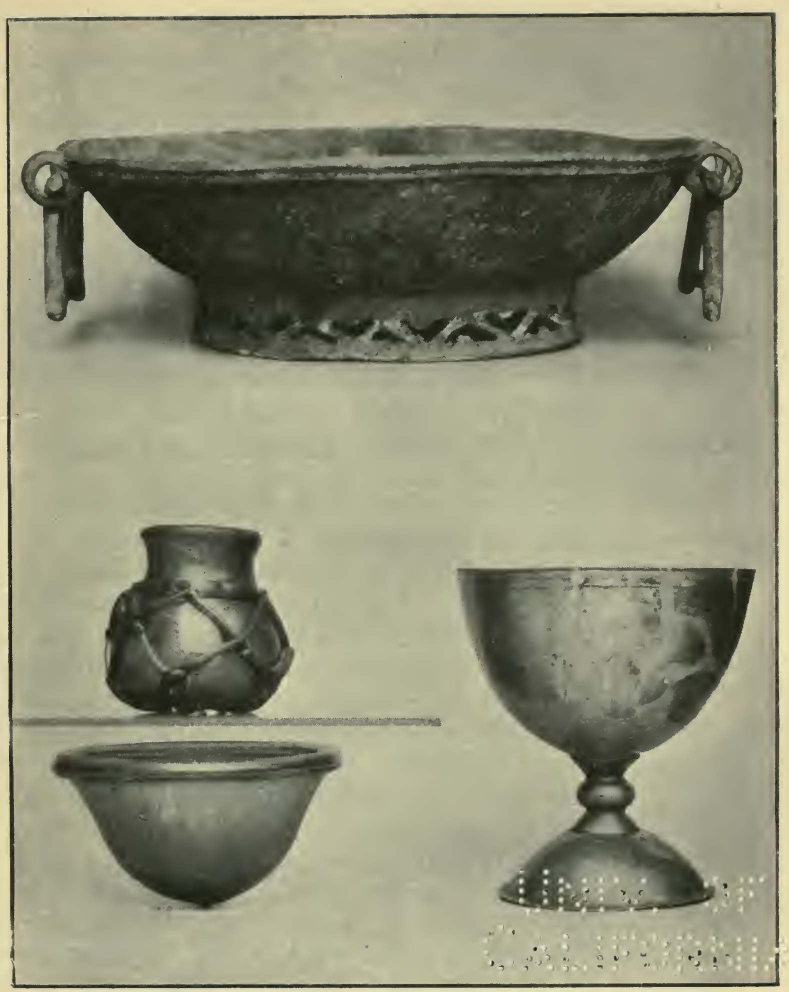

PLATE XXIII. ANGLO-SAXON CRAFTS: BRONZE BOWL, GLASS-WARE, AND SILVER CHALICE 172

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British and in early Saxon times. For the rest, the Saxons possessed a form of lyre and flute and a simple violin, also trumpets of various sorts. Of the quality of the music produced we know nothing.

LAWS

If the Anglo-Saxon period produced comparatively little vernacular literature and little art, it has at least given us a long series of lawgivers and a bulky compilation of dooms. At first the doom-givers are widely separated in point of date, Ethelbert of Kent, the first Christian king of a part of England and the first English lawgiver, promulgated his findings at the beginning of the seventh century; Lothaire and Edric come next, nearly a hundred years later. But when once the end of the ninth century is reached the stream is a continuous one. Alfred, Edward the Elder, Athelstan, Edmund, Edgar, Ethelred follow one another closely; each published important dooms; and although we must exclude Cnut's admirable laws as the work of a Dane and Edward the Confessor's dooms as spurious, we still have left a large number of rules which teach us much, if we will probe into them, of the life of the age and the condition of Saxon England.

We do not propose in these pages to enter into the details of Anglo-Saxon law, save to such extent as may be necessary to bring home to the reader the state of society in those times.[1] As for the dooms themselves, they were mainly criminal codes, based on the money fine as to penalty, and aiming at replacing self-help (with the resulting blood-feud) by an organized State system, so little developed, however, as to deserve the name 'organized self-help' which has been given to it. But though the dooms are largely concerned with the suppression of crime—immorality, heresy, murder, and especially thieving—they give us, at the same time, a glimpse of the state of trade in Saxon England and lift for us a little the curtain which hides the everyday life of the people.

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[1] For what follows the author's articles in the *Law Quarterly Review*, 1913, 1915, in which the authorities are collected, have been used as the basis.

Trade in those days was at once far more simple and far more complex than now. The articles sold were, comparatively speaking, few in number; the places where the sale could take place were also few; but, on the other hand, the rules to be observed, the parties to be present, the penalties imposed where a secret sale had been effected, made it in some cases a singularly difficult matter to transfer an object of value from hand to hand.

Throughout the Saxon period sales did not take place in shops, but in markets. In doom after doom we read that sale must take place in 'port,' and there is every reason to believe that by 'port' the Anglo-Saxons meant 'market.' The reason for this varied with the centuries. In early times, owing to the disordered state of the country, the antagonism of various towns to one another, and the simplicity of the social state, it is probable that the few sales which were transacted took place of necessity in burhs or in other secure places. As time went on, however, the tendency was for trade to enlarge its boundaries. But what had formerly been impossible now became undesirable. Sales in isolated places were to a large extent secret, and secret sales were not permitted, for they enabled the thief to alienate his ill-gotten goods. We must also remember that the nobles and the clergy had been given from early times franchise market rights enabling them to take toll, etc.—valuable privileges which they were by no means likely to be willing to see reduced by the springing up of non-franchise barter-places. At least as early as the time of Burhred of Mercia we have the grant of a steelyard in a market recorded,[1] and such grants were possibly made long before. Apart from the travelling chapman who carried his wares from house to house, and who was required to take with him men approved by the king's reeve at the folkmoot to witness the transactions, we may say, then, that the whole commerce of this country was carried on in the markets or fairs.[2] Nor were the markets very many. It was only in the larger places that these barter-places existed. The villagers, before the increase of franchise markets, had to rely upon their own productions, or on the chapman, or on the market of the nearest market-town, or on an occasional fair. It is probable, however, that it was always possible to buy from a man himself produce which he had grown or reared. Thus a farmer could sell a pig on his farm or at the nearest market, but nowhere else. As long as toll was paid and the sale took place before the port-reeve, it is probable that the purchase was good wherever performed.

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[1] *Codex Diplomaticus*, No. 280.

[2] Occasional large markets held on a saint's day, from *feria*.

It was to these markets, therefore, that the merchants flocked with the silks, wools, dyes, and spices from the East and the South. The merchant who thrived so that he fared thrice over the wide sea by his own means became a thegn and a mighty man. Thus encouraged, Englishmen even in those days seem to have been good at searching out what to them were the uttermost parts of the earth, from which to bring rarities dear to the heart of the buyer. Into these markets or fairs not only were luxuries brought, but also such everyday goods as cattle, pigs, and sheep, sent by the neighbouring farmer. There came also slaves—men, women, and children captured in some fight—and maidens to be purchased by their future husbands.[1] When we read the dooms relating to wife-purchase—dooms promulgated by a king such as Ine a century after Augustine had landed—we realize that we are dealing with a primitive people who could exchange two cows and a sheep, and perhaps a few coins obtained from the moneyer in the market smithy, for their wives.

But though the Saxons were unpolished their laws had a strong common sense underlying them. The market was well organized, and gave a publicity to sales which had an effect in checking fraud and theft. Over all was the *portgerefa*, master of the market, a kind of curule aedile, the ancestor of the modern mayor. All disputes relating to the dealings between buyers and sellers came before him, and were heard in the market court, called in later times a court of *pie-poudre* ('dusty-foot'), from the fact that the suitors were generally travellers who had walked a long way. There the procedure was short and inexpensive, and calculated to mete out rough justice and prevent knavery. Elaborate rules relating to warranties existed; these aimed at the prevention of theft. The man into whose hand stolen property came was required, if he sold it again and the theft were afterward discovered, to ask the person from whom he obtained it how it came to him, and so on backward until the thief was reached. Equally stringent rules applied in the case of found property. The finder was required to hand it over to the priest of the church in his parish; he in turn called in the headman and best men of the vill to inspect it, and the priests and headmen of three or four neighbouring vills, who had to bring with them their best men. The thing, after inspection, was given to the headman of the domain to which the finder belonged, and he in turn placed it (if it were an animal) *in borh*, called in later times *in naam*, or in pound.

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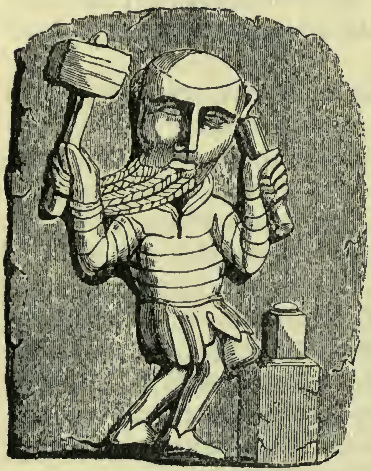
[1] This only applies to the early times in the case of nobles. The common people, however, frequently bought their wives even as late as the tenth century.



COINER AT WORK

From the capital of a pillar at St Georges de Bocherville, Normandy

These laws, besides the peep they give us into the mode of buying and selling, also tell us of the superstition of the people, their fear of false oaths, their belief in the binding effect of the hand-clasp, their reverence for relics or 'haligdoms.' Men would seem to have feared the triple ordeal less than the making of a false oath, which subjected the perjurer to the severest ecclesiastical, as well as temporal, punishments.

Perhaps, however, the most interesting of all are the rules relating to local government. Here we have evidence of a people thoroughly used to and apparently capable of self-government. Right from the Witan to the lowest moot there is a gradation of council chambers, at which the most prominent men of the district meet to discuss public affairs. The Witan, ancestor of our modern Parliament, performed for the State what the scirgemot performed for the shire and the burhgemot for the town. This system of local government, linked up as it was with a collateral system of local courts, played a mighty part in the subsequent political history of our people.

CHAPTER IX

THE EIGHTH CENTURY

THE history of England in the eighth century is somewhat dull and lifeless. Unlike the fifth, which saw the invasion of the Teutons; the sixth, when occurred the first conversions by Italian and Celt of the pagans from the Baltic; the seventh, when Rome again conquered Britain, this time through the Church; the ninth, that century of war in which the Saxon felt the sharp edge of an invader's sword, even as four centuries before he had made the Britons feel it, the eighth century is devoid of any great national event.[1] Our early chronicles are full of references to supernatural or abnormal events in nature: we read of dragons hurtling through the air, of eclipses of sun and moon, of fiery crosses in the heavens and moons of blood-red colour; we are told of lightnings and whirlwinds and pestilences, how a "black and gloomy shield was held before the face of the sun," and how many adders were found in Sussex. These notices of evil portents do not, however, make up history. They had a purpose in their own day, being mentioned, as Roger of Wendover informs us, "that they might lead men to see how Providence punishes evil-doers." There is reason to believe that the men of the eighth century had need of a frequent reminder of Divine anger, for, according to Bede, the commencing years of the century saw a grave decline in morals. The good Celtic monks had to a large extent relinquished their endeavours after their defeat at Whitby, and the Roman Church in England was as yet in its infancy. The monasteries

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[1] The Danes began to come toward the end of the eighth century, but the Danish invasion belongs rather to the ninth.

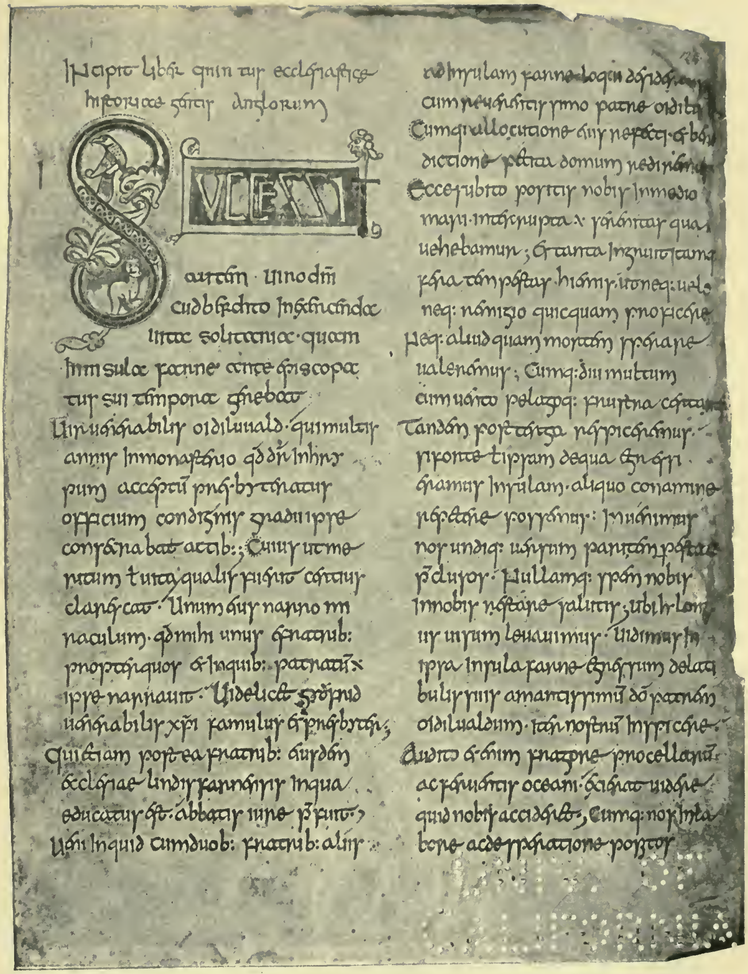

PLATE XXIV. PAGE FROM MANUSCRIPT COPY OF BEDE'S "ECCLESIASTICAL HISTORY"

were frequently illicit foundations which pandered to every vice while giving slothful ease. The generality of the people were pagan at heart, and the story recounted by Roger of Wendover of Rabbod, Duke of the Frisians, could have been applied to many a man in England. According to Roger, the Duke, when about to be baptized by Bishop Wolfram, after having put one foot in the water, drew back and asked whether there were more of his ancestors in Paradise or in Hell. The good Bishop, simple man, replied: "Assuredly, in Hell." "Then," said the Duke, giving up all thought of conversion, "it is better to follow the majority."

There is another reason for the aridity of our authorities for this period. The great Bede, Father of English History, having lived a long life in the twin monastery of Jarrow and Wearmouth, a life of devotion to learning, literature, and his God, under the good abbots Benedict Biscop, a seventh-century patron of the arts, and Ceolfrith, died before the century was half spent. The most learned man in Europe in his time, the master of a pure Latin style, a painstaking and accurate historian, Bede has given to posterity a priceless heritage and some knowledge of the years which elapsed during the first two centuries of the Saxon invasion. His history, however, stops at the year 731, and four years later he died, engaged to the last in dictating a work which might soften the labours of those who should come after him. With the death of this great and good man, whose character possesses many of the qualities found among the learned Christians, sympathy, charity, and breadth of view, the sources of our history dry up until we reach the time of Alfred. Other writers, monkish chroniclers and suchlike, there were, but men like Aldhelm, Bishop of Sherborne, the rival of Bede in learning but not in style, who had predeceased the historian by some twenty-six years, had apparently ceased to live. Some of the old works now lost to us in the main are preserved by the later chroniclers in part. That they were not considerable or important, however, is made manifest when we glance through the pages of Henry of Huntingdon, Florence of Worcester, or Roger of

Wendover, and see with what poor stuff they pad their narrative in these years of little deeds.

This being the state of the case, we shall without apology hurry through the years of the century. We shall find Northumbria, now greatly weakened, contesting for uncertain victory with the Picts, her shaky throne occupied by a succession of minor kings who rapidly follow one another as each in turn is murdered, becomes monk, or is slain; we shall find Mercia marching on from the position won for her by Wulfhere to yet greater things, and stretching out a hand for the hegemony of England; we shall see that four kings, of all those that grasped the sceptre in England in this era, Ine and Cuthred of Wessex, Ethelbald and Offa of Mercia, merit some close attention; we shall pause at the end of the period to view the first coming of the Danes, that second fatal invasion which heralded fresh bloodshed, fresh ruin, fresh desolation. For the rest, the bishops who flit before us, the miracles that fill up the pages of the chroniclers, the petty doings of princes whose names are but names, we shall consign them to a present oblivion.

When we were last considering the political history of England in the closing years of the seventh century[1] we found Ethelred King of Mercia; Aldfrith, successor to Egfrith, King of Northumbria; Ine ruling over Wessex; and Wihtred King of Kent. Of Ethelred, though he lived long and was a worthy son of the Church, granting many a hide of English ground for the building of monasteries, we need say but little. After his campaign against Kent in the early years of his reign, and after his battle with Egfrith in 679, his kingdom knew peace, and the major part of the thirty years he bore the sceptre slumbers on eventless, save for the signing of many charters for the benefit of many monks and some abbesses. The same may be said of Wihtred, who appears to have been more remarkable for his wealth than his prowess in the field. Coming to the throne about 692, he signalized his accession by compounding with Ine and gave him a large sum of money for his friendship. In the succeeding years he was equally free with his possessions, and no king's name is more frequent than his in the various collections of charters of the period as a donor of lands to the Church. The Abbess Ebba was particularly fortunate, receiving large grants of land in or near Thanet, and at the Council of Bapchild, held in 716, many important privileges were given to the churches of Kent. This synod gave the Archbishop and his council power to inquire into and punish looseness of living among the clergy, besides acknowledging more definite material rights, and thus in a sense recognized the distinction between temporal and ecclesiastical jurisdiction which, in later years, William I recognized and Becket attempted to extend, and which has ever since, in one degree or another, been acknowledged by English law. Apart, however, from such grants and gifts, Wihtred did nothing sufficiently important to be recorded, and after a long and peaceful reign he died in 725.

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[1] See Chapter VII.

Twenty-one years before, in 704, Ethelred of Mercia had become a monk, a curious end for the son of Penda, though, indeed, most of Penda's children were zealous converts to Christianity. This religious cast of his mind may account for the uneventfulness of Ethelred's reign. He was succeeded by Cenred, who, five years later, went to Rome with Offa,[1] where he remained for the rest of his life. He was succeeded by Ceolred.

Meanwhile, in 705, the year following Ethelred's death, Aldfrith of Northumbria had died at Driffield, and was succeeded by Osred, his son. For some eleven years Osred held sway, and on his death in 716 Northumbria, which was even now drifting toward anarchy, sank almost to its lowest ebb. It was in this same year (716) that Ceolred passed away, leaving the crown of Mercia to Ethelbald. Coenred, meanwhile, ruled for two years in Northumbria, and was succeeded in 718 by Osric, who held that tottering throne until 729.

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[1] Not Offa of Mercia, but Offa of East Anglia. There was another Offa of Northumbria.

INE

Having thus passed in review the dull and uninteresting first years of the eighth century, and having seen how king followed king on the thrones of Northumbria, Kent, and Mercia, we will now turn back a few years and devote rather more attention to Ine, one of the greatest of the early kings of Wessex.

Ine came to the West Saxon throne in 688, ruled for thirty-seven years, retired to Rome in 726, and died in 728. Following the energetic Caedwalla,[1] the contemporary of the peaceful Ethelred of Mercia and the puppet-kings of Northumbria, he was enabled to raise Wessex from the state of weakness into which it had been thrown by the wars, largely unsuccessful, with the Britons and neighbouring Saxon states to a position of temporary pre-eminence.

The first duty which Ine performed was the pacification of his own country, torn as it was by civil strife. It was probably the wars which had been waged by various usurpers that had driven Caedwalla to take refuge in the Church. Ine chose differently, and established his throne by the slaughter of the pretenders. His next step was against Kent, which, as we have seen,[2] had for long been at feud with Wessex. The good Wihtred of Kent offered but little resistance, made submission, and purchased peace.

The next few years were uneventful in wars, and possibly saw the compiling of the famous dooms which have given to Ine a place in our history which no successes in inter-tribal battles would have gained him. Before the first decade of the eighth century had passed, however, we find him pushing outward to the west against the ancient enemies of Wessex, the Britons. In 710 we read of him fighting against Geraint,[3] King of the Britons. The result was a victory for the West Saxons, though not without loss. The Britons, probably the men of Cornwall and Somersetshire, were pushed farther back and a fortification was erected on the banks of the Tone, the foundation of the later Taunton.

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[1] See *ante*, p. 142.

[2] See *ante*, p. 143.

[3] Geraint was the King of the West Welsh to whom Aldhelm addressed his letter on the Paschal question.

Again for some years there was peace, and when the baying of Bellona's hounds is again heard the enemy is neither Kentishman nor Briton, but Mercian. Ceolred, who now ruled over the middle kingdom, abandoned Ethelred's policy of peace and prepared to contest with Wessex for supremacy. The two forces met in 715 at a place not inappropriately named Wodensburh,[1] and, after a bloody encounter, the victory remained doubtful;[2] but in one sense it was decisive—it terminated for the time the quarrel between the two kingdoms, so that for six years there was peace.

In 721, however, war again broke out. A rebellion appears to have been raised against the King, and Taunton Castle was seized by the rebels. In the year following the Queen recovered Taunton, and in 725 the rising seems to have been overcome, for we read that in that year "Ine, King of the West Saxons, marched a large army into Sussex, and slew in battle Eadbert, whom he had before driven from the castle of Tantona." With this war Ine's successes in the field were concluded, and in the following year he, like his predecessor, resigned his crown and journeyed for the good of his soul to Rome, where he built a place in the city called 'the Saxon School,' to the end that, as Roger of Wendover tells us, "when the kings of England and the royal family, with the bishops, presbyters, and clergy, came hither to be instructed in the Catholic faith and doctrine, nothing heterodox or contrary to Catholic unity might be taught in the English Church." He also built a church near by where Englishmen dying in Rome might be buried, and endowed it with a tax called 'Romescot,' to be collected in England, "one penny from each family, . . . for the blessed Peter." It was also Ine who, supported by his saintly sisters,

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[1] Green identified this place with Wanborough, but Stevenson (*English Historical Review*, vol. xvii, p. 638) has shown that there is no connexion between the two places.

[2] William of Malmesbury suggests that Ceolred was victorious.

St Cuthburga, St Quenburga,[1] and Jetta, founded the famous Abbey of Glastonbury, on the site previously occupied by a more ancient, probably a British, church. Throughout his reign he was a most generous donor of lands and privileges to the Church. He was, indeed, one of the first of a long line of fine kings which Wessex gave to England. A brave fighter, a wise lawgiver, a munificent patron of the Church, he was in many ways an outstanding figure in eighth-century England.

Ethelbald of Mercia

During the years which had intervened between the battle of Wodensburh and Ine's retirement to Rome a new force had appeared in Mercia. When, in 716, Ceolred of Mercia had died at table of over-eating or over-drinking, and had been carried by his thegns to burial at Lichfield, he was succeeded by Ethelbald, " a brave and powerful man, who reigned most triumphantly forty-one years."

Tales sprang up in later years of how Ethelbald, when fleeing from the fury of Ceolred, had taken up his abode near the skin-clad, nobly born, vision-seeing anchorite of Croyland, Guthlac the Hermit. There these two, amid the wastes of the eastern fens, the one condemned to exile, the other an exile self-condemned, had spoken of Ethelbald's hopes for the future. The anchorite had advised waiting until God's good time had come. When it came the quondam fugitive was not slow to seize his opportunity, and, once having ascended the throne, he wielded a power greater than any Mercian before him. The eighth century is, indeed, Mercia's century, and she occupied her position of fluctuating pre-eminence during the succeeding years largely because she was ruled by two noteworthy men, Ethelbald and Offa, whose combined reigns stretch from 716 to 796.

It was in 733, five years after Ine had died at Rome, that Ethelbald renewed the interminable struggle with Wessex. The cause was probably no more than the existence of the ancient feud; the result was the capture of the royal town of Somerton. Then truly the West Saxon chronicler saw dire omens and eclipses of the sun, whose face was hidden in darkness. Wessex was pulled down from the high place to which Ine had raised her, and for the next two decades Ethelbald could style himself 'King of the South English,' though he never aspired to Offa's high title of *Rex Anglorum.*

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[1] She married Aldfrith of Northumbria, but they shortly afterward separated and she devoted her life to religion.

Wessex having thus been crushed for the moment, the Mercian laid waste Northumbria (737), a country which for years had been in the throes of anarchy. Osric of Northumbria had been slain in 729, and was succeeded by Ceolwulf (to whom Bede dedicated his *Ecclesiastical History*), who had turned monk in the year of Ethelbald's raid. Eadbert, a cousin to Ceolwulf, had succeeded him, and, unlike most of the unfortunate sovereigns who ruled over eighth-century Northumbria, he occupied the throne for more than two decades, ruling well and prosperously. Northumbria, however, was raided, and the Mercian's purpose, punitive, destructive, or whatever it may have been, being accomplished, he turned south once more, and in 741 again attacked Wessex. Wessex was at this time ruled over by Cuthred, who had succeeded that Ethelhard to whom Ine had surrendered the kingdom before setting out on his pilgrimage.

Cuthred, we are informed, "contended strenuously against Ethelbald, King of the Mercians." The Mercian attacked his enemy not only in the field, but also by stirring up sedition. Cuthred, however, was by no means overwhelmed, and peace was frequently made between them; indeed, in 744 West Saxon and Mercian combined to repel a raid made by the Britons, "who had assembled from every quarter." At this time Rhodri Molwynog was the most powerful king in Wales, and it is probably he who was leading the Britons. We know from the Welsh sources that about 722 he had been fighting against his hereditary foes in Cornwall and South Wales, and he was still reigning in 754, in which year he died. Whoever may have been the British leader, his forces were put to flight after "these very brave kings" had "rushed headlong against the enemy." Much booty was taken and the allies returned home in triumph.

The friendship between Mercia and Wessex seems to have lasted for a few years, but war again broke out in 752, when Cuthred, "unable to endure the overbearing exactions and insolence of Ethelbald," once more determined on battle. The forces met at Beoreford (Burford), where, after a furious fight, the golden dragon of Mercia, carried aloft by the standard-bearer Ethelhun, was dragged in the dust. "Terrible were the thunder of the battle, and the sound of blows, and the cries of the fallen; each side was confident of victory; no one thought of flight; but at last God, who resisteth the proud and giveth grace unto the lowly, turned Ethelbald to flight and rejoiced Cuthred with victory." In these words the old chronicler recounts the battle of Burford, a battle which snatched from Mercia's near grasp the overlordship of England and reserved for Wessex that power which, after the changes of centuries, placed the capital of our country first at Winchester and later at London, instead of at Lichfield.

The battle of Burford, decisive though it was in that it preserved Wessex, was not decisive in that it destroyed Mercia. But a short time after his victory the warlike Cuthred died, and his opponent followed him to the grave probably within the year.[1]

The successors of these kings were both harsh and haughty tyrants who ruled but for a few months. Beornred, who followed Ethelbald, was expelled in the year of his accession by Offa, destined to be one of Mercia's greatest kings. Sigebert, who had ascended the throne of Wessex, rendered vacant by the death of Cuthred, was a very John in his imprudence, being at once overbearing with his nobles and " intolerable even to his domestics." At last the murder of one of his chiefs caused his deposition by the Witan. The dethroned King, driven from his kingdom by the wrath of his subjects, fled to a wood, was there found by a swineherd, and slain. His place was now taken by Cynewulf, who had been largely responsible for driving Sigebert into exile and who was a kinsman of Cuthred. He reigned without distinction until 786, when he was slain by the atheling Cyneheard while engaged in an amour with a lady at Merton.

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[1] There is some doubt as to the dates of these kings' deaths, the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle* from 754–851 being two to three years behind. In one text we are told that Ethelbald was slain at Seckington in 755 (757) and that his body was buried at Repton; another text says that he was slain at Repton. The *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle* places the death of Cuthred in 754 (756). Some of the later chroniclers state that Ethelbald was slain by his own people, probably led by Beornred, his successor; others that he was killed in the battle of Seckington, fought against Cuthred of Wessex, in which the Mercian army was again defeated. This, however, is impossible, because we have a charter preserved to us of date somewhere between 755 and 757 which is sealed by Ethelbald, King of Mercia, and Cynewulf, King of the Saxons, *i.e.* West Saxons—that is to say, Cynewulf, who succeeded Sigebert, who succeeded Cuthred, was king while Ethelbald was yet alive. Plummer puts Cynewulf's accession in 757, the year when Ethelbald was murdered by his guards. Sigebert, of course, only reigned a very short time. On the other hand, we have a charter in which Cynewulf appears as *Rex Meldunensis* in 758.

OFFA

It is not, however, to Wessex that we must look for the chief events of the next four decades. Those years (757–796) when Offa ruled saw Mercia rise to the zenith of her power and it is with the doings of her King that we shall be mainly concerned.

" King Offa," says Roger of Wendover, " was a terror and a fear to all the kings of England ; for he overcame in battle the King of Kent, the King of the West Saxons, the King of the East Angles." To this respectable list of conquered kings or rulers we may add the names of two Welsh princes, Conan and Howel, sons of that Rhodri Molwynog of whom we have already spoken.

For the first fourteen years of his reign, however, the Mercian King indulged in no campaigns. In spite of the defeat at Burford, Mercia was still a powerful State. Some years after Burford had been fought and lost Ethelbald is found describing himself in a charter [181 [1]] as " King not only of Mercia, but also of the surrounding people," and it is clear that Mercia's overlordship of Kent was not destroyed, for we find Offa in 764 (*i.e.* eleven years before the defeat of the men of Kent at Otford) granting land on the Medway, "*Heabertus rex*" (Egbert, King of Kent) joining in [195]. It is also, of course, manifest that the Huiccii, or men of Worcestershire, though possessing kings of their own, were subject to Mercia, and in 759 Eanberht, Uhctred, and Aldred, Kings of the Huiccii, make a grant [187] of land in Worcester "with the licence and consent of the very pious [*piissimi*] Offa, King of the Mercians." Examples could be added. We also find the Mercian's name subscribed, by way of consent, to a grant [197] made *c.* 765 by Aldwulf, King of the South Saxons, to Earl Hunlabe, and in 767 we read of Offa giving away land situated in Middlesex [201]. In 770 Offa definitely describes Uhctred, senior King of the Huiccii, as "my sub-king."

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[1] The numbers in brackets given in connexion with charters or grants in the following pages are the numbers in Birch's *Cartularium Saxonicum.*

After his first successful campaign, undertaken in 771 against the Hestingi (? East Angles or men of Hastings), which resulted in their being subdued, Offa's indefinite supremacy was made more definite. Though in 772 he merely describes himself, while making a grant [206] of land in Kent, as "King of the Mercians," by the August of that year his style has changed. He now bears the title *Rex Anglorum* in the body of the deed, though he still signs as King of the Mercians. To this interesting grant [208, *cf.* 210] we find Egbert, King of Kent, and Cynewulf, King of the West Saxons, subscribing. The title of 'King of the English' seems to have been regularly used by Offa until the year 775, one grant [213] going so far as to style him 'King of all the English.' In these years we find him granting or confirming grants of land in Kent, Worcester, and Sussex.

OTFORD AND BENSINGTON

Notwithstanding the fact that after 775 he returned to the lesser title of 'King of Mercia,' or 'King of the Mercians,' Offa would seem in that year to have decisively defeated the Kentishmen at Otford, and it is possible that about this time he built a palace in London in which to dwell when in the east. Four years later a victory over Cynewulf at Bensington, resulting in the capture of that town, still further added to the power of Mercia, and probably made Offa supreme between Thames and Humber, with considerable powers over Middlesex and Kent and the land south of the Thames as far west as Ashbury. Hence onward, indeed, we may certainly regard him as the most powerful king in England. In 781 the old title *Rex Anglorum* recurs [240], and we find Pope Hadrian I, in writing to Charlemagne, describing him as 'King of the English.'[1]

MARRIAGE ALLIANCES

Although his power was, as we have said, certainly very considerable at this time, Offa did not disdain to strengthen it by alliances. When in 786 Cynewulf of Wessex lay slain by Cyneheard, he was succeeded by Beorhtric. The disappearance from the stage of Offa's enemy opened the way to friendship between the two states, a friendship which was consolidated by the surrender by the Mercians of Egbert of Wessex, the enemy of Beorhtric. It was in 789, that year of evil omen, the year when the Northmen first came, that Mercia and Wessex were drawn into alliance by the marriage of Beorhtric and Eadburga, King Offa's daughter. Somewhere about the same time, or perhaps earlier, the Mercian had himself sought the hand of a powerful princess, a daughter of the Emperor Charlemagne. He, however, like other suitors, was refused, with the result that Offa and Charlemagne, who had once been friends, became enemies. Another cause for this change of feeling was probably the extensive smuggling indulged in by English merchants disguised as pilgrims—a form of illicit trading which caused considerable loss to the Imperial exchequer. At last, however, owing largely to the efforts of Gerwold, Abbot of St Wandrille, a friend of Offa's, and Alcuin, the famous Northumbrian adviser to Charlemagne, the old friendly relations between the two Kings were restored, together with the old trade between the two countries —a trade which in the years of the quarrel had been forbidden. At the close of the episode we find Charlemagne writing a most friendly letter [270] to the Mercian, accompanied by a present of a belt, a Hunnish sword, and two cloaks of silk.

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[1] We may observe, however, that Charlemagne when writing to Offa styles him 'King of the Mercians.' It must be understood, of course, that, strictly, *Rex Anglorum* meant 'King of the Angles' rather than 'King of the English' (in the modern sense), and Mercia was an Anglian state.

Northumbrian Kings

In 792 another alliance was made, this time between the house of Mercia and that of Northumbria. For many years past Northumbria had played a singularly unimportant *rôle* on the stage of English history. On the death of Aldfrith early in the century he was followed on the throne by Osred, who was slain on the southern border; Coenred, who reigned but two years; Osric, who was killed after the somewhat lengthy reign, for a Northumbrian, of thirteen years; Ceolwulf; Eadbert; Oswulph, who was slain; Ethelwald, who abdicated; Alcred, who was expelled from his realm by his subjects; Ethelred, son of Ethelwald, who was driven out by Aelfwald, his successor. Aelfwald, who seems to have been something of a saint,[1] was murdered by Siga, and Alcred's son Osred ruled in his stead, to be 'betrayed' in the year following, driven from the kingdom, and later murdered. Following him came Ethelred, who was killed by his own people in the year when Offa died (796). It was this Ethelred to whom Offa gave his daughter Elflaeda in marriage in 792, and although it is not probable that the alliance strengthened Mercia to any extent, it certainly took all pressure—if, indeed, any existed—off her northern border.

Offa's Dike

We are now approaching the year (794) which saw the commission of the crime which has been responsible to some extent for the blackening of Offa's character. Before, however,

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[1] The *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle* tells us that a heavenly light was seen at the place where he was slain, and he occupies a prominent place in the report made by the Pope's legates in 787 (Birch, *Cart. Sax.*, No. 250). He signs as "*Aelfwaldus Transhumbranae gentis rex.*"

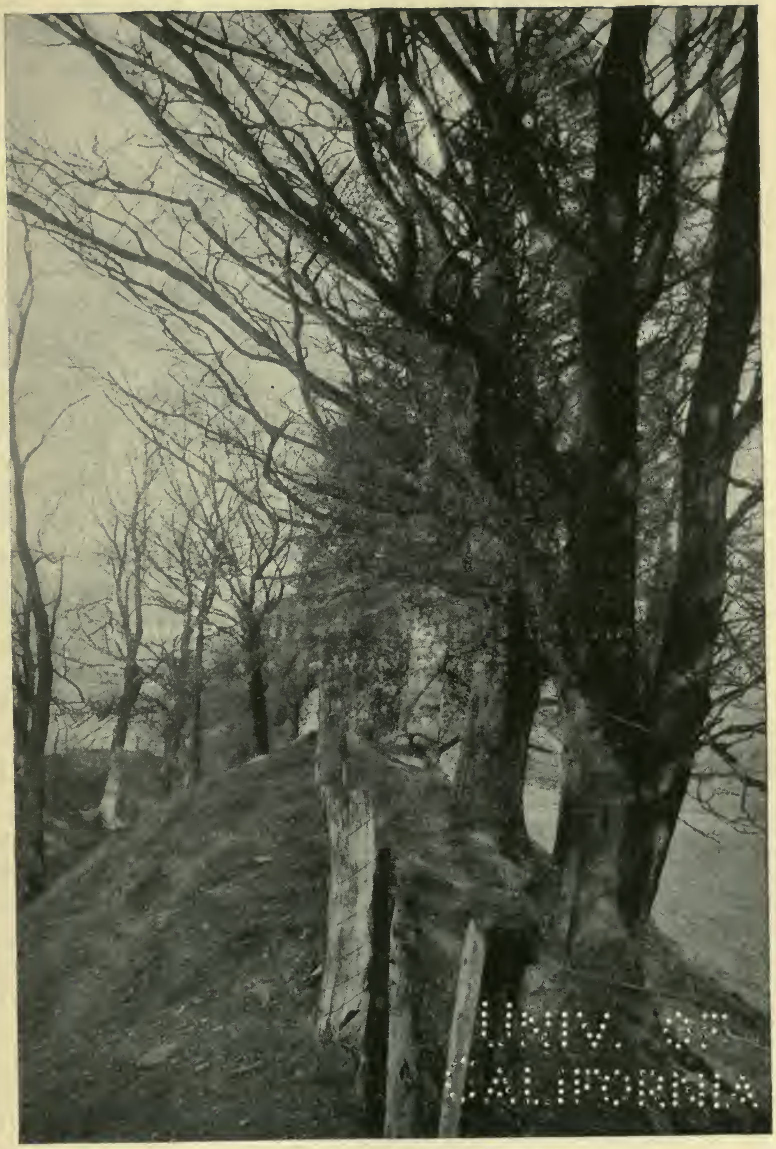

PLATE XXV. OFFA'S DIKE 186

UNIV. OF CALIFORNIA

we consider the murder of Ethelbert of East Anglia we must turn back for a moment and consider his campaigns against the Welsh.

It is necessary to state at the outset that both dates and facts are here very uncertain. It is but natural that English and Welsh sources should not perfectly agree, but one is placed in a difficulty when the discrepancies are as great as they are in the descriptions of Offa's attacks on the Britons.

If we follow the *Gwentian Brut* we must accept the statement that in 765 the Cymry devastated Mercia, with the result that Offa built a dike to divide Wales from Mercia. This barrier appears to have been largely destroyed, as the result of a successful raid, by the men of Gwent and Glamorgan in 776. Eight years later, we are told, Offa built another dike, this time "nearer to himself." This is to some extent confirmed by the fact that there are two sets of earthworks between Kennel Wood and Shoals Bank. But although the *Chronicles of the Princes* also speaks of the Welsh devastating Offa's territories, we must, perhaps, follow the authorities which regard Offa as the aggressor, for it is probable that the years 778 and 784 found an extension of Mercia being made westward. The matter is not, however, by any means clear. There is some reason to believe that Mercia under Wulfhere extended almost as far to the west as under Offa,[1] and it is certainly remarkable that the Welsh chroniclers have much more to say of the fights with Offa than have the English writers. That the Dike was a defensive barrier may probably be denied; it is generally regarded nowadays as a jurisdictional boundary-mark.

THE COUNCIL OF CHELSEA

Whatever may have been the exact result of Offa's Welsh wars (which were probably renewed in 795), we may safely say that Mercia was not threatened in the serious way that it was in later years when Burhred was king. Offa was, indeed, by the time of the Council of Chelsea (Celchyth), the 'Contentious Synod' of 787, the most powerful man in England, and we can quite understand that the Mercian, who three years afterward was granting land in London [1] to the Abbey of St Denis in France [259], and six years after that could describe himself as "King of the Angles and of the Mercian lands as far as London city," had comparatively little difficulty in persuading the Pope's legates, George and Theophylact, to sanction the surrender, by Archbishop Jaenbert of Canterbury, of the sees of Worcester, Leicester, Lindsey, Elmham, and Dunwich in order to form an Archbishopric of Lichfield. This arrangement, however, although it received the Pope's approval, was very short-lived, for a few years after Offa's death the new archbishopric was abandoned.

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[1] See *ante*, p. 139.

The Murder of Ethelbert

The *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle* tells us very laconically of the death of the East Anglian King, for under date 792 (794) we simply read that "this year Offa, King of the Mercians, commanded the head of King Ethelbert to be struck off." Later writers are, however, more communicative. Thus the *Vita Offae Secundi* (which, we may add, is quite untrustworthy) informs us that Ethelbert, desiring the hand of Offa's daughter in marriage, journeyed at the King's invitation to the Mercian Court. Arrived there, it seems that the Queen, Cynethryth, took a violent dislike to the young King. That she was a strong-minded and scheming woman is evident from Offa's charters, nearly all of which bear her signature as well as his own,[2] and from the fact that she persuaded her royal consort to consent, at least as early as 788, to Egfrith, their son, sharing the royal honours and styling himself King of the Mercians.[3] If there is any truth at all in the story of her plot to kill the East Anglian, we must assume that she was jealous of his popularity and fearful lest her careful plans to assure the succession of her son should be, through him, defeated.

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[1] Some think Lundenwic = Sandwich.

[2] As we have said before (see p. 155), it is unusual to find a woman's signature on an early Saxon grant. Queen Cynethryth was an exception.

[3] See Birch, *Cart. Sax.*, No. 253. Later grants are signed by him as "*Egfrith rex*"; "*Egfrith rex Merciorum*"; "*Egfrith filius regis*"; "Egfrith."

However this may be, according to the *Vita Offae Secundi* the Queen was the deadly enemy of her daughter's lover. Her request made to Offa to have his guest slain having been scornfully rejected, Cynethryth devised means whereby the obstacle in her son's path might be finally removed. Dissimulating her hatred, she invited Ethelbert to come and talk with her daughter in a certain chamber. This room had been carefully prepared; under it a deep pit had been dug; upon a false part of the floor immediately above the pit a seat had been placed. To this seat the Queen escorted her victim. Once seated he was doomed, for the floor gave way and he was precipitated into the trap, there to be slain by hired assassins. The whole story is so elaborate that, though it does much credit to the imagination of the narrator, we can hardly regard it as history. It does seem, however, that there was something wrong and treacherous in the manner of Ethelbert's death. He was in later years regarded as a martyr, and Queen Cynethryth seems to have been held by many as primarily responsible for the crime.

OFFA'S CHARACTER AND POWER

There is no doubt that, in the main, Offa was a man of outstanding character and of vigorous intellect. In his lifetime he doubtless had the reputation of being a liberal benefactor of the Church. From the various collections of charters it would appear that he made at least five times as many grants of land to the Church as any other king of the period, and most of the other grants are made by his sub-kings and contain his consent or confirmation. As a ruler he was far in advance of his contemporaries. By no means content to centre his thoughts in his own state, he corresponded with the Emperor Charlemagne and granted lands to Frankish abbeys. We find him well known and respected by the Pope. In his own Mercia he left no stone unturned to increase its power. Wars, marriage alliances, the creation of the Archbishopric of

Lichfield, the continual insistence of his lordship over the sub-kings surrounding him—all were undertaken, effected, or asserted in order to advance the welfare of his country. With the clergy, apart from the time when he was insisting upon Lichfield's rights and the dispute with Heathored, Bishop of Worcester, which resulted in a compromise and the surrender to the King of the monastery of Bath, he seems always to have been on good terms ; by his sub-kings he appears to have been looked up to as admitted overlord.[1] Although in the last years of his reign the men of Kent began to grow restive, the major part of his territories, once conquered, knew peace, and Mercia, in his day, was not torn by the everlasting civil wars that had dragged Northumbria to the dust. It is probable—we are, indeed, expressly so told—that Offa was also a lawgiver ; his dooms, however, have not come down to us.

Thus we seem to see in Offa the most powerful Mercian since Penda, and perhaps the strongest English king of the eighth century. With his death we regard the century, for our present purpose, as closing. The last years of his reign had, in the words of the chronicler, been years of " dire forewarnings." "There were excessive whirlwinds and lightnings, and fiery dragons hurtled through the air. A great famine soon followed these tokens, and a little after that . . . the ravaging of heathen men lamentably destroyed God's church at Lindisfarne." Six years before, in 789–790, the Northmen had come and had been attacked by the reeve, whom they turned upon and slew. Now the visits become more frequent, and for the next two centuries we shall be mainly concerned with the wars between Saxon and Dane.

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[1] Charter No. 267, a grant by Offa of lands in Hertfordshire to St Alban's Abbey, is subscribed by a number of kings, viz. :

" ✠ Ego OFFA hanc donacionem meam signo crucis Christi confirmo. ✠ Ego ECGFRIDUS similiter consencio et subscribo. ✠ Ego CEOLUULFUS rex ad ipsum consencio. ✠ Ego CENUULFUS rex consencio. ✠ Ego BEORNULFUS rex. ✠ Ego LUDECHA rex. ✠ Ego UUILAF rex. ✠ Ego ECGBIRHTUS rex. ✠ Ego BURHREDUS rex. ✠ Ego AELFREDUS rex."

CHAPTER X

THE COMING OF THE DANES[1]

THE last years of the eighth century and the first years of the ninth saw a general weakening of the two strong states of England, Mercia and Wessex. Northumbria, of course, was still in the unhappy condition to which she had been reduced by a century of civil war. With the death of Offa the crown of Mercia had passed to his son Egfrith, who, as we have seen, had already ruled jointly with his father for eight years. This son of Cynethryth, for whom that Queen had planned and plotted so well, was not, however, destined to rule long, for in the same year he died and Cenwulf became lord of the Mercians. This year also saw Ethelred of Northumbria, who had married Offa's daughter, slain by his own men and supplanted by Eardulf. Six years later Beorhtric of Wessex, another of Offa's sons-in-law, was murdered by his wife Eadburga, a crime, though committed in error—the poison which he drank being intended for another—which was looked upon with so much loathing by the Queen's subjects that for years the consorts of the West Saxon kings were not permitted to be crowned. With Beorhtric dead, Egbert, who had been driven oversea by Offa and Beorhtric, and had taken refuge at the Court of Charlemagne, came back to Wessex. This King, popularly regarded as the first King of all England, though he never succeeded in uniting the whole of the country south of the Tweed into one kingdom, became in subsequent years by far the most powerful of England's many rulers, and earned the title of Bretwalda—a title which had been dormant since the death of Oswy, King of Northumbria. It is with the doings of Egbert, his son and grandsons, and the coming of the Danes that the following pages are mainly concerned.

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[1] In our account of the Danish invasion and conquest we shall use the word 'Danes' generically and shall not distinguish between Danes and Norsemen.

The Danes

As we have said, the first mention of the Danes in the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle* occurs somewhere about 789–790,[1] when three ships of Northmen, "the first ships of Danishmen which sought the land of the English nation," landed somewhere in Beorhtric's territory and slew the reeve, who had challenged them.

Northumbria was also soon to feel the new peril. In 795, we read, "heathen men lamentably destroyed God's church at Lindisfarne through rapine and slaughter." To this misfortune were added famine and, in the year following, civil war, Ethelred, as we have said, being slain by his own people. The Danes, instantly taking advantage of Northumbria's weakness, once more descended upon her and plundered the monastery at Wearmouth. This time, however, the invaders did not escape without loss. Their leader was killed; many of their ships were wrecked; and the Danes, on swimming ashore, were caught and slain at the river's mouth.

After this disaster there appears to have been a lull in the new-comers' attacks, and it was in these years that Egbert advanced to pre-eminence. When the onslaught was again renewed the West Saxon King had need of all his forces, and after his death in 839 the *Chronicle* for years is filled with unwilling accounts of Danish victories, plunderings, and burnings.

Cenwulf and Egbert

It was not until the death of Cenwulf of Mercia in 821 that the way was clear for the upward rise of Egbert of Wessex. Cenwulf was clearly a wealthy and important prince. During the years 801–824 Egbert subscribed but two grants. For practically the same period Cenwulf's charters fill scores of pages of the *Cartularium Saxonicum.*

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[1] The date is not certain. The *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle* (which, as stated on p. 182 *n.*, is two to three years behind) puts it under date 787; Ethelweard gives 786; the later chroniclers favour 790. We believe it took place either in 789 or 790, but certainly not in winter-time.

As we have seen, toward the end of Offa's reign the men of Kent were threatening rebellion. On the great King's death this unrest broke out into open warfare under the leadership of Eadbert Pren. During Egfrith's short reign nothing appears to have been done to repress the rising, but in 798 Cenwulf, now king, led the forces of Mercia against the men of Kent and laid waste their country "as far as the marshes." Eadbert Pren, who had been made king by the rebels, was seized, bound, and led captive to Mercia, where, according to the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle,* Cenwulf "let his eyes be picked out and his hands be cut off." Later chroniclers, however, are kinder to Cenwulf's memory and inform us that "at the dedication of the church which he had founded at Winchelcombe he gave the captive King his liberty before the altar." This account certainly agrees with what we know of Cenwulf's character, which was generous almost to excess. At that same gathering at which Eadbert Pren was liberated we read that "no one met with a denial of any petition, and each one departed replenished in purse; for besides the numberless gifts which the nobles had received of inestimable value, in utensils, raiment, and choice steeds, he gave to all who had no lands a pound of gold, a marc of gold to every presbyter, a noble to every monk, and many gifts to all the people." Such generosity reminds one of the later Berhtwulf's Christmas Day grants [1] in the year 841, when, with his bishop, abbots, dukes, and Court officials around him, after doubtless an excellent Christmas dinner, he made three separate and substantial gifts of land to the Church.

The keynote of Cenwulf's reign is, indeed, generosity. In Offa's time Mercia had become wealthy; his successors did their best to make her poor. Abbeys were founded, churches were established, thegns were rewarded. In all his numerous charters, however, Cenwulf is simply described as 'King of the

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[1] Birch, *Cart. Sax.*, Nos. 432–434.

Mercians,' and no sub-king's name appears except that of Cuthred, his brother, whom on the capture of Eadbert Pren he had made King of Kent, and, on three occasions [338, 340, 373], that of Siredus, or Sigred, King of the East Saxons.

Throughout the whole of Cenwulf's reign the clerics were very powerful. The scheming Cynethryth on the death of her son Egfrith had turned abbess and doubtless strengthened the clerical party. Quoenthryth, the King's daughter, in later years also devoted her life to religion.[1] Both Cenwulf's queens, Cenegitha and Aelfthryth, successively supported the King in his gifts to abbeys and churches. At the same time the Archbishop of Canterbury, Coenulf, was an able and ambitious man. Fortified by the support of the Pope, Leo III, he was able in 803 at the Ecclesiastical Council of Clofesho, held on October 12 in that year, to pass a measure recognizing the paramount rights of Canterbury and abolishing the Archiepiscopate of Lichfield. With such forces around him it is not surprising to find Cenwulf spending much of his time and most of his wealth in establishing religious foundations. The result was twofold: the warlike thegns, being forgotten and unrecompensed, were content to do nothing while their country declined in power; the monasteries, full of unwarlike, wealthy, and probably licentious priests, were poor recruiting-grounds for a national army. As a result, when the Danish blight fell on England 'the army' (that terrible Danish army which needed no further defining to the men of that age) ravaged Mercia as easily as anarchy-rent Northumbria.

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[1] Abbess of Southminster and Reculver (?) in 824 (Birch, *Cart. Sax.*, No. 384: "*Quoenthryth abbatissam heredem Coenwulfi*"). Matthew Paris has a story about Quoenthryth (Quenedrida) and St Kenelm. According to him, in 821 when Cenwulf died he entrusted his young son Kenelm, then seven years of age, to the child's sister, Quoenthryth, to bring up. "Led astray by base ambition," she had the child put to death. The place of his burial was disclosed at Rome by a white pigeon which dropped a letter written in gold in the English tongue on St Peter's altar. The body was found and removed by an immense multitude to Winchelcombe. Then, we are told, "the murderous woman put forth her head from the window of the chamber where she was standing, and began to repeat in a loud tone the psalm, 'Be not silent, O God, at my praise,' which with a sort of jugglery she uttered backwards. . . . When she had gone backwards as far as the verse, 'This is the work of those who malign me with the Lord,' straightway both her eyes burst from their sockets and fell on the page she was reading. To this day, that psalter, wrought with silver and stained with the gore of her eyes which fell upon it, bears testimony to this judgment." Such a story is, of course, beyond comment. There is a letter [284] from Leo III to a King Kenelm dated 798, but the Kenelm addressed is another person.

The time of Mercia's weakness was always the time of the West Saxon's strength, and Egbert was able slowly to consolidate his kingdom during the earlier peaceful years, and, after Cenwulf's death and the subsequent years of civil war, to contend successfully for mastery with the middle kingdom.

Though he came to the throne in 802 [1] no event of much importance happened until 815, a year after the death of his benefactor Charlemagne. In that year we read that "King Egbert laid waste West Wales from eastward to westward." According to Roger of Wendover (who places it under 809 and gives us later some incorrect facts about an expedition into Wales proper), the result of this campaign was the incorporation of Cornwall (West Wales) into the West Saxon kingdom.

EGBERT BRETWALDA

After Cenwulf's death in 821 the crown of Mercia passed to Ceolwulf, who, however, was deposed within two years and succeeded by Beornwulf. Egbert was not slow to take advantage of these changes, and in 826,[2] although his western borders were being threatened by the Welsh, the West Saxon and Mercian forces fought a great battle at Wilton, in which, after much slaughter had been made, Egbert proved victorious. Returning home "a sorrowful victor," Egbert next dispatched his son Ethelwulf and Bishop Ealhstan of Sherborne—a fighting prelate who in later years was ever urging Ethelwulf to deeds of war—to Kent, whence they drove King

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[1] The *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle* gives 800. It is still behind. Plummer gives 802 as the date. We have a grant [300] made by "*Edbirtus rex*" in 801, but, as Mr. Birch suggests, this should probably read "*Eádburh regina.*"

[2] Date again doubtful. *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle* gives 823. It places the second synod of Clofesho in 822. This council was held in 825 and settled the quarrel which had sprung up between Abbess Quoenthryth and King Beornwulf. See Birch, *Cart. Sax.*, No. 384.

Baldred and received the submission of the men of Kent, Surrey, Sussex, and Essex. The East Saxons had, indeed, already made overtures to Wessex for a protective alliance against Mercia. Egbert agreed, and toward the end of the year the men of Essex captured Beornwulf and slew him. Shortly after this (in 828) we find Egbert described as *Rex Anglorum* and two years later as King of the West Saxons and men of Kent. From that year at latest Ethelwulf appears to have been established over the men of Kent as king on behalf of his father Egbert.

Meanwhile on the death of Beornwulf the crown of Mercia had passed to Ludechan, who, after reigning but a short time, was slain with his most important nobles, and Withlaf succeeded to the kingdom. In 828,[1] however, Egbert completely conquered Mercia and all the land south of the Humber. It is significant that now for the first time he assumed the title of *Rex Anglorum.* Later in the same year, or perhaps early in the next, the West Saxon " led a mighty army into Northumbria, committing terrible ravages in that province and putting King Eanred under tribute." Most of the chroniclers seem to agree that Northumbria was now a subject state and that Egbert had gained his right to the title of Bretwalda.

In the year following, however, Withlaf of Mercia regained his former position as an independent king, and in 831 we read of his granting land in Middlesex [408]; but two years later, when he gives a charter [409] to Croyland Abbey, Egbert, Ethelwulf, and Swithun, then a presbyter, all join in. Somewhere about this time, or possibly in 830 or even earlier, Egbert seems to have led an army against the men of North Wales, then ruled by Merfyn Frych. Deganwy Castle was destroyed, and, in the words of the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle,* " he forced them [the Welsh] to obedient subjection."

It is just at this time, when all England was beginning to settle down to a state of peace under the overlordship of

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[1] The *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle* gives 827, but mentions an eclipse of the moon as occurring " on the mass-night of midwinter," which we know took place on December 25, 828.

Egbert, that we read both in the English and in the British annals the same ominous announcement: "This year the black pagans came"; "This year heathen men ravaged Sheppey." It is a great mistake to think, as some historians have not merely thought but said, that the Welsh and the Danes joined forces against the English. An occasional alliance there may have been, but for the next four decades the Britons fought against the 'black pagans' as vigorously and as successfully as the English. The constant and furious battles brought one English king of surpassing merit far to the front of his contemporaries, and earned him the leadership of England and the epithet 'Great.' As with Alfred in England so with Roderick in Wales. For years both Alfred the Great and Rhodri Mawr (Roderick the Great) fought the common enemy with similar results, national and personal.

The Danes return to the Attack

It was probably in the year 835 that the "army of infidel and piratical Danes, after being vanquished at Dunemouth and put to flight, ravaged Sheppey." Landing from twenty-five vessels, they plundered that island and thence journeyed to Charmouth, which was also pillaged, neither sex being spared.

From this time onward mention of this new scourge is rarely absent from the year's summary in the *Chronicle*. In the year following Egbert fought against the invaders at Charmouth, but, after great slaughter, "the Danish-men held the field," and in that battle two bishops and two ealdormen fell. Two years later Dane and Cornishman combined against Egbert. This time the Saxons were victorious, and at the battle of Hengeston, or Hingston Down, a wild moorland overlooking the Tamar, the Danes and their allies were put to flight.

So far Egbert had shared the honours with the Danes, but Egbert was growing old and in the next year he found repose in the grave. He left his kingdom, imminently threatened by his new enemies, to Ethelwulf, his eldest son by his Queen, and to Athelstan, a bastard prince. Ethelwulf took Wessex; Athelstan took Kent and possibly the rest of his father's conquests, ruling all, probably, as sub-king to Ethelwulf, whose grants he frequently subscribed.

ETHELWULF

During the eighteen and a half years of Ethelwulf's reign there is hardly a year in which the Danes do not plunder or murder or fight. Ethelwulf himself, a virtuous though weak king, is found vacillating between the warlike policy of Ealhstan Bishop of Sherborne and the more reposeful and pacific advice tendered by Swithun [1] Bishop of Winchester. In the majority of cases the Danish axe decided the point and Ethelwulf, whether willing or unwilling, was forced to take the field.

In 840 [2] his ealdorman Wulfheard successfully engaged the Danes, who had landed at Southampton from thirty-five ships. Probably, however, Wulfheard was wounded, for he died the same year. Again, still in 840, the Danes attacked Wessex. This time Ethelhelm and the men of Dorset attempted, for a time successfully, to beat them back, but again we read the ominous admission, "the Danish-men held the field." In this fight at Portland the ealdorman was slain. The year following another ealdorman, Herebert, died fighting these same foes, and the heathen overran Lindsey, East Anglia, and Kent. In 842 the blow fell on London, Canterbury, and Rochester, at which cathedral cities the pagans made great slaughter. Matters were thus serious, and the King himself was compelled to take command of the national militia. In 843 another battle was fought at Charmouth against the crews of thirty-five ships, but once again " the Danish-men held the field." For a few years there seems to have been peace, but in 848 the struggle was renewed. This time the mouth of the Parret was the scene of conflict. The leaders of the men of Dorset (who opposed the invaders) were Bishop Ealhstan and the ealdormen Eanwulf and Osric, and the result of the fight was such a decisive Saxon victory that England knew peace for three years.

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[1] Widely known in connexion with St Swithun's Day. Of noble birth but of a devout turn of mind, he probably inclined to the Church from an early age. We find his name mentioned and himself styled presbyter on a grant to the Abbot of Croyland in 825. Two years later his signature is added to a grant and he is now styled Bishop of Winton (Winchester). In 838 on the findings of the Council of Kingston he is described as '*diaconus*,' but in the confirmation in 839 he is '*episcopus*.' In 851 he subscribes a charter as Bishop of Winton, and in the year following makes his profession [461] as Bishop of Winton. The last grant he subscribed [500] is dated 860, when Ethelbald was king. He died probably some two years later.

[2] *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle*, 837.

Battle of Ockley

In 851, however, the struggle began again. Early in the year Ceorl the ealdorman, leading the men of Devon, fought a big battle at Wembury, near Plymouth, and, after much slaughter, gained a victory. Next we find Athelstan, King of Kent, and Elchere the ealdorman engaged in a naval encounter with the Danes off Sandwich, with the result that nine of the enemy's ships were taken and the rest put to flight. Notwithstanding these successes, however, it was in this year that " the heathen men remained over winter in Thanet." The attack was renewed with increased violence in the year following. Now no fewer than three hundred and fifty ships came to the mouth of the Thames. Canterbury and London were taken by storm; Berhtwulf, King of Mercia, was put to flight with his army; the Thames was crossed and Surrey penetrated. Once more Ethelwulf realized that his duty lay in the field. Gathering the West Saxon militia together, he and his son Ethelbald led them against the invader. The forces met at Ockley, and there Ethelwulf, in the words of the chronicler, " made the greatest slaughter among the heathen army that we have heard reported to the present day, and there got the victory."

Welsh Attacks

For a time there was peace, but in 853 a new enemy appeared, for Rhodri Mawr, now the premier Welsh chieftain, took advantage of Mercia's weakness and attacked Burhred, who had ascended the Mercian throne on the death of Berhtwulf in 852.[1] So low had Mercia now fallen that Burhred was forced to appeal to Ethelwulf for aid. The West Saxons responded and the combined expedition was apparently successful, and on the return the friendship between the two peoples was consolidated by the marriage of Ethelwulf's daughter Ethelswitha to the Mercian king, the nuptials being celebrated in the royal vill of Chippenham.

The Danes in Sheppey

Hardly had the joyous ceremonies associated with royal marriages been concluded than peace was rudely broken yet again by the pagans. This time the men of Kent and Surrey were attacked, and after a bloody struggle were beaten; many were slain, many were drowned. In the year following the ominous entry appears: "This year heathen men, for the first time, remained over winter in Sheppey." The phase of mere plunder was passing away; the era of occupation was beginning.

Notwithstanding the grave peril which threatened his realm—a peril the mere anticipation of which had made Charlemagne burst into tears at the thought of the woes which awaited his descendants—Ethelwulf chose this year of years to weaken his state, first by the granting of a tenth part of his land to the Church and secondly by a prolonged absence in Rome—actions which prove him and his chief adviser Swithun to have been more pious than discerning.

Two years before he had sent his youngest son Alfred, then in his fifth year, to the Eternal City with an escort of nobles. The Pope, Leo IV, had received the child with honour, had anointed him king or consul and had adopted him as his spiritual son. The child appears to have returned in a short time, so that he was in England ready to accompany his father when he decided to undertake the pilgrimage. Ethelwulf seems to have travelled with much pomp. Charles the Bald in France received him with every mark of honour and escorted him to the confines of his kingdom. In Rome itself ceremonial receptions were of necessity dispensed with, for Leo IV died in July of that year and there followed a state of civil war until the Anti-pope Anastasius was dethroned and Benedict III raised to the pontificate. During these turbulent months, however, Ethelwulf found opportunity to enrich the papal horde with a crown, images and vessels of gold, a paten of silver-gilt of Saxon make, and many beautiful vestments and curtains, probably from the famous English looms. Largesse was distributed to the people, and the Saxon School, founded as we have seen by Ine,[1] and destroyed by fire in the previous year, was rebuilt.

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[1] We conjecture this as the date of his death, since we have two charters both dated 852, one subscribed by King Berhtwulf, the other by King Burhred. Many of the chroniclers give this date, but dates in the chronicles are not very reliable for this period.

ETHELWULF AND JUDITH

After a lengthy sojourn in the Imperial City, during which time his son Ethelbald and the warrior-prelate Ealhstan, righteously indignant at the King's absence in such troublous times, had initiated a movement to dethrone him, Ethelwulf returned. He again visited the Court of Charles the Bald, whence the infatuated old man brought as a further surprise for his astonished subjects a girl-bride in the person of the French princess Judith. Meanwhile, however, the rebellion had made headway and Ethelbald was well established on the West Saxon throne. Ethelwulf, who had never been a distinguished warrior, was far from desiring to end either his own or his son's life on the field of battle, and, guided by wisdom most unusual in those days, determined on a settlement of the quarrel. Thus it was decided without any fighting that Ethelbald should take the eastern and Ethelwulf the western part of the kingdom. Having thus agreed, the old King hastened to crown the little Judith, although, as we have seen,[2] since the murder of Beorhtric by Eadburga no consort of the King of Wessex had been permitted to wear a crown or bear the title Queen. Some two years later Ethelwulf died,[1] and the young widow, who doubtless had much of the charm of her countrywomen, passed to the arms of his successor Ethelbald,[2] who after reigning a little while, and renouncing his wife, died in 860 and was buried with much pomp at Sherborne. Judith now returned to her native France, eloped with the French King's forester, Baldwin, and with him founded the ruling house of Flanders and a long line of distinguished folk, one of whom became Emperor of Rome and another, Matilda, the wife of William the Conqueror.

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[1] See *ante*, p. 179. Offa also added to it.

[2] See *ante*, p. 191.

Following Ethelbald's short reign came that of Ethelbert, who had already received the title *Rex* in his brother's lifetime,[3] and had ruled over Kent and the eastern portion of the West Saxon realm. This part of Wessex was now assigned by him to his brother Ethelred, or Ethered, he himself retaining Wessex proper. He is found subscribing charters until 866, when he died and was succeeded by his brother Ethelred, who reigned alone until 871, to be succeeded in his turn by the youngest and most famous of Ethelwulf's sons, Alfred the Great.

The Danes attack Winchester

Having thus sketched out the dates of the kings who link up the two long reigns of Ethelwulf and Alfred, let us turn back and see with what deeds the intervening years were filled. In the very first year of Ethelbert's reign the Danes came again with a large fleet and stormed Winchester. The invaders were met, however, by Osric, senior Duke of Wessex,[4] and the ealdorman Ethelwulf, leading the men of Hampshire and Berkshire respectively. The heathens were checked, defeated, and put to flight, and for the remaining years of his reign the King held his land "in goodly concord and in great tranquillity." Though he early lost the guidance of the good St Swithun (861) he seems to have remained a benefactor of the Church, to which he gave much land. He was buried near his brother at Sherborne.

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[1] Charter No. 497, dated 859, is subscribed by "*Ethelwulf rex.*" Perhaps this is wrongly dated. See next note.

[2] She is found subscribing a grant [495] as "*Judith regina.*" Ethelbald signs the same charter as King of the West Saxons in 858. In 860 she is "*Judith Regis filius*" (*sic*).

[3] Charter No. 500.

[4] His name comes immediately after that of Bishop Ealhstan in Charter No. 500. He had already defeated the Danes on the banks of the Parret. See *ante*, p. 199.

Kentish Men try to buy off the Danes

Though Ethelbert had known peace for the last five years of his reign signs were not wanting that the Danes proposed to renew the attack. We read that in the year before his death "the heathen army sat down in Thanet and made peace with the men of Kent, and the men of Kent promised them money for the peace"—thus repeating the Britons' weak policy in former years and anticipating the folly of Ethelred the Redeless in the next century. The "cunning foxes," however, to use Asser's words, "spurning at the promised money, which they knew was less than they could get by plunder," suddenly broke the truce, the east coast of Kent was ravaged, and the Danes retired with much booty to their ships.

Change in the Nature of the Danish Attack

In the next year, after Ethelbert's death, fresh hordes of plunderers arrived, this time from the Danube, and wintered in East Anglia, where from their camping-ground they made forays for horses, which having seized they trained for use in war. This creation of a force, and a large force, of cavalry had an important effect on the Danish campaigns of the next few years and led directly to their conquest of a large part of England. Heretofore we have had to consider sudden attacks from ships, occasional encampments over winter, the quick assault and capture of cities, the plundering of religious houses. Now the movements of the Danes become more general, and, leaving the coast counties, they penetrate to the very centre of the island. In 867 they passed from East Anglia across the Humber to York. York having been seized and the Northumbrian militia, led by the usurper

Aelle and his erstwhile enemy the deposed King Osbert (who with rare magnanimity had sunk his private grievance in the face of his country's peril), having been decisively defeated, the Danes are, in the year following, next found in Mercia and at Nottingham. Burhred of Mercia pressed by the foe sent hastily to his brothers-in-law Ethelred and Alfred of Wessex for aid, and after Nottingham had been ineffectively invested peace was made. By 869, however, 'the army' was once more back at York, where it remained for a year preparing for a renewed attack upon Mercia and East Anglia. In the autumn of 870 the Danes occupied winter quarters at Thetford in the latter kingdom, now ruled by King Edmund, whose martyrdom was near at hand.

St Edmund of East Anglia

We must pause in this the last year of Ethelred's reign to touch upon the life of the East Anglian King, Edmund, whose death at the hands of the pagans earned for him a martyr's crown, and whose name is preserved to us by many a church up and down England, and particularly by the great Abbey of Bury St Edmunds, some few miles from Thetford, which covered the last resting-place of the King.

Though we know but few genuine historical facts concerning this martyr, it would appear from the legends which in later years gathered round his name that he was a pious and gentle king, more noteworthy for his great stature, courtly manners, and Christian meekness than for his capacity as a leader of men. If we are to believe Florence of Worcester, he was probably not a native of England at all, but was of the race of the Old Saxons and had merely been adopted by his predecessor on the East Anglian throne. Roger of Wendover has a very lengthy story which recounts the murder of Lodbrog [1] (Lothbroc) by Berne, the King's huntsman; the discovery of the murder and its perpetrator by the fidelity of a hound; the condemnation of Berne and the sentence passed upon him whereby he was set adrift in a boat; his arrival in Denmark; his seizure by Lodbrog's sons Hinguar and Hubba; his admission that Lodbrog had been slain, falsely alleging by the King his master; the expedition which the two Danish chieftains raised to punish the supposed murderer; how contrary winds carried them to Berwick-on-Tweed; how they ravaged Northumbria and at last reached East Anglia. Upon such details we cannot rely, but to East Anglia a great force of Danes certainly came, and to oppose their farther advance King Edmund led against them the whole of his available forces. The ensuing battle was fought at Thetford, Hinguar leading but half the Danish forces in the absence of Hubba, who was ravaging Mercia. The fight was long and furious and the slaughter terrible, so that "the whole field ran red with the blood of the slain." At last the pagans drew off and Edmund held the field sorrowing, "not only for the slaughter of his companions . . . [but also for] the fate of the infidel barbarians who were precipitated into the gulf of Hell." His grief was soon, however, to become more personal, for Hubba having arrived with heavy reinforcements the battle was renewed, and Edmund was surrounded and dragged from a church in which he had sought sanctuary.

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[1] The Danish sagas state that Ragnar Lodbrog was stung to death by serpents in a pit into which Aelle of Northumbria had cast him.

The account of his death is given us with much detail by Roger, whose story we are content to reproduce. After telling us how the King was led before "the wicked chief" he proceeds to inform us that "at his command he was tied to a neighbouring tree; after which he was scourged for a long time, and insulted with every species of mockery. But the undaunted champion of Christ, by continuing to call on Him between every lash, provoked to fury his tormentors, who then in their mockery using his body as a mark, shot at him with their bows till he was entirely covered with arrows, so that there was not a place in the martyr's body in which a fresh wound could be inflicted, but it was as completely covered with darts and arrows as is the hedgehog's skin with spines." Finally, since nothing would persuade the King to renounce his faith, the savage Hinguar commanded his attendants "to cut off the martyr's head with his bloody sword." The result of the defeat and death of the King for East Anglia was a period of misery, the heathen giving themselves up to murder and rapine.[1]

NATURE OF THE DANISH INVASION

We have now reached a point at which it is convenient to summarize the results of the Danish invasion. Already Northumbria had been overrun and its capital seized; Mercia had been laid prostrate and had been forced to ask aid and sue for peace; East Anglia had been ravaged and her King put to an ignominious death. Wessex alone was unsubdued. In the year following (871), the terrible 'Year of Battles,' Wessex too was to feel the hammer of Thor; King Ethelred was to die in the midst of furious fights; King Alfred was to seize the helm at his country's most critical moment. In the pages which follow we shall see how Alfred guided the ship of State once more into smooth waters.

Taking our eyes from this gloomy horizon we will now turn and survey the days that had passed.

The Northmen, Danes and Norse, coming from a bleak climate and a barren soil, were a race hardened for war and eager for wealth. The country of their birth, pierced by a hundred fjords, raised in these as in succeeding centuries a race of men trained from childhood to battle with the sea. Such a combination of circumstances created a nation of sea-rovers who, setting sail in their small wooden ships, carried the terror of the Danish name up every estuary and river of Western Europe from the Arctic Circle to the coast of Spain. We are not concerned with the miseries which France suffered; with the expeditions up the Meuse, the Seine, the Scheldt, and many another Continental river—miseries recounted for us by our own Asser, who had probably heard of them from Grimbald of St Omer and from John of the monastery of Corbie; rather we will limit ourselves to the doings of the Danes in England, prefacing our remarks with the statement that nowhere was the invader more stubbornly opposed, nowhere was more slaughter made.

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[1] It was at this time that the great monastery of Medeshamstede (Peterborough) was sacked and its abbot and monks slain. The *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle* adds: "and that place, which before was full rich, they reduced to nothing."

At first the attacks were directed, as we have seen, solely for the purpose of plunder. A quick descent from shipboard; a sudden raid, murder, fire, and sword; an abbey burnt; men slain; women and children outraged, bound and taken as slaves; a hoisting of sails and away—this was the form the early pirate raids assumed. Such rapid descents, ever increasing in frequency and in magnitude, continue until about the middle of the ninth century. Then a change occurs. No longer do the pirates suddenly disappear with their plunder. The entry "this year the heathen men remained over winter" begins to make its appearance; the pagans who first came for booty remained for settlement. The next stage, the one we have now reached, occurred in 866, when the development of a cavalry arm enabled the invaders to sweep from county to county, leaving behind them always the same hideous trail of burnt-out houses, plundered churches, ruined monasteries, wronged women, murdered children, and dying men. In only one particular was the Danish invasion of England different from the Saxon invasion of Britain. Then barbarians broke in upon a race of different nationality and language, a race which, under Roman guidance, had reached a high level of civilization. Now pagan barbarian fought Christian barbarian; both were of the same race, the tongue they spoke was similar. Such kinship had as effect the greater embitterment of the struggle. The fact that the Saxons were still barbarians makes us lament their woes less than those of the Britons, for they lost less than the Britons, having less to lose. Once the conflict was at an end the Danes settled on terms of amity with the Saxons and readily absorbed from their one-time enemy the one great gift that enemy had to give—Christianity. For the rest the loss was personal rather than national. For the dying soldier it hardly matters whether he has received his death-wound from an Epictetus or from a Nero, from a debased savage or a man of highest culture ; for a country it makes a large difference by what kind of man it is conquered. Thus with the Danish inroad, though it caused much private misery, it made no great change in England's fortunes. We have to bewail the loss of a few manuscripts, the levelling of a few, or perhaps many, fine buildings ; for the rest some of our soil was tilled by a new people, but not by a new race ; the old institutions were modified, but not greatly ; the English language was amplified, but not essentially changed. Even these changes belong, perhaps, rather to the years which lie ahead, for although the north had already passed for the time almost completely under the Danish sway, the most glorious years of Saxon Wessex were yet to come, and many a battle was to be fought before, in the eleventh century, the new-comers were to unite England under the sceptre of a Danish king.

CHAPTER XI

ALFRED THE GREAT

BORN 849; REIGNED 871–899[1]

ALTHOUGH we have not yet slain King Ethelred we have reached the last year of his life, and hence onward, even while he was yet King, the stage is occupied and the attention of the audience commanded by the greatest personality of Saxon England—his youngest brother, Alfred. Already, as we have seen, this, the last child of Ethelwulf and Osburga, had been marked out in some special way from his brothers, for on his visit to Rome, while yet an infant, he had been clothed in consular, or it may be kingly, robes and anointed by Pope Leo IV for the high office he was destined so worthily to fill.

After his return from Rome, until the accession of his brother Ethelred to the West Saxon throne, the youthful Alfred seems to have been kept in the background, and it may be that his elder brothers Ethelbald and Ethelbert, feeling some jealousy for the Benjamin of their house, intentionally suppressed his youthful ardour. Certain it is that, notwithstanding the doubtful story of the illuminated book of poetry which his retentive memory won for him in childhood, his early youth saw him neglected by those responsible for his training, with the result that despite his eagerness for learning he grew up as ignorant as any Saxon noble.

From his subsequent life, so marked with every sign of

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[1] The date generally given for his death is 901. We follow Mr W. H. Stevenson's *The Date of King Alfred's Death*. He concludes that Simeon of Durham and Roger of Howden were right and prints a conclusive and little-known document.

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purity of character and nobility of mind, we may hazard the opinion that his mother Osburga, daughter of Oslac the famous cup-bearer [1] of King Ethelwulf and descendant of the warriors Stuf and Wihtgar,[2] was a dame of gentle nature and pious mind, though, as we shall see, there is reason to believe that she may have been discarded in the evening of her days by her royal consort for the child Judith. Legend has preserved for us the story of how Alfred's mother, when showing him and his brother a book of Saxon poetry, offered it to whichever should sooner learn the contents; how Alfred, eager to possess the pretty volume, took it to his tutor, who read it to him; [3] how, having listened attentively, Alfred got it by heart and returning to his mother repeated it correctly and so gained the prize. We should not relate this story, which every child has heard, were it not for the fact that, if authentic, it possesses many curious difficulties, besides creating a pleasant interlude in our account of these years of warlike and savage happenings. The difficulties we have suggested turn on the dates at which the event could have happened. Alfred we know was born in 849; Judith was enthroned as Queen in 856; in the intervening years from 852 Alfred had been in or travelling to or from Rome, save, perhaps,[4] for a short time between the return from the first visit and the departure for the second one in 855. Thus unless the event happened while he was yet an infant it occurred after Judith had supplanted his mother. That Judith, his stepmother, is referred to is, of course, absurd, since she in 856 was but thirteen, and whatever we may think of Alfred, Ethelred would certainly not have tolerated parental condescension from a girl of his own age; moreover, the book in question was a Saxon book and she was a Frankish princess. We must therefore put the tale aside as unhistorical, or accept as proven either that it happened when Alfred was not yet seven years old or that Osburga was alive when Judith was Queen—that, in fact, she had been discarded, a theory which, though possible when we remember the manners of those times, is not probable when we bear in mind her consort's character for piety and benevolence, her long married life, her numerous family, and the position of her eldest son, already, as we have seen, master of the major part of Wessex. When we further remember that the tale does not come from Asser's genuine life of Alfred, but rather from the doubtful *Annals of St Neots*, we must, perhaps, mark it as a legend which preserves for us, it may be, the germ of truth that Alfred even in his childhood was a clever, attentive boy, fond of books if only for their beauty.

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[1] Personal service on the king was a mark of distinction in Saxon times and a ground for nobility.

[2] See *ante*, p. 90.

[3] The text is difficult here.

[4] We incline to the view taken by Freeman that Alfred stayed at Rome until he returned in 856 with his father. Mr Stevenson, however, regards Freeman's view as contrary to authority and unsupported by the facts.

The ambiguous word which occurs in the Latin and which, if strictly construed, makes the boy already capable of reading is certainly misleading, for we have his admirer's definite assurance that owing to the neglect of his parents and nurses he remained illiterate until he was twelve or more, and in after years the King was wont to complain that knowledge came to him with difficulty, since he had become acquainted with books late in life. It was perhaps this regret for opportunities lost which prompted him when arrived at years of discretion and of power to plant throughout his kingdom centres at which his subjects could learn in childhood to do that which he himself found so difficult—read and write.

But though he was debarred by ignorance from reading while yet a boy, he combined a boy's love for games and for hunting, in all kinds of which he was very proficient, with delight in the hearing of poems and other literature when read to him. By this means, being blessed with a retentive memory, he grew up with a mind less blank than those of most of his nobles; for it was an age when ignorance was more deep and abysmal than we can well imagine, when the priest could scarcely read or write, and when the sign of the Cross served the purpose of hiding the subscriber's ignorance as well as of calling God to witness. "John Jones his mark ×" tells to-day a sorry story of John Jones's education. "+ Osric duc" was common and not disgraceful in those days.

As time went on, however, the youthful Alfred found opportunity to increase his knowledge. He learnt the observance of the hours, a few psalms, and several prayers from a book which he carried about with him, but whether from his own perusal or from getting his masters to read them to him we do not know. It is almost pitiable to think of this King—for this state probably lasted until he had ascended the throne—being unable in the whole of his realm to find any one who would instruct him in the liberal arts. As he himself complained, when he was young and had the capacity for learning he could find no teachers; when in later life he had gathered teachers from other lands he was too ill and too weighed down by the burdens of sovereignty to find much opportunity for learning. Despite these heavy drawbacks, however, he persevered, and in the later and more peaceful years of his life was able to translate and edit for his subjects' use several worthy and useful works.

It was in 868 that Alfred, now in his twentieth year and grown to manhood, sought for and obtained the hand of Ealhswith, daughter of Ethelred surnamed Mucil, a Mercian lord whose name is preserved to us to-day on many a Saxon charter and who was one of those present at Berhtwulf's Christmas party of which we have already spoken.[1] It was shortly after this marriage, if not on the very day, that that curious disease began to manifest itself which so increased the King's burdens and against which he strove so manfully.

This, his marriage year, was the last year of peace for him until he had at last beaten off his enemies the Danes and had saved Wessex from the ruin which had befallen the other Angle and Saxon kingdoms. Of the Nottingham campaign, of Burhred's request for aid, and of the subsequent movements we have already spoken. These events carried us to the year 870. In the year following, 'the Year of Battles,' Ethelred, who was still King of Wessex, but who died before the year was half spent, and Alfred were fighting almost continually for the very existence of their country.

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[1] See *ante*, p. 193. He was chief or ealdorman of the Gaini (this has no reference to the men of Gainsborough).

'The Year of Battles' (871) and Ashdown

In the years 869 and 870 the Danes had passed rapidly and triumphantly through Northumbria, Mercia, and East Anglia. In the last-named state the King, Edmund, had been put to death and the country-side ravaged. Northumbria likewise had been brought under the Danish yoke. Mercia had been compelled to sue for terms. Of all the English kingdoms Wessex alone remained unsubdued. In 871 the Danes, leaving East Anglia, invaded the kingdom of the West Saxons and entered the royal city of Reading, situated on the south side of the Thames in Berkshire. Having thus made good a footing some of the Danish leaders hastened to plunder the surrounding country, while others employed the remaining men in building a rampart between the Thames and the Kennet to protect the city they had seized.

Such a bold advance was not allowed to be made without challenge. Some part of the invading force was attacked by Earl Ethelwulf, leading the men of Berkshire, and after a stubborn battle fought at Englefield, and after one of the Danish jarls had been slain, the pagans fled leaving the English in possession of the field. This success, however, was but of local importance; the main army of the Danes was still threatening Wessex, and four days after Earl Ethelwulf's victory King Ethelred and Alfred found it necessary to unite their forces and attack the enemy at Reading. Throwing their militiamen on the pagans who had ventured outside the city gates they were successful in cutting them to pieces; but from within the walls the Danes sallied forth in strength, and, falling upon the Saxons, after a long and fierce engagement won the victory, slaying, among others, the Earl Ethelwulf.

After this defeat the men of Wessex rallied from all quarters to avenge the defeat of the King, the slaughter of their countrymen, and the death of the Earl of Berkshire. The new national army, led once more by King Ethelred and Alfred, met the pagans in the hilly district of Ashdown. According to Asser both the Danes and the Saxons, when they came in sight of one another, commenced to prepare defences and divide their army into two parts. With the Danes one part was given to the two kings who commanded the pagan forces; the other part was directed by the several Danish jarls who were supporters of those kings. With the Saxons one part was commanded by King Ethelred and one part by Alfred. Such was the division of command when the forces were about to engage. Ethelred, however, seeking spiritual aid, was at prayer in his tent when his co-commander saw that his enemies were about to bear down upon him. The moment was one of grave danger for the whole kingdom. It is evident that for this battle both sides had arrayed the greater part of their available forces. For Wessex defeat would probably have been decisive. Still the senior King Ethelred tarried hearing Mass instead of directing his people. Alfred for his part was in a subordinate command, yet he could not await the enemy's impetuous attack without risking annihilation. In such a moment of danger a quick decision was imperative. Alfred made it. Without waiting for his brother to arrive he formed his forces into a phalanx and flung the whole army, including the King's command, against the foe. The shock of the encounter bore down the front ranks and soon the opposing forces were engaged in a fierce *mêlée*. The pagans, who had the advantage of the ground, and who flung themselves upon the Saxons, now struggling up the hillside from the lower ground, were met and checked by Alfred's men, who fought with fury in defence of "their country, their dearest ties, and their lives." For long the battle raged around a stunted thorn-tree which grew on Ashdown's slopes, until at last the Danes, overborne by the fierceness of the Saxon onslaught, gave ground and fled, leaving upon the battlefield the corpses of one king, five jarls, and the major part of their army, many thousands in number. So great was the slaughter that the whole plain of Ashdown was encumbered with the dead. The Saxons thus victorious hastened to press home their victory. The remnants of the beaten army were pursued all through the day until night ended the chase; but the routed enemy continued their flight through the darkness until they had gained the protection of the stronghold whence they had sallied.

Ashdown, unquestionably, was a great victory. It did not, however, prove decisive against the Danes. Fourteen days later the pagans, having collected their forces from all quarters, renewed the attack and defeated Ethelred and Alfred at Basing. About the same time they were further strengthened by reinforcements from overseas.

It was shortly after this defeat and some time after Easter that King Ethelred died and was buried at Wimborne Minster. Asser tells us that Alfred, who succeeded, "undertook the government of the whole kingdom, amid the acclamations of all the people." It is probable, however, that he and his followers were far too busy attempting to beat off the pagan attacks, which were increasing in frequency, to give much attention to his change in rank. No king, perhaps, ever came to his throne in more troubled circumstances; no king occupied his throne more worthily.

Asser preserves for us the account of but one more battle in this terrible year. But we are informed by the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle* that in this year nine[1] general battles were fought south of the Thames, besides many minor engagements, and that in the course of these fights nine Danish jarls and one king were slain. It is in the number of these conflicts and the losses suffered that Asser finds the excuse for Alfred's defeat at Wilton Hill, a battle noteworthy since it saw successfully employed the ruse which in later years was to help win for William of Normandy the battle of Senlac and the crown of England. At Wilton it was that the pagans, feigning flight, deceived the Saxons into a premature pursuit, and then rallying fell upon their pursuers and gained the victory.

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[1] Asser gives eight as the number. He does not mention the battle at Marden.

Exile and Death of Burhred

Despite the victory at Wilton Hill the year 871 had seen the Danes make no progress with the conquest of Wessex, and toward the end of that year Alfred made peace with his enemies on the terms that they should depart from his kingdom. For some years the truce was kept, but while Wessex thus was freed from the scourge the rest of England suffered all the more. In 872 London [1] was entered and occupied over winter. In the beginning of 873 the Mercians made peace with the Danes, who thereupon attacked Northumbria and wintered in the district of Lindsey. In the year following Mercia proper was invaded and Repton was occupied over winter. Burhred, who had been King of Mercia for twenty-two years and who had married Alfred's sister, was driven from his kingdom, which was entirely subdued by the Danes and placed by them under the rule of Ceolwulf, " an unwise king's-thegn," lately one of Burhred's ministers, on condition that he should restore the realm to the Danes whenever they should wish. To guarantee this arrangement hostages were given by the Mercian, who also swore not to oppose the conquerors and to obey them in every respect. Burhred, for his part, weary of the unceasing struggle against an enemy whose losses were always more than made good by reinforcements, fled to Rome, where he died a short time after. He was buried in the Saxon School, in the Church of St Mary.

The Struggle Renewed

In the following year (875) the Danes, after an extensive campaign which resulted in the complete subjugation of Northumbria and the ravaging of the Picts and the Strathclyde Britons, returned to Cambridge to winter. Meanwhile Alfred, who thus early in his reign had realized that if the Danes were to be defeated it was imperative to attack on sea as well as on land, had organized, or reorganized, an English fleet and had fought a naval battle against the pagans, capturing one ship and scattering the others in flight. It is probable that the Danes regarded this act as a breach of the treaty of 871, and that the news of Alfred's renewed activity caused them to hurry south from Caledonia and establish themselves at Cambridge ready for an advance upon Wessex in the opening months of the new year.

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[1] London was ruled by the King of Mercia.

It is extremely difficult to understand exactly what happened in 876. We find the Danes leaving Cambridge (Grantabridge) by night and entering the Saxon stronghold of Wareham, between the rivers Frome and Trent. Next, and apparently without any battle being fought, we find Alfred concluding a solemn treaty, supported by oaths on Christian relics and the giving of hostages by the Danes, whereby it was provided that the invaders should speedily depart from the kingdom. As Asser informs us, however, the Danes "practised their usual treachery, and caring nothing for the hostages or their oaths,[1] broke the treaty, and sallying forth by night slew all the horsemen that the King had around him." Having thus broken the truce, they pushed on as far as Exeter and passed the winter on the shores of the Channel. Here they apparently stayed throughout 877, steadily augmenting their forces by troops received from overseas, until Asser could say: "The number of that disorderly crew increased every day, so that, if thirty thousand of them were slain in one battle, others took their places to double the number."

We have seen that Alfred had already taken steps to prevent the arrival of these reinforcements, but in this present year (877) his efforts in this direction were redoubled. Boats and long-ships were built in all the West Saxon ports; the ships when launched were manned by seamen commanded to watch the seas. Meanwhile the King, leading his army, laid siege to Exeter; supplies by sea were cut off by the newly organized fleet. The pagans, however, were by no means prepared to be caught like rats in a trap. Danish attacks seem to have been planned by sea and land. On the sea a hundred and twenty Danish ships of war attempted to scatter Alfred's blockading fleet. The result was disastrous for the attackers; their storm-tossed vessels were all sunk and their entire crews were drowned in the sea off Swanwich, in Dorsetshire. On land, however, the Danes were more successful, and early in the following year (878) 'the army' escaped from Exeter and seized the royal vill of Chippenham, in the west of Wiltshire. Here, we are informed, they wintered, and by force of arms drove many of the Saxons beyond the sea and reduced almost entirely to subjection the surrounding countryside.

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[1] It is to be observed that the Danes were pagans and would not regard themselves as bound by the Christian's oaths.

ALFRED AT BAY

It would seem that at this time (878) Alfred and his nobles were reduced to the lowest fortune compatible with liberty. We read of the King surrounded by a few of his thegns and soldiers leading an unquiet life among the woodlands of Somerset, or, as the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle* puts it, in "the woods and the fastnesses of the moors." Guthrum, the famous Danish leader, who had been leading the invaders in the south, developed a comprehensive plan for the final subjugation of the West Saxon King. The brother of Halfdene, the leader of the Danes in the north, was dispatched with twenty-three ships to Devonshire, presumably to land and attack Alfred from the south, while Guthrum directed his forces against him on the north and east. The plan, though admirable, was defeated by the disaster which befell Ubba, the Danish leader, and his followers before the castle of Cynuit.[1] This stronghold had been the refuge-place of many of Alfred's followers, and as it was too strong to be taken by assault, the Danes endeavoured to blockade it and compel the defenders to surrender through starvation. Early one morning, however, the besieged, rendered desperate by hunger, and desiring rather

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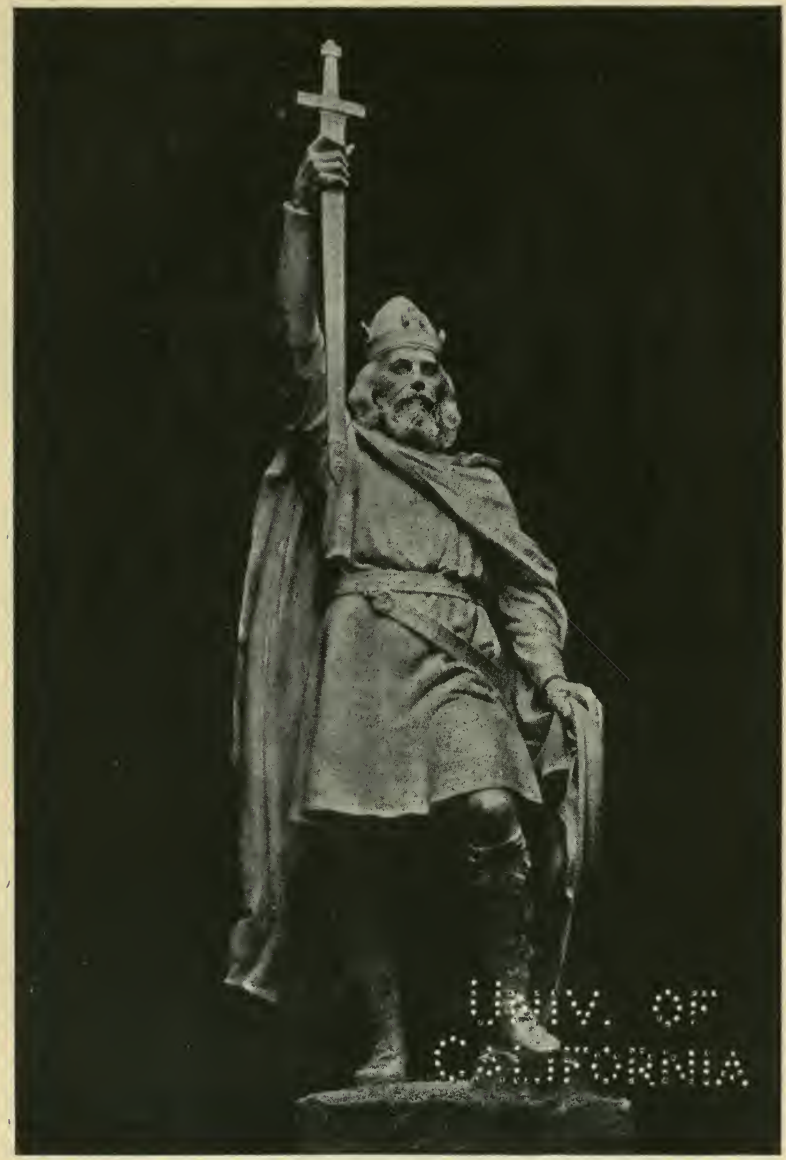
[1] Identification doubtful. Kynwith Castle on the river Taw has been suggested.



UNIV. OF CALIFORNIA

PLATE XXVI. STATUE OF ALFRED AT WINCHESTER
Hamo Thornycroft, R.A.

to die fighting than to purchase life with liberty, suddenly attacked the encircling force. In the fight which followed Ubba was slain with almost all his followers, the remnant of his army fleeing in disorder to their ships. Much booty was taken, and so great was the rout that the Danes left in the hands of the English the magic Raven standard woven by the daughters of Lodbrog, which was able to presage victory or defeat.

Alfred was still hard pressed, however, and at about this time he was driven to make for himself a stronghold at Athelney,[1] at the confluence of the Tone and the Parret, where, protected by the marshes which surrounded his place of defence, he slowly strengthened his forces. As Ethelweard puts it: "King Alfred was at this time straitened more than was becoming." He was not, however, a mere fugitive. Some of the most powerful men in the kingdom were still around him, and we have mention made of Ethelnoth, ealdorman of the men of Somerset, who was encamped near his King, surrounded by a narrow retinue. Little by little others rallied to the royal cause. To Selwood Forest, the natural fortress to which Alfred now seems to have retired, the men of Somersetshire, Wiltshire, and Hampshire gathered. The meeting of the King and those of his subjects who had disdained to fly overseas and had rallied for one last effort under the royal banner must have been an inspiring event for Alfred. We read how when the assembled host saw their King alive after such great tribulation they received him with joy and acclamations, and the chronicler soberly tells us that "they were joyful at his presence." On the night of the meeting the King encamped his forces at Buxton, on the east side of Selwood. In the dawn of the following morning camp was struck, and at daybreak of the next day the Danes were encountered in full force at a place called Ethandune. The result of the battle was a decisive victory for Alfred; the Danes were slaughtered in great numbers and fled to their fortified camp, which Alfred proceeded to blockade. After fourteen days the pagans sued for peace, hostages were given, and with oaths they swore to leave Wessex. Further and more noteworthy, Guthrum, their leader, promised to forsake paganism and be baptized. Three weeks later the sacred ceremony was performed at Aller, near Athelney, King Alfred standing godfather to his one-time enemy. Adjourning to Wedmore the chrism-loosing was done and the famous Peace of Wedmore was made, the Danish King remaining as Alfred's guest for some twelve days.

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[1] According to the *Annals of St Neots*, a doubtful twelfth-century work, it was at about this time, or perhaps when he was seeking shelter in the woods of Somersetshire, that the episode of the cakes occurred. The mere fact that even a popular legend could describe a cowherd's wife shouting at her king, "Cas'n thee mind the ke-aks, man!" shows that Alfred was not devoid of humour and was a man of simple manners. For the rest the story is too unreliable and too well known to be enlarged upon.

THE PEACE OF WEDMORE

Although J. R. Green has stated the terms of this Peace of Wedmore in some detail, saying that "In form the Peace of Wedmore seemed indeed a surrender of the bulk of Britain to its invaders. All Northumbria, all East Anglia, the half of Central England was left subject to the Northmen. . . . The peace had in fact saved little more than Wessex itself," it is quite unknown what the terms of the peace were, save that as a result we find the Danish army leaving Wessex in comparative repose for many years. The peace between Guthrum and Alfred which Green probably had in mind belongs to the year 885, after the Danes had made a permanent settlement in East Anglia (879), even as in earlier years they had divided out the land of Northumbria. In other words, *Alfred and Guthrum's Peace* gives effect to an accomplished fact. Already by 885 Northumbria and East Anglia were being tilled by Danes, were, in fact, completely under Danish domination. Mercia was in like case as regards the north and east. This is shown by the fact that immediately after the defeat at Ethandune and the Peace of Wedmore the Danes wintered at Fulham, near London. In 884, however, we find Alfred raising the siege of Rochester and capturing many of the Danish horses. In the year before he had gained a naval victory, a success which was repeated shortly after the relief of Rochester. In the intervening years between the two peaces it is, indeed, clear that the Danes were mainly concerned with the consolidation of their conquests in England and the extension of their gains in France. Wessex was in the main left in peace, but this was apparently not because of any definite division of England between Danes and Saxons, but simply because of a truce concluded at Wedmore and supported by Alfred's leadership and West Saxon loyalty.

The state of England about this time is admirably shown by one of the paragraphs in which Asser recounts the doings of the year 884. Having mentioned the abandonment of the siege of Rochester by the pagans and their flight to France, he proceeds to inform us that Alfred, gathering his fleet together, prepared to attack the country of the East Angles "for the sake of plunder." Nothing could tell us more clearly of the degree of the Danish settlement than this statement that Alfred, most English of English kings, could lead a plundering expedition against a province of England. So completely had the Danes divided the spoils that it is evident that by 884 whatever plunder was gained in East Anglia would probably be Danish property. What we have said of this district applies with equal force to Northumbria, and as to Mercia we have seen how on the flight of Burhred an arrangement had been concluded whereby Mercia was to be ruled by a nominee of the Danes.

With these facts before us we must express no surprise at the terms of Alfred and Guthrum's Peace, unless it be at the fact that the West Saxon should have been able to retain so much. Whatever may have been the bounds agreed upon at Wedmore, we now find Alfred ruler over all the land south and west of the line drawn along the Thames from its mouth to its confluence with the Lea, and thence up the Lea to its sources. From there the boundary ran to Bedford, and up the Ouse to its junction with Watling Street, which it followed in the main throughout the remainder of its course. Kent, Surrey, Middlesex, and the major part of Mercia were thus retained by Wessex, besides those counties which had for long been recognized as subject to the house of Cerdic.

Alfred at Peace

For the next few years Wessex was at peace, and it is probably to the years between 880 and 892 that we should assign the major part of Alfred's pacific labours as writer, lawgiver, patron of learning, and benefactor of the Church.

It will now be convenient to take a general view of the state of Wessex and of Alfred's attempts to improve the condition of his people and to advance the position of his state. When viewing Alfred's reign we must not have in mind a wealthy, prosperous realm full of fine cities, great churches, rich monasteries, and good schools. We must rather remember that we are dealing with a people originally barbarous and reduced on occasion to real want and penury under the ravages of their enemies. We have to deal with a Church from which most of the sanctity of the Celtic and the learning of the Roman Church had departed and whose main endeavours were directed toward gaining more and more land and founding more and more monasteries in which an increasing number of monks could live in licentious ease. We have to deal with an ignorant, though brave and warlike, nobility and an unlettered and hardworking and but partially free peasantry. Trade was but small and industries did not flourish.

Such was the state of West Saxon England when Alfred ascended the throne. Already, it is true, in Ethelwulf's time the West Saxon Court was in intimate communication with the Frankish Court, as had been the case when Egbert and Charlemagne were alive. Ethelwulf had married a Frankish princess and had brought over to England a Frankish secretary. Notwithstanding these bonds between insular England and the more polished Continental state Alfred could still deplore the almost complete absence of learning in southern England at the time of his accession. With characteristic energy he soon took steps to cure the evil. Plegmund, the most learned man in England, was invited to leave Mercia and accept the Archbishopric of Canterbury; Werferth also came from Mercia. From Wales, where learning was more advanced than in England, Asser, Bishop of St David's, was persuaded to attend on the King and give the benefit of his knowledge for six months in the year. From the mouth of the Elbe, John the Old Saxon, a learned man, came to help Alfred with his literary work and to rule over the monastery at Athelney as abbot. From St Omer that Grimbald came who in Camden's spurious interpolation into Asser's *Life* is represented as quarrelling with the learned men of Oxford. In truth, of course, there were no learned men at Oxford in Alfred's days. The colleges on the banks of the Isis had yet to be built. Grimbald held under Alfred the high position of abbot of the new minster at Winchester.

Besides attempting to improve the minds of his countrymen by inviting distinguished foreigners to form the centres of learned movements, the ripples of which through the channels of Court schools, monasteries, nunnery and lesser schools the King doubtless hoped would reach eventually even to his humblest subjects, Alfred took other steps to become acquainted, and to acquaint his people, with the knowledge of the wider world. Embassies were sent, *e.g.* to the Patriarch of Jerusalem, in quest of medicinal recipes. Possibly one aim of the King was personal. It may be that he desired a cure for the complaint which through all these years had been tormenting him. But when we read the list of drugs the messengers brought back with them we realize that the purpose of the mission was not so restricted. According to a doubtful text the King's view extended even beyond Jerusalem, for there we read of the dispatch of West Saxon almsgivers to "St Thomas's Christians" in India.

So far we have seen Alfred attempting to banish the mists of ignorance by the importation of learned men, the foundation of schools, and the sending of emissaries to foreign parts in search of knowledge. There was another and an important step taken by this great Englishman which had the same aim. The King, wisely seeing, like Dorotheus of

Constantinople, that the student should be led gently along the road of learning rather than taken immediately to its steepest inclines and roughest surfaces, determined to render books in the English tongue accessible to all, lest the difficulty of learning Latin in an unlettered age should prevent men from reading anything. We therefore find him stealing some time from the cares of State and with the aid of Asser and John, and perhaps Grimbald and the Archbishop, translating into the English tongue certain notable works which he thought should be widely known.

ALFRED'S LITERARY WORKS

If we accept the order suggested by Dr Bosworth, Alfred's various translations were: (1) Boethius's *Consolation of Philosophy*, (2) Bede's *Ecclesiastical History*, (3) the *History against the Pagans* of Paulus Orosius, (4) Gregory's *Pastoral Care*. It is also possible that he was responsible for the translation of the *Soliloquies* of St Augustine and for the composition of the *Encheiridion* which is now lost but is mentioned by Asser. The so-called *Proverbs of Alfred* is a thirteenth-century compilation. Finally, we must never forget that Alfred was responsible for the commencement of the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle*. It may even be that the vivid entries which occur under the later years of his life came from his own pen, although it is true that their form hardly supports this view.

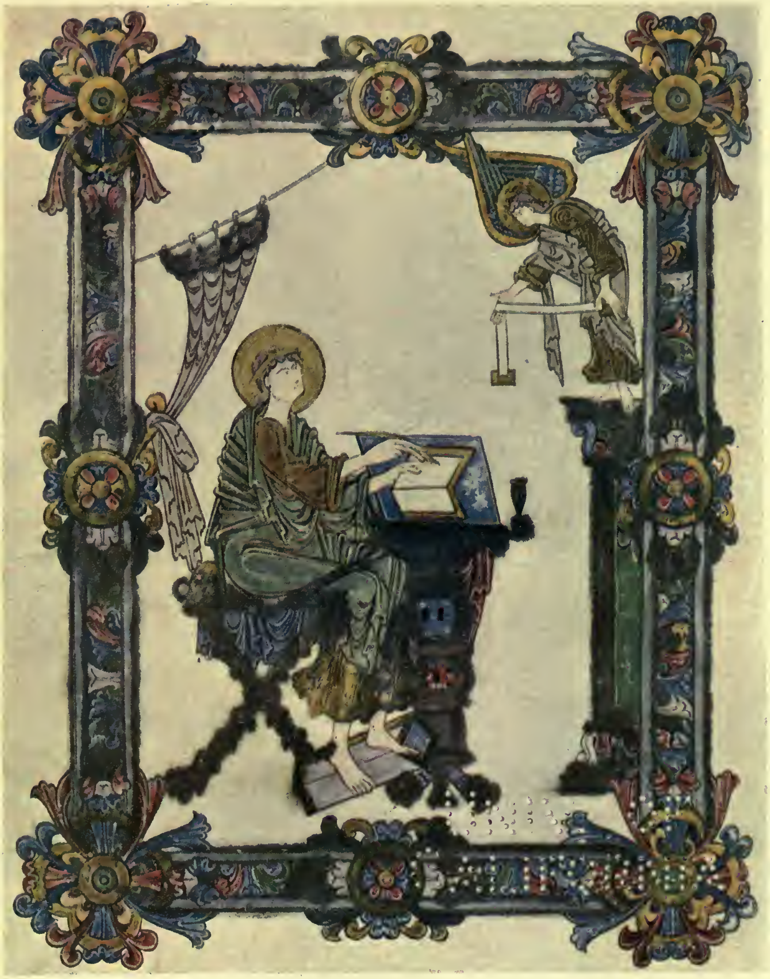
The first of the above works, the *Consolation of Philosophy*, was translated probably shortly after Alfred and Guthrum's Peace had been made, that is to say, some time about 885. It is probable that Alfred was helped by Asser. In form it is a free translation of the somewhat pagan philosophy of Boethius, to which he gives a Christian flavouring. To us perhaps its greatest interest lies in this very fact that Alfred is no literal translator. His emendations, or rather alterations, give us a peep into the King's true mind and show us a man pious, faithful, able, energetic, and eager for knowledge—in short, a very king who more than most men possessed what Bagehot called "an experiencing nature"; a king who could be interested in all forms of knowledge, who could glory in the beauties of nature, who could be at once religious and humorous. The same marks are present in his translation of Bede's great work, but in this he was rather more careful to follow the original with close fidelity. Even here, however, he shows excellent good sense in almost eliminating the details relating to the Easter controversy. In his next work, the *History* of Orosius, he allowed himself wide powers of selection. It was a somewhat curious work to choose for translation, for although doubtless one of the best productions of dying Rome, it takes a far from favourable view of Rome's enemies, among whom the Saxons were to be reckoned, and in other ways must have appeared to Alfred's people as a strangely gloomy work. As the late Thomas Hodgkin said: "Both Alfred . . . and his readers must have been somewhat unnecessarily depressed by its perusal; for as the book had a polemical bearing, *adversus Paganos*, and was intended to show that the calamities which were befalling the Roman Empire in the fifth century were not due to its adoption of the Christian faith, its author was naturally led to exaggerate the misery of the world in preceding ages. While enumerating, therefore, all the murders, pestilences, and earthquakes of which he could find mention in the 5167 years that had elapsed since the creation of the world, he omits to notice the long interspaces of quiet happiness." We may perhaps hazard the view that Orosius's purpose in writing the book and Alfred's aim in translating it were not dissimilar; his subjects who had to look back on half a century of spoliation, his monks who had looked upon ruined minsters and plundered abbeys, were, it may be, beginning to debate the everlasting question of the worth of religion, of the value of Christianity. It may be that Orosius's catalogue of natural horrors was translated that his subjects might see that the sorrows of the present when men were Christian were no worse than the evils of the past when men were pagan.

However this may be, we must thank the translator for some valuable interpolations, particularly for the account of the Arctic explorations of Othere, the Northman, who sailed to the north along the coast of Norway until he passed beyond the seas where the whalers sought their prey, and sailing ever northward for three days at last found the coast-line turning from north to east. Pursuing his way yet farther he found it turning south. Finally we read of his anchoring his ships at the mouth of a mighty river. This story of Othere's visit to the spot where Archangel was to be built in later years had been told to the King by the brave Northman himself, and Alfred writes it down in Orosius's *History* as a matter of interest for his subjects, and caring not at all that the interpolation had nothing or little to do with the rest of the work.

The fourth work, Gregory's *Pastoral Care* (*Regula Pastoralis*), was probably translated in the closing years of Alfred's life. It is in the preface to this work that we have the many allusions to the ignorant state of Wessex. The King is, however, speaking of the past, of the early years of his life. As to the present he can rejoice in that he has an "abundance of learned bishops," but he foresees that the time has not yet come when the continuance of knowledge may be deemed certain, or when men can be expected to read readily Latin or even Saxon.

ALFRED'S LAWS

Alfred's labours in literature represented only a part of his work on behalf of the arts of peace. Possessing as he did an intensely practical mind, he not only reorganized learning, the navy, the militia, but interested himself in building and in the foundation of religious houses. Asser informs us that he rebuilt London, and from the cartularies we know that he was always ready to aid in the erection of a new abbey or minster. Of all the things he helped to build, however, none was more fair than that monument to English greatness—English law. As he himself informs us, he was by no means an innovator; his practical mind rather preserved and established what was old and known and certain than



EXAMPLE OF ANGLO-SAXON ILLUMINATING

From a Gospel in Latin written at New Minster, Winchester, early in the Eleventh Century

From Additional MS. 34890 *in the British Museum*

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introduced new rules which from their newness might have failed in justice or in utility.

In the popular mind, for many a year Alfred has had the primary and indeed the altogether supreme place among Saxon lawgivers. It may be that that vicious compilation known as *The Mirror of Justices* [1] was first responsible for this notion. In the first chapter of that work we read that " King Alfred caused the Earles to meet, and Ordained for a perpetual usage, that twice in the yeere, or oftner, if need were, in time of Peace they should assemble together at London, to speake their mindes for the guiding of the people of God, however they should keepe themselves from offences, should live in quiet, and should have right done them by certaine usages, and sound judgements." The author then proceeds to enumerate a vast number of rules, many of which belong to a period long posterior to Alfred's time. In truth, Alfred was less of a lawgiver than an administrator of laws already given. In the beginning of his dooms he himself tells us that he had but chosen dooms formed by his predecessors such as Ethelbert, Ine, and Offa. To these, it is true, he added copious extracts from the Mosaic code; but in the main his laws add little to our knowledge of Anglo-Saxon legal procedure or custom. The chief difference is due to the circumstances of the time rather than to any intentional effort at improvement. Thus the fines to be paid by wrongdoers are less under Alfred's code than under Ine's. The reason is obvious. Money had become more valuable and the people were poorer as a result of the Danish ravages. Apart from this, few changes were made by Alfred in the dooms issued by earlier kings. In one respect, however, Alfred's laws mark a new stage in English legal history. As the learned authors of the *History of English Law* [2] say, " The age of the capitularies begins with Alfred, and in some sort it never ends, for William the Conqueror and Henry I take up the tale"; and again: "The mere fact that Alfred sets, and that his successors (and among them the conquering Dane) maintain, a fashion of legislating is of great importance. The Norman subdues, or, as he says, inherits a kingdom in which a king is expected to publish laws." In short, although there had been earlier lawgivers in England the stream had not been a steady one until Alfred's time; hence onward the laws follow one another, whether the ruler be Saxon or Norman or Angevin, with hardly a break, until at last Parliament is established and the king surrenders his power to ordain in favour of the people's power to legislate by Bill.

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[1] We quote from the 1646 edition. The best edition is that published by the Selden Society. The work is entirely unreliable, but had a great vogue in mediaeval times. It always gives great prominence to Alfred.

[2] Sir Frederick Pollock and the late Professor Maitland. We quote from the second edition, vol. i, p. 20.

Alfred, indeed, as we have said, was a practical administrator of laws rather than a lawgiver. As Asser tells us, "He strove also, in his own judgments, for the benefit of both the noble and the ignoble, who often perversely quarrelled at the meetings of his earls and officers, so that hardly one of them admitted the justice of what had been decided by the earls and prefects, and in consequence of this pertinacious and obstinate dissension, all desired to have the judgment of the King, and both sides sought at once to gratify their desire."[1] Again, his biographer tells us that "He inquired into almost all the judgments which were given in his own absence, throughout all his dominion, whether they were just or unjust. If he perceived there was iniquity in those judgments, he summoned the judges, either through his own agency, or through others of his faithful servants, and asked them mildly, why they had judged so unjustly; whether through ignorance or malevolence; whether for the love or fear of any one, or hatred of others; or also for the desire of money. At length, if the judges acknowledged they had given judgment because they knew no better, he discreetly and moderately reproved their inexperience and folly in such terms as these: 'I wonder truly at your insolence, that, whereas by God's favour and mine, you have occupied the rank and office of the wise, you have neglected the studies and labours of the wise. Either, therefore, at once give up the discharge of the temporal duties which you hold, or endeavour more zealously to study the lessons of wisdom. Such are my commands.'" Thus by example, exhortation, and advice Alfred cleansed the judicial system of his country and set up a pattern to be imitated in succeeding ages.

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[1] Our extracts are from Dr Giles's translation, p. 85.

As a result of his efforts toward an improved administration of justice we find robbery being repressed and lawlessness subdued, so that in a later age the legend grew up that the King brought the provinces into such tranquillity that he could command golden bracelets to be hung upon trees near the cross-roads without any traveller daring to touch them.

Thus engaged in the betterment of his people we must leave the King and return once more to recounting the incidents in his struggle with the Danes.

The Danish Wars Renewed

After the peace between Alfred and Guthrum had been concluded the Northmen turned their attention to the Continent rather than to England. Up the Seine, the Marne, the Aisne their ships sailed. Against Paris they battered themselves in vain. At last, however, after an enormous amount of damage had been done they were met by the future Emperor Arnulf and decisively defeated near Louvain. Despairing of final victory against the Franks, we find them renewing the attack upon England, and under date 892 the chronicler announces the arrival of a " swarm of pagans from Gaul." The first detachment landed from two hundred and fifty ships in the south-eastern part of Kent, possibly at the mouth of the Rother. There they built a fort at Appledore, near the great forest of Andredeswald. Meanwhile the dreaded Hastein, or Hasting, had landed his followers from eighty ships at the mouth of the Thames, building a fortress at " the royal vill called Middleton."

We must now pause and consider the general military position of England in order to appreciate the steps Alfred took to combat the new danger. In the east and north, East Anglia and Northumbria, the Danes were in force, and although for the moment peace reigned between them and the Saxons, they were ever ready to fall on their ancient enemies if the circumstances were favourable. It is not, therefore, surprising to find them harrying the Mercians and West Saxons whenever those states were particularly threatened by the new Danish armies from overseas. The Welsh also had to be watched. Ethelred, the Mercian leader, had been severely defeated by Anarawd, the most powerful Welsh chieftain, little more than ten years before, and for a few years Danes and Welshmen were allies against Mercia. Already, however, Anarawd had come over to Alfred's side, had visited his Court, and had been treated with much courtesy by the Saxon King. In the year when Saxon and Dane met at Buttington the Welsh fought on the side of the English King.

As for the nature of the fighting, we have to note the absence of many pitched battles. Always the *here* [1] is found making itself a fort, whence armed bands of plunderers dash on occasion in search of booty. Always after a siege, if the fort falls, great quantities of plunder are recovered by the attacking force. When we inquire into the mode of construction of these forts we find that they were probably not unlike the later motte,[2] being formed of an immense raised mound of earth, protected at the top by a heavy wooden palisading. From these strongholds the Danes, like the later Norman lords, could, in the words of the *Acta Sanctorum*, "protect themselves from their foes . . . subdue their equals, and oppress their inferiors." The presence in these forts of Danish women and children is suggestive of the nature of the new Danish invasion. It would appear that for years the Danes had been regularly settling in the north; now they seem to have determined to extend the area of their settlement to the south.

Against these fortresses the Saxon King could only oppose the national militia, a freeman force which owed to the king but six months' service at a time. At least one siege failed for the reason that at the critical moment when the garrison might have surrendered through hunger the siege was raised because the investing force, having served its term, struck camp and marched home, although the relieving body had not arrived to take its place.

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[1] *Here* = the army. In the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle* it usually refers to the Danish army.

[2] See, however, *Wales*, in this series, pp. 226–227.

CAMPAIGNS LEADING UP TO BUTTINGTON

We left the Danes from the Continent in force at Appledore and Middleton, and we have seen that Northumbria and East Anglia were ready to rise, though at the cost of their plighted faith, in order to aid their Danish countrymen. Alfred, finding it necessary at all costs to prevent the junction of the various Danish forces, encamped between his enemies "as near as he could for wood fastnesses and water fastnesses." From his encampment he endeavoured to check the bands of Danish freebooters who wandered through the forests and the byways of the land in small companies intent on plunder. This was by no means an easy task, for although stragglers could be cut off, the robber bands could always fly for safety to some Danish stronghold, which in those days could only be taken after a prolonged fight or perhaps a siege. We read that throughout 893 "the army did not come out of their stations with their whole force oftener than twice." Once they took much booty, but afterward the King fought against them at Farnham and regained the plunder taken. About the same time, or perhaps earlier, Hastein had been forced to sue for peace and had sent his two youthful sons to Alfred for baptism. Meanwhile, in order to relieve the pressure on the southern Danes the men of Northumbria and East Anglia had manned a hundred ships and attacked Devonshire both on the north and south. The main force launched itself against Exeter. To save this important city Alfred hurried west, leaving but a part of his army to hold the Danes in the east. Upon his arrival the besiegers of Exeter, seeing that they were outnumbered, made for their ships, and, setting sail, passed round the point of Cornwall and directed their course for the Bristol Channel.

In the meantime the leaders of the Saxon army in the east had not been idle. Joining forces with the citizens of London and with men from the north, they attacked at Beamfleot (Benfleet) Hastein's force, which had already united with the larger Danish army from Appledore. The moment seized by the Saxon leader (Ethelred) was a happy one. Hastein and many of his men were away on a plundering expedition. The result was the capture of Benfleet, the slaughter of many Danes, and the seizure of Hastein's queen and his two sons, who, however, were later surrendered by the chivalrous Alfred, who liked not the thought of being jailer to his godsons.

THE BATTLE OF BUTTINGTON

After the failure at Exeter and the defeat at Benfleet the Danes made an attempt to join their eastern and western forces. We read of the "wicked" Hastein "stealing, therefore, a hasty march through the province of the Mercians." Their route appears to have been from Shoebury along the Thames valley, thence to the Severn, up which they penetrated some distance. Opposed to them were the ealdormen Ethelred, Ethelm, and Ethelnoth and many King's thegns, who gathered forces from all the towns east of the Parret, west of the Severn, north of the Thames, and from the country around Selwood. To these were added now, for the first time since Penda's days, Britons from North Wales, led, not improbably, by that Anarawd who in earlier years had been an honoured guest at Alfred's Court. Meanwhile Alfred blockaded the west coast of Devon, endeavouring to prevent the ships which had originally come from Northumbria and East Anglia from sailing up the Severn and joining forces with Hastein. The *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle*, though full, is not clear in its treatment of this campaign, but we know that the main Danish army was contained both by sea and land for weeks at Buttington, a village "washed on all sides by the waters of the Severn," and that at last, when they had eaten nearly all their horses, driven desperate by hunger, the Danes sallied forth and gave battle to the besiegers. After a fierce conflict in which many a King's thegn was slain, the Danes, having lost heavily, saved a remnant of their army by flight, and made for Essex, for their fortress and their ships.

The victory of Buttington was certainly a great one, but the talons of the Northmen had not yet been clipped. Hastily gathering all their forces, and placing their wives, children, and portables in some safe retreats in East Anglia, 'the army' swept once more west to Chester,[1] that city of the dead which now once more re-echoed to the hoofs of cavalry and the tramp of warriors. There the surrounding country was ravaged, North Wales was invaded, and, having seized some booty, 'the army' returned in part to East Anglia, the remaining portion pressing on through Northumbria. We also find other Danish bands attacking different parts of Wessex. Chichester was despoiled, and a fleet of ships sailed up the sluggish Lea to a place some twenty miles above London, where a fortress was built. This fortified camp was immediately invested by Alfred, for it was harvest-time and the King had no mind to see the wheat crops around London burnt, destroyed, or used as they had been round Chester. Further, the quick mind of the King perceived that the Lea could be obstructed so that the Danish ships would be trapped. The plan worked admirably: the Danes left their vessels to be destroyed at leisure and struck off across country, this time to Quatbridge, near Bridgnorth, followed by Alfred's forces.

This constant and successful harrying of the Danes bore fruit in the year following (897). We now read that "In the summer of this year the army broke up, some for East Anglia, some for Northumbria; and they who were moneyless procured themselves ships there, and went southward over sea to the Seine." A few more plundering expeditions were made, chiefly against the south coast, but for the time being the Danish peril was at an end, and when England had recovered from the plague which visited her that year she could look forward to a few years of prosperous peace.

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[1] The best modern opinion seems to favour Chester, but some of the chroniclers mention Leicester. The *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle* gives Wirall or Wyrhale as its British name. The Welsh chronicles when they speak of Chester usually use the word Caerlegion.

LAST DAYS

In the last few years of Alfred's life we find him returning once more to the arts of peace, devoting himself, as Roger of Wendover tells us, "wholly to the restoration of the churches, to almsgiving, and to the framing of laws for curbing the rapacious and confirming the faithful in their duty." It is probable that to this later period belongs at least one of his translations. As to his many inventions, they stretch from his famous candle-lantern to a new type of ship, of which many examples were built in these later years. This peaceful time did not, however, last long. On October 26, 899,[1] he died, and was buried in New Minster (afterward Hyde Abbey), at Winchester, leaving behind him his widow, Ealhswith, and five children—Edward, named the Elder; Ethelward; Ethelfled, the Lady of Mercia; Elfthryth, who married Baldwin II of Flanders, son of Judith and the Forester; and Ethelgifu, a maiden dedicated to the Church who became Abbess of Shaftesbury.

Alfred died mourned by his subjects throughout the land, for he was 'England's Darling.' His dominions on his death embraced nearly all of Saxon England, though not much besides; but if his territory did not extend as far as that of his son or grandson, his title to greatness is more firmly established than that of any man in pre-Norman England. He ascended the tottering throne of an ignorant state; he passed to the shades the established King of the fairest half of England, having won fame as a warrior, a statesman, a lawgiver, a patron of the arts, a supporter of the Church, and a benefactor of the poor. In his day Wessex was territorially a small state, it was also a struggling one, and Alfred's claim to our respect is based, not on the greatness of his power or the political importance of his kingdom, but rather on the beauty of his character, for every day was lived for the benefit of his people and every hour was treasured for the good work which could be done therein. Round his name in later centuries many a story gathered, such as that told us by William of Malmesbury of his journey to the Danish camp disguised as a harper, and that other legend of the loaf which he gave to the poor man who afterward proved to be St Cuthbert, a legend preserved to us in the pages of the *Chronicle of Brompton*. Though we cannot attach much importance to such stories, we may note one thing about them—they show us the King as a very human, kindly, brave, and resourceful man. Happy the ruler who leaves behind him such a memory. Of Alfred this is all we have, for his very bones were scattered to the winds by those eighteenth-century Hampshire vandals who purchased the site of Hyde Abbey for the purpose of building the county jail. Thus on his last resting-place, by a curious symbolism, we find erected the last sanction of English law.

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[1] See note, p. 209. Roger of Wendover gives Wednesday, October 28, 900, as the day. Wednesday was the 28th of October in 901, the generally accepted date of Alfred's death.

CHAPTER XII

THE TENTH CENTURY

FIRST PHASE: WAR AND EXPANSION

c. 899[1]–959

On the death of Alfred the main interest centres at once upon his son and successor Edward, called the Elder, and his warlike daughter Ethelfled, wife of Ethelred, lord of the Mercians, better known, perhaps, under her popular title of the Lady of Mercia. Throughout the remainder of their lives we shall find this brother and sister battling frequently and successfully against the Danes, gaining at last their main objective, the Danish Five Boroughs; and, Ethelfled having died, we shall see how Edward still pressed on and extended his influence far beyond the Humber even to Scotland.

Before, however, either Edward or his sister could devote their whole attention to the conquest of the Danelaw it was necessary for the new King to establish his right to the throne. It will be remembered that Alfred was Ethelwulf's youngest son, and it is known that at least one male descendant of the elder brothers still lived and was of mature age when Alfred died. This West Saxon atheling, Ethelwald by name, might in later years, when the principle of primogeniture had been fully established, have asserted rightly and successfully his claim to the throne. According, however, to Anglo-Saxon custom birth was but one of the qualifications for kingship.

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[1] About the time of Alfred's death a new chronicler appears as continuator of the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle*. Owing to a gross piece of carelessness on his part the dates for the next few years are even more doubtful than usual. The *Chronicle* is now probably two to three years in advance of the true date.

Before an atheling was raised to be king he had to be chosen by the Witan, and probably by the people at the husting. Alfred's fame and glory clearly gave his son the people's favour, and it is no matter for surprise that we find him elected to the highest office in the State. On the other hand, bearing in mind Ethelwald's superior right by birth, we cannot be surprised at, though we may condemn, his efforts to snatch the sceptre from his rival's hand.

Ethelwald's first step toward revolt was taken when he seized the castle at Wimborne, which he swore to hold or die—an oath that, however, he speedily broke, for on the approach of the King he stole away by night and joined forces with the men of Northumbria, leaving behind him his mistress, whom he seems to have taken by force, and who had been a nun. We do not propose to enlarge upon this sorry story of civil strife; of Ethelwald's alliance with the Danes; of his flight overseas; of his subsequent return and death. Suffice it to say that for nearly five years the pretender was a source of danger to West Saxon unity, and at the time of his death, about 903, he was threatening Mercian prosperity as gravely as any Danish viking had ever done. His end came on the field of battle when fighting by the side of his East Anglian allies against the men of Kent.

This cause of internal dissension having thus been removed, Edward, ably seconded by Ethelfled, steadily strengthened his kingdom and prepared for the subjugation of the Five Boroughs, that Danish district which in earlier years had been a part of Mercia and had on occasion rendered tribute to Northumbria.

Reading the pages of the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle*, one is immediately struck with the nature of the Saxon plan of campaign. As in Alfred's wars, we rarely hear of sudden raids, of battles fought by 'army' and militia; almost always the entry speaks of forts and sieges. The old pitched battle was still, of course, fought on occasion, notably in (*c.*) 906, when the Angles gained a victory over the Danes at Tettenhall, and in the year following, when Edward beat back some pirate bands who had sailed up the Severn spreading death and destruction as they went. We also find the West Saxons and Mercians gaining a great victory over the Northumbrian Danes in 908, in a battle in which were slain four Danish leaders, the kings Ecwils and Halfdene, and the earls Ohter and Scurf.

ETHELFLED

Notwithstanding these occasional fights, the keynote of the Saxon and Angle attack upon the Danelaw was sounded by Ethelfled when in (*c.*) 906 she built the fortress at Bromesberrow in Herefordshire. Three years later we find Edward seizing London and Oxford and the Lady of the Mercians renewing her fortress-building at Scergeat (Shrewsbury) and Bridgnorth. Next year Hertford was fortified by Edward, Maldon occupied, and a motte built at Witham. Ethelfled, on her part, linked up her chain of strongholds by forts at Tamworth and Stafford. Continuing her defensive works in the two years following, she built forts at Eddisbury, in the forest of Delamere, at Warwick, at Chirk, in North Wales, at Warburton, and at Runcorn.

Thus protected, this Amazon soon abandoned a simple defensive policy for the attack. Wales was invaded, the royal residence of the Prince of Brycheiniog stormed and his Queen captured. Next year Ethelfled was back again fighting with the Danes, and, in the words of the chronicler, " Before Lammas, God helping her, [she] got possession of the fortress which is called Derby, with all that owed obedience thereto." Already one of the Five Boroughs had thus fallen to the Saxon attack ; but the victory was not gained without loss, for within Derby's gates four of Ethelfled's well-beloved thegns fell under blows from Danish axes.

It was in this same year that ' the army,' riding forth from Northampton and Leicester, fell upon the Saxons at Hockerton and slew many men and took much booty—plunder which, however, was recaptured in the same year, when the men of Leighton drove back the Danes once more to their strongholds. One of these fortresses, Leicester, was next attacked by the Mercians, still under the leadership of Ethelfled, and surrendered, apparently in consequence of a condition in a treaty which was now concluded between Mercians and Danes, whereby, besides the surrender of Leicester, " the greater part of the army which owed obedience thereto became subject to [Mercia]." York next followed Leicester's example, and it almost seemed that the energetic Lady of Mercia was outstripping her royal brother in the race for power.

Danish Raids in the West

It was at about the time when Leicester and York submitted that a new danger appeared on the horizon. We read that " In this year a great fleet came over hither from the south." The new-comers, under the leadership of Ohter and Rhoald, pushed rapidly up the Severn, " spoiling the North Welsh everywhere " and capturing a valuable prisoner in the person of Cyfeiliog, Bishop of Llandaff, who was eventually redeemed from captivity by Edward. The progress of these pirates was eventually stopped by the men of Hereford and Gloucester and the surrounding towns, who, sallying forth, put the robbers to flight, killing Rhoald and the brother of Ohter. The scattered forces of the Danes were eventually surrounded and hostages demanded guaranteeing their peaceful departure from the realm. Some escaped to die of hunger on the inhospitable island of Flatholme; the rest made their way to Ireland by way of Dyfed, or South Wales. Thus, having rid his western borders of the enemy, Edward was free to turn his attention to more fortress-building, so that about Martinmas we find him erecting forts on both sides of the river near Buckingham, and before the year had ended receiving the submission of the earl Thurkytel and the chieftains to whom the Danes of Bedford and Northampton owed obedience. Within two years this same Earl Thurkytel, together with his followers, sailed for France, " with the peace and aid of King Edward."

Edward's Defensive Policy

In the meantime Bedford had been captured and occupied and the town of Maldon rebuilt and fortified. Soon after

Thurkytel's departure we read also of Edward's taking possession of Towcester and strengthening its defences; Wigmore burh was also built. The value of this well-developed defensive policy was clearly shown in the subsequent events of 918 (*A.-S. C.* 921). Some time between midsummer and Lammas we find 'the army' from Northampton and Leicester and the north breaking the peace and marching against Towcester. In the old days it is probable that the town would have fallen at the first onslaught and have been given over to rapine, but now, thanks to Edward's defences, the townsmen were able to hold their enemies at bay until the attackers, fearing the arrival of the West Saxon army, abandoned the reduction of the town—to vent their wrath upon the country-side between Burnham Wood and Aylesbury, whence they took many men as captives and much cattle. The next move on the part of the Danes was directed against the burh at Wigmore, but although the fight raged furiously for some time the Saxon defence works were too strong for the enemy; they abandoned their attempts against the town, after seizing all the cattle thereabout.

Edward Attacks

Meanwhile Edward had not been idle; he had gathered a considerable army and directed it against Tempsford, now the military headquarters, in place of Huntingdon, of the Danes of East Anglia. The town was eventually taken by storm and all the inhabitants, including one Danish king and two jarls, slain or taken captive. Next Colchester was attacked by the men of Kent, Surrey, and Essex, and all the inhabitants put to the sword "except the men who fled away over the wall." The East Anglians shortly afterward attempted to avenge their losses, and, joining forces with some pirates, they beset the newly built town of Maldon. Again Edward's defensive work held the attackers at bay, until, on the approach of a relieving force from the towns round about, the siege was raised. This time, however, the Danes were not suffered to retire in peace, for the townsmen, joining forces with the relieving army, followed their retreating foes, brought them to bay, fought and defeated them and their pirate allies, and slew many hundreds of them.

Events now move quickly. We find Edward and his army at Passoham, while Towcester is being surrounded by a wall of stone. Next Earl Thurferth and the army of Northampton accept the West Saxon King as their lord and protector. Almost immediately afterward Huntingdon is occupied, and rebuilt at the command of the King. The inhabitants of the surrounding country, both East Anglians and East Saxons, are found leaving the protection of the Danes and seeking the peace of the Saxons. Later in the year the men of Cambridge take oaths to hold Edward as their lord. Some time later, in the first half of the year following, Stamford Town was built at Edward's command and the surrounding country reduced to submission. Soon afterward all the people who had been subject to Ethelfled accepted the King for their lord, for Ethelfled had died at Tamworth twelve days before the midsummer of this year. By the death of his sister Edward had lost a good friend and an able ally; he had gained the lordship of Mercia, part of the Danish Five Boroughs, and an indefinite overlordship of Wales, now ruled by Howel, named Dha, or 'the Good,' Clydog, and Idwal the Bald. Nottingham was later occupied and repaired, and so far had the subjugation of the Five Boroughs proceeded that in the year following Edward pressed on into Northumbria and took possession of Manchester, which in his customary manner he proceeded to repair and garrison. Next we find him raising a burh or fortified town at Bakewell, in Derbyshire, and it would seem that he had determined to extend his power over all Northumbria, if not beyond.

Submission of the King of Scots

An entry now appears in the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle* which in later years, in the reign of Edward I, was made the basis of the claim to English supremacy over Scotland—an entry which has been accepted by some modern historians, notably

Freeman and Plummer, but which has been combated by others and discussed by not a few.[1] This entry, which appears under date 924, is as follows: "And then chose him for father and for lord, the King of Scots and the whole nation of the Scots." It is certain that at this time Edward was as powerful, perhaps more powerful, than any Anglo-Saxon king who had previously ruled in England. On the other hand, there is no reason to believe that the Scottish submission, if made, was of a permanent nature. As we have seen, the Welsh also had submitted. They, however, had felt the edge of the Saxon sword in these late years not once but many times; and although under Athelstan and some later Saxon kings the Welsh seem to have recognized a certain overlordship in the King of England, such overlordship was extremely vague and uncertain, and passed like a puff of smoke whenever England was particularly weak or Wales particularly strong. The supremacy cannot have been more definite in the case of Scotland, and, indeed, Edward's successors seem quickly to have abandoned the claim, until it was revived once more in the thirteenth century.

It was in 925,[2] when Edward was at the zenith of his power, when he had at his feet the men of Scotland, of Northumbria (both English and Danish), of Strathclyde, of Wales, of Mercia, and of most of the Five Boroughs, East Anglia and Danish Essex, that he died at Farndon, in Mercia. A few days later he was followed to the grave by his son Alfward (Aelfweard). Both were buried at Winchester.

Edward, though lacking many of the graces of character possessed by his father Alfred, was, without doubt, one of the ablest of the West Saxon kings. Sound as a soldier, far-seeing as a statesman, and wise as a lawgiver, he is entitled to our respect. Supported by his sister, he continued the work commenced by Alfred. That work was undertaken directly to beat back the Danish invasion, indirectly to check the anarchy which was threatening the English State. We have seen how, right from the commencement of the Anglo-Saxon period, England was divided into many kingdoms. Occasionally a king arose, more powerful than his neighbours, who earned the title of Bretwalda, but that title was an uncertain one. Too often its incidence depended on the issue of a single battle. In a word, the condition of the English kingship and of the English kingdoms was unstable. One year Northumbria would be in the forefront, then East Anglia, then Mercia, then Wessex. Sometimes Kent would belong to Mercia, sometimes to Wessex. Matters were in this state when the Danes came. They, taking full advantage of Northumbrian anarchy and Mercian weakness, seized for themselves the north-eastern half of England, and would have held the whole had it not been for the genius of the house of Ethelwulf. Alfred, as we have seen, had driven them back, but something more was wanted before England could become anything but a group or congeries of petty kingdoms—could, in fact, advance to the position of a united State. Unity was imperative, and it is Edward's highest honour that he took the steps which rendered unity and a centralized government possible. Edward's laws show a desire to advance the dignity of the king, improve, and to some degree centralize, the system of government and the administration of justice, check theft, and increase trade. His military plans were all directed toward strengthening his kingdom against attack, while at the same time leaving his army free to operate against enemy territory. This object he accomplished, as we have seen, by extensive fortress-building, by training the townsmen to protect their own town, and by so organizing the national militia that it could be raised readily against any point where danger threatened or where a success was likely to be gained. In all these military enterprises he was ably seconded (if, indeed, such term be apposite) by Ethelfled. Though trade was probably improved during this more settled time, the frequent fortress-building must have emptied the royal purse to some extent, so that it is not matter for surprise that we find this King more sparing of grants to religious foundations than either his father or his successor.

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[1] See Hodgkin, *Political History of England*, vol. i, pp. 324 *et seq.*, for an analysis of the arguments and objections.

[2] Possibly he died late in 924.

ATHELSTAN (925–940)

Edward, on his death, was succeeded by his son Athelstan, Alfred's favourite grandson, who, while yet a fair-haired child, had been girded by that King with a belt studded with gems, carrying a sword set in a golden scabbard. Athelstan's reign proved the gift to be a suitable one, for the King was destined to fight many a battle against the Scots, the Irish, the Welsh, and the Danes, the story of one of which, the battle of Brunanburh, has, thanks to a poet's genius, come down to us with all the details of the struggle. We may, perhaps, dismiss the later stories of his illegitimacy as absolutely without foundation, though Roger of Wendover tells a very circumstantial story of how a maiden had a dream which suggested that her child should reign over England; how, on telling this "to a certain matron who had nursed the King's sons," she was adopted by her and daintily clad and well educated; how King Edward, passing near the matron's house, called upon his old nurse, saw the maiden, fell in love with her, and had her as his mistress; how Athelstan was born, and later, on the death of Alfward, succeeded Edward in the kingdom, despite the fact that a legitimate child, Edwin, was living. The old chroniclers who accept this version of the King's birth tell us that, jealous of the younger Edwin and fearful that he might lay claim to the throne, he caused the young prince to be put, with an attendant, into an old, worn-out boat, which was then taken far out to sea, with the result that the youth, weary of life, plunged into the waves and was drowned, his body being rescued and brought back to land by the attendant, who succeeded in reaching safety "by dint of rowing with his hands and feet." Athelstan, we are told, struck with horror at the crime, underwent a seven years' penance and put to death his butler, who had persuaded him to commit the deed. If there be any truth whatever in the story, it is probably to be found in the statement that Edwin was drowned at sea.

ATTACK UPON NORTHUMBRIA

As soon as he had been duly elected King and crowned at the royal town of Kingston, Athelstan took steps to preserve the overlordship of Northumbria. Sihtric, a Dane, was then King of the Northumbrians, and the two leaders met at Tamworth early in 925. There an alliance was made, a sister of Athelstan, Eathgitha, being given to the Dane in marriage. The union does not appear to have been a fortunate one. Sihtric abandoned Christianity, which he had embraced "for love of the damsel," and returned to paganism, renouncing his wife, who thereupon sought consolation in religion. This treatment of Eathgitha brought Athelstan out against the Dane, but before any battle was fought Sihtric died, and Athelstan laid claim to Northumbria, at the same time expelling Guthfred, Sihtric's son, from the kingdom, driving him over the seas to Dublin.

WELSH AFFAIRS

In the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle* we read that, after Northumbria had been obtained, the King, in 926, marched against the Welsh. He then subjugated all the kings who were in this island, including Howel of the West Welsh and Owain of Gwent. The West Welsh were, of course, the men of Cornwall. The chronicler may, however, have been wrong in referring to them. It may be that the Howel mentioned was Howel Dha, one of the most famous of Welsh princes. It is clear that in 927 the leading Welsh chieftains were summoned to Hereford, and a tribute was imposed upon them of gold, silver, cattle, dogs, and hawks. Hence onward we frequently find Howel's signature appended to Saxon grants. Other Welsh names also appear, such as Idwal Voel, Morgan ap Owain, and Tewdwr ap Elisedd (Tudor of Brecon). It is possible, however, that the intercommunication between the English and Welsh Courts was the result of friendship rather than of pressure, for Howel is known to have been a warm admirer of Alfred and his descendants.

ATHELSTAN AND CONSTANTINE

But if relations with Wales were friendly, those with Scotland were marked with bitter enmity. The *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle* is about this time extremely scanty, so that we must rely upon the later chroniclers and the sagas for our knowledge of the quarrel between Constantine of Scotland and Athelstan of England and the entry of Olaf o' the Sandal, the Anlaf of the chronicles into the struggle, to be defeated and driven over to Ireland, mourning the loss of five Danish kings and five Danish earls, after Athelstan's decisive victory at Brunanburh.

In 927 Hugo, son of Robert, first Duke of Normandy, had married a sister of Athelstan,[1] and in the wars which followed it is probable that Robert rendered some aid to the English King. Constantine of Scotland, on his part, called in the Irish to aid him, and was also supported by the Danes of Northumbria. It was in 933 that the truce between England and Scotland was finally broken, and Athelstan proceeded with a large force of cavalry against the enemy, at the same time sending a strong fleet to prevent reinforcements reaching the Scottish King from Ireland. These concerted measures seem to have been successful, and Constantine was compelled to surrender his son as hostage to secure the peace which was now resumed.

It was not, indeed, until four years later that war again broke out. Some time before, Olaf, or Anlaf, son of that Sihtric who had married and repudiated Athelstan's sister, had entered into a treaty with Constantine, with whose daughter he contracted an alliance. Their joint preparations for the defeat of the English were perfected by 937, and, according to *Egil Skalligrimsson's Saga*, we find the Scottish King and Olaf, leading his Irish Danes and the Strathclyde Britons,[2] sailing up the Humber with a great fleet, prepared to contest with Athelstan for supremacy.

[1] Another sister, according to one of the manuscripts of the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle*, had married in 924 Otto, destined to be Emperor. Roger of Wendover tells us that Otto married Elgiva in 938.

[2] The saga speaks of the Welsh, but it is probable that the Britons of Strathclyde rather than the men of Wales are meant.

THE BATTLE OF BRUNANBURH

At first the English of Northumbria, caught unprepared, were badly worsted. One of Athelstan's earls was defeated and much booty seized. But during these early raids the English King was hastily gathering his forces, to which some Norse supports were added, and at last, after some abortive negotiations undertaken by Athelstan in order to gain time, the two opposing forces met at the hill called Burnswark and the battle known to history as Brunanburh was fought—a battle famous for the fact that it established Athelstan as the predominant king in England, and of even more renown as the theme of a great battle-song.

If we are to believe William of Malmesbury, we must credit Olaf with adopting the ruse already attributed by legend to King Alfred, for we are informed that on the night before the battle Olaf, disguised as a harper, penetrated into the English camp, and, having sung to the King, his enemy, learned of the English plans and strength and then made good his escape. He had, however, been observed by a former follower, who, although he hesitated to hand over to death one to whom he had once sworn allegiance, hastened on his departure to inform the King, so that by a change of place and plan the knowledge gained should be useless to the spy.

The battle,[1] which was fought on the next day, raged with great fury. Both armies were about equal in size, and Athelstan had with him two noted leaders of the Norse, Thorolf and his brother Egil, who had already done many redoubtable deeds against the Danes. Thorolf now led the army opposed to the Scots, while Athelstan and his earls, with Egil, led the vanguard of the English against the Danes. Thorolf, fighting bravely, early fell a victim to an ambuscade, whereupon Egil, seeing his brother fall, left the King's side and, fighting his way to the fallen hero's side, took his place as leader of his countrymen, cut through the Scottish ranks, and fell upon the Danes in the rear. Olaf's men, already hard pressed by Athelstan, thus taken unawares, broke and fled, pursued by the victorious English, who wrought great slaughter among their broken ranks.

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[1] There is an interesting account of the battle compiled from Egil's saga in Eleanor Hull's *Northmen in Britain*.

After the battle was over, Egil, grieved at the death of his brother, sat gloomily in the King's tent, careless of the noise of feasting and revelry around him, whereupon Athelstan, mindful of his great services rendered that day, "drew his sword from the sheath, and took from his arm a ring of gold, noble and good." This golden bracelet[1] he passed to the sorrowing warrior in token of his esteem, adding to it later a gift of two chests of silver, to be taken to his father in Iceland in recompense for the slain Thorolf.

ATHELSTAN SUPREME

The victory at Brunanburh established Athelstan in the position of the most powerful king in England. His sisters had allied him to two rising houses on the Continent, and for the remaining three years of his reign the State was undisturbed; monasteries were founded, and the laws were now probably promulgated which have so advanced the fame of Athelstan's name. He died at Gloucester, on the 27th of October, 940, in the sixteenth year of his reign, and was buried by his successor, Edmund, at Malmesbury.

He has left behind him a reputation as a man, a soldier, and a lawgiver. Kind to the lowly, dignified among nobles, respectful to the learned, he had a gracious and free manner, brightened by humour. By force of arms he had imposed his lordship over the King of the Scots and the kings of the

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[1] The *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle* breaks into verse in describing the battle of Brunanburh. Compare the lines:

> "Here Athelstan king,
> Of earls the lord,
> Of heroes the bracelet-giver,"

with Egil's song sung after the gift of the armlet:

> "Mailed Monarch, lord of battles,
> The shining circlet passeth,
> His own right arm forsaking,
> To hawk-hung wrist of mine."

Welsh, most, if not all, of whom are found subscribing his charters. As an enemy he was dangerous in battle and merciful in victory, and his character is probably truthfully represented by the words which his admirer, William of Malmesbury, puts into his mouth: "It were more glorious to make than to be a king."

Athelstan had, indeed, not only created an outstanding position for himself in England, but his reputation in Western Europe was well established. If Mr Stevenson [1] be right in ascribing the extraordinarily corrupt Latin verses which have been printed by Mr C. H. Turner from a Durham manuscript of the Vulgate Gospels to "some oversea poet, probably a resident in Frankland," it would seem that even abroad it was found desirable to find favour with the victor of Brunanburh,[2] the generous donor of gifts "to all the monasteries of Germany," [3] and the harbourer and protector of the monks of St Bertin.

EDMUND, EDRED, AND EDWY

The three kings who followed Athelstan are all somewhat vague figures in history. Edred and Edwy lacked the genius or personal qualities of either Alfred, Edward, or Athelstan, and their reigns fall into the background and are unmarked by any incidents of great note. Edmund, on the other hand, though giving signs of marked ability both as a soldier and a statesman, was, unfortunately, murdered so soon after his accession that he was unable to leave that reputation for greatness which otherwise his qualities might have won for him.

On the death of the victor of Brunanburh all the forces which had been held down by the fear of Athelstan reasserted themselves. The Five Boroughs joined hands with the Danes of Northumbria, now led once again by

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[1] *English Historical Review*, 1911, p. 486.

[2] Mr Stevenson suggests that the poem was written before Brunanburh had been fought, but this is not absolutely established.

[3] Cenwald, Bishop of Worcester, was the bearer of these presents in 928.

Olaf. As to Scotland, it is uncertain whether she was ranged against the English or not, but later we find Malcolm of Scotland concluding a peace with Edmund in return for the grant of all Cumbria, lately ravaged by the English. Of the struggle between Edmund and Olaf the accounts given in the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle* are scanty. It would seem that at first the Danes were victorious and inflicted a severe defeat upon the English at Tamworth, but later Edmund gained the upper hand, the Five Boroughs were once more reduced to submission, and an Olaf, leader of the Danes of Northumbria in succession to Olaf Sihtricsson, was persuaded to forsake paganism for Christianity. Some time later, when Northumbria was regained, the converted Olaf and his brother were expelled from the kingdom.

It was at this time, when the upheavals of the first few years of his reign were subsiding, that Edmund met his death. The story is well told by Roger of Wendover, whose words we reproduce. Speaking of the year 946, he says : " In the same year, Edmund, the most pious King of the English, on the feast of St Augustine, invited all the nobles of his kingdom to a great banquet in the royal town of Michelebury [Pucklechurch, in Gloucestershire], as was the custom with the English every year, in veneration of the blessed Augustine, through whom the English had received the light of faith. When all were assembled and seated at the King's table, they began to feast and make merry, the King himself setting them the example. At length the King stood up to see his guests, and, beholding a certain robber named Leof [Leofa], whom he had some years before banished for his crimes, standing among the rest in the hall, the King, greatly indignant thereat, ordered his butler to put out that robber straightway from the palace ; but, the wicked wretch refusing to go out for the butler, the King, enraged beyond measure, leaped suddenly from the table and, seizing him by the hair, threw him to the ground. Hurt by the fall, and feeling the King lying on him, the traitor quickly drew a knife which he wore concealed about him, and, lamentable to relate, cut the King's throat. Seeing their lord dead and weltering in blood, all the King's officers and servants rushed on the robber and cut him into a thousand pieces."

Thus died Edmund, the brother of Athelstan, struck down by an outlaw's knife in a brawl at his own dinner-table.

His successor, Edred, another of Edward's sons, reigned for some nine years, from 946 to 955. During the whole of that time he was the victim of disease, and although he led a successful campaign against Northumbria, and probably received once more the submission of the Scottish King, there are but few entries in the *Chronicle* of any importance throughout the period. Even Northumbria was by no means completely subdued, for in 949 we read of yet another Olaf (Anlaf), 'Cuaran,' becoming leader of the Danes of that province; three years later Olaf was expelled in favour of Eric Haroldsson, who had been in active opposition to Edred in 948. Once more, in 954, Eric and Edred seem to have been at feud, and again Edred was victorious, Eric being again driven into exile. In the year following the English King died on St Clement's Mass-day at Frome, and was buried at Winchester, and Edwy, King Edmund's son, reigned in his stead.

The years of Edred's reign are noticeable in the *Cartularium Saxonicum* for a very considerable number of grants to the Church. His will, which is preserved to us in three languages, was distinguished by the same generosity, and in the English form [913] we find him granting "for relesyng of the paynys of his sowle, and for his deth rewardynge, to the pwre peple, syxtene hundred punde, on that intente that they may suffyr none hungyr." When we read on and find gift after gift of hundreds of pounds, including one "to my chef servant . . . twenty hundred handfullys of goold," we see that England, or at least her King, was at this time wealthy.

The succeeding King, Edwy (or Eadwig), was even more open-handed. In his short reign so many grants were made that those preserved to us (with a few grants made by other persons) fill pages 83–239 of the third volume of Mr Birch's splendid collection of charters. Yet, notwithstanding the generosity and piety of these two kings, on the death of Edred the Queen-mother, Edgifu, was deprived of her position and all her property, and toward the end of Edred's reign Archbishop Wulfstan was imprisoned. For this act, which seems to have shocked the cleric chroniclers, there was probably a good reason. Four years before (948), the Archbishop, together with the Witan of Northumbria, had gone over to the Danish side, and William of Malmesbury tells us that Wulfstan had often been mentioned to the King as one who meditated rebellion. In general, however, both Edred and Edwy were obedient to the Church, and had the latter King not become embroiled in a dispute with Dunstan, now rising to power, over his marriage with Elfgifu, it is probable that the numerous grants made by him would have shown a greater leaning toward the Church. As it is, it is permissible to say that these grants were the bribes made by a weak King to purchase support, rather than the gifts of a wealthy and powerful sovereign to reward his servants and to benefit and glorify the Church.[1]

We have given a list of the royal grants for 955 and 956, since they throw considerable light upon a comparatively little-known paragraph in English history. The story is well known how the youthful Edwy, ‘the Handsome,’ left the coronation banquet for the charms of Elfgifu, whom he wished to marry, and how the thegns and priests, incensed at what they regarded as an insult, chose Abbot Dunstan and the Bishop of Lichfield to fetch him back to perform his duties as host; how the good clerics found him seated between his lady, Elfgifu, and her mother, Ethelgifu, his crown no longer worn but tossed carelessly on to the ground. The dispute which followed and Dunstan's attitude toward the King, marked with the disapprobation of a schoolmaster for an errant boy rather than the respect of an abbot for his king, can hardly have made Edwy his admiring friend. Edwy was, however, too young, perhaps his election was too uncertain, to enable him to strike. The angry nobles had to be propitiated; perhaps his grandmother, Edgifu, had to be combated. However that may be, throughout the year 956 we find grant after grant of land being made to ‘thegns,’ to ‘princes,’ to ‘dukes,’ to the King's men, to the King's friends, to the King's relatives. Apparently by 957,[1] possibly after Edgifu had been deprived of her position and her property, the King was strong enough to attack the man who had humbled him before his lady. In that year we read in the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle* that “Abbot Dunstan was driven over sea.” The struggle was not, however, as yet over. Dunstan had fought many a battle in his time, from the early days when he had been trampled in the mud by his schoolfellows to the years when he fought abuses in the monasteries, and it is evident that about this time a civil war broke out.

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[1] The following is a list of Edwy's grants for the first two years of his reign: [917] to Wilton Abbey; [919] to Abingdon Abbey; [920] (conf. of grant) to Glastonbury Abbey; [921] to Malmesbury Abbey; [924] to Abingdon Abbey; [925] d. 956, to Uulfric the thegn; [926] to Prince Wulfric; [927] to Wulfgar, Abbot of Bath; [930] to Brithelm, Bishop of Chichester; [932] to Aelfric the thegn; [933] to Elswi, Abbot of Glastonbury; [935] to Aelfwine; [936] to Church of St Peter at Bath; [937] to monastery at Worcester; [938] to Aelfric the thegn; [940] to Aelfwine the thegn; [941] to Aelric the thegn; [942] to Aelfsige; [943] to the thegn Aelfsige; [944] to Aethelgeard; [945] to Aelfhere; [946] to the Earl Aelfhere; [948] to the thegn Aelfheah, his relative; [949] to his relative Aelric; [951] to his man Maeglsothen; [952 and 953] to the noble lady Aethelhild; [954] to the thegn Aethelnoth; [955] to Eadric; [956] to his vassal Wiferth; [957] to Aelfswyda; [958] to the thegn Aelfred; [959] to the thegn Aethelwold; [960] to the thegn Aelfwold; [961] to Eadmund dux; [962] to the thegn Wulfric; [963] to the thegn Eadric; [964] to the thegn Byrhtnoth; [965] to the thegn Brihtric; [966] to Prince Beorhtnoth; [967] to St Mary's Abbey; [968] to his huntsman Wulfric; [969] to Athelwold; [970] to a religious foundation at Shaftesbury; [971] to the priest Byrhtelm; [973] to Hehelm; [974] to the thegn Byrnric; [975] to the thegn Bryhtric; [976] to the Prince Aethelgeard; [977] to the thegn Aethelnod; [978] to the thegn Eadwig; [979] to the thegn Aethelsige; [981] to Abingdon Abbey; [982] to the thegn Eadric; [983] to the thegn Wynsicge; [984] to his man Eadric; [986] to his relative Byrhtelm.

The first signs are probably seen in the notice in the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle* under date 957 that “This year Edgar the Atheling succeeded to the kingdom of the Mercians,” confirmed by a charter which has been preserved to us [1040]. About the same time we hear of Edwy being driven across the Thames, and Ordericus Vitalis is able to speak with certainty of rebellion. Next year, 958, Edwy, who had married Elfgifu some time before,[1] was forcibly divorced from his consort by Odo of Canterbury on the ground that they were too near akin. That Edwy's infidelity was an added reason we gravely doubt, for he seems to have erred throughout rather in consequence of his excessive affection for his consort than the converse. However that may be, in the next year [2] the young King, having lost his wife, one-half of his kingdom, the support of the Church, and the real fidelity of his nobles, died on the calends of October, and was buried in the New Minster at Winchester.

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[1] 956 is favoured by Plummer.

[1] The date is a little uncertain. Both 956 and 957 have been suggested. Charter No. 972, if correctly assigned to 956, is, of course, conclusive, since it is subscribed by Elfgifu, the King's wife, and Ethelgifu, the King's wife's mother, but it is an undated exchange of lands given by Edwy in that year and may possibly be of later date.

[2] Date uncertain. Plummer favours 959, and we have a grant of his dated May 17, 959 [1046], but it is suspect.

CHAPTER XIII

THE TENTH CENTURY

SECOND PHASE: PEACE AND DECLINE

959–1016

THE later chroniclers, gazing back over the terrible years when the Northmen were ravaging the whole of England and were preparing the way for Cnut's accession to the English throne, looked back upon the reign of Edgar the Peaceful, *deliciae Anglorum*, as to a Golden Age. It was, indeed, an age noticeable for new movements in the Church rather than for glorious deeds on the battlefield.

Edgar, chosen King by the northern insurgents in 957, from that date probably ruled over the major part of England north of the Thames. In the year following he is found styling himself "King of the Angles and ruler of the rest of the peoples dwelling around." We have already seen that he was King of Mercia, and about the same time he is called "King of the Mercians, Northumbrians, and Britons." When we remember that he was but fifteen years of age at the time of his accession to the throne of Wessex, on the death of his brother Edwy, it is clear that he was, as Dr William Hunt has said, "little more than a puppet in the hands of the northern party." Throughout his reign we find him apparently the docile instrument of such men as Dunstan, Bishop Ethelwold, and the 'half-king' Aethelstan, Ealdorman of East Anglia, and it is probable that he was in fact a weak and pleasure-loving prince who, though he may be acquitted of some of the sins of which he has been accused, must also be relieved of the honorific names which the later chroniclers were fond of showering upon him.

This being the state of the case, we shall perhaps get a better view of these years by looking at the life of Dunstan, his famous archbishop, than by searching for scattered fragments of information about the King himself.

DUNSTAN

This saint was born in 924 or 925, and gained his early education at Glastonbury. He was of high birth and most noble connexions, numbering among his relatives Ethelfled of Mercia, besides one archbishop and two bishops. In his youth he was frequently at the Court of Athelstan, whose favour he gained. He was, however, a highly strung and nervous lad, whose capacity for seeing visions and dreaming of terrible happenings was probably distasteful to his associates, who accused him of black arts and obtained his banishment from the Court. After this forced retirement he lived with his kinsman the Bishop of Winchester, whose exhortations, coupled with a severe illness, at last persuaded him to become a monk. For some years he lived the usual life of an anchorite. Much time was spent in craftsmanship ; many a mental fight was fought out with the Tempter, who apparently caused all the old hermits a great deal of unnecessary anxiety. We leave him wrestling with fiends and pass on to the time when he was called once more to Court, this time by Edmund. Again jealous tongues whispered in the King's ears unpleasing stories of the new favourite, and once more Dunstan was forced to depart. Now, however, a miracle happened which finally gained him the royal favour and placed him on the chair of the Abbot of Glastonbury. Edmund, while hunting the stag on the Mendip Hills, was carried by his horse to the very edge of a precipice. Fearing instant death, he attempted to recall any evil he had done, so that he might pray for forgiveness. His banishment of Dunstan flashed into his mind, and thereupon he vowed, if spared, to recompense the saint, for such he was convinced he must be. Spared he was, for the horse, suddenly checking its career, stopped on the very edge of the chasm. The King, true to his vow, lost little time in raising Dunstan to the vacant abbacy—at the extraordinarily early age of twenty-one.

From now onward much of the Saint's energy was devoted to the purification of the monasteries, a reform to which we shall advert later. For the present we confine ourselves to his work as statesman. With the accession of Edred he seems to have occupied a high position in the councils of the King, and, indeed, during that prince's reign Edgifu, the Queen-mother, and Dunstan held the reins of government, and it was probably at Dunstan's suggestion that Ethelwold was created Abbot of Abingdon and that Wulfstan, the rebel Archbishop of York, was cast into prison.

On the death of the Lady Aethelflaed, whose heir he was, Dunstan became a man of great wealth, and everything seemed to mark him out for a speedy advancement to the highest position in the realm, when the death of Edred, the accession of Edwy, and the disgrace of Edgifu brought about an entire change in the balance of forces at Court. Dunstan's position was rendered yet more difficult after his action on the day of Edwy's coronation in bringing the young King back, almost by force, to the banqueting-hall. Soon, as we have seen, he was compelled to retire and to leave the kingdom, but in less than two years he was back again, ranged on the side of the northern insurgents who were supporting Edgar against Edwy. Shortly afterward he was given the See of Worcester, and on the accession of Edgar he held this, together with the Bishopric of London, later being advanced to the Archbishopric of Canterbury on the expulsion of Brithelm.

Throughout the whole of Edgar's reign Dunstan was the King's chief adviser and greatest friend, and it is generally accepted that the glories of that reign belong rather to Dunstan than to Edgar. Dr William Hunt would have us see his hand in the advancement of foreigners and Danes to important offices in the State, a policy for which the King has been fiercely attacked by some of the later chroniclers. He it was, doubtless, who was responsible for the coronation of Edgar in 973 in the presence of Oswald, Archbishop of York, and all the bishops of England, a coronation from which some would date the first claim of a king to rule over a united England. This ceremony certainly seems to suggest the surrender by the Danes of the right to choose the king who should reign over them. He it was who, in conjunction with Ethelwold, took energetic measures for the rebuilding of the religious houses destroyed and ransacked by the Danes, and who steadily fought the claims of the *canonici* to be recognized as members of monastic houses. He it was who some time in Edgar's reign placed a penance on the King for an irregular union, and who strove throughout his life to cleanse the morals of King, Court, and cloister.

On the death of Edgar, in 975, Dunstan led the party which declared for Edward, and it was mainly owing to his support that that unfortunate King rather than his opponent Ethelred was crowned. On the death of Edward, in 978, Dunstan still remained in power, and placed the crown upon Ethelred's head in the April of that year, but toward the end of his life he appears to have fallen from favour and never controlled in any degree the policy of the new ruler. Had it been otherwise Ethelred might never have earned the inglorious title of 'the Redeless,' for Dunstan was a man of counsel, ready with wise advice.

Dunstan died in May 988. His last words, "The merciful and gracious Lord hath so done His marvellous works that they ought to be had in remembrance. He hath given meat unto them that fear Him," were typical of his beliefs, for he held with a peculiar force the view that man is not the shuttlecock of fate, but, believing, may look for a certain aid and assistance from his Creator. He was buried near the altar of his church, in a tomb fashioned by his own hands. Statesman, ecclesiastic, reformer, craftsman, he made his mark upon his times in a diversity of ways. In later years men were apt to attribute many things to him for which he was not responsible. Of his many miracles we need say nothing, but it is desirable to point out that of all the literary works ascribed to him none can be proved to have come from his pen, though he may have written the music of the Kyrie eleison, the words of which Eadmer asserts were revealed to the Saint in a dream and later were dictated by him.

Regulars and Seculars

By a canon or rule framed in the latter part of the eighth century by Chrodegang, Bishop of Metz, priests were admitted into religious foundations who, though sworn to celibacy, were not required to renounce all worldly goods. These men, half laymen, half monks, were known as *canonici* or seculars, in contradistinction to the ordinary monks or regulars. The new order, if such a word may be applied to them, seems to have caused great dissatisfaction among the regulars, who doubtless foresaw that the wealth of the seculars would in time overwhelm the poorer monks.

An event which has direct bearing upon this dispute occurred in 910, for in that year the famous monastery of Cluny was founded. From that religious house irradiated a new spirit of piety and chastity, so that the Benedictine monk of the tenth century gained a reputation which was only matched by the Franciscan of the thirteenth century.

It is possible that Dunstan in his exile came into close personal contact with the new movement. It is certain that the English monasteries were in immediate need of a complete and general cleansing, despite the efforts at reform which had been made by Odo of Canterbury. We thus find throughout the early years of Edgar's reign the good Dunstan, ably seconded by Ethelwold, Bishop of Winchester (he had been Abbot of Abingdon), and Oswald, Bishop of Worcester, rebuilding the old abbeys that had fallen into ruins owing to the depredations of the Danes and driving from the new ones those *canonici*[1] whom he regarded, rightly or wrongly, as subversive of monastic discipline. It is also possible that the regular foundations were reformed and some steps taken toward repressing the many vices which monastic life has ever led to in the absence of stern and relentless control. As to the mere fabrics of the older abbeys, they were in a more parlous state than even the souls of the seculars, for, speaking of the fine minster of Medeshamstede (later called Peterborough), the chronicler informs us that Bishop Ethelwold "found nothing there but old walls and wild woods." The monastery had, indeed, been destroyed "by the heathen-men." Under the new monastic movement, and helped by the favour and generosity of the King, the small band of reformers was soon enabled to rebuild and repair the churches, monasteries, and minsters which had suffered most severely during the raids of the preceding century.

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[1] It should be added, for greater accuracy, that Ethelwold was responsible for most of the expulsions. Dunstan contented himself with disfavouring the seculars and persuading them to become regulars.

Political Events of Edgar's Reign

When we turn to review the political events of Edgar's reign we find an extraordinary dearth of facts, a result of the unhappy condition into which the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle* had by this time fallen. We read of Edgar's marriage to Elfrida, daughter of Ordgar the ealdorman, in 965,[1] and in the year following we are told that Thored, Gunner's son, devastated Westmorland, and that two years later Edgar ordered all Thanet-land to be ravaged; but these are all the notices, save two, in the whole of this reign which do not relate to the Church, or to mere deaths of important people, or to plagues, fires, or famine. The two exceptions are to be found in the metrical verses under date 973, which, though interesting, are not instructive, and in the very curious but well-authenticated announcement under date 972 that in that year the King led his navy to Chester and there received the homage of six kings. It is almost certain that this date is wrong, and that the famous meeting in the City of the Legions belongs either to the year of Edgar's coronation (973) or to the year following. We are told by Roger of Wendover (who gives eight as the number and spells all their names wrongly) that the King, embarking with these sub-kings in a vessel and placing them at the oars, took the helm and, steering the vessel along the winding Dee, voyaged from his palace to the monastery of St John the Baptist, where divine service was held. The whole party subsequently re-embarked and returned to the starting-place, having been followed on both journeys by the principal nobles of the King's Court.

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[1] This was his second wife. His previous wife was Ethelfled the Fair, known as 'the Duck.'

It may be that this is a mere story, to be compared with the legend of Edgar's offer to meet the mighty Kenneth of Scotland in single combat because Kenneth had jested about the small and slender frame of the English King; or with the tale of the tribute of wolves which is supposed to have been exacted by the Welsh. The Chester meeting, however, is confirmed in a source which is not likely to romance on such a subject—the Welsh *Chronicles of the Princes*.[1]

If true, this meeting of the kings at Chester shows Edgar to have been exceptionally powerful, for both Scots and Welsh kings there bowed the knee before him. It is to be observed, however, that so far as the Welsh were concerned there was not that intimacy with the Court of Edgar that there had been with the Court of Athelstan. In Edgar's charters we look in vain for the subscription of a Welsh king.

To this scanty and jejune account of what was evidently an important reign we are able to add but one really considerable fact, which has been preserved for us by a later annalist, who probably had before him some of the earlier chronicles now lost. He tells us that in 975 the King, "for the advantage and quiet of his realm, assembled 4800 strong vessels, 1200 of which he stationed on the east coast, 1200 on the west, 1200 on the south, and 1200 in the North Sea, for the defence of the realm from foreign nations." Although we must be forgiven for casting questioning eyes upon these numbers, the events of the remaining years of the century leave but little doubt in our mind that forebodings were already assailing the men at the helm in England. The precaution taken was one worthy of Edgar the Peaceful and his far-sighted adviser, Dunstan.

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[1] The *Chronicles of the Princes* puts the place of the meeting at Caerleon-upon-Usk, which is perhaps to be preferred to the Chester site if we regard the ceremony as connected directly with the coronation, which took place at Bath. In our *Wales*, p. 162 *n.*, we have accepted the Chester site, contenting ourselves with pointing out that it may have taken place at Caerleon-upon-Usk. The balance of probabilities is almost equal, though the Welsh sometimes referred to Chester as Caerlegion, which might have caused the confusion.

Edward the Martyr

In this same year (975) Edgar, "the flower and grace of kings, the glory and honour of England," died, in the sixteenth year of his reign, at the early age of thirty-one. His body, we are informed, was taken to Glastonbury, and was there buried in a royal manner. His death seems to have been the signal for a renewal of the dissensions which had marked the reign of Edwy. The cause was probably the ambitions of Elfrida, King Edgar's second Queen, who put forward the claims of her young son,[1] Ethelred, in opposition to Edward, the eldest male child of the union between Edgar and Ethelfled, 'the Duck.' Dunstan, however, quickly took steps to give effect to the late King's expressed wish, and in conjunction with Oswald, now Archbishop of York, assembled the bishops, abbots, and nobles in the Witan, and having elected Edward, anointed him King. But there were murmurs among a portion of the people, and the whole of the reign is marked with grave internal animosities, due probably less to the antagonism between the King and Elfrida than to that which still existed between the regulars and the seculars, who now once more renewed the old dispute, the seculars apparently being favoured by the new King. We are informed that almost immediately upon Edward's accession "a number of the nobles and great men thrust forth the abbots and monks from the monasteries . . . and restored the clerks [*canonici*] and their wives in their room." Time after time councils were held by Dunstan to attempt a settlement of the vexed question, but, despite several convenient miracles (one of which left Dunstan standing upon the only plank remaining in the floor of the upper room in which the council had been held, with the result that all the other councillors, regulars, and seculars were killed or sorely injured), it does not appear to have been definitely laid at rest.

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[1] He must have been less than ten years of age, since she was married in 965.

Murder of Edward

Although, as we have suggested, the religious disputes were a serious cause of dissension, it is also manifest that Elfrida was making every effort to secure the overthrow of Edward and the succession of her son. It would seem, however, that Edward carried himself with such caution that he gave no opening either for the poison of jealousy or the sword of discontent. Thus baffled in her attempt to inveigle him in some unwise and fatal move, the ambitious woman, if we are to believe the later chroniclers, decided to employ open murder, and while the King, when on a visit to her at Corfe, in Dorset, was greeting her with kisses, her attendants stabbed him in the back. The earlier biographer of St Oswald, who might have heard at first hand all the details in his youth, though agreeing that the blow was struck at Corfe, the Queen's residence, does not connect her with the crime, but assigns it to her butler and her thegns, one of whom kissed his King's right hand, while another, holding his left, struck at him with a weapon, whereupon the King cried out aloud, "What are you doing, breaking my hand!" and, falling from his horse, expired.

Whether Elfrida was directly or only indirectly responsible, Edward was foully murdered, and it was but natural that the men of those days should regard him as a martyr at whose tomb many infirmities were healed. As for the murderess (if so she may be called), we are told that she performed a lengthy penance, notwithstanding which she was eventually eaten by worms. Her son, Ethelred, reigned for many a year disastrously.

ETHELRED

The events of the next few decades are extremely difficult to explain for many reasons. We see a king coming to the throne amid, apparently, the acclamations of his people; we find a country wealthy and prosperous, having benefited from the peace of Edgar's reign; we have two nations, English and Danish, apparently living in harmony in this country. Suddenly all is confusion. The sea-rovers against whom Edgar had taken precautions burst through all opposition; England is harried from end to end. Upon the landing of Svein, or Sweyn, King of Denmark, in 1013, Northumbria, Mercia, and East Anglia render him immediate submission. Following on the short reign of Edmund, Ethelred's successor, comes a line of Danish kings who rule over a united England until the gluttony and drunkenness of Harthacnut result in his death, and the sceptre passes, apparently with hardly a struggle, once more to the house of Cerdic. During Ethelred's reign we have incompetence bordering upon insanity; we have timidity in King and nobles amounting to pure cowardice; we have treachery in thegns nearest to the King; we have an act of atrocity unequalled in this country since Hengist's men struck with their daggers at the hearts of their British hosts. How comes it that Saxon society had so declined?—that Dane and Englishman follow one another upon the throne of England without any mighty upheaval?

The conquests of Athelstan and the peaceful policy of Edgar had, undoubtedly, resulted in England's becoming wealthier than she had been for centuries; perhaps we may say since the Roman occupation. At this time the country was occupied by some of the ancient inhabitants (most of whom were probably serfs), by Angles and Saxons, and by Danes. The latter still controlled and occupied East Anglia, Northumbria, and part of Mercia, and, although from time to time English kings gained suzerainty over the Danish portion, there is no evidence whatever that the Danish population were sensibly disturbed or their rights interfered with.

Several results flowed from these circumstances. In the first place, the evidence of the cartularies is sufficient to show that the West Saxon kings were wealthy. The chroniclers persuade us that after Athelstan, with one or perhaps two exceptions, they were weak. We thus find, as we might expect, the flattery of sycophantic followers being purchased rather than the aid of warriors being won. By the time we reach Ethelred the English Court must have been filled by men who had been bought rather than by fighters, statesmen, or clerics who merited their position. Again, this wealth of the Court had a grave result upon the calibre of the men who ruled therein. Dr Hodgkin has suggested that the line of Cerdic was getting physically and mentally degenerate because it was an old line. The argument is not sound, in our opinion, for, granted freedom of marriage, all men have an equal ancestry and all houses are equally old. By this time (*circa* A.D. 1000) it is clear that the king was not limited to a small royal circle in his choice of wife. On the contrary, Ethelred's mother was simply the daughter of an earl, his wife was a lady of noble but not royal blood; Athelstan's mother was possibly the foster-child of a king's nurse, and Edward's wife was the child of Godwin. There is, however, another reason to explain the Edwys and Ethelreds of the period, and it is to be found in the words of the chronicler, who tells us that Ethelred was overfond of wine and women, who more than hints at Edgar's lack of morals, and who has something to say adverse to their predecessors. In a word, these barbarian kings had been degraded by prosperity. The nightly orgies over the flagons of mead and the excesses which followed were, perhaps, natural and allowable to an age when they followed upon some heroic victory in the field or some fierce struggle with the perils of the ocean. A life full of hardship and adventure was apt to be balanced by occasional relapses from the standard of conduct set by the Christian Church. But when there are no hardships and no adventures, but simply licentiousness without excuse, the result has always been and will always be the same.

In our view, then, England was rotten at the core. Her Church was feeble and divided ; the seculars were still in high places and the regulars have left us no great proof of either their piety or their learning. But although this explains the weakness in deed and in counsel of Ethelred's reign, it does not explain how it was that the Dane followed Edmund as acknowledged King and was followed by Edward, a Saxon, without a struggle. Two explanations at least are open to us : (1) Sweyn and Cnut were war-captains who by their own personal genius wrested the crown of England from the weak hands of the legitimate rulers ; (2) Saxon and Dane were so equal in England long before Ethelred's day, both in numbers and in power, that it was a matter of indifference who was king, whether Saxon or Dane. In truth, we believe that the solution lies in a conjunction of these reasons. Sweyn and Cnut, especially the latter, by their military ability were enabled to claim all the men of England as their subjects—Northumbrians equally with Mercians, Mercians equally with East Anglians, East Anglians equally with West Saxons. Once that position was reached it appears to us that a transition from Saxon to Danish or Norwegian or Norman rule was reduced to a mere question of royal succession, which, when we remember the elective nature of Saxon kingship, is little more than a choice by the public of rival candidates. This, although quite heterodox, is in our judgment an explanation not only of the strange change from Saxon Edmund to Danish Cnut and from Danish Harthacnut to Saxon Edward ; it also explains the equally strange ease with which the Norman William conquered England. Harold Godwinsson, a Dane on his mother's side, was no more to the people of England than William the Norman, who was at least related to the wife and was the friend of a West Saxon king.

When we turn to the actual events of Ethelred's reign we simply find a forbidding list of acts of barbarism committed by the vikings upon a hapless people. Olaf Trygvesson, Sweyn

Forkbeard, Thorkill the Tall, and, toward the end, Sweyn's son, Cnut, each is found leading his men throughout the length and breadth of the land, his passage marked by the beacon-light of burning buildings. London alone resisted successfully their repeated attacks; and when, in 994, Olaf Trygvesson and Sweyn made a descent upon London with ninety-four ships they were driven back with great loss, to wreak their vengeance on the southern counties, which they plundered and devastated.

MALDON

The latter years of the reign seem to be symbolized in the entry in the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle* in which, after the announcement that Ethelred was consecrated King at Kingston on a Sunday fourteen days after Easter, we read: "That same year was seen a bloody cloud, oftentimes in the likeness of fire; and it was mostly apparent at midnight, and so in various beams was coloured: when day dawned, then it glided away." For a while after the boy King was anointed there was peace, but in his fifteenth year the storm broke. In 982 Dorset was invaded and Portland ravaged. London also was burnt, but whether by the pirates it is impossible to say. In the year following the weakling Elfric became Ealdorman of Mercia, a man who turned sick at the sight of battle and whose counsel was as weak as his digestion. In 988 Watchet, in Somerset, was ravaged. Three years later Ipswich shared the same fate, and a little later Brithnoth the ealdorman was slain, urging on his men to victory even as he lay dying. The victory, however, did not lie with the Saxon, for the noble epic, *The Battle of Maldon,* though it recounts the brave deeds of the hoary fighter Brithnoth and his squires, Elfnoth, Wulfmaer, and a young noble, Elfwine, also has to admit the cowardice of one thegn, Godric, who, fleeing on his leader's horse, created panic among the Saxon band, thus enabling the Danish leader, who may have been Oláf Trygvesson himself, to hold the field.

TRIBUTE PAID TO THE DANES

It was as a result of this defeat that Archbishop Sigeric persuaded the Witan to pay tribute to the Danes in an endeavour to purchase freedom from further ravaging. This was probably not the first time the country had sought to buy off the enemy. Alfred may have adopted the same expedient. But now no serious effort seems to have been made to profit by the few years of peace which ensued. The defences of the kingdom were not strengthened, so that when the Danes once more returned to the attack, in hope of further booty or more peace-money, they found Lindsey and Northumbria undefended and at their mercy. The one result of Sigeric's advice was the imposition of a new tax upon the people of England called Danegeld, which during Ethelred's reign resulted in the payment to the Danes of what would be equivalent in burden to at least £200,000,000 at the present day.[1]

From 997 onward until the accession of Cnut hardly a single year passes without some raid, battle, or massacre. In 1005, when the Danes appear to have retired for a time to Denmark, death at the hand of the enemy was varied by death as the result of famine so severe "that no man ever before recollected one so grim." Two years later a little peace was purchased by a large payment of tribute (36,000 pounds of silver)—peace which lasted but two years, during which an attempt was made to re-create the fleet. With those three exceptions, every year has its tale of slaughter. Even the sudden effort at naval defence was rendered nugatory by the dispute between Brihtric, Eadric the ealdorman's brother, known as Streona or 'the Rapacious,' and Wulfnoth Child (Earl Godwin's father), a dispute which resulted in a naval battle between the contending parties and which caused the loss

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[1] The amount was about £425,000 = in purchasing power to-day £8,500,000. Granted then a population of 2,000,000, the burden is equivalent to about £200,000,000 to-day. The figures 2,000,000 for the population of England are based upon the results arrived at by McCulloch and Thorold Rogers. The present figures we take at 46,000,000.

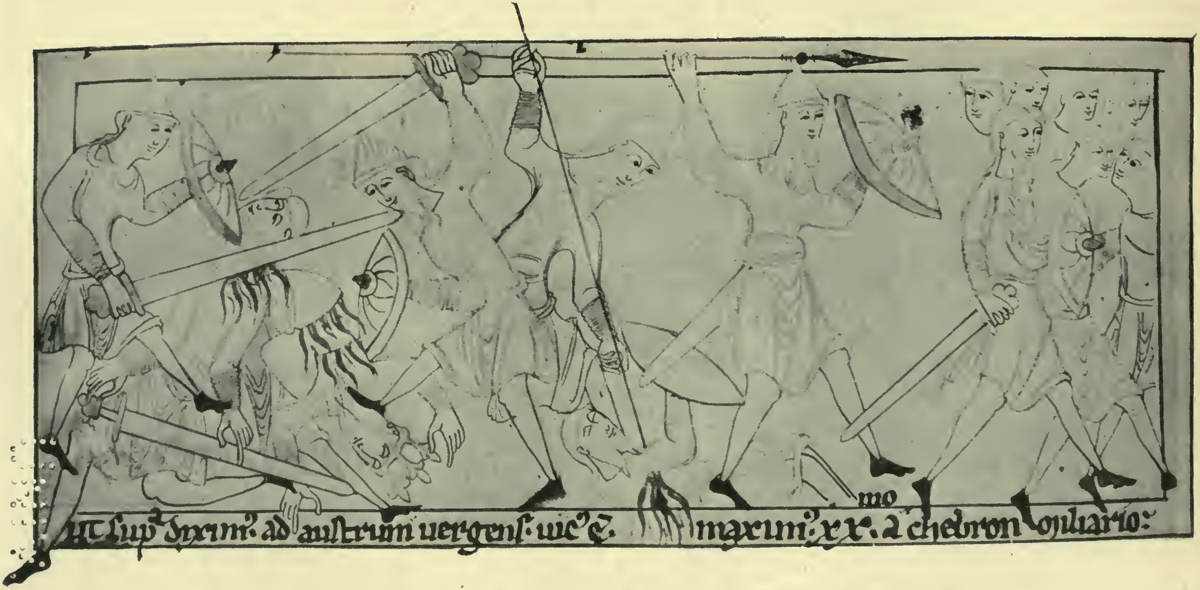
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PLATE XXVIII. BATTLE SCENE SHOWING MILITARY WEAPONS

of eighty ships. It is curious, indeed, how throughout this unhappy reign the sinister name of Eadric appears in connexion with every disaster. Either by unwise counsel or treachery or cowardice he seems throughout the years to have thwarted every attempt made by the English to withstand the Danes.

It would be tedious and is unnecessary to recount all the places sacked and ravaged by the vikings. From Ipswich to Wales, from Taunton to Bamburgh, there is hardly a place which was not harried. Two events, however, stand out which must be mentioned in more detail: the massacre of 1002 and the martyrdom of St Alphege.

THE MASSACRE ON ST BRICE'S DAY

In 1002 Ethelred, in a momentary burst of wisdom, had endeavoured to strengthen his position by an alliance with Normandy. The result was his marriage with Emma, daughter of Duke Richard, a lady whom in later years he gravely ill-used, but who was able to give him during the years when Sweyn had driven him from his kingdom a place of refuge at her father's Court. Although in this union we see the signs of some wise counsel, later on in the same year the good impression is more than obliterated by an act of senseless ferocity which caused the Danes to swear to drive Ethelred from the kingdom and which made Sweyn his deadly enemy.

It was upon St Brice's Mass-day in that year (1002) that effect was to be given to the order which had gone forth commanding each Dane in England to be treacherously slain by his neighbour. We cannot believe that every Dane was massacred or that the order was quite general, although the words of the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle* are: "And in that year the King ordered all the Danish men who were in England to be slain." Even if it applied only to one district or to one group of Danes the plot was infamous, and we know that it resulted in the death of Gunhild, the sister of Sweyn, who was slaughtered after she had seen her husband. Earl Pallig, and her children butchered. This act of savage folly had the immediate result of bringing over Sweyn and Thorkill the Tall to ravage the south-east of England; it had the indirect result of exiling Ethelred and of placing Sweyn's son, Cnut, upon the English throne.

St Alphege

The other deed of which we have spoken, the martyrdom of Alphege, Archbishop of Canterbury, took place ten years later. The good Alphege had been raised to the archbishopric in 1006, in succession to Aelfric. Five years later Canterbury was besieged by the Danes, and finally gained through the treachery of an archdeacon. Men were put to the sword, babes torn from their mothers' arms were tossed on the points of lances or cut into morsels, women were dragged by their legs through the streets and flung into the burning ruins of the buildings. Alphege was by no means permitted to escape, but, having been fettered, was dragged about, tortured, and finally imprisoned. It was in the year following that the end came. The Danes, furious at the withholding of ransom, and having drunk deeply of wine—pillaged, probably, from the French—gathered round their intended victim and, pelting him with the remains of their feast, bones, and ox-horn drinking-cups, tormented him cruelly until at last one of the number, Thrum or Thorm by name, taking pity upon him, ended his sufferings by cleaving his head with an axe. His blood, we are informed, falling upon a piece of dead wood, caused it to burst into leaf, and the body, now invested with the sanctity of a martyr's corpse, remained uncorrupted, and was later borne to its last resting-place at Canterbury.

Flight of Ethelred to Normandy

The year following (1013) Sweyn and his son, Cnut, came with all their available forces to Sandwich. Hitherto the Danes had contented themselves with plundering forays, and expeditions intended to extract more tribute from the unwilling Ethelred. Now, however, a serious attempt at conquest was made. At first the fleet, sailing from Sandwich, went up the mouth of the Humber, and the Danes, having landed, prepared to win Northumbria. The task proved simple, Earl Utred and all the men of that province quickly submitting. Sweyn now turned southward, being accepted as king by the people of Lindsey and the Five Boroughs. A little later all the army north of Watling Street came over to his standard, and hostages were given to secure obedience. Already, without, apparently, a battle being fought, Sweyn had gained as much as Guthrum ever did.

Having obtained ample provisions and a supply of horses, the augmented force now turned south. Watling Street was crossed and Oxford reached. On the way, we are told, " they wrought the most evil that any army could do." Oxford, perhaps fearing the fate of Canterbury, soon submitted, and more hostages were given. Next Winchester was attacked, and similarly surrendered. With the old capital of Wessex in his power, only one city remained before Sweyn could regard England as at his feet. We therefore find him turning eastward and making for London. The King, Ethelred, who had not moved a finger to protect his kingdom, had shut himself up in London, trusting rather to a new-found ally, Thorkill the Dane, who had previously sacked Canterbury and had invited Sweyn to come and seize the kingdom, but who, apparently, had suddenly changed sides. At first the townsmen successfully resisted the attack, and Sweyn, having lost many of his men in an impetuous attempt to cross the river without using the bridges, turned to the west once more, took Wallingford and Bath, and at the latter place received the submission of Aethelmaer and the West Country nobles. Meanwhile, apparently either Thorkill once more changed sides or Ethelred, fearing ultimate defeat, decided to make sure of his personal safety at whatever cost. Journeying by sea from London, he eventually arrived at the Norman Court, to which Emma, his wife, and the athelings Alfred and Edward had already been sent. The townsmen, thus bereft of all leadership and fearing lest Sweyn "should utterly undo them," threw open their gates and made submission.

Cnut Leader of the Danes

It was in the midwinter of 1013 that Ethelred fled overseas. For a few weeks Sweyn was master of the whole of England; but by Candlemas in the year following (February 2, 1014) his brief rule was over. On his death the whole of the viking fleet unanimously chose his son Cnut for leader. The English, however, determined to make one more bid for freedom. The Witan was assembled from all parts of the country, and both laity and clergy decided to send for Ethelred, for they declared "that no lord was dearer to them than their natural lord, if he would rule them better than he had before done." From Normandy came back a promise that their desire should be fulfilled, that the King would amend all the things they abhorred, and "each of those things should be forgiven which had been done or said to him, on condition that they all, with one consent, would be obedient to him, without deceit." As a result of these overtures and embassies full friendship was established between the King and his people, and "every Danish king was declared an outlaw from England for ever."

Cnut meanwhile had mustered his forces at Gainsborough, the most important town in Lindsey, and had gathered in from the people of that district horses and food-stuffs. While these preparations were being completed Ethelred, in one of his bursts of fitful and misguided energy, swept down upon the unhappy province, plundered, burned, and slew, in order, apparently, to frighten others from aiding the Danes, but allowing Cnut, meanwhile, to raise anchor and depart with all his supplies and his hostages, and, having thus ravaged his own people without harming his enemies, completed the tale of folly by directing the Danish army under Thorkill to be paid 21,000 pounds of silver. Cnut by this time had dropped anchor once more at Sandwich, where he came ashore and had the hostages cruelly mutilated.

The year following opened in a manner equally inauspicious. The thrice perjured Eadric succeeded in betraying and murdering the chief thegns of the Seven Boroughs, Sigefrith and Morcar. These nobles' property was immediately seized by Ethelred for his own, Sigefrith's widow being appropriated by Edmund the Atheling. While these proofs of Ethelred's desire to be a 'loving lord' were being shown to his people Cnut was busy ravaging the whole of the south coast, Dorset, Wiltshire, and Somerset. A little later the ealdorman Eadric[1] completed a list of treacheries which is, perhaps, as long as any history has to show by deserting Ethelred and, with forty ships, passing over to the side of Cnut. Wessex submitted, delivered hostages, and "horsed the army." It was now late in the year, and Ethelred lay dying at Corsham. The leadership of the English, in consequence, devolved upon his son Edmund, called 'Ironside,' a brave and valiant fighter who might have re-established the West Saxon supremacy had not his life been cut short before a year had passed.

EDMUND IRONSIDE

In the very beginning of 1016 Cnut and Eadric crossed the Thames with their army and invaded Mercia. From Cricklade they pushed on to Warwickshire "and ravaged and burned, and slew all that they could come at." Edmund, meantime, was not idle, for, gathering his forces, he assembled them, waiting for the King (whose illness had not declared its fatal nature) to join him with the men of London. The King, however, was not there, and the assembled army refused to fight without him and was disbanded. Again they met together, but "it availed them nothing more than it oft before had done." So utterly disgusted were his subjects with the King's behaviour that revolt was openly spoken of. Edmund had apparently despaired of any assistance from Ethelred, and had left him to seek aid from Utred, Earl of the Northumbrians. The two forces of the south and north now having joined, we find Edmund and Utred turning south in Staffordshire and Shropshire and Cheshire; "and they plundered on their part, and Cnut on his part." The Dane had apparently made no attempt to meet his opponents, but, working up the east coast, penetrated as far inland as York. The capture of the capital town brought Utred hurriedly north. Having reached York, he seems to have realized that resistance was impossible, and, submitting to Cnut, delivered hostages and swore obedience. The false Eadric, however, fearing in others baseness equal to his own, counselled the death of this man who had in truth given himself into their power. Cnut, persuaded by the traitor's crafty tongue, put the earl Utred to death and appointed Eric to be Earl of Northumbria, or at least of Deira, in his stead. We now find both Cnut and Edmund turning southward for London, the Dane going by sea, the Saxon by land. The news had probably reached both of them that Ethelred's illness had reached its final stage; both expected that he who gained the brave Londoners had the better chance of wearing the crown. The race was won by Edmund, who was in London about the time when the King, his father, died (April 23, 1016) and before Cnut's fleet had yet arrived. The nobles who were then in London, together with the citizens, immediately and unanimously chose Edmund for their leader and King, despite some doubt as to his legitimacy. It was at once evident that the reins of power were in very different hands from those of the vacillating Ethelred. The gigantic frame of Edmund, which had earned him his title 'Ironside,' contained an energy which at least prompted him to act, if not always with great wisdom. Leaving London, now partly invested by Cnut, Edmund gathered to his standard the men of Wessex, and battles were fought against ' the army ' at Pen, near Gillingham, and at Sherston. None of them seems to have been at all decisive. By autumn, however, Edmund was strong enough to raise the siege of London and drive the investing Danes to their ships. Two days later Edmund met ' the army ' at Brentford, on the south-west side of the city. Again the Danes were beaten, but the English also lost heavily, owing, as the chronicler puts it, " to their own carelessness."

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[1] The character of Eadric as painted in the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle* is almost inconceivably base. Time after time we have such entries as this: "When they came together, then would the ealdorman betray the Atheling, but he was not able: and they then parted without a battle on that account, and gave way to their foes." Even agreeing that the chronicler was trying to find a scapegoat we cannot but wonder at the folly of a King and Witan that could give to such an oft-proved traitor the command of a large part of the entire defensive fleet. Roger of Wendover thus describes him: "A traitor Eadric, surnamed Streona, who purchased the King's favour, not by his nobility, but by his wealth. He was the very scum of mankind, the disgrace of England, double-tongued, crafty, a betrayer of secrets, a practised dissembler, ready in inventing falsehoods; he was often sent to the enemy as a mediator of peace, but invariably fanned the flame of discord."

Once more Edmund is found going into Wessex to raise forces ; once more London is attacked and surrounded ; once more the citizens beat off their enemies. Cnut, now turning for the moment from his main objective, took his ships up the Orwell and struck over into Mercia with his army, destroying and plundering as he went—" as is their wont," adds the chronicler, who was evidently writing of the doings of his own times. Food and cattle having thus been obtained, the fleet again turned south and made for the Medway, Edmund attempting meanwhile to strike through Kent and oppose their landing. A battle appears to have been fought at some place unknown, and the Danes were driven into Sheppey with heavy loss.

ASSANDUNE

Cnut, now realizing that the way to London was definitely barred to him until Edmund's forces were beaten, determined to march north once more and harry Mercia. Essex was entered, and the unhappy middle province was expecting yet further devastation when Edmund, leading a powerful army and hastening after the Danes, overtook them at Assandune, in the low-lying part of Essex which stretches between the Thames and the estuary of the Crouch. A long and bloody battle followed, in which many of the bravest of the English thegns were killed, including, among many other earls, Ulfkytel of East Anglia, who had fought with exceptional bravery even in Ethelred's pulseless reign. The final victory at last lay with the Danes, in consequence, apparently, of Eadric's treachery in pretending that Edmund was dead, and so causing panic in the English ranks. As a result of the fight Cnut was able to exchange the *rôle* of pursued for that of pursuer.

THE OLNEY MEETING

At last, however, again it would seem by the advice of Eadric, the two parties were reconciled and peace was made. Hostages were exchanged, and at the meeting at Olney oaths of friendship were sworn and the tribute for 'the army' settled. It was there agreed that Edmund should have Wessex and Cnut Mercia and the north. The arrangement, however, lasted but a short time, for in November of the same year, at St Andrew's Mass, the valiant Edmund died, or was murdered, and was buried at Glastonbury, near his grandfather, Edgar. With his death all hope of preventing Cnut from gaining the realm of England passed away, and in the year following the Dane was elected and raised to be King, or, in the old Anglo-Saxon words, *gecoren and áhafen to cyninge*, and was accepted as leader by all the English people.

CHAPTER XIV

THE DANISH KINGS

1016–1042

EDWARD THE CONFESSOR

1042–1066

THE death of Edmund Ironside, whether it was the result of bodily weakness induced by the fatigues of the preceding years or whether the consummation of a plot evolved by Eadric, the traitor, and connived at by Cnut, left England at the mercy of the Dane. Since Olney, Cnut and Edmund had ruled as joint kings by virtue of the treaty then agreed to. There is no evidence, however, that there was any provision made for the succession by one partner to the share held by the other on the latter's death. But now, Edmund being dead, Cnut took steps to support his claim to the whole kingdom, seeking to bolster up a weak case by legal forms and false oaths rather than by force of arms.

There can be no doubt that Cnut showed admirable wisdom in thus choosing the path of peace. England desired nothing more than repose and freedom from devastation. The chief who offered that, of whatsoever nation he might be, offered much and could count on much support. On the other hand, he who declared his intention to rely on the sword would but raise up a sword to defeat his intention. As a result we find this alien King being accepted as King by the people of England without any great attempt being made at resistance.

Edmund Ironside had died on the last day of November, 1016, and Cnut allowed but little time to pass before he took steps to make good his claim to the crown of all England.

The Witan was summoned to attend by Christmas, and during a session which extended on into 1017 the question of the succession was thoroughly debated. Whether at Olney Cnut had really been declared Edmund's successor or not, a matter about which there is much doubt, it is clear that Cnut asserted his right to succeed as a legal right capable of being perfected by a vote of the Witan rather than by force of arms. As for his actual election, nothing could have been more formally correct. Cnut was elected to the kingship and the sons and brothers of Edmund were expressly excluded.

Thus established behind the walls of constitutional precedent, Cnut began still further to strengthen his position by removing all dangerous opponents. In the first months of 1017 we find Edwy the Atheling banished, to wander back and die heart-broken. A certain Edwy, King of the Churls, was outlawed. To the same period also belong the disgrace and death of certain prominent Saxon noblemen, foremost of whom was Ethelweard, Edwy's bosom friend and son of Aethelmaer the Stout, Ealdorman of Devonshire, of whose family we shall have much to say later, for Aethelmaer was the grandfather of that great Englishman Godwin, whose deeds and ambitions claim far more attention than the colourless doings of the kings who ruled from Cnut to Harold II.

Cnut, now established by the choice of the wise men and the overthrow of his rivals or opponents, appears to have felt himself strong enough to temper statecraft with mercy, and although he found it convenient to banish the young princes, the sons of Edmund, there is probably little truth in the story that he requested the King of Sweden to have them put to death—a commission which, it is said, the King avoided by delivering the children unharmed to the King of Hungary, in whose Court they grew up. In truth, Cnut had no need to request his brother monarch to commit murder on his account when he had near to hand that perfect assassin Eadric Streona, whose long life of treachery had now gained him the ealdormanry of Mercia. Eadric is indeed credited by Florence of Worcester with having counselled the murder of the children, and it is probably a sign of magnanimity on the part of the King that their lives were spared. As for Eadric, his course was now run, for in this same year (1017) he was slain in London—"very rightly," as one of the chroniclers says.

ELFGIVA EMMA AND ELFGIVA OF NORTHAMPTON

We now come to an event of some importance and much obscurity, for under 1017 we read in one of the Saxon chronicles that "before the kalends of August the King commanded that Ethelred's widow, Richard's daughter, be fetched to be his queen." At this time Cnut was a young man of twenty-two years of age, while Aelfgyfu, or Elfgiva, or Emma, the widow of King Ethelred, was a well-preserved woman of thirty-five with a somewhat numerous family by that King. Cnut had also entered into some sort of irregular union with another Elfgiva, known to history as Elfgiva of Northampton, who was destined to be the mother of Cnut's successor, Harold Harefoot, and of Sweyn, the sub-King of Norway. It is this Elfgiva who, according to Norse tradition, was the cause of jealousy and enmity between Cnut and Olaf the Thick of Norway, for Olaf had been her first lover and was ousted by the handsome young Dane. These two Elfgivas will be met with at many turns of our road, but for the moment we are content to point out the general effect of Cnut's marriage with her whom we will call Elfgiva Emma, the daughter of Richard of Normandy.

In the first place, Elfgiva Emma was the mother of sons by Ethelred the Redeless, one of whom, as Edward the Confessor, was destined to rule England. She was thus intimately connected with the English royal house and the fortunes of that house, now represented in the persons of her own children. Nevertheless, as we shall see, from the moment of her marriage with Cnut she seems to have lifted not a finger to advance the prospects of her first family. Alfred and Edward, her eldest sons, languished at the Norman Court for years after their mother was Queen of England, and the one returned to this country only to be foully done to death, while the other had to thank the astuteness of an ambitious statesman for his crown rather than the efforts of his mother, who yet by no means lacked power to persuade or talent for intrigue. Again, we must remark that after his marriage with Elfgiva Emma Cnut's character seems, on the whole, to gain considerably in grace and breadth of view. Of Elfgiva Emma's character very divergent views have been expressed, but to us she appears to be a woman of much ability, a friend of the Church, of a scheming yet by no means tortuous type of mind. In her matrimonial ventures she seems to have had but little admiration for the vacillating Ethelred or his colourless son Edward, and the whole of her wifely and maternal love appears to have been devoted to her second husband and their children, Harthacnut and Gunhild. That she played a prominent part in the government of England for many years is probable. That she was the friend of Godwin and responsible to some extent for his meteoric rise is by no means impossible.

Godwin

The history of England for the greater part of the first half of the eleventh century is, indeed, less concerned with kings than with the progressive advancements of the Earl Godwin, whom Freeman, his great panegyrist, described as "the maker, the kinsman, the father of kings." Who the Earl Godwin was by birth and parentage the same authority declared to be "utterly problematical," but if we accept the recently expressed opinion of Mr Anscombe,[1] which, though not conclusive, has certainly some evidence to support it, he was no peasant's son, but a member of the cadet branch of the house of Ethelwulf, the senior branch of which gave Alfred, Athelstan, and Edgar to the throne of England. According to the same authority, Godwin, Thane of Sussex, and later Earl of Wessex, was the son of Wulfnoth Child, Thane of Sussex, who flourished *c.* 1009, and was a younger son of that Aethelmaer, Ealdorman of Devonshire, whose son Ethelweard the younger is found

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[1] See "The Pedigree of Earl Godwin," *Trans. R. Hist. Soc.*, 3rd series, vii, 129.

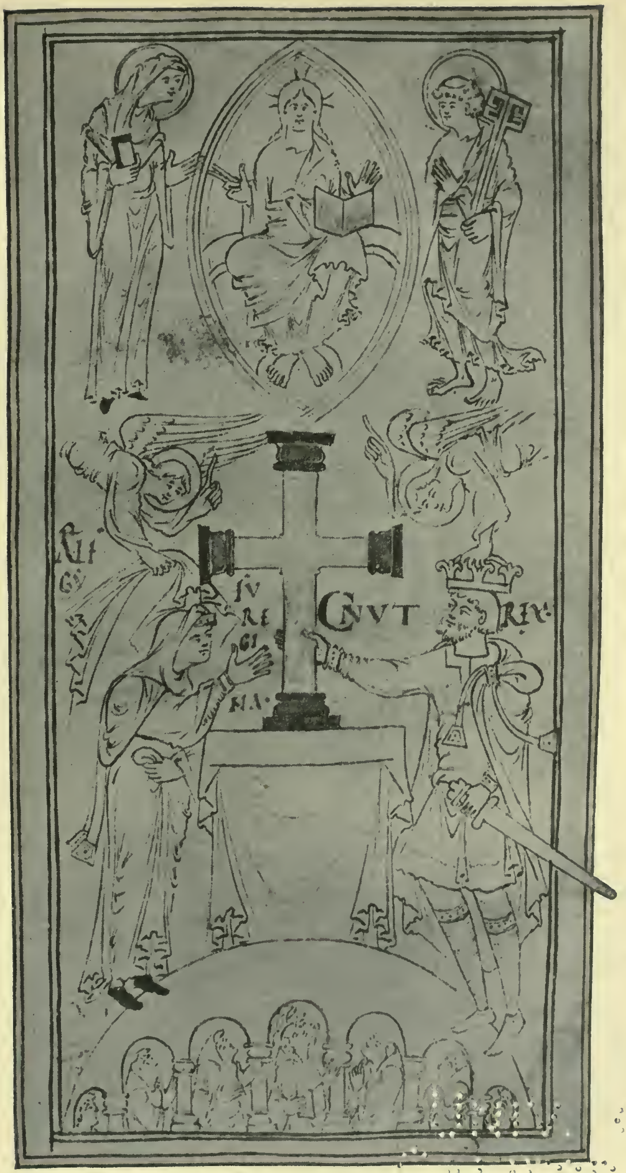
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PLATE XXIX. CNUT AND ELFGIVA EMMA PLACING GOLD CROSS ON ALTAR 280

falling into disgrace on the accession of Cnut, probably as a result of his great friendship with Edwy the Atheling. If this be so, then Godwin was the nephew of Ethelnoth, Archbishop of Canterbury, and owned Ethelweard the historian as a collateral ancestor. One thing at least is certain: Aethelmaer, Godwin, and Wulfnoth are all named as beneficiaries under the will of Athelstan, King Ethelred's son, and from the form the will takes it would appear that at that time Aethelmaer was in disgrace with Ethelred. An Aethelmaer had, indeed, led the thanes of the West Country and had gone over with his following to Sweyn, King of Denmark, at Bath, in 1013, as we have said. Wulfnoth Child had also rebelled against Ethelred, and had been deprived of his honours by that King. On the other hand, Ethelweard, brother to Wulfnoth and son of Aethelmaer, had suffered for his fidelity to Edwy the Atheling. In a word, therefore, we may say that Godwin was a member of a noble and semi-royal house, all the branches of which were powerful, some being the leaders of the loyalists, others playing a part against their own countrymen by favouring or accepting the Danes. It is by no means improbable that the family had intermarried with the Danes, and as for Godwin, it is, of course, well known that his wife was Gytha, a lady of the Danish royal house, being the daughter of Thorgils Sprakalegg and sister of Ulf the Earl or Jarl, a brother-in-law of Cnut. The children of this union—Swegen, Harold, Tostig, Gyrth, Leofwine, Wulfnoth, Eadgyth, Gunhild, and Elfgiva—were thus partly English and partly Danish, as is apparent from their names. Even Harold, hailed by Freeman as the last great representative of English royalty, bore a Danish name,[1] was the child of a Danish mother, and cannot be regarded as the legal representative of the royal house of Cerdic or of any other royal house. He was, in truth, half Englishman, half Dane, the child, the able and valorous son of a far-sighted, scheming, and ambitious politician who from year to year had increased the family fortunes until their lands stretched over the larger half of England; who was successively the chief adviser of Cnut and the benefactor, friend, and chief minister of Edward the Confessor until his fall, and who passed on a great portion of his power to this Harold, destined to wear the crown for a few months and to lose it to the Norman William after laying down his life on the battlefield of Sandlake.[1]

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[1] The charters sometimes have the signature 'Harald,' the pure Danish form, sometimes 'Harold'; never 'Hereweald,' the English form.

For the first year or so of Cnut's reign it is probable that Godwin occupied no very prominent position. In the earliest of Cnut's charters Haldenne and Thorkill are seen to be the most prominent of the men around the King. Thorkill had, indeed, played an important if somewhat dubious part in the Danish conquest of England, and had once, as we have seen, thrown in his lot with Ethelred against his own people. On the accession of Cnut he occupied an extremely high position, and as late as 1019 his name is first among those of the dukes or leaders around the King. In 1020 he was co-founder with Cnut of the religious house at Ashingdon, and it is evident that in this year he was still high in favour. The next year, however, we find him banished with his wife, Edith (a daughter of Cnut), and although he was soon restored to favour, he never returned to England, but became Regent of Denmark. The way was thus open for the rise of Earl Godwin, who added to his advantages of birth and station great ability in battle and in the council chamber. Whether or not we are to accept the stories connected with his fight against the Wends or Swedes, which gained for Cnut a most important victory, it is clear that from 1019 at latest [2] Godwin had already reached the dignity of a dukedom, and even when he married (*c.* 1016–1018) his first wife,[3] a daughter of Brihtric, brother of Eadric Streona, it is evident that he was one of the most powerful men in the land, for his marriage articles were agreed to before the King at Kingston and half the nobility of the realm. Since this marriage took place not later than 1018, it is apparent that Earl Godwin was from the opening years of Cnut's reign a man of great importance, and from 1020 to 1023 onward his name always stands first among those of the nobles in the charters of Cnut.

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[1] Commonly known by the Norman-French name of Senlac, popularized by Ordericus Vitalis and Freeman.

[2] The 1018 charter in which his name is given as *dux* is believed by Birch to be spurious; we therefore date his elevation to that high rank at 1019, the date of another and genuine charter.

[3] It is not certain that this was the great Godwin; it is, however, probable.

BATTLE OF CARHAM

We do not propose to deal with Cnut's foreign expeditions. They were adventures of a personal nature which had absolutely no permanent effect upon English history. It is a matter for remark, however, that as early as 1019 Cnut felt himself strong enough to leave his recently conquered kingdom and sail with forty ships for Denmark, where he abode over winter. In the following year he returned, outlawed Ethelweard and Edwy, King of the Churls, and consecrated the minster at Ashingdon. In 1022 he was again absent in Denmark, returning the year following to be present at the christening of the babe Harthacnut, a ceremony which took place at Christ Church, Canterbury, and which was preceded by the translation to the church from London of the corpse of the martyr St Alphege. Of the subsequent expeditions against Denmark and Norway we say nothing, but a battle fought at Carham against the Scots some years before, in 1018, had an important effect upon our history, and must be mentioned. In that year Malcolm, King of the Scots, combined with Owain, King of the Strathclyde Britons, to attack the Danes and English of Northumbria. At that time the Dane Eric was chief of the men of Deira, while Eadwulf, a Saxon, had succeeded his brother Utred (who had been assassinated, perhaps at Cnut's command) as chief of the Bernicians. The two forces met at Carham, not far from the site of the future battlefield of Flodden, and there a great slaughter of the Saxons was made. As a result of Malcolm's victory Lothian was lost to England and the dividing-line between England and Scotland was fixed at its present limits on the east.

Cnut's Saxon Favourites

Apart from this defeat, the early years of Cnut's reign hold for us little of interest that is connected with the King himself. It is not, indeed, until his pilgrimage to Rome, in 1027, that we shall have occasion to consider the royal movements, but during the intervening years we must trace shortly the rise of the men who were later to control the fortunes of the country.

By 1020 Godwin was already Earl of the West Saxons, and from 1023, at latest, he was pre-eminent in the State. Meanwhile other Englishmen were also beginning to occupy high positions around the King. Nothing is more strange, indeed, than that Danish Cnut should have found it desirable slowly to remove all his Danish followers and replace them by Englishmen. Of Thorkill's banishment we have spoken, and we have seen that Eadric, the traitor, had been promoted to the ealdormanry of Mercia, to be later slain in London. He was followed by Leofwine, a name which becomes prominent in the charters of Cnut about 1019. About the same time, Leofric—the husband of the far-famed Godgifu, whose name appears in a charter of 1023, and who is known to all, under her Latin name of Godiva, as the lady who gained for the citizens of Coventry freedom from a burdening tax at the price of riding through their streets clothed only in her tresses—became a chieftain of the Welsh border, though, indeed, it is not until 1023 that he is found signing as earl. In that year, however, he occupies second place to Godwin himself. It is probable that his advancement was due in part to the disgrace and death of Northman, the son of Leofwine. Meanwhile Godwin had been created Earl of the West Saxons in 1020, and Thorkill had been banished in 1021. It is possible that Eric was banished late in 1023, although his signature is found on a charter of that date, and six years later another important Dane, Duke Hakon, who in 1019 was second among Cnut's followers, was also compelled to cross the seas. This Hakon, 'the Doughty,' was the son of Eric, and later occupied an important place in

Norway until his death, in 1030. Five years before, Ulf the Jarl, a relative both of Cnut and Godwin, was mysteriously murdered at the instigation of the King. As Freeman says, "It is most remarkable, in tracing the signatures of the charters, to trace how the Danish names gradually disappear and are succeeded by English names."[1]

Cnut's Administrative Reforms

During these years, in which Englishmen were gradually displacing Danes in the highest positions in the State, Cnut seems to have pursued a policy directed toward establishing his grip on the throne by removing all possible claimants and by gratifying the national feelings of his subjects. The Danegeld was still, of course, exacted. In 1018 no less a sum than 82,500 pounds was paid, of which burden London bore rather more than one-eighth. It is evident, however, that this heavy charge was used to relieve the kingdom to some extent of future exactions, a large part of the Danish fleet being paid off and sent back to Denmark. It is, again, a remarkable sign of Cnut's confidence in the stability of his position that one year after his election to the English kingship he felt strong enough to dispense with all but forty ships of the fleet, which had been mainly instrumental in gaining for him his crown. The forty ships which remained appear to have been used by the King for his own protection, their crews forming his personal bodyguard under the title of huscarls, or housecarls.

The first great step toward convincing the people that they had nothing to fear from the rule of the Dane was taken in this same year (1018), when the Witan was summoned to Oxford. Then it was solemnly decreed that the laws of King Edgar should be observed. This meant, as William of Malmesbury pointed out, that the new King was prepared to observe the laws which the English King had observed, and not necessarily that he subscribed in detail to the particular dooms published by Edgar. In other words, the English customs and usages were to be respected and were to continue. There was to be no violent change, such as that which took place in Wales after the Edwardian Conquest of 1282. Freeman said that the English claim amounted to "a demand for good government in a time of past or expected oppression or maladministration," but to us this hardly appears to explain the position correctly. Cnut promised the continuance of English law; he did not, and could not, promise the observance of any particular degree of good or bad administration of that law. At the same time, it is manifest from Cnut's own dooms that he strove earnestly to re-establish justice and to cleanse the country from the maladministration under which it had groaned in the years of England's weakness. The very first clause of his secular dooms commences: "That is, then, the first that I will; that just laws be established, and every unjust law be carefully suppressed, and that every injustice be weeded out and rooted up, with all possible diligence, from this country. And let God's justice be exalted; and henceforth let every man, both poor and rich, be esteemed worthy of folk-right, and let just dooms be doomed to him." When we examine in detail these laws which he gave his new subjects we find them breathing a spirit of mercy and Christian charity: "Let gentle punishments be decreed"; "Do unto others as we would they should do unto us"; "We command that Christian men be not too readily sold out of the land"; "And be it constantly inquired, in every wise, how counsel may most especially be devised for the benefit of the nation . . . and unjust laws most diligently abolished"; "[Let] injustice be put down and justice loved"; "He who dooms a worse doom to the friendless and the comer from afar than to his fellow, injures himself"; "As a man is mightier or of greater degree, so ought he the more thoroughly to make payment for injustice."

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[1] In 1018 the signatures to a charter are Cnut, Emma, Haldenne, Thorkill; in 1019 Thorkill, Hakon, Leofwine, Halfdan, Eric, Ethelred, Godwine, etc.; in 1023 Godwine, Leofric, Osgod Clapa; in 1035 Cnut, Elfgiva Emma, Godwine, Leofric.

Such expressions give us at once the spirit of Cnut's laws and a reason for the ready acceptance by the English people of his rule. Of course, his qualities have their defects, and so we find somewhat savage laws directed against witchcraft and the heathen practices connected with the worship of wells, woods, sun, moon, stones, and forest trees of every kind. But in the main his laws are admirable. Standards of money and weights and measures are improved, adequate rules are laid down to check theft and the disposal of stolen goods, the local court system is preserved and strengthened. This system had much to do with the development of the political instinct of Englishmen and paved the way for the rise of Parliament and the political system of this country, which has enabled it beyond all other States to rule its people justly and harmoniously. False oaths are checked, the old police system is continued and strengthened. In view of the fact that the King himself was succeeded by a son, the child of an irregular union, it is instructive to observe that several of his laws are directed against immorality. It must be remembered, however, that, apart from his relations with Elfgiva of Northampton, which appear to have been regularized as far as possible, Cnut has left a reputation for personal propriety far higher than that of most of his contemporaries.

CHARACTER OF CNUT

We thus see before us a King of great parts. At twenty-two years of age he had conquered England. Raised above most in power by the strength of his arm and the wisdom of his mind, he showed the highest statecraft in the garnering in of the fruits of victory. Freed from rivals to the throne by a few executions and some banishments—measures which, for the age, cannot be called excessive—he had within a few years consolidated his position. He ruled justly from the first, and in later years gave his people wise laws, which were worthily kept. In his youth the son of a race which had butchered an Archbishop of Canterbury, in his later age he raised a minster on his field of victory and installed therein, as priest, Stigand, an Englishman, destined to be Archbishop of Canterbury and the aider of William the Norman. He supported the clergy and protected them, and in 1027 followed the example of several of the priests of early Christian monarchs and made the pilgrimage to Rome. In that Imperial city he was present at the coronation of Conrad the Salic, and from there he indited to his people the famous letter which, in the translated form preserved to us by Florence of Worcester, begins, "*Canutus rex totius Angliae, et Denemarciae, et Norreganorum, et partis Suanorum,*"[1] and which relates how the King had been received honourably by the Pope and the Emperor Conrad and had obtained, besides rich gifts and much honour, certain concessions for his people. For us, however, the letter is chiefly instructive in virtue of the lines wherein he commands his nobles and chief men throughout the realm to see that neither rich nor poor suffer the burden of unjust power under pain of the King's displeasure. Nor is the Treasury to be filled by exactions, for, as the King says, "I have no need of unjust gains extorted from the people."

In truth, at this time Cnut appears to have been a wealthy and 'magnificent' king. The splendour of his retinue had excited admiration in Rome, and his generous gifts had doubtless paved the way to a more intimate relationship between England and the Papacy and Empire than had existed for many years. Indeed, had this King been followed by others like him there is small chance that a Norman would ever have ruled from Cerdic's seat. Whether that would have been for the betterment of England is, of course, a matter of opinion. It is almost certain that it was not until after his return from this pilgrimage that his laws were promulgated, and from this time his reign passes along uneventfully, a certain sign of prosperity and good government, until at last Cnut the Great, who in earlier years had laid his crown upon Christ's altar at Canterbury, rendered up his life, in the forty-second year of his age, to claim, it may be, in another world the crown he had so worthily worn and surrendered on earth. He was buried in the Old Minster of Winchester, and there lay side by side with many a Saxon king, none of whom had ruled his people better than this Dane.

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[1] For full text see *Flor. Wigorn.* (Thorpe's edition), t. i, pp. 185–189.

Harold Harefoot and Harthacnut

The strong hand of Cnut being removed, we find the unhappy land once more becoming the prey of rival factions and being ruled by vicious kings. Of one of Cnut's successors, Harold Harefoot, we know so little that it is impossible justly to appraise his character ; the other successor, Harthacnut, we know was in every way unworthy both as a man and as a ruler. It is a matter for surprise that Harold, the child of Cnut and Elfgiva of Northampton, should have succeeded in making good his claim to the throne by ousting his legitimate half-brother Harthacnut. It would appear, however, as though a strong intrigue were at work, directed against Elfgiva Emma and her son. At the time of Cnut's death it is almost certain that Elfgiva of Northampton was still alive, and it is probable that she was the leader of the movement which eventually succeeded in placing Harold Harefoot, her son, on the throne and depriving her rival, Elfgiva Emma, of her treasures and, for a season, of her station. It is worthy of remark that in 1036 we find a certain Immo writing to Azeko, Bishop of Worms, and informing him that the young and delicate Gunhild, Harthacnut's sister, had learnt from England that " her unjust *noverca* was scheming to influence the great men to deprive Harthacnut of his realm." As Mr Stevenson says,[1] " It is clear from this [letter] that Elfgiva of Northampton was the main instrument in securing the crown of England to her son, Harold Harefoot."

The difficulty, however, is not solved by merely postulating a scheming woman with a clever and persuasive tongue. The succession of Harold Harefoot raises questions of difficulty and importance. It must be remembered that it was not a mere question of rivalry between Harold Harefoot and Harthacnut. Alfred and Edward, the sons of Ethelred and Elfgiva Emma, were alive, were older than either Harold Harefoot or Harthacnut, were princes directly descended from the house of Cerdic, were children of a woman who had been

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[1] *English Historical Review*, vol. xxviii, p. 116.

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Queen not only to Ethelred but also to Cnut, and were able, we should imagine, to count at least upon the moral support of the powerful house of Normandy. Yet Harold Harefoot, a bastard, the son of Cnut's mistress, a young man without outstanding qualities either of mind or body, was elected to the kingship, apparently with popular acclaim.

MURDER OF THE ATHELING ALFRED

In 1036 Alfred, it is true, came over to England, ostensibly on a visit to his mother, who was in retirement at Winchester.[1] Doubtless the visit had more serious ends in view. It is almost certain that the Prince desired to see for himself how affairs stood in the kingdom that had once been his father's. The fate which met the young Atheling showed clearly that there were men in high places who had small love for Ethelred's house. Hardly had he landed at Dover than he and his companions were seized and dragged to London. There some were mutilated, imprisoned, tortured, and slain. The Prince himself was taken by ship to Ely, being blinded during the journey, and set on land to grope through life in darkness among the monks of the fens. Shortly afterward he died, and was buried in the minster.

The responsibility for this bloody deed is a heavy one, and by some the charge has been laid against Earl Godwin. Freeman, anxious to clear his hero of the crime, adduces certain arguments, more notable for their apparent subtlety than their soundness, to show that the best text of the *Chronicle* when it said that Godwin was responsible for the seizure of Alfred did not know what it was talking about. His discussion of the question has, indeed, been described by Mr Stevenson as "perhaps as curious a piece of special pleading as is to be found in any serious history." That Godwin had a part in the deed is as certain as anything which happened in this puzzling period.[1] That he was the instigator of the crime is by no means so clear.

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[1] Some of the Norman chroniclers speak also of an expedition led by Edward. It is very doubtful if it occurred, and it had absolutely no effect if it did except to show that the English were not prepared to rally to the standard of their exiled prince. See *Two Saxon Chronicles*, vol. ii, p. 214.

We must remember that when Cnut died two rival parties arose. The one, or northern party, headed by Leofric, gained the upper hand in the Witan at Oxford and defeated Godwin, leading the southerners, with the result that Harold Harefoot was elected either to be Cnut's successor or to be regent during Harthacnut's absence in Denmark. Which of these positions was actually occupied by Harold we do not know, but from the *Chronicle* and the letter above quoted it would appear that Harold was by no means prepared to stand aside from the southern part of England on his rival's return. So far we thus see that in the opening year of Harold's reign Leofric was supporting Harold and Godwin was opposing him ; subsequent events show that Godwin was throwing his weight on the side of Elfgiva Emma against Elfgiva of Northampton and in support of Harthacnut's right to the kingship. Mr Stevenson has suggested that Godwin even went so far as to oppose by force of arms the decision of the Witan, and by so doing, as we read him, prevented the expulsion of Elfgiva Emma from the country.

In the year following, Harthacnut being still absent, Harold consolidated his position and became full King ; Elfgiva Emma was expelled and fled to Bruges, where she was received by her kinsman Baldwin, Count of Flanders.[2] The election probably took place very early in the year, perhaps in the January of 1037, and when Alfred landed it is manifest that Harold was well favoured both by people and nobles. We must therefore conclude that Godwin had swung round on to the side of Harold's party,[3] had forsaken Elfgiva Emma's interests and those of her Danish son, and was prepared to act the part of executioner in respect of the Atheling Alfred. That he took any more prominent part is improbable. It is apparent that at this time he would have been less in favour than Leofric, and it was probably the Mercian earl or Harold himself who decided upon the treacherous slaughter of the young Prince's suite and the blinding of the Atheling. Godwin's part, however, is sufficiently base, and it is evident that Freeman was endeavouring to make a hero of a man whose ability was directed not toward the advancement of his country's interest so much as of his own—whose ability and ambition were by no means matched by greatness of character.

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[1] The Rev. William Hunt in the *Dictionary of National Biography, s.v.* 'Godwin,' says : "the evidence against him [Godwin] appears conclusive."

[2] The father-in-law of William the Conqueror.

[3] See, however, for another view *Two Saxon Chronicles*, vol. ii, p. 213.

Harold once established on the throne, we find him reigning in comparative quiet, untroubled either by Edward or Harthacnut; and although the Welsh in 1039 made a serious attack upon the border, slaying the brother of Leofric and many others, this was the only break in the three years of peace which stretched between his full election to the kingship and his death in 1040. Two years before (1038) the good Ethelnoth, Archbishop of Canterbury and an uncle to Earl Godwin, had passed away.[1] It was probably he who was responsible for much of the good government with which England had, in the main, been blessed since the early years of Cnut's reign.

HARTHACNUT

On the death of Harold, Harthacnut allowed little time to pass before setting sail from Flanders in sixty ships for England. He came at the invitation of the Witan; and again we remark that it was to the Dane, and not to the Saxon prince, that the people of England, Earl Godwin among them, turned. It cannot have been long before they bitterly repented their choice. Almost immediately on his arrival they learned how utterly worthless the new King was. As the *Chronicle* well says, "he did nothing royal during his whole reign." He commenced his rule by levying such heavy tribute to pay off the ships that it could hardly be collected. Next he vented his spleen on the corpse of Harold, which he caused to be taken up from the grave and cast into the boggy fens. In the following year Worcestershire was ravaged because the people had slain two of the royal servants engaged in raising a heavy impost.[1]

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[1] It was probably after the death of Ethelnoth that Harold "caused Sandwich to be seized from Christ Church into his own hand, and held it well-nigh a twelvemonth, and at all events fully two herring seasons."

In the same year the King betrayed one whom he had sworn to protect. It is noteworthy that prominent among those to whom the King delegated the task of punishing the people of Worcestershire are to be found the names of Godwin,[2] Leofric, and Siward.

The reign so ignobly commenced was not, however, destined to last long. In 1042 the King was present at a betrothal feast at the house of Osgod Clapa, a man of great wealth whose name stands prominently in at least one charter, and who resided " at a place called Lambeth." In the course of the banquet he suddenly collapsed while in the act of drinking, became speechless, and, after lingering some time in that state, finally expired on June 8, 1042.

Edward the Confessor

At the time of the fortunate death of Harthacnut his half-brother Edward, later known as ' the Confessor,' was residing at the English Court, having journeyed from Normandy in the preceding year upon a visit which, according to the clear words of the *Chronicle*, continued until Harthacnut's death. Already Edward's right of succession appears to have been recognized by Harthacnut, who probably had no wish to see Harold Harefoot's son [3] (now dragging out his life in some French town in Rouergue, whither, according to the cartulary relating to the monastery of Sainte-Foi at Conques, he had gone on pilgrimage) follow him on the throne. Apart from this person, of whose very existence we have but recently become aware, there was no other near claimant to the throne, and it is probable that Godwin had already gauged the temper of the future 'Confessor' and realized that the elevation of such a weakling to the kingship would open out unlimited opportunities for the future advancement of his own power.

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[1] The money was needed to pay the standing navy, now raised to thirty-two ships in place of the sixteen ships of Harold's day.

[2] Godwin had fallen into disgrace with Harthacnut probably because of the murder of Alfred, who was, of course, Harthacnut's uterine brother. Possibly the Earl was now making special efforts to prove his loyalty. Besides taking part in the Worcestershire expedition he made a splendid gift to the King of a ship with a golden beak; he was also compelled to clear himself of the charge of murder by oath.

[3] See as to this Mr Stevenson's article in the *English Historical Review*, vol. xxviii, p. 117.

Sweyn Estrithsson

It is true that at the time of Harthacnut's death some support was given by one party in the Witan to the pretensions of Sweyn,[1] Swegen, or Swend, the son of Estrith, nephew of Cnut and of Godwin's second wife. It is also probable, as the *Vita Eadwardi* states, that Godwin resisted his claim and pleaded with his accustomed eloquence on behalf of the Atheling Edward. Whether this was the act of a high-souled patriot struggling to obtain a Saxon king for the rulership of England or merely a far-sighted piece of intrigue directed toward his own aggrandisement is a matter not susceptible of proof, but we remark that Edward had the character of a puppet and was the mere plaything of the Earl for years, until he fell into the hands of Godwin's rivals, the Norman favourites. We must also remember that there was much talk in later years of a bargain which Godwin made with the Atheling, by virtue of which Godwin and his sons were to retain all their offices and estates and the King was to marry the Earl's daughter.

Godwin's Position

It is highly probable that some such bargain was struck; it is certain that the King did become the son-in-law of the Earl and that for the next few years Godwin was the most powerful man in the kingdom, far outrivalling in splendour even such magnates as Leofric of Mercia and Siward of Northumbria. His possessions, or those of his relatives, absorbed in time the larger part of England. Wessex, once the fairest of the Saxon kingdoms, owned him for lord. Swegen, his eldest son, ruled over Herefordshire, Gloucestershire, and Oxfordshire. Harold, his second son, held the Earldom of East Anglia. Beorn, a nephew by marriage, was Earl of Hertfordshire and Buckinghamshire. Tostig, the third son, who later (1051) married Judith, daughter of Baldwin IV, Count of Flanders, and granddaughter of Richard II, Duke of Normandy, eventually became (1055), on the death of Siward, Earl of Northumbria, Northamptonshire, and Huntingdonshire. The fourth son, Gyrth, eventually (1057) succeeded Aelfgar (Harold's successor) in the Earldom of East Anglia; he probably held wide estates before, and subsequently had Oxfordshire added to East Anglia. Of Wulfnoth, the youngest child, we know but little, but, accepting Mr Anscombe's suggestion that the word 'Child,' which was the distinguishing mark of Godwin's father, 'Wulfnoth Child,' meant that he was the youngest of a family who held their land by the custom of Borough English,[1] it is a permissible conjecture that Wulfnoth held the family lands in Sussex. As for the daughters, Eadgyth, or Edith, became Queen in 1045. Of the other two we know but little. Gunhild married nobly and died at Bruges. Of the very existence of Elfgiva there is some doubt.

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[1] We spell it 'Sweyn' in order to distinguish him from Godwin's son Swegen, whose name is also sometimes written 'Sweyn.'

SWEGEN AND THE ABBESS

We thus see that the family of Earl Godwin controlled the major part of England, and it is no surprise to find the Earl supreme in the councils of the King and the government of the realm. From the beginning, however, he had to combat three forces, each of which was inimical to the fortunes of his house. Edward, weakling though he was, was dangerous as a patron in that he was ruled by favourites. While Godwin held the King's favour all was well, but the murder of Alfred had neither been forgotten nor forgiven. The Confessor, brought up and protected in the Norman Court, numbered all the friends of his youth from among Norman clerics and

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[1] Whereby the youngest and not the eldest son succeeds.

Norman lords, and as time passed the English Court became more and more Norman. Englishmen saw themselves supplanted once more by foreigners, this time from Normandy. Again, one of Godwin's sons, Swegen, was a riotous youth who brought disgrace upon his house by the seduction of the Abbess of Leominster and later by the murder of his cousin Beorn—deeds of wickedness which even in those rude days outraged public sentiment and brought down the wrath of the King at first upon the offender and, when Godwin sought to protect him, upon the Earl himself.

After the affair with the abbess Swegen fled to Denmark, and was outlawed. This was in 1046, and shortly afterward Godwin was defeated in the Witan on the question whether aid should be sent to Sweyn, the son of Estrith. This defeat by the Leofric party, which was now doubtless strengthened by the Norman favourites who had secured the election of Robert of Jumièges to the Bishopric of London two years before, was a clear sign that Godwin's power was for the moment declining, and when, two years later (1048), the Earl again failed to win the Witan to his views, it was apparent that new influences were on foot tending to undermine his position. That he was still capable of protecting the family interests is, however, clear from the fact that Swegen's earldom was not escheated, but was divided between Harold and Beorn.

SWEGEN AND BEORN

This action, though it benefited the family, seems to have so infuriated Swegen that he risked an outlaw's death, returned to England and slew Beorn. Once more Swegen made good his escape, flying to Flanders, and it is significant that soon after Godwin contrived the marriage of his son Tostig to a daughter of Baldwin, Count of Flanders. As a result, it would appear, of joint pressure exerted by Baldwin and Godwin, Swegen was pardoned and inlawed, and soon afterward returned. But by now, though influence had gained a temporary triumph, the crimes of the son and the resulting intrigues of the father were giving a handle to the Norman favourites around Edward, who diligently sought by every means in their power to break the power of the Earl.

In the resulting quarrel between King and Earl we must readily agree that Godwin appears in a favourable light as one who risked disgrace in preference to tolerating devastation and death inflicted upon a section of his countrymen. Before, however, we come to consider the results of his refusal to harry the town of Dover, we must trace out the first steps taken by the Norman favourites to bring about his downfall.

FALL OF GODWIN

From the first year of the Confessor's reign it is clear that the King harboured bitter feelings with regard to his long exile. Hardly was he on the throne when we find him[1] leading a raid, in which Godwin, Leofric, and Siward took part, against Winchester, where his mother, Elfgiva Emma, was residing. The Queen-mother appears to have been dispossessed of all her treasures because "she had done less for him [the King] than he would, before he was King, and also since." Even as Elfgiva Emma's predilection for her Danish children was not forgiven, so Godwin's part in the capture and mutilation of Alfred rankled in the King's mind. For a time that deed was neutralized by Godwin's support of Edward's claim and by the bargain we have mentioned. But when the King's Norman favourites, many of whom were priests—one, the same Robert of Jumièges before mentioned, becoming Archbishop of Canterbury in 1050—began to whisper that Godwin was a traitorous self-seeker who gave none of his wealth to the Church, who sought to build up his family fortunes so high that they would overtop the King's, whose son was a seducer and a murderer, who had lent ear and support to the claims of the King's rival, Sweyn Estrithsson, and who was plotting with Baldwin to oust the Normans and, it might be, to attack the King himself, Edward began to dwell on Godwin's past and to remember that this man, now so powerful, was closely related to Eadric Streona, who had done so much to overthrow his father, Ethelred, that he had contrived to sail with the most favourable wind throughout the reigns of Cnut and Harold, that he was related to the traitor who had sold the English at Bath, and again, last and most of all, that he had treacherously seized Alfred, the King's own brother. Whether these thoughts were actually in the King's mind we cannot know; we may, at least, surmise that the Norman followers made every effort to prevent their being forgotten. The breaking-point was not, however, reached until 1051, the year which saw the English released from the heavy tax payable to the Danish troops.

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[1] According to the chronicle called 'D.'

In that year, some time in September, Eustace, Count of Boulogne, a brother-in-law of King Edward, sailed to Dover with a somewhat numerous retinue. After the landing a dispute arose between his men and the citizens of Dover, in the course of which one of the townsmen was slain. By way of revenge, a neighbour of the murdered man slew one of the Frenchmen. The Count, on hearing of this, and enraged at the death of his dependent, directed his soldiers to make reprisals and "slew many men and women and trampled under their horses' hoofs their children and babes." The townsmen now hastened to take up arms to prevent further slaughter, and succeeded in killing seven of Eustace's men. The remainder made their escape with difficulty to King Edward, whose Court was then at Gloucester.

One would have thought that a fracas between townsmen and a noble's train, however begun and however terminated, would have demanded of the King inquiry before punishment. Edward, however, appears to have taken the side of Eustace without hearing either the townsmen or their superior lord, Godwin. As a result of the King's attitude,[1] which was a direct insult to Godwin, that Earl gathered a large army from

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[1] There are immense difficulties in reconciling the various accounts of this dispute. See *Two Saxon Chronicles*, vol. ii, pp. 234–236; Freeman, *Norman Conquest*, vol. ii, pp. 129–160, 559–605. We have relied in the main on *Chronicle D* and Florence of Worcester, together with the *Vita Eadwardi*.

Wessex, Kent, and Sussex. He was joined later by Swegen, leading the men of Oxfordshire, Gloucestershire, Herefordshire, Somersetshire, and Berkshire, and by Harold, who had mustered the men of Essex, East Anglia, Huntingdon, and Cambridge. With these armies the Earl and his sons encamped at Langtree, and sent messengers to the King at Gloucester demanding the surrender of Eustace and the Normans and Boulognese who had seized Richard's Castle.[1] Meanwhile the King, urged on by the Norman party, had taken steps to raise force against force, and, hearing that the troops of Leofric and Siward, Earls of Mercia and Northumbria respectively, were marching to his aid, supported by those of Ralph, a Norman who had lately established himself on the Welsh march in a motte castle of the type which was later to play such a large part in Welsh history, he replied firmly to Earl Godwin and refused to remove his protection either from Eustace or his followers. The two armies were now not far from one another, and a battle was only averted by the counsel of Earl Leofric, who urged a peaceful settlement if by any means possible.

As a result of this wise advice it was eventually agreed to submit the matter to arbitration rather than test it by force of arms. Godwin appears in the course of these negotiations to have exercised much ingenuity, as a result of which he cleverly obtained London as the place of trial, doubtless hoping that the citizens of that place would rally round their Earl. It is very probable, however, that the Norman party had already hit upon an expedient for more than removing this apparent advantage.

FLIGHT OF GODWIN

The next stage is reached when we find the Earl marching to London and the King, having strengthened his forces, making for the same meeting-place. Godwin, we are informed by some of the chroniclers, arrived at Southwark with a vast army, which, however, as the days passed by, grew less and less, until the Earl, fearing the King's might and knowing that if he were weak the judgment would inevitably go against him, fled the country and took refuge at the Court of Baldwin. We may, however, say without any doubt that this account of the cause of his flight is not correct. For one thing, it is practically certain that London would favour Godwin against such men as the Earls of Mercia and Northumbria. Moreover, Godwin was incontestably supporting the rights of the men of Dover against wrongs inflicted by foreigners. There is, indeed, another and far more probable reason given for the flight in the *Vita Eadwardi*, which suggests that after the Earl had come to his house in London and the King had also arrived a sudden change was made in the nature of the charge to be preferred against the Earl. No longer was there any talk of Eustace and the men of Dover, but the old crime against the Atheling Alfred was raked up. In the very city to which Godwin had led that prince a prisoner the demand was made that Godwin should produce the body of his captive.

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[1] Florence speaks of Dover Castle as the place seized.

The Earl seems to have realized at once that he had been trapped. There in London, many of whose citizens had witnessed the procession in which he had led the Atheling captive to his Danish master, Harold, it was useless for him to hope for sympathy or support in such a cause. Were it a dispute between Englishman and Norman he could count upon the support of his men and the aid of the Londoners, but this present charge was unanswerable. He had been seen the captor of the Prince; he was required to produce that captive; the Prince lay dead, a mutilated corpse. Thus caught in a web of his own weaving, the Earl instantly took steps to save himself by flight. With his wife, together with Tostig, Judith, Swegen, and Gyrth, he hastened to Thorney. There a ship was loaded with all the articles of value the fugitives had time to collect, and, hoisting sail, they crossed the sea for Flanders, there to reside at the Court of Baldwin, Judith's father. Simultaneously Harold and Leofwine fled to Bristol, embarked on a ship, already prepared by command of Swegen, and thence made their way to Ireland to the Court of Diarmaid mac Mael-na-mbo, King of Leinster. What happened to Wulfnoth we do not know, but Edith, the Queen, fell into disgrace and was sent, with only one handmaid, to Wherwell, where she was received into the charge of the abbess, a sister of the King.

Thus, after a short dispute and without a blow being struck, we find the most powerful earl in English history, together with almost the whole of his family, banished or in disgrace. His absence is soon made evident by the presence of a new visitor to these shores, who could hardly have appeared had Godwin held his old position—William, Duke of Normandy, destined to be the victor of Senlac and conqueror of England, who now makes his first appearance in our story. About the same time another figure leaves the stage, for in March of 1052 Elfgiva Emma, who had been living in retirement since 1043, died, and was buried in the Old Minster at Winchester. In these later years the "old lady," as the chronicler calls her, or Queen-dowager, as we should say, had played but a small part; but even in her declining years she was still wealthy and of consequence enough to be a signatory to important charters.

We must now for a moment leave the quarrel between Godwin and the Normans and see how matters were faring on the Welsh border. For some years the Welsh had been somewhat threatening.

Welsh Affairs

The most important Welsh chieftain at this time was Gruffydd ap Llywelyn,[1] who as early as 1039 had surprised, attacked, and defeated the Mercian army at Rhyd y Groes, on the Severn. Later we find him opposed to Howel of Deheubarth, whom he defeated at Pen Cadeir in 1041 and slew at Aber Tywi in 1044. Another rival was Gruffydd ap Rhydderch, with whom he was contending for the chieftaincy of South Wales on the death of Howel. In 1046 Llywelyn's son was so hard pressed that he is found calling in Saxon aid in the person of Earl Swegen. For a time he seems to have suffered a decline in power, but almost immediately after the banishment of Godwin and the departure of Earl Swegen he reappeared on the scene. This was in 1052. In the intervening years many events had taken place on the border. Earl Swegen had been driven from Hereford, and his place had been taken by Ralph, son of the Count of Vexin and nephew of Edward the Confessor. With him many important Normans had come and Norman castles were beginning to spring up. The Welsh chieftain no doubt viewed with anger this presence of a new and powerful group of nobles, and in 1052 he vented his wrath in a raid upon Herefordshire. From the return of Gruffydd to his people, loaded with spoil as a result of a victory at Leominster and a consequent and successful foray, we may date the commencement of the struggle which was to make Gruffydd one of the most dangerous of Harold's many opponents.

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[1] Or Griffith the son of Llewelyn.

RETURN OF GODWIN

The West Country was thus troubled by the Welsh incursions when the Earl Godwin and Harold made a concerted attempt to re-establish their power. Doubtless throughout the winter of 1051–52 the exiled Earls had been preparing forces with which to impose their will upon the King, and simultaneously the Norman advisers of the Confessor had collected at Sandwich a fleet of forty vessels with which to prevent any threatened landing. The first blow seems to have been struck by Harold, who, sailing from Ireland, came up the Severn and raided Somerset and Devonshire, where we are told he slew " more than thirty good thanes," afterward landing at Porlock and journeying coastwise along the south coast toward the east, purposing to join forces with his father. Godwin meanwhile had effected a secret landing and had gathered to his standard the men of Kent and the butsecarls, or Danish marines, who were doubtless aggrieved at the disbanding of a part of the standing fleet effected by the King in the preceding year. To his banner also came the men of Essex, Sussex, and Surrey, besides many others. As yet, however, he evidently felt himself too weak to oppose the royal fleet, which he evaded, and, sailing round to the Isle of Wight, joined forces with Harold. Godwin and Harold now collected many adherents, including the discharged Danish butsecarls, all along the south coast and set sail for Sandwich with a powerful army. Meanwhile the King had endeavoured in his turn to increase his forces, but it is evident that there was no enthusiasm among the people either for the King or his Norman favourites. "Help," we are told, "came very late," and Godwin was now making for London, sailing up the Thames estuary with a formidable host. After staying some little time at Southwark, possibly visiting his own house there, and having taken steps to win over the townsmen, in which he was apparently successful, the Earl mustered the whole of his force and, dragging anchor, sailed on the flood-tide along the southern shore and under London Bridge. At the same time the land force made its way along the strand.[1] The naval force now turned from the south bank and made for the north bank with the intention of surrounding the King's fleet, which was apparently stationed along the north bank not far from Westminster and was supported by a land force. All appeared ready for the opening of a great and bloody battle when Stigand, now Bishop of Winchester and a supporter of the Earl, urged Edward to refrain from bringing on his people the evils of civil war. The Bishop's advice, supported by the leaders of the townsmen, finally persuaded the King to offer no resistance. It is, indeed, fairly manifest that the Earl was by this time regarded as a national deliverer, and that the Norman favourites of the Confessor were detested and had brought their royal master into some discredit.

The sudden change in the King's attitude spelt for the Normans the disaster which had once befallen Godwin. The Archbishop Robert, together with Bishop Ulf, fled with their followers, hacking their way through East Gate and eventually taking ship for Normandy. Meanwhile Godwin and Harold had landed and a hasty meeting of the Witan had been convoked. In that council the Godwinist party was completely triumphant. Robert the Archbishop, Ulf, Bishop of Dorchester, and William, Bishop of London, were outlawed; Godwin and Harold received back their possessions; the Queen was received once more into favour. As one of the texts says, "The King granted to the Earl and his children his full friendship and full earldom, and all that he before had possessed"; or, as another chronicle puts it, "Godwin, the Earl, and Harold, and the Queen, sat down in their possessions."

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[1] *Chronicle D:* "⁊ trymedon hy be þæm strande" — "and arrayed themselves along the strand" or shore. They were marching along the northern shore.

DEATH OF GODWIN

By the following year (1053) we find the King feasting with all the signs of perfect amity with Godwin, Harold, and Tostig. Swegen has already passed from our history, having died in 1052 while returning from Jerusalem, where he had gone from Bruges. Godwin was soon to follow the son he had risked so much to support, for at this very banquet, held at Winchester, he suddenly collapsed at the King's footstool, and was carried from the chamber speechless. He was probably the victim of a seizure.[1] Thus stricken, he lingered for some time, but died without having regained the use of his limbs, of which the stroke had deprived him, or his speech. He was buried in the Old Minster at Winchester, where but a few short months before the body of Elfgiva Emma had found a last resting-place.

The same year, although Robert had not surrendered the pall, Stigand was created Archbishop of Canterbury, receiving the symbol of his office from the hands of an antipope. As we shall see, this twofold defect in the Archbishop's title had its effect upon later events.

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[1] The story of the cursed morsel which was said to have caused the Earl's death is an invention which appears in several later chronicles, *e.g.* Roger of Wendover and the *Chronicon Monasterii de Hyda*. According to this story the clumsiness of the King's butler and Godwin's reply brought a taunt from the King which raised the question of Alfred's death; whereupon the Earl, taking up a small piece of bread, said, "*Domine mi rex, haec buccella hodie vitae mihi fiat terminus, si in nece fratris tui auctor fui vel conscius,*" and so saying placed the morsel in his mouth and attempted to swallow it. By a divine judgment it stuck in his throat and choked him, thus causing his death. The tale is useful as showing the later opinion of the Earl's part in the Alfred affair, and the belief in divine intervention to punish wrongdoers.

The Scottish Campaign of 1054

With the opening of the year 1054 our story is again concerned with the tramp of soldiery, but the place of combat is now beyond the northern border, across which Siward, Earl of Northumbria, led a powerful army, purposing to punish Macbeth of Scotland, immortalized by Shakespeare as the murderer of Duncan. This crime was not, of course, the cause of Siward's anger. Duncan had been slain in 1040 and was no friend of Siward's, for five years before (1035) he had laid siege to Durham. It is true that Duncan was related by marriage to Siward, but we must look for the reason for Siward's march against Macbeth less in a desire for revenge, than in the fact that the Scotch King had harboured Norman fugitives from the English Court.[1] A battle was fought, resulting in much slaughter, in which Siward was victor, but Macbeth escaped, to be slain three years later (1057) by Malcolm Canmore, the husband of Margaret, the Atheling Edward's[2] daughter—a union which connected the royal families of England and Scotland and eventually gave once more to England a Queen[3] in whose veins ran the blood of Cerdic.

Death of Siward

The Scottish campaign seems to have terminated with the one great fight, and it is possible that, besides losing his son Osborn, the Earl himself was also wounded. In the following year the old warrior died a natural death, and was buried in the minster of Galmanho, which stood in the suburbs of York and was later merged in St Mary's. Henry of Huntingdon preserves a dramatic account of Siward's last hours.

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[1] This also is not clear. Siward was hardly the man to do Godwin's or Harold's executionary work.

[2] Son of Edmund Ironside.

[3] Matilda, their daughter, married Henry I.

Angry that, after a life spent on the battlefield, he should die "like a cow," the Earl commanded his servants to buckle his armour on him, and so accoutred, and with axe, sword, and shield, he made his last stand against his enemy.

The Welsh Border

With the death of Siward we must turn once more to view the condition of affairs on the Welsh border. By 1055 Gruffydd ap Llywelyn, of whom we have already spoken, had finally overthrown his rival, Gruffydd ap Rhydderch. He was thus prince of nearly the whole of Wales, and his position was further strengthened by an alliance with Leofric of Mercia. When Godwin was banished Aelfgar Leofricsson was given the East Anglian earldom. With the return to power of Godwin and his sons the ancient rivalry between the families was seen to have grown into a real enmity, which was not healed by the surrender by Aelfgar of the forfeited earldom. Shortly after Harold became Earl of Wessex Aelfgar was accused of treason and outlawed.

This was in 1055, the same year that saw Gruffydd prince of the major part of Wales. It was not entirely unnatural, despite the ancient rivalry between Mercian and Welshman, for Aelfgar in this time of need to turn for help to his most powerful neighbour. Nor did he content himself with this alone, for we find him also seeking aid from the Danes.

The first and final adventure of the allies was the attack upon Hereford—an attack so boldly conceived, so admirably carried out, and so convincing in its result that almost without a further struggle peace was made, Aelfgar being restored and much land granted to Gruffydd.

The combatants at the fight at Hereford were Gruffydd and Aelfgar on the one side and Ralph, son of the Count of Vexin, on the other. The allies marched to the plunder of Hereford. They were met about two miles outside the city by the Norman Earl. The actual combat appears to have been of short duration. Ralph and his men were scattered; their lines were entirely broken and the allies rushed the city, capturing the castle by a surprise attack and after very little fighting. Hereford itself, including its cathedral, was fired, after the allies had removed such valuables as they cared to carry away.

This was a serious blow struck against the prestige and dignity of the King of the English. Some small attempt was made to send a punitive force against Wales. It was totally unsuccessful, and the year was too far advanced for a lengthy campaign. Peace was therefore patched up—a peace which from its nature and from the place of meeting may be called the Truce of Billingsley.

As soon as winter was over this truce was torn up, and Bishop Leofgar, who was doubtless anxious to revenge the burning of Hereford Cathedral and the murder of its seven canons, led an army against Wales. The opposing forces met in the valley of the Machwy on June 16, 1056, and the battle resulted once again in a decisive victory for the Welsh Prince. The Bishop was slain and his army retreated in disorder. Again an attempt was made to send an effective punitive expedition against Gruffydd, again it failed, and again peace was made.

In the following year Gruffydd's ally, Aelfgar, succeeded his father as Earl of Mercia, and we find Gruffydd strengthening the ties which bound them together by his marriage with the Lady Godiva's beautiful granddaughter, Ealdgyth, daughter of Aelfgar, and destined for a few months to be the consort of the King of England.

Edward the Atheling

It was the year after the defeat of Leofgar that Edward the Atheling, who had been in exile in Hungary for some forty years, came to England with his "goodly team of bairns" by his wife Agatha, a kinswoman of the Emperor. The cause of this belated return to his native land is by no means clear. Perhaps we may trace it in the events which followed on Earl Godwin's outlawry and his subsequent return to power. When the Earl was in exile preparing to launch his fleet from the sluggish waters of the Yser against England, his son's future rival, William the Norman, had, as we have seen, taken advantage of the temporary victory of the Norman party to visit the Confessor. In the course of his short stay it is probable that he extorted from the King a promise that he, the Norman, whose house had befriended, protected, and supported both the King, his brother, and his parents in the days of their exile, should succeed to the throne on Edward's death. Such a promise, if made, did not live longer in the King's conscience than did the Norman favourites at the King's Court. Within but a few years of Godwin's return and the flight of the Normans the King apparently invited Edward to return from his exile, and he now came, bringing with him his son Edgar and two daughters. It is possible that Florence of Worcester gives us true history when he writes, "The King had determined to appoint him [Edward Atheling] his successor and heir to the crown," but if this were so, we may be sure that Harold had had no share in the Confessor's counsel. We can hardly doubt that at this time Harold, who was now Earl of Wessex and Kent, whose kinsmen held, as Freeman says, "the whole kingdom, save a few shires in the centre," whose father had ruled England, in fact if not in name, for decades with but one small break, who was connected with the royal house by blood, was not prepared to stand upon one side in favour of some unknown exile. But Edward had now come. It would seem that Harold or some one about the King had won over that vacillating monarch to the Godwin side. Audience of the King was refused the new-comer, and, significantly enough, within a short time of his landing the Atheling was dead and of Edmund's line the child Edgar was now the sole male representative.

Thus, whether by sickness or, as we think, by the hand of an assassin, the Atheling, Harold's most dangerous rival, as he thought, was removed. In the autumn of the same year (1057) Leofric, the old Earl of Mercia, a man wise in counsel, generous to the Church and bitter in opposition to the Godwin party, also died, to be followed to the grave within four months by Ralph, Earl of Hereford, the son of King Edward's sister, and one whom Edward had once thought to make his heir.

HAROLD'S WELSH CAMPAIGN

As a result of the disappearance from our stage of Leofric and Ralph the earldoms of Mercia and Hereford (or the Magesaētas) were left vacant. It is clear that Aelfgar regarded himself as entitled to both. Harold, on the other hand, determined to seize the earldom of Hereford. As a result we find Aelfgar and Gruffydd ap Llywelyn once more in alliance.

In 1058 Harold was successful in obtaining the banishment of Aelfgar, an exile which was, however, but temporary. Shortly afterward the Earl returned, thanks to aid given him by Gruffydd and some Norwegian shipmen.[1] Four years later the alliance was terminated, for in 1062 Aelfgar died. Gruffydd became once more open to attack from Mercia, and the events which led up to the death of the Welsh Prince in the year following all centre round Earl Harold. Harold seems to have regarded Gruffydd with peculiar malignity. Perhaps there was a woman in the case, for on Gruffydd's death we know that Harold hastened to marry his widow. However this may be, in 1063 Harold planned to surprise and murder the Welsh Prince in his palace at Rhuddlan. The move was certainly a bold one. The Earl pushed right through North Wales from Chester with a small bodyguard in an endeavour to catch his enemy unprepared. The attempt failed in its main purpose. Gruffydd escaped by sea; but his palace was burnt, almost about his ears, and the adventure must have destroyed his prestige in a very large measure.

Harold was not, however, content with the burning of his rival's palace or with the reduction of his rival's fame. He had clearly determined upon Gruffydd's death. With this end in view we find him arranging with Tostig a large and well-developed scheme for the invasion of Wales and the final overthrow of Gruffydd. Tostig was to advance from the north, probably by way of Chester, while Harold collected his men at Bristol. Both armies mainly consisted of light cavalry—the type of military unit best suited for a campaign in which rapid movement over difficult country was essential to success. With the appearance of this formidable army at its gates the men of Wales showed their fatal weakness of disunion. The men of the south broke away from their compatriots of the north, and Gruffydd was left to meet the invader with the loss of one-third of his supporters.

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[1] Under the leadership of Magnus, son of Harold Sigurdsson, or Hardrada.

As a result of this defection Gruffydd was too weak to oppose Harold. The whole of North Wales was ravaged by the English. Gruffydd's own men rebelled. The Welsh leader was assassinated and his head was sent to Harold as a peace-offering.

Harold was, as we might expect, not slow in following up his triumphs. Some two years after the death of Gruffydd he was again in Gwent. Apparently no opposition was offered, and it may be that the expedition was one of pleasure. So satisfied was he that his enemies were quite subdued that we find him ordering the building of a hunting-lodge at Portskewet. The time had not yet come, however, when a Saxon or Norman house was safe within the Welsh border unless fully guarded with moat and mound and palisade. It happened as he might have expected. While the builders were busy constructing this summer retreat, Caradog,[1] Prince of Gwynllwg and Gwent, swooped down from the hills, murdered the builders, and carried off everything that was portable.

Tostig

In the same year that Harold's hunting-lodge was being destroyed by the lawless Caradog grimmer deeds were being done by Tostig, now,[2] through the favour of the King, Earl of Northumberland, Northamptonshire, and Huntingdonshire in succession to Siward, whose son, Waltheof, was passed over. Since his elevation to this high position Tostig had dealt mercilessly with the lawless men with which the northern borders

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[1] Pronounced 'Craddock.'

[2] He became Earl of Northumberland, etc., in 1055.

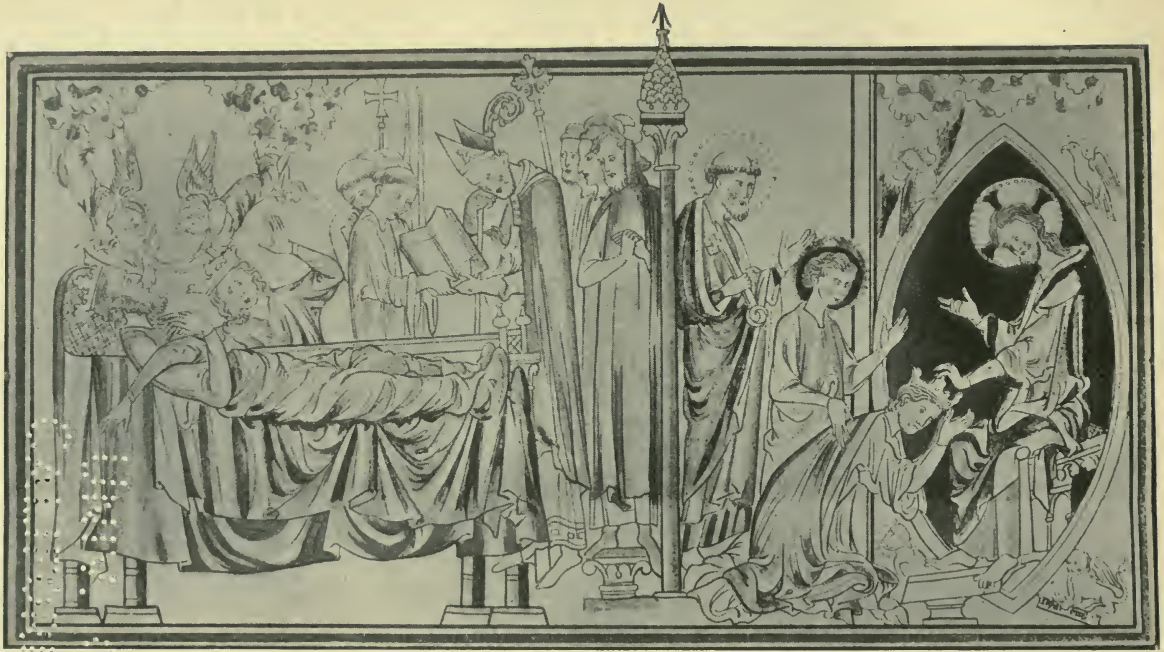

PLATE XXX. DEATH OF EDWARD THE CONFESSOR

abounded, and mutilated and slew large numbers of robbers and robber chiefs, some being men of high rank. He also supported Malcolm against Macbeth, and appears to have befriended the Church, making in 1061, in company with his brother Gyrth and Aldred, Archbishop of York, the pilgrimage to Rome. It was on the way back that his life was saved by a young noble named Gospatric, who, by a stratagem, prevented the Earl's capture by a robber band. Two years later (1063) he had supported Harold in the Welsh campaign, his earldom being ruled in his absence by one called Copsi. In the following year a smouldering hatred, which had first been created by his harsh rule, burst into flame because of two crimes committed in that year with every accompaniment of basest treachery. The first was concerned with the death of two thegns, Gamel and Ulf, whom Tostig lured to York, promising safety, and there slew; the other was the murder of another Gospatric, who, according to Florence, " was treacherously killed by order of Queen Edith at the King's Court on the fourth night of Christmas, for the sake of her brother Tostig." These deeds, together with excessive exactions levied by the Earl, caused his subjects to revolt. His Danish huscarls were seized and put to death, and the day after the revolt broke out two hundred of his liegemen were slain on the north bank of the Humber. Finally his treasury was broken into and sacked, and the rebels, gathering their forces, marched on Northampton, there to be joined by Edwin of Mercia, leading Mercians and Welshmen. At Northampton they were met by Earl Harold, who sought to restore peace. It was in vain; the outlawry of Tostig was demanded, and after some preliminary manœuvring on the part of Tostig's friends, the doom of outlawry was decreed at the meeting at Oxford, and the Earl fled with his wife once more to Flanders and passed the winter at St Omer.

Death of Edward the Confessor

It was but shortly after this that the King fell into his last and somewhat lengthy sickness, which finally robbed him of life on Thursday, the eve of the Epiphany, 1066. He seems throughout his reign to have been a weak King, easily controlled by favourites. There must, however, have been something lovable in a man whose name in the years to come was so frequently on the lips of patriots, when, groaning under a foreign yoke, the people called on their rulers to grant them once again the laws of Edward. We see, indeed, in the pages of Florence that something of the love shown later by the English for King Edward was present in the hearts of his contemporaries, for when "King Edward the Pacific, the pride of the English," was drawn with royal pomp to his last resting-place, we are told that his hearse passed "amidst the tears and lamentations of the crowds which flocked to his funeral."

More noted for his piety than his statecraft, the friend of priests rather than of warriors or statesmen, a King who allowed himself to be ruled by favourites and outrivalled by a subject, his character is not inadequately summed up by the thirteenth-century rhyming chronicler who wrote of him:

> Sa char venqui par chasteté,
> Le mund par humilité,
> E diable par ses uertuz.[1]

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[1] The flesh he conquered by chastity,
The world through humility,
And the devil by his virtues.

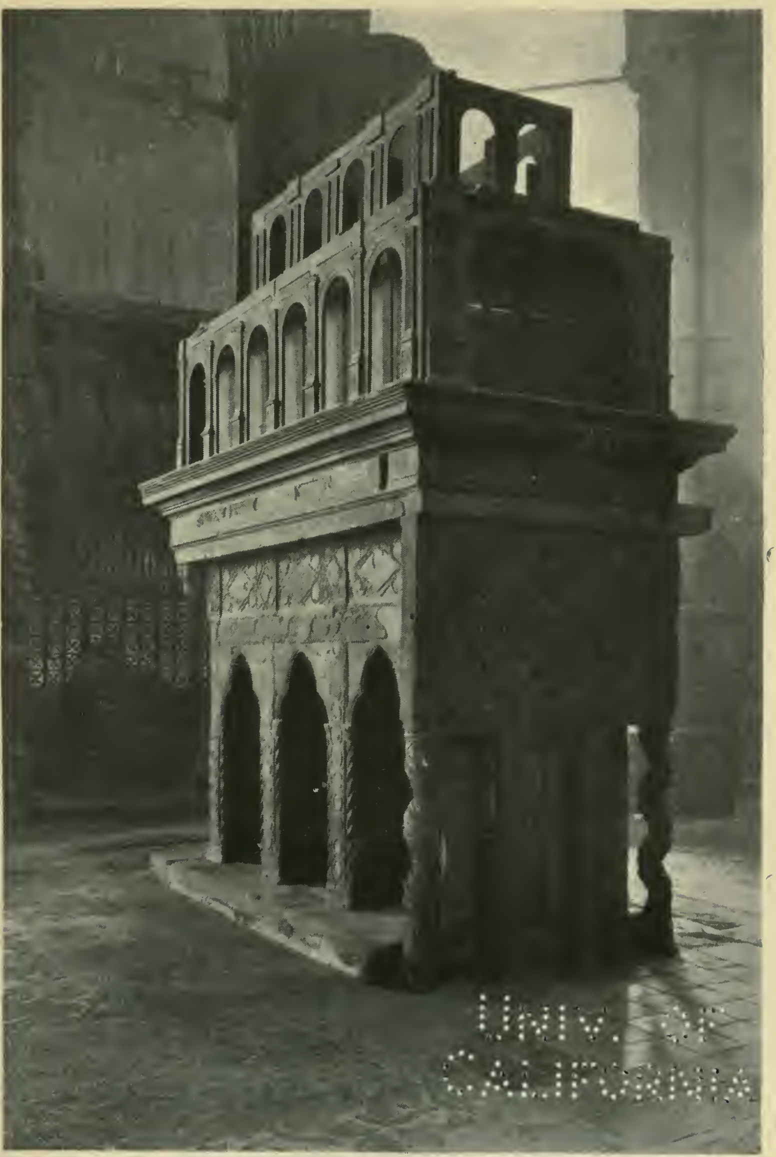

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PLATE XXXI. EDWARD'S SHRINE IN WESTMINSTER ABBEY 312

CHAPTER XV

THE COMING OF THE NORMANS

ON the death of the Confessor there were three distinct parties, each of which deemed itself interested in the question of the succession. On the one hand there was Harold, who during Edward's lifetime had become practically regent; on the other hand there was Edgar, the grandson of Edmund Ironside, whose father had recently died after his return from exile in Hungary. Opposed to the claims of both was the Duke of Normandy, William the Bastard. Of the three Harold had the advantage of being already the *de facto* ruler of England, and he lost no time in persuading the magnates of the realm to assent to his coronation. The ceremony was performed by Aldred, Archbishop of York, shortly after the death of the Confessor. Stigand was still, it would appear, regarded as hardly the rightful Archbishop of Canterbury, having received the pall from an antipope while his predecessor, Robert, was still living. The result, however, of this ignoring of Stigand was that that cautious prelate became a tepid, and later a cold, supporter of the new King. His name is, indeed, prominent among those who first did homage to the victor of Senlac. The coronation of Harold practically resulted in the snuffing out of the Atheling Edgar's claim. That Prince was nearing manhood at the time. The realm was not imminently threatened so far as men then knew. It would not have been matter for surprise had the house of Leofric, which had so long opposed that of Godwin, come forward to support this legitimate descendant of the house of Cerdic. It would seem, however, that the support of Leofric's grandsons, Edwin and Morcar, had been purchased by Harold, who had connived at the exile of his brother Tostig and the election of Morcar to the Earldom of Northumberland, thus left vacant. It is by no means improbable that there had been a pretty intrigue between these two houses, whereby it had been arranged that Harold was to be lord of Wessex with an indefinite overlordship of the north, while Edwin and Morcar were to divide the rest of England between them. However this may be, it is impossible to regard Harold's succession as in any way regular unless we are to assume that any man who was chosen King, whatever his birth, whatever his claim or antecedents, was by that choice made not only the King in fact but the King by right. Such a theory would validate the wresting of the crown from weak hands by any upstart adventurer who could gain the ear of the people. Elective though the English kingship was, it was also partly based on birth, and there can be no doubt that according to all precedent and previous practice Harold was a usurper.

GROUNDS OF WILLIAM'S CLAIM TO THE CROWN

When we turn to the Norman's claim we find it still more empty of right. William himself was by birth a bastard, being the son of Arlette, daughter of Fulbert, the tanner of Falaise, by Robert II, Duke of Normandy. It was only by his bravery and energy that he had been able to make good his doubtful claim to his father's dukedom. Though Duke Robert had made his barons swear to support the young William, after Robert's death, in 1035, three of the young Duke's guardians were murdered, the fourth also falling later to the daggers of assassins, who aimed at seizing William as he lay asleep. The plan miscarried, however, and William lived to burn down many an adulterine castle and force into good behaviour many a rebellious lord. One of the most important of these was Guy, son of the Count of Burgundy. He, refusing to obey his playmate, now styled by him ' bastard,' rose in revolt, but was finally and completely defeated at Val-ès-Dunes. Later the young Duke was engaged in warfare

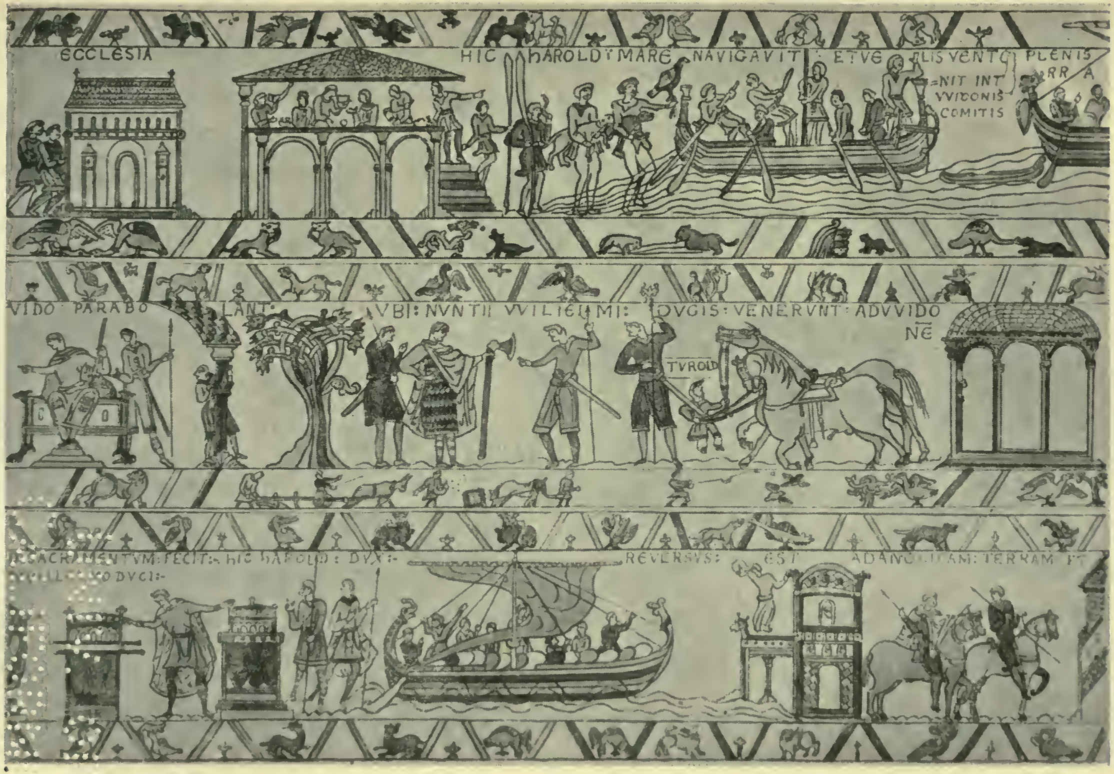
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PLATE XXXII. HAROLD'S VISIT TO NORMANDY

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against Geoffrey of Anjou, and it was during this campaign that he cut off the hands and feet of thirty-two of the citizens of Alençon because they had hung hides over the city walls and jeered at him as he approached, calling him a tanner's son.

Such, then, was the man in whose father's Court Edward the Confessor had been reared, who had visited the English Court and probably received some indefinite promise of the crown from that weak monarch, who had been the liberator and host of Harold Godwinsson when that noble, having set out on a sporting expedition, was wrecked and cast into the unfriendly hands of Guy. It was during this visit that Harold had asked for the hand of the Duke's daughter, and it is probable that Harold also swore on sacred relics either to support William's claim to the crown of England or to recognize William's overlordship should he himself obtain that crown. Neither of these promises, if made, was kept. Harold married, as we have seen, Ealdgyth, daughter of Aelfgar, almost immediately after his return to England. As to the succession to the throne, of course his own pretensions were directly opposed to those of William.

We thus see that the true Saxon claimant, Edgar, was almost completely relegated to the background; the half-Danish Harold was for the time being head of the English State, and the pretended title of the Norman William was based on indefinite promises only. These promises William now took steps to support by force of arms, called a meeting of his barons at Lillebonne, and drew up what has been well called "the memorandum of a great Joint Stock Company of conquest." In this memorandum was entered the support promised by the various nobles. According to the extent of the support was to be the extent of the reward. England lay ready to be divided up between an alien nobility, and soon the parcelling out was to begin.

Harold and Tostig

Leaving this question of the succession, we must now turn back and view the acts of the *de facto* sovereign. Tostig, as we have seen, had fled the country in the October of 1065. As one of the old rhyming chroniclers said,

> Harold hated Tostig much
> And drove him out and banished him.

The quondam Earl of Northumberland was, however, by no means prepared to drag out his life in exile, and soon after the appearance of that precursor of evil the comet with the long hair [1] Tostig returned from Flanders, landed in the Isle of Wight, gathered in tribute in lieu of pillage, ravaged the south coast, captured seamen from Sandwich, whom he impressed into his service, burnt houses and slew men in Lindsey, and finally, after some skirmishes with Edwin and Morcar, repaired to Malcolm of Scotland, at whose Court he dwelt during the summer.

HAROLD HARDRADA

Meanwhile two invasions were threatening. It was now well known that Duke William was preparing an army for the conquest of England—a fact which necessitated the keeping of a fleet in the Channel and an army along the south coast. At the same time, unknown to Harold, the King of Norway, Harold Sigurdsson,[2] had entered into an alliance with Tostig, and now suddenly arrived with more than five hundred ships [3] at the mouth of the Tyne and landed at Cleveland.

It was at once realized that the danger was great. Harold instantly raised a host and went with forced marches to meet the invader, who meanwhile had hoisted sail and made for the Humber. Scarborough had already been set fire to, and the Plain of Holderness was now swarming with Norwegians, led by a king who combined enormous height and strength with much experience of fighting and with a will to conquer England. Harold, "the man of hard counsel," had already fought for Byzantium and had taken part in the sack of the

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[1] Shown very prominently in the Bayeux Tapestry and now known as Halley's Comet. It last appeared in 1910.

[2] Called Hardrada.

[3] According to Florence of Worcester, whose figures must be an exaggeration. The *Chronicle* says three hundred.

Piraeus, had been the unwilling inamorato of the Empress Zoë and the husband of a Russian monarch's daughter, had slaughtered many a Dane and wielded his two-handed sword in most of the countries of Europe. He was now to test the mettle of another Harold.

BATTLES OF FULFORD AND STAMFORD BRIDGE

The Norwegians by water and by land penetrated as far as York. On Wednesday, September 20, Harold Sigurdsson and Tostig met Edwin and Morcar at Fulford and heavily defeated them. York was entered and submitted, delivering hostages to the victor. Having thus, as they thought, tamed York, Harold Sigurdsson and Tostig returned to their ships preparatory to turning south for the purpose of meeting the main English army. By now, however, the English King (whose qualities as a soldier were of the highest order) had brought up his men so suddenly that we are told [1] the invaders were taken by surprise.

Indeed, as part of Harold Sigurdsson's men marched along the dusty road in the heat of the sun, now so oppressive that the Northerners had left their coats of mail behind with the men guarding the ships, they suddenly saw approach from the direction of York a great army, whose bright chain armour, fair shields, and glittering spear-points shone in the sunlight so that the host as it came nearer seemed to the Northmen like an ice-sheet sparkling in the light. Instantly a council of war was called. Tostig advised a retreat on the ships, where they could arm fully and gather their now divided forces and, in case of defeat, depart by water. Harold Sigurdsson, true to his nickname 'Hardrada,' determined to fight. Calling Fridrek the standard-bearer, the Norwegian King commanded him to hold aloft the banner 'Land-waster,' while around it he posted his men, who stood in two rows with shield locked with shield, guarding their banner.

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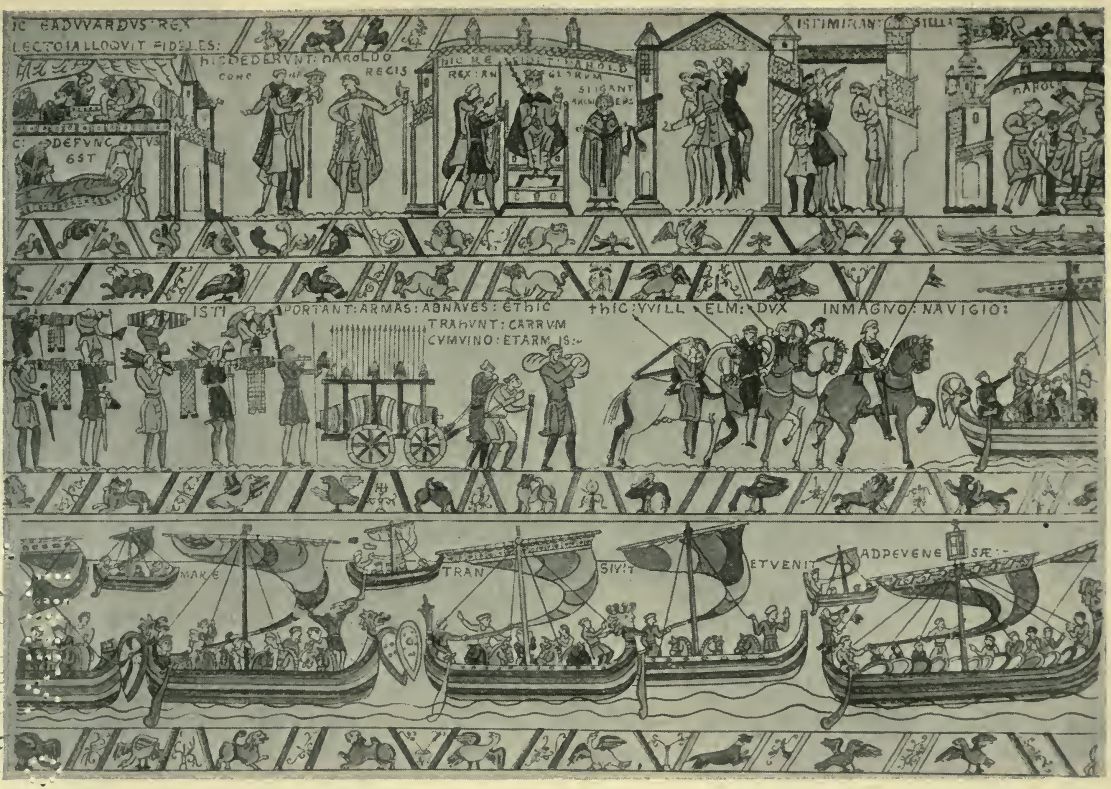
[1] *The Saga of Harold Haardraade*, which, though unhistorical, gives us an account, which is probably substantially accurate and is certainly very brilliant, of the battle of Stamford Bridge.

Already the approaching foe was within hearing when Harold Sigurdsson, riding round his army on a black piebald horse, was seen to fall, whereupon King Harold of England, turning to his attendant, said: " Knowest thou the big man yonder who fell from his horse, the man with the blue kirtle and the fair helm ?" " That is the [Norwegian] King," he cried. " A big man and a masterful, yet it seems his luck has passed," replied Harold.

By now the two armies were ready to engage. But before action Harold of England parleyed with Tostig, offering peace and pardon if he would but abandon the Norwegians and come over to the English side. Tostig, however, refused, demanding what the English King was prepared to grant to the Norwegian. " Seven feet of earth," replied Harold, " or as much more as he is taller than other men." Thus the negotiations broke down, and the Norwegian, interested to know the name of the envoy who dared to give such an insolent reply, asked Tostig who he was. " That was King Harold Godwinsson," answered Tostig. To which the Norwegian replied, after some complaint that he had been allowed to escape: " A little man is he, but firm in his stirrups."

And now they fell to battle. For a time the opposing hosts waged a bitter, though equal, struggle. According to some chroniclers the fight raged most fiercely around Stamford Bridge itself, the passage being barred by a Northman, who killed all who approached him. Finally an English archer crept under the bridge and slew, in a none too noble manner, this Horatius of the Yorkshire stream. The obstacle removed, the English crossed and flung themselves against Harold Sigurdsson's shield-wall, for a time unavailingly. At last, however, the Norwegian King was slain by an arrow which pierced his throat. Tostig now took his place and still urged on his men. Meanwhile messengers had flown to the ships and Eystein Gorcock had gathered all available reinforcements and was hurrying with all speed to be by his King's side in time. He arrived to find him dead and the major part of his host slain, but the Gorcock restored the fortunes of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HAROLD
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HIC: VVILL ELM: DVX IN MAGNO: NAVIGIO:
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PLATE XXXIII. THE ACCESSION OF HAROLD AND PREPARATIONS FOR THE CONQUEST

the day for his side for a time, and it seemed as though the English would be beaten. However, Harold of England rallied his men, and with one last and tremendous onslaught finally overcame and utterly vanquished the Norwegians. Tostig was slain and almost all the Norwegian leaders, and it was a mere broken remnant that fled before Harold's victorious army. So fierce was the contest that day that many men died, we are told, of sheer exhaustion, while the battle raged.

According to *The Saga of Earl Magnus*, " After these fights King Harold gave Olaf Haroldsson and the earls leave to go away out of England." With their departure we may turn south once more. The northern invasion had failed, thanks to Harold's energy, bravery, and ability ; the southern one was now about to begin.

WILLIAM CROSSES THE CHANNEL

As we have seen, when William's invasion first threatened, Harold collected a fleet and an army, which he posted in the Channel and along the south coast respectively. That both forces were unusually powerful we have every reason to believe. Unfortunately, the accumulations of food were not adequate for such a force, and lack of provisions rendered necessary the disbanding of both fleet and army early in September. About a fortnight later, however, the King had assembled a considerable land force with which to oppose the Norwegians, with what result we have seen.

While Harold was saving York William was hastening on his preparations near Caen. As the old rhymer says,

> Then he prepares a navy,
> Treasure, and his chivalry,
> And comes to Saint Valery.

And it was from St Valery, whither he had taken his forces, that William set sail with nearly seven hundred ships,[1] carrying " an innumerable host of horsemen, slingers, archers, and foot soldiers, having taken into his pay auxiliary forces of great bravery from all parts of France." The landing was made while the English King was already in the north. Instantly Harold struck camp and raced south, marching by night and day, his strength reduced considerably by the battles of Fulford and Stamford Bridge and the energies of his soldiery lessened by the extraordinary exertions which they had lately been called upon to make.

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[1] The number given by Wace is 696.

Papal Support

Meanwhile William had disembarked his army, and had collected it and rested it preparatory for the struggle which lay ahead. The Norman had already taken many steps to strengthen his political position, his agents having been particularly active at Rome. The Pope had blessed the expedition, sending to its leader splendid gifts, which included "a consecrated banner and a golden ring set with a costly jewel containing a hair from the beard of the Apostle Peter." [1]

It is evident that the whole adventure was warmly approved by Archdeacon Hildebrand, already the greatest force among the men around the Pontiff, and destined soon to be the greatest of the Popes himself. For years England had been becoming more and more insular; her Archbishop, Stigand, at this very moment had been irregularly elected; Saxon culture was tending to become confined within narrow bounds of its own creation; the Saxon clergy had small interest in or communion with the larger life of Continental clericism. Further, and most of all, the Papacy had recently been fortunate in supporting the pretensions of two other adventurers—Demetrius, who became Duke of Croatia and Dalmatia, and Robert Guiscard, who won for himself the dukedom of Apulia and Calabria. In consequence of the aid thus given, these magnates had promised to, and did in fact, hold their lands as feudatories of St Peter, styling themselves "Duke by the Grace of God and St Peter." It is probable that the Pope (Alexander II), who, according to the German Archbishop Anno, had been maintained in his position by the Normans, not only was well disposed toward William, but desired to strengthen his position,

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[1] *Trans. R. Hist. Soc.*, N.S., vol. xix, p. 210 (Rev. O. Jensen, Ph.D.).

now being assailed by the followers of Cadaloüs, by the capture of a still more powerful feudatory in the person of Duke William. Many of the Pope's demands William readily agreed to. The English Church was to be brought into closer touch with Rome. The clergy were to have more privileges, Peter's pence was to be tendered with regularity. Laws advancing the status of the Church were to be passed. All these were promised and in time performed. But when the Pope later demanded that William should hold the kingdom as a vassal, William replied in the sense of the words put into his mouth by Dr Jensen: "I have not rendered oath of allegiance yet, nor will I do so in the future, although your legate, Herbert, demands it of me. I neither promised this myself, nor have my predecessors." [1]

But though he was not prepared to go this length in order to purchase papal support, his promises, aided by the eloquence of Hildebrand, gained Alexander to his side. Harold, unrepresented at the council at which the question of the English succession was debated, was deemed guilty of oath-breaking and rebellion against his feudal superior, and the whole weight of the Church was flung into the Norman side of the balance.

SENLAC, SANDLAKE, OR HASTINGS

We now return to Duke William, who early in October had established himself behind protected works near Hastings. Some ravaging of the coast there had been, but the worst was to follow. Meanwhile Harold had reached London, probably about October 6, with but a portion of the English host, for Edwin and Morcar, who had been saved by Harold's northern campaign, failed to come to the immediate support of their deliverer. It is probable that their chief fault was a lack of energy. In the result their lethargy was as fatal as deliberate treachery. Harold, on his part, erred almost as greatly on the side of too great haste. Ignoring the advice of Gyrth, who counselled delay and a defensive action in the first place, he pushed onward with his weary army, aiming at one decisive blow such as had destroyed for ever the hopes of Gruffydd of Wales and Harold of Norway. As a result, by October 14 he had drawn up his army, a force of perhaps some 12,000 men, nearly all on foot, along the ridge in the tithing of Sandlake.[1] There, in his own land,[2] the leader of the English planted his great standard, which bore in gold the figure of an armed man, and prepared to contest with William for the sovereignty of England. There too there fluttered in the wind once more the Dragon of Wessex.

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[1] Cf. *Epp. Lanfr.*, ed. Giles, No. 10.

On the other side William had emerged from his castle of Hastings early in the morning of that day and was posted on the hill called Telham. His army, numbering some 10,000 men, was composed of Bretons, Normans, and Frenchmen, partly cavalry but mainly foot, and comprising many archers. The Duke himself rode a Spanish warhorse, the gift of the King of Spain, which had been brought to him by Walter Giffard, the Poitevin, who had shown his mettle at Barbastro, and was to do great deeds in England. Near by the Duke were his foremost knights and the brave minstrel Taillefer, 'the Iron-cutter,' who opened the battle by galloping alone, singing songs of Roland, against the Saxon line. One Saxon he pierced with his lance, a second he slew with his sword, but then the brave spirit was released by a hail of arrows and darts. Taillefer had fallen, the battle had begun.

And now the Normans flung their main strength against the English line, hoping to pierce it. Harold, however, had ordered his men to stand their ground behind a close-linked wall of shields,[3] and in this formation, and aided by the position they occupied, they stopped time after time the most impetuous

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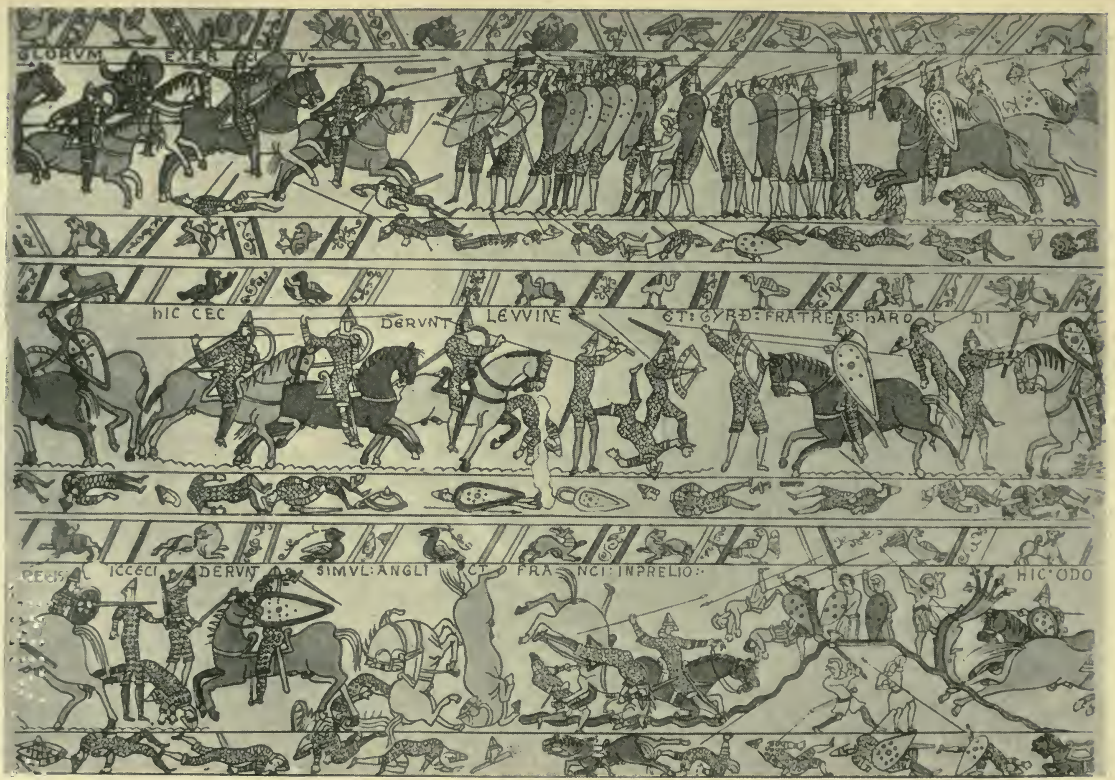
[1] Hence the French name for the battle, 'Senlac.' See Mr W. H. Stevenson's article, "Senlac and the Malfossé," in the *English Historical Review*, vol. xxviii, p. 292. His arguments in favour of 'Sandlake' appear to us conclusive, but in conformity with usage we have adopted 'Senlac.'

[2] Mr Stevenson points out (*ibid.*) the fact that the tithing of Uckham adjoined Sandlake and belonged to Earl Godwin, and Harold owned the adjoining manors of Whatlington and Crowhurst.

[3] As to whether there was a palisade, the inquirer is referred to the lengthy and somewhat acrimonious dispute which occupies many pages of the *English Historical Review*, vol. ix. We accept Mr Round's opinion that there was no palisade.


GLORUM EXER CI TU
HIC CEC DERUNT LEVVINE ET: GYRD: FRATRES: HARO LDI
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HIC ODO

PLATE XXXIV. THE BATTLE OF SENLAC: I

UNIV. OF
CALIFORNIA

of the Norman rushes. To the right of the English line matters went even better for the defenders. The Norman left, composed mainly of Bretons, was not merely stopped, it was driven back in such confusion that a panic was communicated to the whole host. The Norman army was, indeed, in some disorder, crying that the Duke was slain, when William, who had the voice of a lion, tore off his helm, roaring, " See, men, here I am ! I live and will conquer by the grace of God ! Are you mad that you fly ? " Thus rallying his men, he seized a spear and, spurring on his horse, checked the rout by the sheer force of his will. Eustace of Boulogne, indeed, for a moment counselled retreat, but William pressed on, encouraged his followers, and turned them once more against the Saxons, who were exulting too early. In their counter-attack the Bretons worked fearful slaughter among their pursuers, while the Norman centre, led by the Duke, cut its way through the Saxon advance-guard, pressing onward always toward the Saxon standard. There Harold, Gyrth, and Leofwine, children of Earl Godwin, fought with a bravery which redeems all the faults of their house. Against the valiant trio William spurred his horse. The Duke, supported by Odo and Robert, designed to strike down his rival, but Gyrth sprang forward and hurled a spear, which brought down the Duke's horse. William, unhurt, quickly rose to his feet and, dashing on in his own unconquerable way, flung himself on foot against Gyrth, smashing in his head with a blow from his mace. Almost at the same moment Leofwine fell to some unknown sword, and Harold, " a little man, but firm in his stirrups," stood alone. But quickly his huscarls gathered round him, and so the fight continued.

Meanwhile William had gained another mount and the battle along the ridge was still raging furiously. Axe and spear, sword and arrow, each sought a life, and often successfully. The Duke's charger was again overthrown by a spear ; again he fought on foot, obtaining at last another charger from Eustace, and still the fight swung evenly. At last the Norman right, composed mainly of French mercenaries, drove back a little the English left, while at the same time the Norman left was ordered to pretend to flee. The stratagem succeeded ; the English pursued their foes with shouts of joy. Suddenly the Norman cavalry appeared on their flank, the Bretons turned, and what had seemed a victory proved a disaster. The Normans seem to have gained a position on the hill which Harold was defending, and although Harold was by no means defeated, yet his two flanks were now in jeopardy.

Already the battle—so much more strenuous than modern battles[1]—had raged for some six hours from the hour of prime to vespers. But now that evening was drawing nigh, though the Saxons still held their ground and had probably as much hope of final victory as the Normans, a chance shot from some archer's bow struck the English King. With his right eye pierced, Harold fell dying to the earth at the foot of his standard. At once dismay filled full the English lines. We have seen how earlier in the day the rumoured death of William had nearly caused his men to flee precipitately. But now there was more than rumour ; Harold had fallen, and by his side Gyrth and Leofwine lay slain.

That there was no precipitate flight redounds much to the credit of the Saxon men. While the King lay dying his huscarls, twenty in number, gathered round him and the standards. Soon, however, most of them had paid for valour with their lives. The Saxons were compelled to retreat. The Dragon and Fighting Man fell into Norman hands, the latter to be sent to the Pope, together with " untold gold and silver ornaments which would have been reckoned splendid even in Constantinople," as a thank-offering for victory. There too, where the King of England lay mutilated by the ferocity of the Normans, later a stately abbey was raised, the altar of which marked the spot referred to in those words which Matilda worked into the Bayeux Tapestry : *Hic Harold. Rex interfectus est.*

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[1] Apart from the fact that the men then fought in extremely heavy coats of mail, etc., it must be remembered that every blow was made, not by the explosion of some chemical, but by the muscles of the soldiers, who were hacking and slashing all the time, or warding off heavy blows.

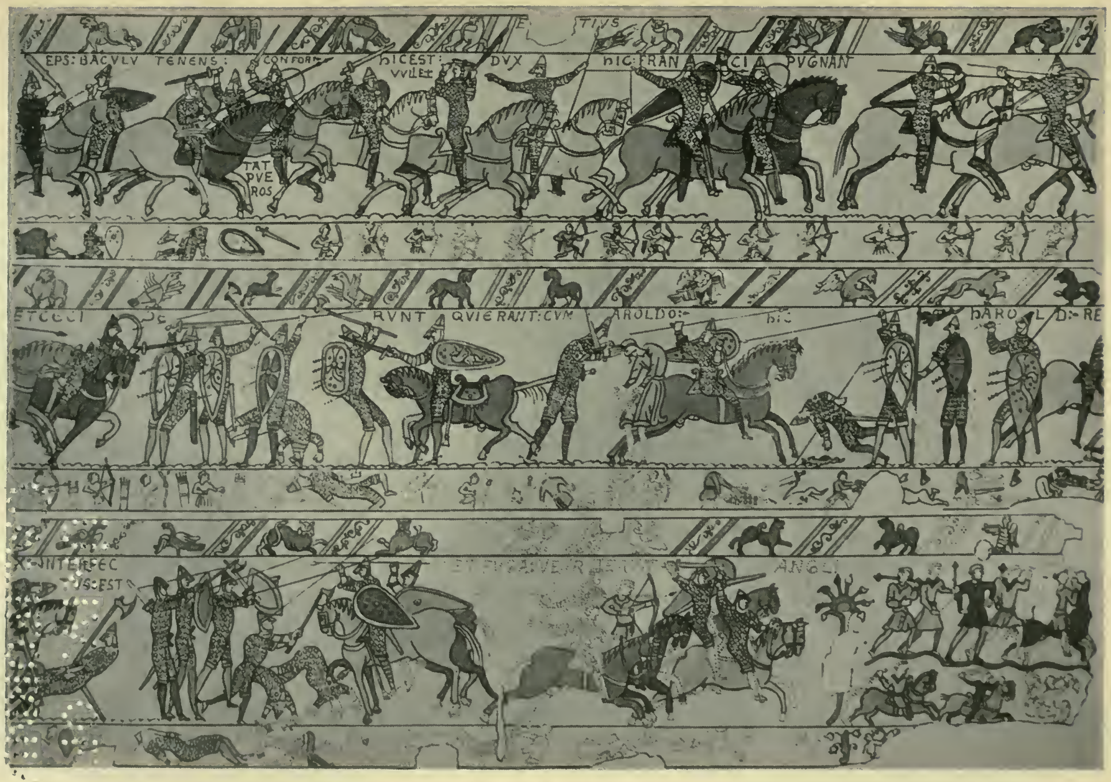
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PLATE XXXV THE BATTLE OF SENLAC: II

AFTER THE BATTLE: THE MALFOSSÉ

It was probably some time after the battle had been won[1] that the English, hastening by devious routes northward, closely followed by the victorious Normans, took refuge in an ancient fortification, where it may be they were reinforced by the men who were hastening from London to strengthen Harold's forces. One thing at least is certain: the Normans, at a spot known as Malfossé, received a sharp check. Most of the modern historians have described the reverse at Malfossé as an incident in the main battle, but, as Mr Stevenson says, "The account of the check of the Normans . . . endorsed by Orderic seems to imply that its site was some old fortification. From William of Poitiers, who refers this reverse in a marked manner to the night following the battle, it would seem to have occurred at some distance from the hill of Senlac or Sandlake." It is indeed probable that William now found the road to London barred by forces too strong to be overcome immediately. We consequently find him retiring on Hastings.[2] There, according to Guy of Amiens, he remained for five days and then marched east to Dover, punishing *en route* the men of Romney, who had slain some Normans who had landed there in error. At Dover he remained a week and a day, and in that time did such grievous harm to the surrounding country-side that ten manors lying north and east of that town, which before the invasion were worth £157 10s., were valued at but £40 afterward. Having fortified Dover, secured a landing-place for reinforcements, and received the submission of the citizens of Canterbury, William turned north-east and arrived at Broken Tower (probably near Sandwich), where he pitched camp. By now or within the next few days Pevensey,

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[1] See as to this Mr Stevenson's article in the *English Historical Review*, vol. xxviii, p. 292.

[2] For our account of William's subsequent movements we are much indebted to Mr G. J. Turner's article, "William the Conqueror's March to London in 1066," in the *English Historical Review*, vol. xxvii, p. 209. It differs in many ways from that given by the Hon. F. H. Baring, *ibid.*, vol. xiii, p. 18, an account based on Domesday Book and its tale of ravagings. Neither account can be regarded in any way as final.

Hastings, Winchelsea, Rye, Romney, Hythe, Dover, and Sandwich were in William's hands. Having thus gained possession of all the Channel ports, the Conqueror left the coast and marched on Canterbury. Here he remained, a prey to illness, for some three weeks, leaving the cathedral city some time about November 21. From Canterbury he marched on London, either by way of Lenham or along the Roman road which passed through Rochester.

Attitude of the Atheling's Supporters

Meanwhile many things had been happening in London. With Harold and all the male members of the house of Godwin dead, save only Wulfnoth, men's thoughts naturally turned to Edgar the Atheling, who had previously been brushed aside by the usurping Harold. As to the Earls Edwin and Morcar, they were apparently playing a double game. Each desiring, yet despairing, of obtaining the throne for himself, they yet hoped by bargaining to gain the larger half of England, and not improbably offered to support Edgar on the terms that he should, when King, recognize them as practically independent rulers of Mercia and the north.[1] As for the citizens of London, they were clearly on the side of Edgar. The clergy, on the other hand, were doubtful. Stigand, whose wide acres in Kent and the south now lay unprotected before the Conqueror, and whose election was deemed invalid by Pope Alexander and William, hung irresolute between two fears. Aldred, the Archbishop of York, however, declared firmly on the side of the Atheling, and apparently won over several of the bishops to his side. Meanwhile messengers had come from the Pope[2] urging the bishops to submit to William and forbidding them to participate in the coronation of the Atheling, now about to take place. The bishops seem to have obeyed the Pope's commands; the

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[1] This is not, however, susceptible of proof. It seems to us to agree with what we know of these Earls, their intrigues, and their subsequent actions.

[2] This must be regarded as a tentative suggestion. See Mr Turner's article already referred to, *English Historical Review*, vol. xxvii, p. 213.

Atheling was never consecrated, and the Church, if it ranked itself on any side, chose in the coming struggle the frigid side of neutrality. Stigand, indeed, at this point was probably favourable to William—hoping, it may be, by a ready submission to regain his high office. One thing at least is certain: William's soldiery, drawn as they were from the ranks of bloody-handed adventurers and mercenaries, generally ravaged, burned, and slew wherever they went. When they approached the wide estates of Stigand an order went forth from William that looting was forbidden. As a result the whole army marched through Stigand's honour, manors, and farms without broaching a single cask of mead! Stigand's land held to a shilling the same value after as before the visitation.

William's March on London

It was while the counsel of the realm was confused and cried with conflicting voices that William, early in December, drew near the city, marching along the southern bank of the river and making for Southwark. The citizens, from the earliest times zealous supporters of the rightful claimant to the crown, crossed over London Bridge, hoping to beat back the enemy. Their artless valour was, however, of little avail. They were driven back by the heavily armed Norman cavalry and suffered much loss. Nor was this all, for the Normans punished the hardy loyalists by burning all the houses along the south bank of the river.

Edwin, Morcar, and Stigand

Meanwhile Edwin and Morcar, who had already sent their sister, the Queen Ealdgyth, north to the family stronghold of Chester, appear to have definitely deserted the Londoners and the Atheling and to have marched their army, not south to meet Duke William, but north to their own earldoms. When judging their action at this time we must remember that less than a hundred years before Wessex, Mercia, and Northumbria were different states, inhabited by men of different nationality. Even in the years when England seemed welded into a united kingdom it is fairly evident that rival factions existed which brought into frequent conflict the interests of these states. It may be that Edwin and Morcar, feeling themselves impotent among the men of Wessex, determined on the northward march in order to be able to raise the men of Mercia. It may be that, having failed to persuade the Londoners to favour their pretensions, they were already prepared to abandon Wessex, in which they had no interest, to William.

Of the two views, that which regards Edwin and Morcar as still meditating resistance is the more probable, and it would seem that they had persuaded Stigand to come over to their side. William was now approaching Stigand's manor at Mortlake, and there probably heard that the Archbishop was veering round to the Saxon side. As a result the manor was laid waste. Southwark had already been given to the flames, and William was hastening westward, crossing the river at Kew and Brentford, making with part of his army for Winchester, while part remained to mask the stronghold of London. At this time it is possible that Stigand, who was Bishop of Winchester as well as Archbishop of Canterbury, was at his manor of Harwell, some eight miles from Wallingford, a town which was then the military centre of Berkshire. It may be that William was endeavouring at once to pick up reinforcements which might join him at Winchester, the ancient capital of Wessex, and to cut off Stigand both from Winchester and London. It is probable that Stigand realized his danger, and on the Conqueror's arrival at Basingstoke offered to make submission and bring in other magnates with him. As a result of this welcome news William turned north to Wallingford, leaving Winchester on his left rear, and received the submission of Stigand and the nobles of Berkshire and Oxfordshire. At the same time it is probable that Edwin and Morcar were also coming south, along Watling Street, in order to bow the knee before Duke William. William, eager that the submission should be made, turned

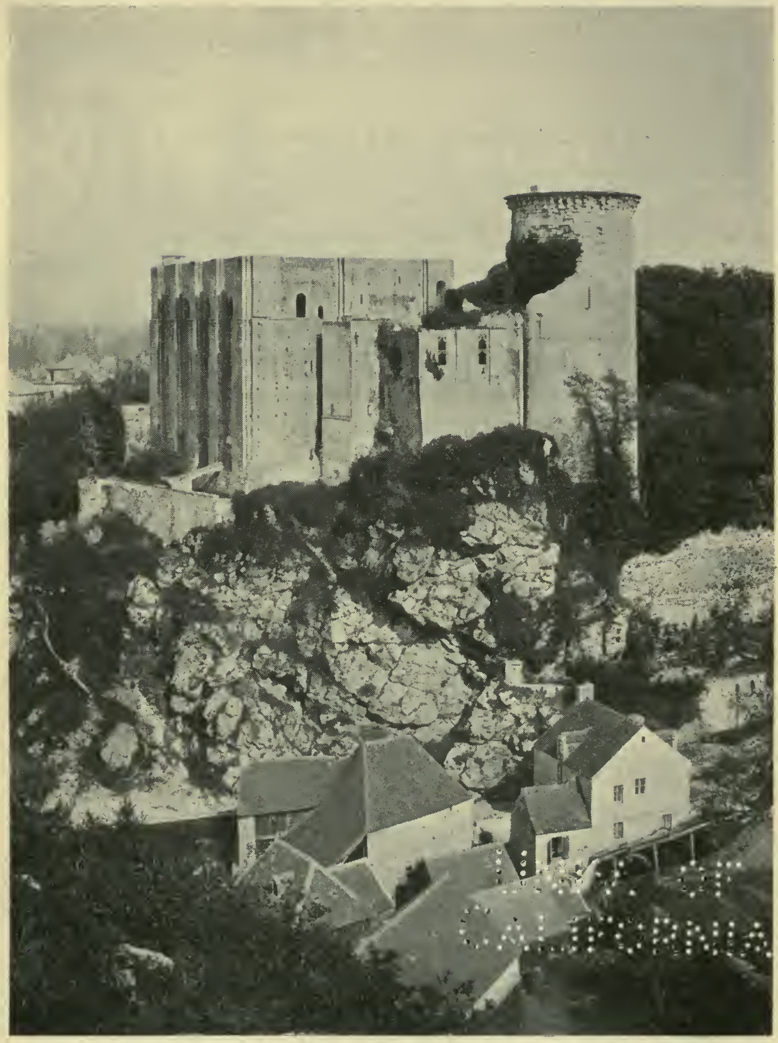

PLATE XXXVI. WILLIAM'S CASTLE AT FALAISE 328

north-east and marched along the Icknield Way to meet them, and arrived at Berkhamsted.

BERKHAMSTED

It was at this place [1] that the advancing army of conquest was met by the Atheling, the Archbishop of York, possibly Edwin and Morcar, Stigand, and certainly many bishops. To all William showed mildness of demeanour and friendliness of intention. The Atheling in particular he treated almost as a son. Submission having been made and received, the crown of England was formally offered to William, and the Duke, after consultation with his followers, accepted it. The great step having been taken, William seems to have devoted himself to hunting, a pastime that was almost a passion with both the Conqueror and his sons. Meanwhile an advance-guard was sent forward to London to occupy it and to commence those fortified works which were eventually to grow into that splendid example of Norman military architecture the Tower of London.

CORONATION OF WILLIAM

The chief city of England having opened its gates to the Normans, William hastened on the preparations for the high ceremony of coronation and consecration. The day fixed was Christmas Day, 1066; the place, the abbey church of Westminster. There, while Norman soldiers kept guard, William, but lately 'the Bastard' but now 'the Conqueror,' walked behind a long line of English clergy who were to take part in a ceremony which gave to England a Norman King. The consecration was performed by Aldred, who, as we have seen, had anointed Harold, and the Duke, after he had sworn to protect the Church, rule justly, give good laws, and keep the peace, was anointed and crowned King of the English.

The kingship of the country of England had been gained by an alien, a man foreign by birth to almost all his subjects.

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[1] Little Berkhamsted has, however, been suggested. William of Poitiers speaks of the place as within sight of London, and Berkhamsted is thirty miles away.

The change had taken place with hardly a blow being struck after Senlac; from the day when Harold fell there is scarcely a sign of any great national movement. The mighty men of the land held back from rendering instant submission only because they were weighing the chances of personal aggrandisement; the Atheling, a man, or youth, of the house of Cerdic, could raise no enthusiasm in the ranks of thegn, clergy, or people, and headed the list of those who tamely submitted at Berkhamsted. Such being the case, it is permissible to inquire what had changed the Saxons and Angles from the rough but brave warriors who had cut down the Britons at Deorham and Chester into the pulseless mob that followed blindly Saxon or Dane or Norman and chose an alien king rather than fight for a native one, who gave over their acres to the rule of adventurers from Normandy rather than follow their native lords.

The State of England

The explanation is seen when we cast back our eyes over the political warfare which had raged in England ever since Ethelred was on the throne, and we believe long before. The munificent grants made by such kings as Edwy, the peace of Edgar's reign, and the craftiness of favourites had raised in England certain nobles who became in course of time little less powerful than the king himself. The houses of Godwin, Leofric, and Siward were straining continually to increase their own fortunes, allying themselves when necessary with foreign invaders against their own king and their own country. The weakness thus created by faction was increased by ignorance and debauchery. The Church, cut off, it would seem, by its geographical situation from intimate contact with Rome, felt but weakly the movements which did much from time to time to cleanse the Continental system. The monastic houses, torn at times by the quarrels of regulars and seculars, seem to have put wealth before piety, purity, or learning. Fine abbeys, wide lands, they gained, but the men themselves were too often drunken, indolent, and soulless clods. It must not be thought that the state of England was greatly worse than that of the Continent. We are dealing with the Dark Ages. It is manifest, however, that England was drifting away from the wider world. Her clergy were self-centred; her nobles were self-centred; her kings were weaklings or men of alien race.

As for the people, there was still much gold to be found among them, but it required refining. The lower ranks were slaves who did not count; the higher ranks were becoming wealthy, for already England was proving her capacity for commerce. But the wealth thus gained could not but be ill-spent. We must remember how densely ignorant the people, peasants or nobles, were. It requires but little demonstration that he who has wealth without a knowledge of how to spend it wisely will be the loser by his gains. Then, as now, gilded ignorance ran to vice. The time had come when a rigorous change was necessary if the soul of the State was to be saved. The change had come. No longer were lords to raise up internecine strife. No longer was the rudder of England to be held in a nerveless grip. No longer was the English Church to slip away from the rest of Christendom. Now a King had come who knew how to rule, who brought with him a new nobility who also knew how to rule, and new clerics who were remarkable for their knowledge and their piety. As a result, the Norman Conquest marks a great and decisive turning-point in the history of our country. Henceforward the outlook of England was wider. Her government, strengthened by a system of specialized feudalism, was more centralized and less diffuse. Her King, by virtue of his Continental dominions, far overtopped the most powerful of his barons. Such was the nature of society in those days that these were solid gains. To them was added the one peculiar excellency of the Anglo-Saxon polity. The old system of local courts and local administrations still lived on. As a result Englishmen gained that unusual political insight and acquaintance with the affairs of government which in later and more glorious years was to create from small beginnings the most splendid of Empires. For that heritage of political insight, priceless as it was, we must thank our Saxon forbears. For the controlling rule which organized the local units and enabled them to work together jointly for the good of the State we must thank the Norman. Both combined to create English statecraft and the English political system. Both were necessary before Magna Carta or a Bill of Rights or a Reform Act was possible. Looking back over the intervening centuries, it seems to us a matter for much thankfulness that William was the conqueror and not the conquered. Harold, brave man and gallant soldier though he was, could not have lifted the State out of the rut into which it had fallen. New methods, new ideals, new blood was necessary. All these were now present for our country's betterment.

CHAPTER XVI

WILLIAM I

1066–1087

"AFTER his coronation at London, King William ordered many affairs with prudence, justice, and clemency. Some of these concerned the profit and honour of that city, others were for the advantage of the whole nation, and the rest were intended for the benefit of the Church." Thus does Ordericus Vitalis, who will be our primary authority for the events of this reign, sketch out the aim of the first measures taken by the new sovereign. It may be that it was now that the King granted to London the first of that long line of royal charters which established the liberties and rights of the metropolis upon such a firm basis. Of the contents of this charter we have no knowledge, for it has been lost, but in the division of the *Liber Albus* which contains the text of the charters granted to the city from Henry I onward we have at the commencement the entry, "*Inprimis, Charta Domini Willelmi quondam Regis Angliae, in lingua Saxonica.*" This entry, of course, belongs to a much later age, when doubtless the original charter was already lost, but it records the existence of a document notable for two reasons: it tells of William's first efforts to win over the citizens; it informs us that the Conqueror commenced his rule by granting charters written in the Saxon tongue.

It is manifest, indeed, that from the outset the new-comer desired to impress the people as little as possible with the sense of change. The old English laws and customs were continued. The English legal system as it existed in the time of the Confessor was preserved, and in later years was reduced to the form of a bilingual code under the title of the *Leis Williame.* When William promised to abide by the laws of Edward the Confessor it is probable that neither he nor the people had in mind any particular code of law published by that King. He simply meant his subjects to understand that the ancient stream of English justice was not to be diverted into fresh channels; it was to flow on along its old course. In later years, when the monkish forgers of Henry I's reign were at work, an effort was made to create a body of law which was supposed to represent the system of Edward's time as amended by the Normans, and the code so formed later became known as the *Leges Henrici Primi.* We now know that this was a private compilation,[1] and that the era of ordered expositions, or anything more than the roughest codes of law, had not yet come. That was to await the genius of Ranulf de Glanvill and Henry de Bracton, and, in a fuller sense, the rise of the so-called English Justinian, Edward I.

The chief constitutional changes introduced by William belong to later years, and will be considered in their place. For the present the Conqueror was mainly engaged in making the necessary arrangements for the complete pacification of the country and for strengthening the bonds between himself and Rome. Already, as we have seen, splendid presents had been sent to the Holy See, and one of the first acts of the reign was the founding at Senlac of the Abbey of the Holy Trinity, better known as the Abbey of St Martin of the Battle, or Battle Abbey. There an altar was raised on the spot where the West Saxon banner had fluttered; there in course of time a Norman abbot was installed. It seemed to men symbolic of a closer union between Church and State, between English and Continental clericism.

But although the King was thus mindful of other matters than those dictated by military expediency, he never for a moment forgot that much yet remained to be done before the conquered country was reduced to full submission. While charters were being given to the men of London, Norman

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[1] As were the *Leis Williame,* or *Leges Willelmi.* See p. 350.

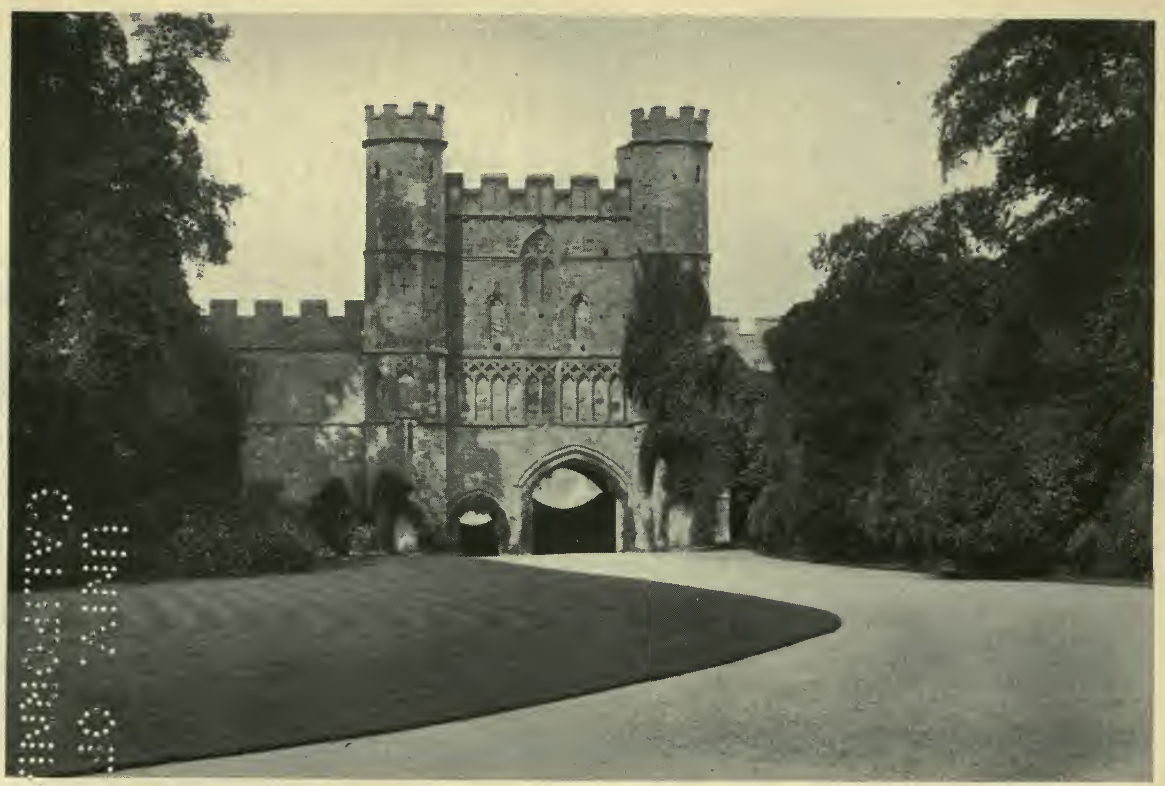

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PLATE XXXVII. THE GATEWAY OF BATTLE ABBEY

architects were busy on fortifications—a work which, as we have seen, had already been begun. While this was in progress the King quitted his capital and spent some days at Barking or Berkhamsted. According to Ordericus Vitalis it was now that Edwin and Morcar came to make submission.[1] Eadric the Wild, a relative of the infamous Eadric Streona, destined in future years to rebel frequently against the Normans, also took the oath of fealty. The King now felt that the country was safe enough to allow him to make a progress through his new dominions. The tour was taken advantage of by William to settle the places at which new strongholds should be founded. Many of his bravest followers were rewarded by grants of wide acres taken from the Saxon nobles who had opposed him, and in many places castles, nearly all doubtless of the motte type, began to spring up, whence the castellans could tame their enemies, suppress their equals, and oppress their inferiors. In particular a strong castle was built within the walls of Winchester, charge of which was given to William fitz Osbern, the King's friend since boyhood and his staunchest supporter. To fitz Osbern was also given control of the major part of the district which had once been Wessex. Few years were to pass before the heir to these wide estates, having succeeded to them on his father's death, seceded from his King, rose in rebellion and was crushed, bringing down with him for ever the fortunes of his house.[2]

While fitz Osbern was being installed in Winchester, Odo, Bishop of Bayeux, the uterine brother of the King and own brother to Robert de Mortain, was given the whole of Kent,[3] which he ruled from the fortress of Dover. Odo, who, Orderic tells us, was " a prelate distinguished by great liberality and worldly activity," was to bring misfortune to the realm, was, in the succeeding reign, to plunder his own earldom and be sent a captive to Rochester, while the English cried, " Halters ! Halters for the traitor bishop ! " For the moment, however, he was high in favour and, with fitz Osbern, ruled England, in the King's absence, with the aid of Hugh de Grantmesnil, Hugh de Montfort, William de Warenne, and other leading warriors. That their rule was light cannot be believed, for even Orderic, who, though brought up in Shropshire,[1] had lived long in Normandy, received all his knowledge in the schools of Paris, and was sympathetic to the Normans, tells us, when speaking of these Norman barons, that " some of them governed their vassals well ; but others, wanting prudence, shamefully oppressed them." The *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle* sounds still more woeful, for there we read, under date 1066 : " Bishop Odo and William the earl [fitz Osbern] remained here behind, and they built castles wide throughout the realm, and oppressed poor people ; and ever after it grew greatly in evil. May the end be good when God will ! "

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[1] As we have said, there is reason to believe that their submission took place before the coronation. See p. 328.

[2] The family intermarried with the Abergavennys; apart from that practically nothing is known of its subsequent history in England.

[3] Orderic speaks of him as *palatinus Cantiae consul*, but it is doubtful whether he held the position of a palatine earl with the wide *jura regalia*.

William's Visit to Normandy

William had, indeed, departed for Normandy during the Lent of 1067. The Conqueror, taking with him Stigand, the Atheling Edgar, and Earls Edwin, Morcar, and Waltheof, among others, returned to his own duchy, there to hold feast and celebration in honour of his glorious adventure. It was while at Pevensey, preparatory to the crossing, that the King paid off a portion of the stipendiary soldiery who had accompanied him, and who now returned to their homes laden with rich gifts. By March the King was in his old duchy, and thereupon began a series of regal processions which, we are informed, " filled the whole of Normandy with rejoicings." Splendid presents were made to the Church, and the feast of Easter (April 8) was kept at the Abbey of the Holy Trinity at Fécamp, where a great number of bishops, abbots, and nobles assembled.

We must now leave the rejoicings in Normandy and return once more to England, where the people were groaning under the iron rule of Odo and fitz Osbern. Already, it would seem, the lesser lords had raised their wooden walls,[1] and, thus protected, had commenced to enrich themselves by extortionate exactions. Their men-at-arms, we are told, "most outrageously robbed the people and ravished the women." It seemed that the Conqueror's injunction to his barons "to comport themselves with dignity, joining activity to right judgment," had been either forgotten or ignored. As a result, when William returned it was to a land ripe for rebellion.

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[1] What is believed to be his seal exists to-day in the Shrewsbury Museum. He spent his early years at Atcham.

Secret meetings were held and a plan was formed for throwing off the Norman yoke. Sweyn Estrithsson, the King of Denmark, was appealed to. Others of the English, despairing of liberty, sought a voluntary exile, while the braver sort journeyed to Constantinople. There in later years they aided Alexius Comnenus[2] to beat off the attacks made upon him by another Norman conqueror, Duke Robert Guiscard. It was in this way that an Anglo-Saxon colony was founded in Ionia.

For the time Sweyn felt himself unable to undertake an expedition to secure the proffered crown, and in the meantime the English, bereft of their native leaders, now practically hostages with William in Normandy, sent over to Eustace of Boulogne, who had quarrelled with the Conqueror. Eustace gave ear to the rebels, collected a force, embarked his troops, and set sail for England, where he landed in the dead of night. No sooner had his last foot-soldier been disembarked than a surprise attack was made on Dover Castle. The garrison, however, though taken unawares, resisted the assault successfully. Odo had time to hurry up support, and Eustace's men, caught between a sally of the garrison and the onrush of a relieving force, were cut to pieces. The Count himself escaped, thanks to the swiftness of his charger, and lived to become reconciled with William.

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[1] Most of the early motte castles were of wood; it was only in course of time that the stately stone castles began to be built all over the country.

[2] Reigned 1081–1118.

The first open rebellion had signally failed, but the news of it had sufficiently alarmed the King to make him determine on an immediate return. Taking horse on December 6, 1067, he arrived at the mouth of the Béthune, whence, setting sail, he returned to England, leaving Normandy in the charge of his wife, Matilda, and his son, Robert.[1] With him came Roger de Montgomery, soon to be established at Shrewsbury as Earl and to attempt the subjugation of the warlike tribesmen of Wales.

REVOLT IN THE WEST

The return of the Conqueror seems for a time to have stamped out the embers of revolt. The feast of Christmas was kept in peace and with courtesy in London. English nobles and bishops were received and steps were taken to remove the causes of the prevailing discontent. Around London and the home counties matters seemed to have calmed down, but in the west Eadric the Wild had joined forces with the Welsh princes Bleddyn and Rhiwallon, who attacked Hereford Castle, now in the charge of fitz Osbern. Meanwhile the men of Cornwall and Devonshire were preparing to withstand the King in the city of Exeter. The reason for their revolt we are not told, but the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle* hints at new and oppressive taxation. Against the men of Exeter the King marched in person, and with him went Englishmen, now used for the first time by the Conqueror against their own countrymen. With the approach of the royal forces the men of Exeter realized the futility of resistance, the city gates were opened, and messengers were sent offering hostages and desiring peace. The hostages were given, the envoys returned, and the King prepared to occupy the city, when the citizens, changing their attitude for some reason which we can only guess at, bolted their gates, manned their walls, and prepared to stand a siege. At first the King tried terrorism. Marching his army to within sight of the gates, he had the eyes of one of the hostages plucked out in sight of the townsmen on the ramparts. The result was to stir the people to make a desperate resistance, and for eighteen days Exeter withstood continual assaults. At last, however, the English leaders betrayed their followers and submission became inevitable. The city gates were opened once more, and in the manner then customary with capitulating cities a procession of the most beautiful of Exeter's women, together with the chief men of the city and the clergy, carrying sacred books and holy ornaments, went out to meet the King.

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[1] At this date a mere child only just in his teens.

Exeter having capitulated, William behaved at first with extreme leniency. Both the persons and the property of the people were spared. But it was otherwise with their leaders. Steps were taken to replace the Saxon nobles by Normans. Exeter itself was castled, Baldwin de Meules being left in charge of the work of fortification, while the King marched onward to the very toe of Britain, to the extremest point of Cornwall. By Easter William was back at Winchester, and his army was disbanded, but already the confiscations had been made and the steps taken to create that wide Duchy of Cornwall which was given to Robert de Mortain,[1] and which later became the dukedom of the heir-apparent of the English throne.

It is about this time that we begin to read of Saxon nobles choosing exile rather than to remain longer in their native land. Gytha, the widow of Earl Godwin, a woman of tragedy who had seen her nearest kin raised to the pinnacle of power only to be dashed down into the abyss of ruin, hastened from Exeter with a train of noble dames for Steep Holmes. There she remained while a fleet was prepared to carry her and her companions to St Omer. A little later the Atheling Edgar, with his mother, the Hungarian princess Agatha, his sisters Margaret and Christina, journeyed north to the Court of Malcolm of Scotland, in the charge of the shire-reeve Merlesweyn and Gospatric. This second exile was the consequence of a rising, led by Gospatric, which had taken place in Northumbria. Before we pass to a consideration of this we must return once more to Normandy, to the Queen Matilda.

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[1] This brother of Odo and uterine brother of William I gained more than any other private person from the Conquest. He held eventually 797 separate manors, less than half of which made up almost the whole of Cornwall. He held land in many other shires.

THE CORONATION OF MATILDA

Matilda, together with the child Robert, had been left regents of Normandy. As yet the state of England was too unsettled for William to think it prudent to bring his Queen to reign over his new subjects. Now, however, that he had been the anointed King of England for well-nigh fifteen months, now that two small rebellions had been instantly snuffed out, one with the aid of English troops, it seemed no longer rash but politic to introduce his English subjects to their Norman Queen. Consequently, after Easter Matilda arrived in England, and was crowned Queen by Aldred, the Archbishop of York, on May 11, 1068. Before the year was ended the Queen presented her new subjects with a prince, destined to rule wisely over his people, and known to us all by the name he later bore of Henry Beauclerc.

REBELLION RENEWED

Hardly had the ceremony of coronation been performed when new troubles arose to disturb the State. Edwin of Mercia, Morcar of Northumberland, Eadric the Wild, and Bleddyn of Wales rebelled, and, although William attempted to wean away Edwin with the promise of his daughter's hand, the promise was not kept, and Edwin, doubly infuriated, entered with the greater vigour into the struggle. The new movement was fraught with serious consequences. Edwin and Morcar, the representatives of the house of Leofric, were the most powerful of the Saxon nobility; Eadric the Wild, if less noteworthy as regards possessions, was a fierce fighter; and Bleddyn[1] was the strongest Welsh prince then ruling. At first the insurrection broke out with great violence north of the Humber. York was in a ferment. The rebels abounded everywhere, fortifying themselves in cities and in places rendered strong by nature.

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[1] See the author's *Wales*, in this series, pp. 182, 184–196, for further details of this prince.

The Conqueror replied in the accustomed Norman manner by castle-building. Apart from numerous smaller works, two strong fortresses were raised—one at Warwick, of which Henry, son of Roger de Beaumont, was given custody; the other, at Nottingham, had William Peverell as castellan. At York itself two castles were raised, while at Lincoln and other places round about other fortresses were built. As a result of these defensive measures the rebels seem to have remained inactive for the time being. Edwin and Morcar submitted. York delivered up her keys to the King. The Atheling Edgar, with his supporters, made, as we have seen, for the Court of Malcolm of Scotland, who later married Margaret, the Atheling's sister.

From some time now the Conqueror pursued a policy designed to strip the Saxon nobility of their land and enrich his Norman followers with the spoil. It would seem that there had been murmurings among his followers, and some had even threatened to return to Normandy. Perhaps they felt that theirs had been all the work and little of the profit. As a consequence William is found making enormous grants of lands and jurisdictions, at the same time promising still more when the country should be finally subdued: At this time it is clear that the lot of England was unhappy. The country was indeed "a prey to the ravages both of natives and foreigners." Hardly had the first northern revolt broken down than the three sons of Harold Godwinsson, who had earlier escaped to Ireland to the Court of Diarmaid, King of Leinster, raised a fleet of sixty-six vessels and made for Exeter. Landing near by, they bitterly ravaged the coast until beaten off, with frightful slaughter, by Brian, son of Eudes, Count of Brittany, and William Gualdi.[1] At the same time the north was ringing with the murder of Robert de Comines and his men. Robert had been given charge of the county of Durham, and had entered the county town at the head of five hundred soldiers. Hardly had the Normans settled down for the night when the men of Durham fell upon them and massacred all but two, Robert falling with the others. This dark deed, which took place on January 28, 1069, was followed soon afterward by the assassination of Robert fitz Richard, the Governor of York, who was killed by the townsmen, together with many of his men. As Orderic says, " Oaths, fealty, and the safety of their hostages were of little weight with men who had become maddened by the loss of their patrimony and the murder of their kinsfolk and countrymen."

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[1] The *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle* gives a different story. The Irish expedition landed at the mouth of the Avon, attacked Bristol, which resisted, took ship, landed again and journeyed through Somersetshire, fought against Eadnoth (Harold's staller), who was slain, and sailed away back to Ireland.

Meanwhile Merlesweyn, Gospatric, and Edgar the Atheling, together with other nobles, had assembled their forces and marched upon York. The castle was besieged, and William Malet, its defender, is found sending post-haste for immediate help. The King replied in person, hastening by forced marches to its relief. The rebels were caught unprepared, and were not spared. By Easter the King was back at Winchester, only to learn that York was again attacked. Once more he hastened northward, met and defeated the insurgents, and scattered their forces.

Such was the state of unrest at this time that William thought it prudent to send the Queen back to Normandy until the tumults should subside. The decision was a wise one, for later in this year a still more serious danger threatened the throne.

THE DANISH INVASION

We have already seen that in the first burst of despair the English had called upon King Sweyn Estrithsson for aid. At the time that aid had been withheld, but preparations had been made for the invasion of England on a large scale as soon as a suitable opportunity could be found. That Sweyn aimed at the throne cannot be doubted. Related as he was to Cnut, there had been in earlier years much talk of his succession to the English crown.[1] Now, having assembled the forces of his kingdom, and supported, according to Orderic, by Poland, Frisia, Saxony, and mercenaries from Lithuania, he prepared to launch a flood of pagans, bought with English gold, into this unhappy land.

At first the Danes made for Dover, but were beaten off by the watchful troops of the Conqueror. The same thing happened at Sandwich. At Ipswich and Norwich landings were effected, but nothing was accomplished beyond some marauding expeditions, stopped in the first case by the valour of the country-people and in the second case by the energy of Ralph de Guader. Meanwhile the King, who was hunting in the Forest of Dean, hearing of these landings, dispatched messengers to York warning the garrison of their peril, and ordering the castellans to be on their guard and to send for help if necessary. The castellans returned a brave answer, saying that they had no need of aid for a year to come. The answer proved that the danger was not appreciated. Already Edgar the Atheling, with Waltheof, Siward, and others of the Saxon nobles, had joined the Danes, who had now landed at the mouth of the Humber. The Atheling's force seems to have been on the south side of the river, and was attacked and captured by the garrison of Lincoln, the Atheling and two companions alone escaping, but the main body of the Danes pushed on for York, which was invested. Now we find the names of Gospatric, Merlesweyn, and several Scots nobles among the attackers, and we cannot doubt that the numbers opposed to York were very great. It is, consequently, a matter for surprise that the garrisons of York's two castles were sufficiently foolhardy to risk an engagement in the open. But so it was. Emerging from behind their castle walls, they made a rash sally, were surrounded, and killed or captured to a man. The castles, now bereft of their defenders, lay open to the enemy, and when fugitives brought news of the disaster to the King terror had magnified it even beyond its just proportions.

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[1] See *ante*, p. 294.

The King instantly raised a force with which to meet the invaders, and appears to have laid his plans so effectively that the allies fled at his approach, hardly attempting to contest with him for victory. But while the King was in the east rebellion broke out in the west, Dorset and Somerset rose up, while Eadric the Wild, aided by the Welsh and the men of Cheshire, attacked Roger de Montgomery's castle at Shrewsbury. Geoffrey, Bishop of Coutances, put down the former rising, while back hurried the King to the relief of the Shropshire stronghold, at the same time ordering William fitz Osbern and Brian of Brittany to march to the relief of Shrewsbury and Exeter (which was also now attacked). Hardly had the King reached Stafford and defeated an insurgent band when he heard that not only had Shrewsbury been burnt and sacked, but that the Danes, emerging from their hiding-places in the fen-land, had made for York. William immediately turned eastward, reached Nottingham, and pushed on to Pontefract. There he was held up by the river, now in flood, for three weeks before a fordable place was discovered. Finally after a dangerous march he reached York, only to find the city burnt to the ground, the monastery of St Peter gutted, and the old Archbishop, Aldred, who had crowned him King, dead of a broken heart at the miseries which had befallen his people.

The Wasting of Northumbria

There can be little doubt that the proceedings of this year had been enough to try the temper of a far less passionate man than William. The sight of the ruins of this second city of his realm and the remembrance of his slaughtered garrison may well have created in the King's breast a consuming rage. Moreover, if Englishman and Norman were not to drag out their lives in everlasting conflict a lesson was necessary. A lesson was given, as ruthless and as savage as any in history. In our view the devastation of the east coast from the Humber northward established finally the Norman power. The mere memory of those burning farms, salted fields, dying men, women, and children, slaughtered horses and cattle, and even dogs and cats, chilled the hearts of the bravest and long held rebellion in the throttling grip of fear. The Danes having been bought off, the King loosed his soldiery over the unhappy land. Such evil was done that, in the words of a contemporary historian, men " were hurried in crowds to hell." " To his lasting disgrace," says Orderic, "William yielded to his worst impulse, and set no bounds to his prey, condemning the innocent and the guilty to a common fate." Food and implements of husbandry of every kind were heaped together, fired, and destroyed. For hundreds of square miles England was made a desert, and, as a consequence, in the ensuing years famine added to the woes of an unhappy people. As for the devastated region, not a living thing remained, and it is only within comparatively recent years that the last traces of this crime have ceased to be apparent. We, in this present age, with the remembrance of a devastated Belgium, can appreciate the feelings of that man of Shropshire whose words we have so often quoted when he wrote : " When I see that innocent children, youths in the prime of their age, and grey-headed old men perished from hunger . . . I assert that such barbarous homicide could not pass unpunished."

The Rebels of the West Disperse

The remainder of the year was mainly spent in driving to the fens and marshes the last remaining bodies of rebels and Danes. William himself pushed on as far as the river Tees, and there received the submission of Waltheof and Gospatric, the former appearing in person, the latter by envoys. Meanwhile the Danes had been cut off from supplies, and, after suffering greatly from lack of fresh food, were compelled to set sail once more for Denmark, carrying back to Sweyn a sorry account of the expedition, which had been expected to prove the beginning of another Danish conquest of England.

We must now return to the Welsh-English combination which, as we have seen, had been formed in 1068 between Bleddyn, Edwin, Morcar, and Eadric the Wild. For a time nothing had been attempted, and Edwin later made peace, but in 1069 Shrewsbury had been burnt to the ground before either William or his supporters could raise the siege. It is probable that fresh dangers were threatening and William found it necessary to undertake a march over the Pennines in midwinter. Unchecked either by the fury of the elements or the discontent of his soldiery, the Conqueror pressed on over hill and dale, now hidden under the snows of a bitter winter. The faint-hearted among his followers were allowed to desert if they would, and with the remaining loyalists, having conquered rain and hail, bogs and flooded streams, hunger and disease, the King arrived at Chester in the first month of 1070. There he built a castle, left a garrison, and pushed on to Shrewsbury, which he also fortified. It was in this campaign that the first effect of the ravaging of Northumbria was seen. On the King's approach no attempt at resistance was made. The forces of Eadric and Bleddyn simply dispersed; Eadric made terms and Bleddyn returned to Wales.

LANFRANC

With the garrisoning of Shrewsbury the pacification of England may be said to have been completed; the first stage of the Conquest was at an end. Hitherto force had called forth force and the lot of England had been a woeful one. Now we enter upon a new era, a time of reformation, when the Church was cleansed, the laws kept, and the constitutional changes made which centralized the system of government and laid the basis for the later feudal system. It may be a mere matter of coincidence that the new turn of affairs synchronized with the coming of Lanfranc, lately Abbot of Caen, to the See of Canterbury. It may be, however, that his was the mind which directed the ship of State along a better channel than that taken either by Odo or William fitz Osbern or William the King.

It was on the octave of Easter (April 4) 1070 that Stigand, who still clung to the Archbishopric of Canterbury, was tried before a great synod held at Winchester. At that meeting three papal legates were present—Ermenfrid, Bishop of Sion, and John and Peter, cardinal-priests of the Apostolic See. Three charges were levelled against Stigand: (1) That he was a pluralist, having held the Bishopric of Winchester with the Archbishopric of Canterbury; (2) that he had taken the Archbishopric although Robert of Jumièges, the true Archbishop, was still living; (3) that he had accepted the pallium from the excommunicated Pope Benedict X. As a result of the trial Stigand was degraded (as was his brother Aethelmaer, Bishop of the East Angles) and the way was open for the appointment of a new Archbishop of Canterbury.

Following the deposition of Stigand there came a whole string of dismissals. The Archbishopric of York, the Bishoprics of Winchester, Sussex, East Anglia, were each given to Normans, three of whom had been chaplains to William. Later the King summoned Lanfranc from Normandy to occupy the See of Canterbury.

Lanfranc, who was now some sixty-five years of age, was a Lombard by birth, being the son of Hanbald, a noble of Pavia, and Roza, his wife. From his earliest years he had devoted himself to the liberal arts. He was soon acquainted with Greek and Latin, and became famous as a dialectician and orator. When some thirty-four years of age he set up a school at Avranches, and it was while there that he abandoned a profession in which he had become famous in order to don the habit of a monk, eventually seeking seclusion in the new and humble monastery at Bec. There he shortly became prior, opened a monastic school, and gained fame as a master to whom all eager for knowledge flocked, even from countries as far distant as Germany and Italy. Two of his disciples occupy a somewhat prominent place in our history, and both bore the name of Anselm. One, Anselm of Badagio, became the Pope (Alexander II) who supported William in his great adventure against England. The other, Anselm of Aosta, who was some twenty-eight years junior to Lanfranc, was his successor at Canterbury.

We do not propose to touch on the meeting of William and

Lanfranc or describe how the two became enemies, later to be reconciled. By 1050 at latest priest and King were on cordial terms, and the position had been reached whence Lanfranc's activities were to broaden out into a wider field than that either of monastery or school.

By 1059 Lanfranc had thrice defeated Berengar, who sought to maintain the doctrine of John Scotus relative to the Sacrament, and had published his book *De Corpore et Sanguine Domini*, and a few months before William's departure for the conquest of England he, at the Duke's request, left Bec and became Abbot of St Stephen's at Caen. On the death of Maurilius, Archbishop of Rouen, in August 1067, Lanfranc was elected his successor. It is probable that already Lanfranc was aware of Stigand's coming fall, and had been urged to undertake the reformation of the English Church ; it is certain that he refused the Archbishopric of Rouen. Lanfranc, indeed, journeyed to Rome, ostensibly to bring the pall for John of Avranches, noted for his arrogance, his quarrels, and his friendship with Lanfranc. John was now, in default of Lanfranc, installed at Rouen.

So far Lanfranc was famous for his learning—he was, indeed, the most learned man in Christendom—his piety, and his astuteness. He was soon to build up a more imposing name as a statesman of the highest order. In 1070, as we have said, he became, not without misgivings, head of the Church in England, and on August 29 of that year he was consecrated at Canterbury. From now onward he was the Conqueror's best friend and wisest adviser. Hardly had he become Archbishop than he showed that the Church in England had as strong a man at its head as had the State. After a short struggle York was forced to recognize the superior claims of Canterbury, and when, in 1071, Lanfranc journeyed to Rome for the pallium he was treated with marked honour. The Pope, his old pupil Anselm of Badagio, rose to meet him, and gave him two palls. The gift was in a sense symbolical, for Lanfranc had already done two great things since his consecration : he had centralized the Church organization ; he had taken steps to destroy the fatal isolation of the Church in England. By 1075 only two Saxon bishops remained, and one, Wulfstan, had shown much spirit in attacking York; the abbacies were also given in great numbers to foreigners. It may be that his policy ran with the Conqueror's plan of supplanting the Saxon nobility by Normans, but it is at least possible that Lanfranc did find dense ignorance, vice, and worthlessness among the native clergy, and for the betterment of the Church found it necessary to seek abroad for men suitable to hold the higher dignities. However this may be, it is certain that such posts fell to foreigners, and that in consequence the English Church began to partake more of the general spirit of Continental clericism.

The new men having been installed as bishops, we find by decree of the synod held at London in 1075 the dignity of the English episcopate being enhanced by the removal of the sees from the little-known places at which they had been established to the nearest place which boasted the importance of a city. As a result Selsey went to Chichester, Sherborne to Salisbury, Dorchester to Lincoln, and Elmham, after a brief resting-place elsewhere, to Norwich. In the monasteries other changes were made besides the installation of Norman abbots. The ancient feud between regulars and seculars was ended by the removal of the seculars. The spirit of the houses was brought nearer to that which had in earlier days irradiated from Cluny; administration was purified and made stricter, breaches of the vows of celibacy were frowned upon, the cultivation of letters and learning was encouraged. The spirit of true monasticism, which had utterly declined, was revived again, and began to light a few candles which illumined these years of the Dark Ages.

Meanwhile William and Lanfranc in consort opposed any attempt on the part of the Pope to gain a definite overlordship over England. The Conqueror's attitude on this matter was not far different from that of Henry VIII. We must remember, however, that the circumstances were different, for the Hildebrandian conception of papal supremacy was now being first put forward. To England, during William's reign, that doctrine never penetrated effectively.

When we turn to view Lanfranc's activities on the secular side we find them equally noteworthy and equally honourable. No sooner had he reached these shores than we find steps being taken to improve the administration of justice. We see nothing impossible in the story given us by the compiler of the *Leges Edwardi Confessoris*, that in this year (1070) an inquest was held to inquire into the customs and laws of the English. Whether such an inquest was ever held may be questioned, but that William's advisers did become acquainted with English law and English procedure is more than probable. It is true that very little documentary evidence has come down to us of William's legislative activity. The *Hic intimatur*, the ordinance severing ecclesiastical from temporal courts, the ordinance concerning criminal accusations, are all we have. The more elaborate, bilingual *Leges Willelmi* is a later forgery done by a private person or private persons. The earlier part of it, however, is early in date, and belongs probably to the early years of Henry I's reign. It seems to prove that the Normans understood the working of the Saxon law, but also added to it many rules peculiar to their own system. Thus the rule [xxii] which runs, "*Ki Franceis ocist, e les humes del hundred nel prengent e meinent a la iustise dedenz les viii iurs, pur mustrer kil ait fet; si renderunt le murdre xlvii mars,*" speaks of a time when it was necessary to protect the new-comers against the assassin's knife by punishing the neighbourhood in which the crime was committed. Though this code is neither authoritative as being the work of the Government nor strictly contemporary, we still look upon the *Leges Willelmi* as an honest attempt to set out the rules in operation in the time of the Conqueror—rules which were probably introduced shortly after the coming of Lanfranc. In another of the Conqueror's charters we find the Saxon customs so well appreciated that the Normans who resided here in the time of Edward were required to pay lot and scot according to English law; they did not, in fact, go scot-free.

HEREWARD THE WAKE

We must now turn back and consider what movements had been on foot among the English. No sooner had Waltheof made peace (1070) than the Danes and English in the east renewed their activity, this time round the fen country of Ely. The *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle* even speaks of a visit made by Sweyn Estrithsson of Denmark, but it is improbable that the Danish forces were considerable. It is here that we first meet with the exploits of Hereward, called afterward, in the language of romance, ‘ the Wake.’ The first act of the insurgents hardly seemed the work of true deliverers, for, falling upon the monks of Peterborough, now ruled by a French abbot named Turold, they burnt down the monks' houses, broke into the town through the Bulldyke Gate, robbed the monastery of every portable object it possessed, and, carrying the booty on board ship, made once more for Ely. According to the *Chronicle* Sweyn and William now made peace and the Danes departed with their plunder, leaving Hereward with a handful of followers to hold out alone.

The exploits of Hereward are wrapped in a mist of legend and romance, and very little is known of him which can be accepted as authentic history. He seems to have collected around him a number of valiant men, and for a time he and his followers lived by plundering the surrounding country, retiring with their booty to the fastnesses of the fens. For a time this rebellion was of small extent, while the leader of the West Country, Eadric the Wild, had made submission. As a result Orderic could picture the later months of 1070 as a time of peace, when men returned to the cultivation of their lands, when churches were built or repaired, and when the King, now striving to master the English language, laid aside the sword and busied himself with works of justice and equity.[1]

According to Florence of Worcester, Edwin and Morcar were at this time residing at King William's Court. For some reason, at which we can only guess, the two Earls became alarmed for their safety, and secretly escaped and fled, after some purposeless wanderings—the one, Morcar, to the Isle of Ely (a tract of land, then but little above the level of the surrounding waters, upon which Ely Minster now stands [1]); the other, Edwin, to the Court of Malcolm of Scotland, falling on the way thither to the hand of assassins. If we follow Florence, who, in agreement with the *Chronicle*, makes the Bishop of Durham (Ethelwine) and Siward Barn journey to Ely, we must also accept his statement that it was now that Hereward also took ship for that safe retreat. However this may be, it is probable that a considerable number of desperate men had gathered there before the end of 1070, and that Morcar, Earl of Northumberland, Ethelwine, Bishop of Durham, and Hereward, tenant of a small estate near Peterborough, more famous for his bravery than his possessions, were of the number. As Freeman says, speaking of Hereward, "His legendary prominence makes it pretty certain that, even if Hereward [were] not the formal leader of the defenders of the Isle, it was on the strength of his heart and arm that the hopes of the defence mainly rested." It seems to have been intended to make Ely the centre of a widespread rebellion, and we find the men of Berkshire hastening to join forces with their compatriots in the fens. The new rebels were, however, surprised, surrounded, captured, and incarcerated. Notwithstanding this misfortune, everything appeared to promise a long resistance, for, as Orderic says, the place held by the insurgents was almost impregnable. Only a short time had passed, however, before Morcar, who, like his handsome brother Edwin, was more fitted to be the darling of Courts than the leader of rebels and outlaws, forsook his followers, left the retreat, and made submission to the King. William, doubtless despising and distrusting such a weathercock, gave him to the custody of Roger de Beaumont, by whom he was guarded until the Conqueror, when on his death-bed, decreed his deliverance.

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[1] The old chroniclers give very different accounts of the rising of Edwin and Morcar and Hereward. Much is legendary.

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[1] This island was connected with the mainland by a causeway, which had probably been constructed in Roman times.

Even then his days of freedom were but short, for William Rufus, on his accession, re-consigned him to the dungeon.

Thus weakened by the loss of their nominal leader, and by what was much more important, the loss of a *national* leader for whom to fight, the rebellion was but short-lived. The King had already taken steps to surround the rebels and had blocked up every outlet, afterward constructing a causeway with which to reach the isle itself. By now the position seemed desperate. Neither purpose nor hope of escape remained, and before many months had passed all but Hereward and a few chosen followers had surrendered. The Bishop of Durham was sent immediately to Abingdon, where he was imprisoned and died early in the winter of 1071–2. The Earl had already been disposed of, and as for the followers, we are told that some were imprisoned, and others set adrift after they had been blinded and their hands had been cut off. Hereward for a time held out, to escape later by sea and to submit eventually to William, by whom he was favourably received.

By the end of 1071 at latest the rebellion was over, and with it the pacification of England was well-nigh complete. The result of the rising had been the death of Edwin, the close confinement of Morcar, the imprisonment and mutilation of many brave men, the sequestration of the wide lands of the Earls of Mercia and Northumberland, which were given to Normans, the castling of Ely, and the firing and spoliation of Ely Monastery. The rebels had accomplished nothing, and it was now patent for all to see that he was ill-advised who measured swords with the Conqueror.

THE DIVISION OF THE SPOIL

The fall of the house of Leofric ushered in an unhappy time for Mercia's western neighbour, the Welsh. It was now that William fitz Osbern came to Hereford and Hugh d'Avranches (following Gherbod of Flanders) held sway from Chester, while Roger de Montgomery later held Shrewsbury. Of the doings of these border barons and their satellites—Robert of Rhuddlan, Robert fitz Hugh of Malpas, William Malbanc of Nantwich, Ralph Mortimer, Warin the Bald, William Pantulf, Roger Corbet, Robert of Sai, and Walter de Lacy—we do not propose to treat. The story of the castling of the Welsh border and the slow but steady subjugation of the marches belongs to Welsh rather than to English history.[1] We turn, therefore, to the grants of land away from the Welsh border. Thus we find that Walter Giffard held large tracts in Buckinghamshire, Surrey went to William de Warenne, Holderness was given to Eudes of Champagne, Norwich fell to Ralph de Guader, Leicester to Hugh de Grantmesnil, while, in the words of Orderic, William "distributed cities and counties among other lords, with great honours and domains." Odo of Bayeux had, of course, by no means been forgotten. He, though hated more than any man by the English, now possessed immense estates, great wealth, and wide jurisdictions. Another favourite, Geoffrey, Bishop of Coutances, who had fought well at Senlac, received 280 manors, which de Mowbray, his nephew and heir, lost by rebellion. Among all the noble names enumerated at such length by Orderic of those who shared in the dividing up of England but one was borne by a Saxon, and he—Waltheof, son of Siward, the enemy of the houses of both Leofric and Godwin, who had been excluded from his patrimony first by Tostig and afterward by Morcar, and who had formally made submission to William at the end of 1069—now came into his own, receiving the earldom of Northampton and the hand of the King's niece Judith.

There can be no doubt that the sudden elevation of many men of no family, breeding, or knowledge, save of arms, to positions of power and authority resulted in the frequent committal of monstrous wrongs and injuries against the unhappy people whom they had conquered. Orderic, usually so proud of the Normans, now lashed with his tongue the "ignorant upstarts" who, "made almost mad by their sudden elevation, wondered how they had reached such a pitch of power, and imagined they could do what they would."

For a time the might of the barons was their right, but open lawlessness did not appeal to a man of William's type. Before 1074 had arrived the King had already become the champion of the people in opposition to the barons, and the long struggle for democracy which was waged in succeeding centuries, sometimes against the barons, sometimes against the king, had begun—a struggle which resulted in the signal, though by no means final, victory for the people when John, the enemy of both people and baronage, signed his name to Magna Carta.

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[1] See *Wales*, in this series, pp. 180 *et seq*.

Rebellion of de Guader and de Breteuil

For the moment this balancing of forces caused King and people to oppose jointly the baronage, with the result that when, in 1075, Roger, Earl of Hereford, Ralph de Guader, Earl of Norfolk (who had married Roger's sister and who was half a Welshman), and Earl Waltheof rebelled they found little support among the people. At the time of this rebellion William was in France, but the justiciars William de Warenne and Richard de Bienfaite were able to collect sufficient English and Norman [1] forces to check the insurrection and overthrow its leaders. A pitched battle was fought near Swaffham, in Norfolk. Ralph was pursued and shut up in his castle at Norwich, to escape after three months of siege, when he crossed to Denmark in search of aid. By now the news of the rebellion had reached the King. William almost immediately returned to England, arriving in time to receive the capitulation of the citizens of Norwich. Ralph was dispossessed of his English lands, and settled on his Breton estates with his wife. Both died some years afterward in the First Crusade, shortly after reaching Jerusalem.

Meanwhile Roger de Breteuil, Earl of Hereford, had been tried for treason and condemned to lose his lands and suffer lifelong imprisonment—a punishment which was carried into full effect. Well might Orderic proclaim, " Truly the world's glory droops and withers like the flower of grass, and is spent and scattered like smoke." But a few years before, William fitz Osbern, Earl of Hereford, the King's lieutenant, High Steward of Normandy, commander of the royal forces, and once joint regent with Odo of the realm, was the most powerful of all William's subjects, with the possible exceptions of the King's near relatives, Odo of Bayeux and Robert de Mortain. And now hardly five years had passed since his death and his son was a prisoner, his son-in-law an exile. The era of centralization had begun ; the King ruled, and, with his people, was strong enough to suppress even the most powerful of his barons.

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[1] Ordericus Vitalis only speaks of *English* forces.

The Position of the Kingship

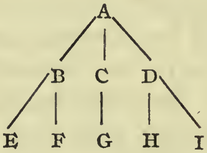
Two years before this rebellion William had undertaken an expedition by sea and land against Malcolm of Scotland. It was successful, and Malcolm saw fit to make submission and swear fealty. Apart from this, and the King's expeditions in France for the purpose of gaining full possession of the province of Maine and in order to oppose Philip of France, who had made an enemy of William by harbouring and supporting his enemies, the remaining years of William's reign are void of any notable campaigns until we come to the rebellions of his son ; but it was in these years of comparative peace that the King still further established his power and his right to be regarded as the true and only ruler of the English people.

In 1074 the Atheling Edgar, aided and persuaded by Malcolm and Philip, attempted, it is true, to harass William, but the effort was short-lived and without any result, and by Malcolm's advice the Atheling submitted later in the year and was received with some pomp at William's Court. Next year occurred the rebellion of Ralph, Roger, and Waltheof, of which we have already spoken. Ralph, as we have seen, became an exile and Roger dragged out his life in prison. For Waltheof a still greater punishment was reserved, for in the succeeding year (1076), on May 31, he was beheaded at Winchester, his corpse being consigned to the earth at Croyland. With the death of Waltheof and of Queen Edith (who had expired seven nights before Christmas at Winchester) almost the last of the great names which had survived the Conquest disappear from our history. With that passing the nobility of England ceases almost entirely to be composed of men of Saxon blood. Hence onward, as Professor Adams says, "Norman families, who were to make so much of the history of the coming centuries, were rooted in the land." Not only so, but they alone formed the aristocracy. The Saxons were reduced to a nation of peasants or serfs; their nobility were now of necessity content to lead robber bands or to purchase a precarious and ignoble position among their class by pretending to be Norman in sentiment if not in blood.

By 1076 such was William's confidence in the stability of his kingship that we find him seeking new lands to conquer. Crossing over to Normandy, he invaded Brittany and laid siege to Dol, hoping by its reduction to bring the Bretons under his yoke, even as they had been under subjection to Rollo and William Longsword, his ancestors. The expedition, however, was disastrous. William retreated precipitately because, as he thought, Alan Fergan, Earl of Brittany, was marching against him, while Philip of France was hastening in person to attack his rear. As a result peace was made, Alan Fergan being given the hand of William's daughter Constance. In the following year (1077), the year which witnessed "a more dreadful fire in London than had ever happened since the town was built," peace was also concluded with Philip, but hardly had this been done than the rebellion of Robert, William's favoured eldest son, broke out. This was to cause the King deep anxiety and, at last and indirectly, to cost him his life. Before we pass to a short consideration of its causes and effects we must turn once more away from wars and consider the internal state of England.

THE FEUDALISM OF THE CONQUEST

Already, it would seem, the new laws of William the Conqueror were being rigorously enforced. The old courts, as we have said, continued, but their focus, the *Curia Regis*, was a stronger, smaller, and more intense body than was its prototype, the Witanagemot. Moreover, ecclesiastical and secular jurisdictions were now separate. As for the grades of society, the feudal system was now in full operation in England. Long before the Conquest men had held land in return for service, but it was now, perhaps, for the first time in this country that the granting of allodial holdings ceased. Hence onward in legal theory all the land of England was vested in the King. He was its sole owner. All that a subject could be was a tenant holding of a lord and ultimately of the King. Thus we find men in England under the feudal system grouped in pyramid form.



A, the King, grants land to B, C, and D, his direct 'tenants' or holders, who are therefore the highest of all tenants and are called tenants-in-chief. B, C, and D in turn sub-grant or sub-infeudate parts of their holdings to E, F, G, H, and I, who are called sub-tenants, holding by sub-infeudation. The time was to come in the reign of Edward I when sub-infeudation was to be forbidden, since it was being made by cunning lawyers a way of evading services and of committing fraud; but at the time of which we are now speaking the number of sub-tenants which could be created was endless. It will readily be seen that from the political point of view the existence of sub-tenants was a weakness. The whole basis of the feudal system (which existed as early as Roman times) was protection in return for service. The king gave land and gave peace in return for an oath of fidelity and homage and the promise made by the tenant that he would, when called upon, fight for his lord. So far all was well, but when the tenant parcelled out his lands to others who held of *him* and not of the *king* the sub-tenant's oaths were made to his, the sub-tenant's, lord and not to the king. As a consequence, the actual land was in the hands of thousands, the oaths of fidelity which had been made by the tenants-in-chief to their king had been made by the few. If one tenant-in-chief turned traitor he carried with him the support of all his sub-tenants.

The evils as well as the benefits of this system had been only too apparent to William, who had passed through a particularly stormy youth and had waged war, not once, but many times, upon his own liege-lord, Philip of France. He therefore made an effort to reduce the weakness consequent upon sub-tenancies by calling a great meeting of all the tenants of land in England and receiving from them each severally a direct and personal oath of fidelity. This meeting was held on August 1, 1086, on Salisbury Plain, and before the assembly met that marvellous monument of William's organizing ability, Domesday Book, had been completed. How many of the actual occupiers of land were there present we cannot say. That all were there is, of course, manifestly impossible, but we may suppose that at least all the new Norman baronage, who at that time probably retained in their own hands the major part of the land of the country, for it is unlikely that they had received many sub-tenants, attended, together with any Saxon gentlemen who had succeeded in bidding high enough for any land they desired to purchase. In a word, we believe [1] that substantially all the actual holders of considerable estates [2] were there, and that they did in fact take a direct oath of fealty to the King and became his men.

DOMESDAY BOOK

Such a great meeting could hardly have been called had it not been for the fact that now in Domesday Book were recorded all the holdings, all the properties in England, and all their contents. As the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle,* under date 1085, says, "At midwinter the King was at Gloucester with his council. . . .

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[1] See for a directly contrary view Professor Adams, in the *Political History of England,* vol. ii, p. 69.

[2] Indeed the *Chronicle* does not say "all the landholders," but "all the landholders *of substance.*"

After this the King had a great consultation and spoke very deeply with his council concerning this land, how it was held and what were its tenantry. He then sent his men over all England, into every shire, and caused them to ascertain how many hundred hides of land it contained, and what lands the King possessed therein, what cattle there were in the several counties, and how much revenue he ought to receive yearly from each. He also caused them to write down . . . what property every inhabitant in all England possessed in land or in cattle, and how much money this was worth. So very narrowly did he cause the survey to be made that there was not a single hide nor a rood of land nor—it is shameful to relate that which he thought no shame to do—was there an ox, or a cow, or a pig passed by, and that was not set down in the accounts, and then all these writings were brought to him."

The record so composed is without doubt the most precious and instructive document of eleventh-century England. As Mr York Powell said,[1] " It is not so old nor so minute as the wonderful French *Polyptyques* ; nor is it so curious and primitive in manner and matter as the Icelandic *Landnámabóc* ; but for variety of information, for excellence of plan, for the breadth of land and the space of time it covers, it is probably unrivalled. It is at once a terrier [manorial roll], a rent roll, an assessment register, as well as a book of settlements and a legal record. It is important alike to economist, lawyer, historian, ethnologist, and philologist." There we can read of barons and *taini* (thegns) ; of *vavassores*, or tenants to great barons ; of *aloarii*, or tenants who held by a true freeholding and whose tenancy amounted to ownership ; of *milites* ; of *sochemanni*, suitors of the manorial courts, who stood in the same grade of society, probably, as the farmer of to-day. A lower class than the *socmen*, and a class of which we know but little, were the *radmen* or *rachen* and the *coliberti*. Below these came villeins, *bordarii*, *cotarii*, while at the very bottom of the social ladder stood the slaves, who probably bore the same relation to the villein as the *caeth* did to the *taeog* among the Welsh. The *caeth* was a menial slave who owned nothing and had no rights; the *taeog* was an agriculturist who held land in return for services, sometimes extremely onerous and unpleasant, but which at least gained him some return—he had rights to a limited degree, and probably in practice was quite as well off as the modern farm-labourer. The *servi*, or slaves, were truly slaves, who could be required to do anything and could be done well-nigh anything with. Happily, that lowest grade has long ago disappeared from our system.

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[1] Traill and Mann, *Social England*, vol. i, p. 340.

Besides these grades of society we have very numerous references to employments, trades, and manufactures. Thus in several places we read of *porcarii*, or swineherds; *arbalistarii*, or arbalesters; *auri fabri*, or gold-workers; *fabri*, or smiths; *joculatrix*, or female minstrels; *apium custos*, or bee-keepers; *berquarii*, or neat-herds, and so on. We also have confirmation of the fact that vineyards existed in England, that mills were an important manorial property, that salt-works were very prominent—many of them obtaining the salt from inland brine supplies, while others extracted the salt from the sea. Of all the salt-works, those of Cheshire were the most important, even as they are to-day. Indeed, as Sir Henry Ellis says, "The details of the laws and customs of the Cheshire Wiches form a singular and very curious article in the survey." Thus we find a salt-pan at Droitwich (Worcestershire) valued at four shillings, while a house at Worcester was valued at one shilling. In view of the prominence taken by the salt industry, it is strange that even in the survey relating to Cornwall no mention should be made of tin or tin-mining. Iron, of course, is frequently referred to. Thus Robert de Mortain received annually four *blomas ferri* by way of rent from his estate at Stanton, while at Sudperet, in Somersetshire, one *bloma ferri* had been paid as rent ever since Edward's time.[1] Lead-works are also mentioned, but they are all found in the

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[1] It may be worth remarking that the contraction T.R.E. so often met with, when expanded, reads *tempore regis Edwardi* [*Confessoris*]. Rents were generally paid in kind, though, as Mr Round has pointed out, this practice was by no means universal.

Derbyshire survey. All the North Wales mines would not, of course, have been visited, for Wales was not conquered, but it is clear that by now the Mendip mines were no longer worked.

It is, of course, impossible for us in the space available to deal with a tithe of the matters contained in this compilation. In view of William's forest laws it is, however, desirable to notice that, excluding the New Forest, lately laid down by William himself, we find mention made by name of only four forests, viz. Windsor Forest, the forest of Gravelinges in Wiltshire, Winburne (Wimborne) in Dorset, and Hucheuuode or Whichwood, in Oxfordshire. Nameless forests are referred to in Herefordshire and Gloucestershire. The *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle* speaks feelingly of the Conqueror's afforestations, saying that " He made large forests for the deer and enacted laws so that whoever killed hart or hind him men should blind . . . and he loved the tall deer as though he were their father." Not only were deer protected, but boars and hares were also preserved.

The *Victoria History of Hampshire* says : " The Saxon and Danish kings loved the chase well, but with the Norman kings it was a passion. Moreover, a change in the game laws existing at the time of the Conquest became a necessary measure in introducing the feudal system into England, so the game laws gave place to forest laws and the ' king's woods ' became ' forests.' "

William, of course, appropriated many other estates and tracts of land for afforestation purposes and hunting besides those later comprised in the New Forest, but it was this forest, made in 1079, with which his name is most closely associated. With the growth of forests came an increasing stringency of forest laws. The right of hunting became in a sense *jura regalia*, to be awarded to favourites. The Saxons were forbidden the chase, and even the Norman lords could only follow hart and hind with impunity if they had been granted the privilege. We can well believe that neither forest nor forest laws were made without much murmuring, and it is interesting, as showing the opposition raised by the sportsmen of the eleventh century to the new rules, that even a king of William's ruthless temperament found it necessary to put forward a forged charter purporting to date from the first year of Cnut's reign in support of his new pretension to the exclusive right to pursue and take animals of the chase. It was by virtue of this supposed right that the afforestation in Hampshire was carried out—an afforestation which caused so much discontent that men pretended later to see in the deaths of the Conqueror's sons, Richard and William, in the forest an act of poetic justice.

Hardly less interesting than the contents of Domesday Book is the method of its compilation, for the vast amount of information contained in it was collected by means of commissioners who journeyed through England, calling before them at various chosen places a number of the inhabitants, who were required to give information upon oath. In each county the county court was summoned to consult with the commissioners ; in each hundred the local knowledge of its inhabitants was extracted from a chosen body of men who, since they were sworn to answer truly, may be called a jury. Even smaller districts were sometimes catechized. The headmen of the vill, the more responsible men of the hamlet, were called before the commissioners and required to answer questions on oath. Whatever we may think of the supposed inquest of 1070, there can be no doubt that the commissioners who were sent round England to obtain this extraordinary inventory of the land pointed the way to the later system of justices itinerant, and the sworn inquest grew in time into the jury.[1]

REBELLION OF ROBERT

For many years Robert, the King's eldest son, a youth more notable for the fatness of his legs than the brilliance of his mind, had been sullenly discontented. Probably as early as 1074, when he was quite a boy, quarrels had arisen, the youth demanding of his father the dukedom of Normandy. For a time peace was re-established, but in 1078 William Rufus and Henry, the Conqueror's younger sons, took a hand in the dispute, and, being enraged, while visiting Robert at the castle of l'Aigle, at their brother's arrogance, they planned to insult him by pouring some water on his head from a gallery while he was talking with his followers on the ground beneath. The trick worked, Robert set upon his brothers, and the resulting fracas came to the ears of the King, who appears to have taken the part of the younger sons. Robert and his attendants thereupon took horse and attempted to seize Rouen Castle, but were prevented by Roger d'Ivry, the King's butler, who held it against them. This attempt upon the capital of Normandy angered William, who commanded the malcontents to be seized, the execution of which order they evaded by flight. For the next few years Robert lived the life of an exile, being only saved from sinking into a condition of absolute indigence by the many and handsome presents sent to him by his mother, Matilda. By January of 1079, however, after resisting for some time a siege by both William and Philip of France directed against the castle of Gerberoi, which he had captured, the rebellious son submitted and peace was made, though not without great reluctance on the part of William. How long father and son lived in a pretended amity is not certain. Robert, we know, was obedient to his father's commands in the autumn of 1080, for he then took part in an expedition against Scotland and built New Castle, around which grew in later ages the famous port of Newcastle-upon-Tyne. It may be that it was not until Matilda's death, in 1083, that an open rupture occurred, though the two had been very ill-disposed toward one another for some time before. Whatever the exact date, it is known that the quarrel was renewed. Robert once again left his father's Court, and never returned until William, when on his death-bed, sent Aubrey, Earl of Northumberland, to him in France to invite him to take possession of the long-coveted Duchy of Normandy.

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[1] The origin of the jury system is a matter much debated, and it is probable that the seeds of that system are to be found in institutions of much greater antiquity than the eleventh century.

Death of William

The Conqueror's end was now approaching. In 1087 the long-standing enmity between William and Philip reached a crisis. Early in that year the garrison of Mantes had indulged in a raid into Normandy. William had contented himself with beating off the attack, till the French King, misconstruing his forbearance, insulted him, saying, "The King of the English lies at Rouen, keeping his bed like a woman in labour; but after he has brought forth I will come to his purification, and bring a hundred thousand candles with me as an offering." [1] William, furious at this, collected an army and invaded France at the time when the orchards and vineyards were plentiful with fruit. He burnt and laid waste all the country-side and made for Mantes. This city he fired and laid waste, and it was while urging on his soldiers to give fuel to the flames that the King, according to Roger of Wendover, "incurred a disease by approaching too near the fire, and from the heat and changeableness of the autumnal season. The anguish of his disease was, moreover, increased by his horse falling whilst leaping over a broken ditch, which accident caused an internal rupture. . . . From the pain of this the King suffered so much that he returned to Rouen."

At Rouen, after lingering some time, William died, the day after the Nativity of St Mary, at the Convent of St Gervais, and was buried in Caen at St Stephen's Monastery, which he had built and had richly endowed, and which in its early years had possessed Lanfranc, the King's best friend, as abbot.

Orderic has left us a vivid account of the scenes around the death-bed of the dying King. By his side were Gilbert, Bishop of Lisieux, and Guntard, Abbot of Jumièges, besides many doctors. Later, when the illness had declared its fatal nature, William Rufus and Henry were summoned. Robert was absent at the Court of the French King. Though suffering greatly, the Conqueror retained his faculties to the last, advising his sons, making donations to the Church and the poor, and, if we are to believe Orderic, delivering to the assembled princes, clergy, and doctors a lengthy discourse in which he confessed his sins and his crimes. "I am stained with the rivers of blood I have shed," we hear him cry, but he showed full well that though the sword had been drawn by him not once, but many times, it had rarely been drawn without cause. He could truly say that he had never injured Holy Church, he could point with some pride to the noble clerics whom he had placed at the head of the world ecclesiastical, he could recount the ten abbeys and twenty-three convents which had been erected in Normandy alone since he was Duke. Now, when death was near, the harsh spirit of the ruthless Conqueror was softened, and as he turns to his sons, to whom he looked to carry on the great work he had begun, we hear him impressing upon them, in the intervals which his pain permitted him, the need for justice at all times and to all men ; we hear him exhort them to be merciful to the weak, while holding down with a firm hand the proud and mighty ; we hear him advise them to be devout, to worship God and support the Church. Finally, after lamenting the oppression of the English, and after expressing a hope that William would succeed him, after ordering the liberation of all his captives, the great King, waking at sunrise on the fifth of the ides of September (the 9th), while the great bell of Rouen Cathedral was tolling for primes, lifting up his eyes to heaven, commended his soul to the keeping of Mary the Immaculate. Thus he died. No sooner had he fallen back in his last sleep than the fear of him which had kept his courtiers watching by the bedside throughout the night was ended. Hardly had the King's head fallen on his pillow when the men of fortune had taken horse and were away, leaving their late lord to be guarded by menials. These, more ready to play the part of thief than mourner, stripped the room, the bed, and even the corpse, of everything portable and fled, leaving him who in life had been so strong a poor naked carcase lying on the floor of the death-chamber. Had it not been for the generosity of Herluin, a knight, it almost seemed as though no fitting burial would have been given the body, so utterly deserted was the late King. Even his last resting-place had to be bought for sixty shillings, almost while the coffin was being lowered into the grave, a certain Ascelin claiming that the spot where the final ceremony took place had been filched from his father by the late Duke. The once proud King had been carried to the tomb at the cost of a stranger, through burning streets, for a fire broke out in Caen as the *cortège* passed, to be buried in ground for which a claimant demanded payment. Such was the end of William.

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[1] The allusions are to William's fatness and to the custom of lighting candles at a churching.

When we attempt to sum up William's character we find that only one adjective is truly applicable to him. He was strong. Though " severe beyond measure toward those who withstood his will," his severity was hardly that of the tyrant. A man of inflexible will, he was ruthless in the means taken to attain his end, but the end was generally a wise, if selfish, one. His hand was heavy, but it generally fell on the lawless. Even the antagonistic *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle* has left it on record that " the good peace that William made is not to be forgotten ; it was such that any man, who was himself aught, might without harm fare over the kingdom with a bosomful of gold ; and no man durst kill another, however great the wrong he might have suffered from him." With the death of the Conqueror the crown passed for a season into weaker hands, but the system he founded lived on. Never again did England lose her unity. Hence onward there was one king, and one king only, in the land. Hence onward government grew more and more centralized. The administration of law and justice developed and became stronger. Lawlessness was suppressed and petty wars grew less frequent. The whole structure of society had been changed ; Norman noble had taken the place of Saxon thegn. A great change had occurred in our history, but it was a change for the better, and for all these movements we must thank the dominant will of the Conqueror and the statecraft of his chief adviser and dear friend, Lanfranc the Lombard, Archbishop of Canterbury.

CHAPTER XVII

THE MIDDLE AGE

WE have now passed in review the history of our country under the ancient inhabitants—under the Britons, the Romans, Saxons, and Danes. We have touched on the opening chapter of a new phase, that which was introduced by the Norman conquerors and developed by their Angevin kinsmen. We have reached a stage when it is desirable to turn once more from our account of wars and great political events to consider the state of society in England in this her Middle Age. In so doing we shall not confine ourselves solely to the England of the eleventh century, but shall touch upon the social life, the art, the literature, the development of law, constitutional history, and learning during the period which stretches from the coming of the Normans to the signing of the Great Charter by John in 1215. We shall thus be, perhaps, better able to appreciate the various movements which make noteworthy almost all the succeeding reigns that we shall have to consider.

The tenth century in Europe was a dark and dismal age. The clergy, who alone possessed learning, felt their spirit chilled by the fear of the millennium, generally believed, at least since the time of Gregory, to mark the end of the world. When the fatal thousand years had passed men seemed once more to wake to life; pessimism was thrown aside, new ground in the thorny path of knowledge was broken, and as years went by and the state of unrest which had followed on barbarian and pagan ravages subsided men began once more the task of building up, laboriously and brick by brick, the civilization which had been overthrown by the fall of the Roman Empire.

In all these new movements France in general and the Normans in particular took a leading and important part. The Normans were, indeed, the most brilliant men of their period. It is therefore with the Norman Conquest that the change was most felt in England. With the Normanization of English society, with the growth of English political prestige owing to her wide Continental dominions under the Angevins, England, as we shall see, soon took her part, and a great and splendid part, in what has been well called the twelfth-century Renaissance. It is perhaps as well to point out at once that the Norman conquest of England dates, from a literary point of view, not from Senlac, but from those years when Edward the Confessor was in exile in Normandy.[1] As we have seen, when Edward eventually succeeded in gaining the throne he brought back with him many Normans, and he at all times loved to surround himself with learned clerics from the Continent. Though Robert the Norman, Archbishop of Canterbury, and the Norman bishops were compelled to flee when Godwin returned to power, yet their presence in the high places of the State had not been without effect. The old isolation of English thought had been broken into and the ground was already prepared for the further growth of this foreign learning, which took effect when at last a Norman line of kings possessed the English throne.

LITERATURE OF THE PERIOD

During the next two centuries Saxon literature almost entirely ceased. For a time political events, the subjugation of the older inhabitants, the dismissal of almost all the Saxon bishops, the degradation of the Saxon nobles, were mainly responsible for this. Later, the merging of English scholastic life into that of the Continent and the growth of an internationalism of learning resulted in all scholars adopting as their medium for expression the Latin language. For well-nigh two centuries the literature of England is to be found dressed in the language neither of London nor of Rouen, but in that of Rome. This was the one great loss to *English* literature. The old vernacular, of course, lived on in the spoken word, and when the barrenness of perpetual and often Low [1] Latinity was at length appreciated, it was English and not Norman-French which emerged, to be for ever stamped as the language of our nation by the genius of Chaucer. Nor must we imagine that the new-comers were responsible for all the Latin literature of the intervening age. The Normans, it may be, directed the new movement, but the native Englishmen took a prominent part in carrying it out. It was the conjunction of Norman gaiety with Saxon phlegm which made our country not only " meri Ingeland " but also a " well god land," capable not merely of developing the Celtic romances [2] so dear to the Angevins, but also of compiling those splendid Latin chronicles which are the glory of the period. It was an Englishman, Robert the Englishman, who first translated the Koran into Latin (*c.* 1143). It was another Englishman, Adelard of Bath, who was one of the first Greek scholars in the West and who gave a knowledge of Euclid to Europe (*c.* 1110). It is worthy of remark that the " glorious King of the English," as Pope Innocent II called Henry I, granted this English scholar, probably in recognition of his learning, a sum of money in 1130. One is almost tempted to say that from the time of the marriage of Henry I with the Saxon princess Matilda we should discard the terms ' Saxon ' and ' Norman ' or ' Angevin ' and boldly declare our kings and their subjects resident in England Englishmen, for from that time the several races which peopled that territory became so merged and mingled that a wide generic term is not inappropriate.

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[1] *Cambridge History of English Literature*, vol. i, p. 149.

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[1] There is a story current among lawyers which well illustrates the Low Latinity which grew up among at least one of the learned professions. An English student, following the mediaeval custom of debating with foreign students, nailed to the gate of the University of Göttingen the following thesis : " *An averia in withernamiam replegienda sint.*" The scholars came, regarded it, and passed by puzzled. They could not construe the challenge. Yet it is perfect mediaeval Low Latin and means " Whether sheep being impounded may be replevied."

[2] On the question of the Arthurian romances reference may be made to *Wales*, in this series, pp. 201 *et seq.*

As Professor Lewis Jones has said, "of all the literary monuments of the remarkable revival of learning which followed the coming of the Normans, and which reached its zenith under Henry II, the greatest, alike in bulk and in permanent interest and value, is the voluminous mass of Latin chronicles compiled during the twelfth and thirteenth centuries." These chronicles were no longer the works of mere annalists. They were great literary productions which aimed not only at recounting historical events, but at delighting the reader by the charm of the telling. The scriptorium at St Albans, which had been under the charge of Paul, a relative of Lanfranc, had enabled men to learn the art of writing and of expressing facts not merely with accuracy but with grace. That the bulk of these chronicles is much greater than the chronicles of any other country for a like period is not matter for surprise, though noteworthy. The twelfth century was one of England's great ages. Henry II ruled from Cheviots to Pyrenees, and the chroniclers, imbued as they were with an intense and national English feeling, penned with a glow of pride their accounts of the great doings which they were witnessing. As the Yorkshire monk William of Newburgh wrote, "In our times such great and memorable events have happened that the negligence of us moderns were justly to be reprehended, should they fail to be handed down to eternal memory in literary monuments." The 'moderns' of those days doubtless regarded the wars and political triumphs of their princes as the most memorable of events. The poor human bee, alighting for an instant on the flower of his life, sucks the honey and is gone, ignorant of the fact that he has fertilized the flower—ignorant, it may be, of the beauty of that flower. But when we look back those hard, practical occurrences, the honey of the chroniclers, the 'memorable events,' seem of less moment than other and more complex, though at the time less splendid, happenings which were transpiring silently in their midst. The English dominions in France passed away. The intrigues, the wars, the schemes for raising money and mercenaries to advance the king's glory succeeded for a moment, yet reached no final goal. The most patient toil of statesmen, the most violent schemes of commanders, the most ignoble humilities of courtiers, had their season, died away and were gone. But all the while, silently, a change was spreading over life and over men's minds which has continued with hardly a break even until to-day. The great migration, due, it may be, to an incident in the quarrel between Henry II and Becket, which brought the scholars from Paris to Oxford, had perhaps more lasting effect on English history than either Henry II or Becket.

The University Movement

The twelfth century is indeed most noteworthy as marking the beginning of the University movement.[1] In former times, at least from the time of Charles the Great, during what is called the Benedictine Age, European education was entirely in the hands of the monks. Under Charlemagne and his great adviser, Alcuin, the centre of the educational system of the Empire was the palace school. A similar system was adopted, as we have seen, by Alfred. Both were based entirely on monastic teaching. With the eleventh and early twelfth centuries a change is apparent. The four greatest teachers of that period are probably Lanfranc, Anselm, Roscellinus, and Abelard. The first two are representative of the old monastic system, the last two of the new University movement. It was Abelard, famous alike as a thinker, teacher, for his liaison with Eloise and his unhappy end, who, having sat at the feet of the great nominalist Roscellinus, broke away from the old orthodox beliefs and methods of instruction, created a great following, and initiated an intellectual movement which resulted in the rise of the University of Paris, distinct from the old cathedral schools. At the same time, or rather earlier, universities were being founded in Italy, a country which had never so completely lost touch with

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[1] For a full history of the University movement the reader is referred to Mr Hastings Rashdall's excellent *Universities of Europe in the Middle Ages.*

Roman learning as had the more northern lands, that had suffered so much more severely from barbarian inroads. By 1000 Bologna was already becoming famous in an international sense, and acquired a European reputation as a school of jurisprudence under Pepo (*c.* 1076), his successor Irnerius, and their followers, the glossators. Both Paris and Bologna had a great influence on English history.

Throughout the eleventh and the first half of the twelfth century most English scholars, desirous of a better acquaintance with the liberal arts, crossed the Channel and took up their abode in Paris or Bologna. Some few, looking farther afield, journeyed to Spain or to the East, where Mohammedanism, which since the Hegira had developed under the guidance and support of wise, well-governing caliphs, had encouraged the growth of learning. Arabic, as a consequence, became a language of great value to the scholar. Baghdad and the cities of Spain, crammed as they were with books, called the student from far countries. The Aristotelian philosophy was first known to the West through Arab texts. Mathematics and astrology were taught by Arab teachers. To gain a knowledge of Arabic students could go to such men as Plato of Tivoli (*c.* 1136), or to the East itself, or to Spain. As we have seen, Englishmen took their share in the working of this new mine of knowledge, which had been opened up by the Crusaders.

Apart, however, from such studies, which few students undertook, Paris and Bologna were the great centres.[1] It was some time between 1165 and 1169 that Henry II issued an ordinance, directed primarily against Becket's supporters, forbidding a clerk to cross to the Continent or to come from the Continent without leave of the King or his justiciar in England. In 1167 we find John of Salisbury informing Peter the Writer that "France, the mildest and most civil of nations, has expelled her alien scholars." As a result of these probably co-ordinated measures there would seem to have been a great migration of

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[1] Salerno should, perhaps, be added as the greatest of the early schools of medicine.

English students from Paris. It is probable that the bulk of them settled at Oxford in or about 1167.

Already there were at Oxford schools, monastic schools almost certainly, of considerable size. Even before 1117 some sixty or a hundred students were to be found under the charge of a single master at Oxford. In 1149 the great Lombard jurist Vacarius was teaching law at Oxford and gaining an important following.[1] Oxford was not, however, a university, a *studium generale*, until 1167 at earliest. Once arrived at that position, it soon became a centre of great importance. Centrally situated, on a fine waterway, in a town of some note which had been graced by Norman architecture and had become a centre of political importance in Stephen's time, the university soon had flocking to it students from all parts of England. Vacarius's own book, the *Liber Pauperum*, concerned with the civil law, was eagerly studied there before the close of the twelfth century, and Oxford speedily became important, not merely for law studies, but for all branches of the liberal arts then generally known. The sister university of Cambridge dates at earliest from the *suspendium clericorum* of 1209. In that year the masters and scholars of Oxford dispersed in consequence of an affray between gownsmen and townsmen, a quarrel in which King John took sides with the townsmen. It may be, however, that we should rather date the commencement of Cambridge as a *university*, as distinct from a teaching centre, from 1229, when Henry III offered a refuge place to the scholars of Paris who had been driven from that city.

Besides the development of these two universities, it must be remembered that the twelfth century was notable for the opening of many grammar schools throughout the land. We thus see that not only were men eager for knowledge, as is evidenced by the output of Latin literature and the form of that literature; they were also, particularly toward the end of our period, able to gain that knowledge in their own land.

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[1] Mr Hastings Rashdall, in his *Universities of Europe in the Middle Ages*, a work we are relying upon largely in our account of the University movement, suggests that Vacarius did not teach at Oxford, but in the palace of Theobald, Archbishop of Canterbury, at whose invitation he came to England.

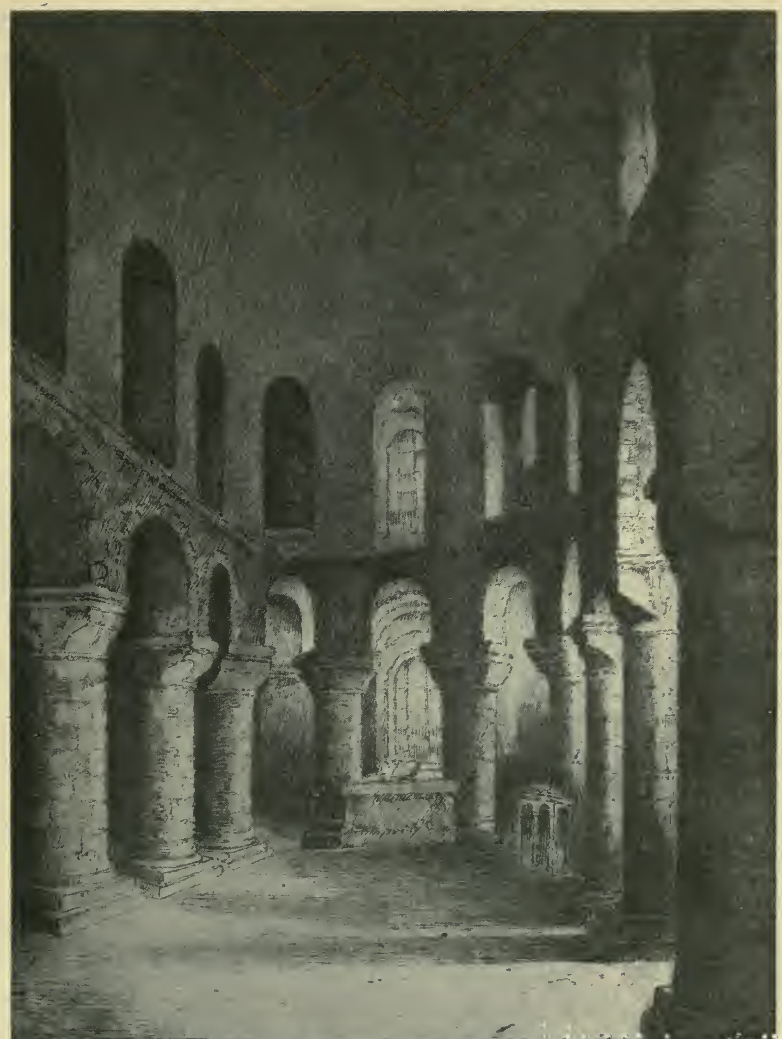

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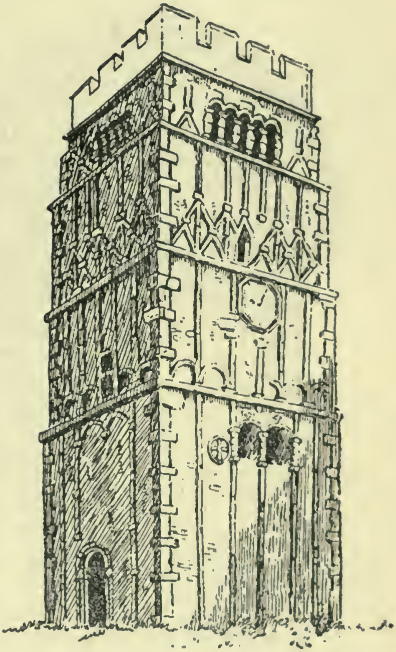
PLATE XXXVIII. ST JOHN'S CHAPEL, TOWER OF LONDON

When we think of these changes and of the Saxon period, we say again it was a good thing for England that William was the conqueror and not the conquered.

ARCHITECTURE

The growth of literature and learning was a silent growth, not too evident to the men of that period, thrusting itself in no manner upon the attention of the average man of the day. In another direction, however, in architecture, a change was spreading over the face of England which was apparent to every one, which symbolized in a sense the strong, resolute Norman character—linked, as it now was, with Frankish grace and Saxon wealth. Dr Stubbs had a saying that the Norman brought little in comparison with what he destroyed and little that he brought was his own. Whether this wide statement may stand in regard to constitutional law or legal history is a matter of opinion, and the learned Bishop's opinion is entitled to the greatest respect. That it was not concerned with and does not hold true in the case of architecture is clear. As Mr Hughes[1] has said, "The Norman style [of architecture] was, perhaps, the noblest form of Romanesque, as the English or Saxon was, perhaps, its meanest manifestation." From the commencement of the Norman period the foreign ecclesiastics brought over by the Conqueror, such as the Italian



ANGLO-SAXON TOWER OF EARLS BARTON CHURCH, NORTHANTS

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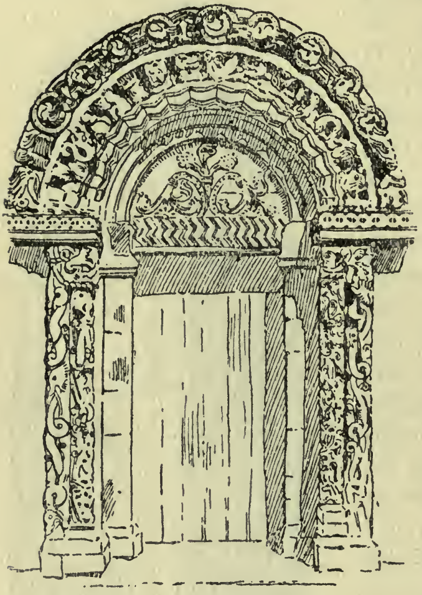
[1] In Traill and Mann's *Social History of England*, vol. i, p. 458.

Lanfranc and Anselm or the Norman Ralph, threw themselves with energy into the task of building cathedrals churches, monasteries, and schools. In addition, we know that the Conqueror and his followers built castles throughout the land. These castles were, however, save in exceptionally important cases, motte castles, mainly constructed of wood, and, speaking from an architectural point of view, unimportant. It is to the ecclesiastical foundations that we must chiefly look for the finest examples of the Early Norman style. These examples, however, are extraordinarily numerous. Despairing of the mean wooden or brick buildings of Saxon times, the new-comers levelled these to the ground and in their place erected new, and in many cases magnificent, stone structures. For a time the haste in which the rebuilding programme was carried out is shown by the careless stone-laying, which may also have been the result of ignorance. The buildings thus put up often fell, and can generally be recognized by the thickness of the mortar and the wide cracks between the stones. By the beginning of the twelfth century, however, the first Crusaders had returned, and had brought back with them much knowledge. They had seen the magnificent buildings of the Byzantine empire, and had marvelled at walls so well constructed that they seemed composed of but one stone, so fine were the joints. This new-found knowledge was soon



South Door, Kilpeck Church, Herefordshire; about A.D. 1180 reflected in Norman buildings, which were still being constructed at a great rate. When the legate, Stephen's brother, was besieged in his palace at Winchester by the Empress Maud we read of his followers showering burning things upon the attackers; as a result Winchester was partly reduced by flames, and in that part alone no fewer than forty churches are stated to have been destroyed. Winchester was, of course, a town of great importance, but the fact that so many churches could have there been burnt shows the zeal with which the Norman ecclesiastics had carried out their great building reform. The same fact is proved by the thousands of Norman remains which are traceable to-day in all parts of England.[1]

It was also at the commencement of the twelfth century that the pointed arch first made its appearance in England, and indeed in Western Europe. By about 1110 Canterbury had been adorned by an ornamental arcade containing the pointed arch, but it was not employed as a definite form of structural design until some fifteen years later, when it was used in building the cathedral of Old Sarum.

This innovation, which was also probably due to the Crusades, opened up a new period for architecture.[2] Hence onward, and particularly under the Angevins, architecture becomes more and more ornate, and by 1175 the Early English style begins to make its appearance. As Mr Hughes informs us, "Its birth was presided over by Hugh of Avalon, Bishop of Lincoln. . . . He died in 1200, and was buried behind the high altar in his unfinished church. His work is remarkable in two ways: first, because it is the first example of pure pointed Gothic (of Gothic, that is, with the least tincture of Romanesque) to be found in England, and not in England alone, but in all Europe; and, secondly, because, though there is a youthful—we might say a girlish—delicacy about it, it is neither tentative nor immature."

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[1] As Dr Cunningham says in his *Growth of English History and Commerce*, vol. i, p. 144, "The abbeys and cathedrals which were erected then may be counted by tens, the parish churches by thousands."

[2] The chief types of architecture which developed successively in this period are: (1) *Early Norman* (eleventh century). Characteristics: great strength combined with simplicity and absence of decoration, semicircular arches, simple moulding, often of zigzag pattern; the masonry is poor. Ornamentation was frequent, worked in the stone with an axe, not with a chisel. (2) *Later Norman* (twelfth century). Characteristics: heaviness less pronounced, the ornamentation much more pronounced. The sculptor's chisel used, with the result that the carving is much deeper. Masonry greatly improved. Doorways are round-headed as before, but now very ornate. The zigzag moulding is used, but with other mouldings, many of which are elaborate and deeply cut. (3) *Transitional* (later twelfth century). This is the name given to the short period during which buildings were being reared which, though similar to those of the Later Norman period in the main, have a design which is more vertical and less horizontal; the pointed arch is beginning to be introduced, but only by way of ornament. By Richard I's reign *English Gothic* has begun. This wide class divides up into: (4) *Early English* (later twelfth century and thirteenth century). Characteristics: delicacy of design, pointed arches, windows, etc., loftiness of design combined with lightness, flying buttresses, undercut mouldings, dog-tooth

Apart from architecture, art did not develop greatly during this period. The craftsmanship of the smith grew in variety, though not noticeably in quality. The illuminated missals continued to be laboriously produced in the quietness of monastic cells, but the Norman examples are hardly superior to those of Saxon times. The art of painting was still almost forgotten, though certain rough wall designs have come down to us. Cimabue had not yet marched triumphantly through the streets of Florence heralding the commencement of the great period in art which at length gave the world Raphael and Michelangelo, Rembrandt and Dürer, and a host of great men. Even the craft of coining was hardly improved. The minted money of Norman times compares very unfavourably with that of the British kings and is not superior to the examples we have from the Saxon period. In one direction, however, a noticeable improvement in the organization of the mint is evident, for whereas in Saxon times mints were scattered over the country [1] and moneyers were to be found in almost every

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ornament. Masonry excellent; dressed stone takes the place of stone and rubble. Marble begins to be used even for pillars. The *Decorated* (*c.* 1300–*c.* 1377) and *Perpendicular* (*c.* 1377–*c.* 1550) styles fall outside our period.

[1] The following mints are mentioned in Domesday Book: Pevensey, Lewes, Malmesbury, Bath, Taunton, Oxford, Gloucester, Roclent, Nottingham, Thetford, Wallingford, Dorchester, Bridport, Wareham, Shaftesbury, Worcester, Hereford, Huntingdon, Leicester, Shrewsbury, Chester, York, Lincoln, Colchester, Norwich, Lingolen, Sudbury, Ipswich, Exeter, Hastings, London, Rochester, Southampton, Hertford, Hornidune, Winchester, Ayles-

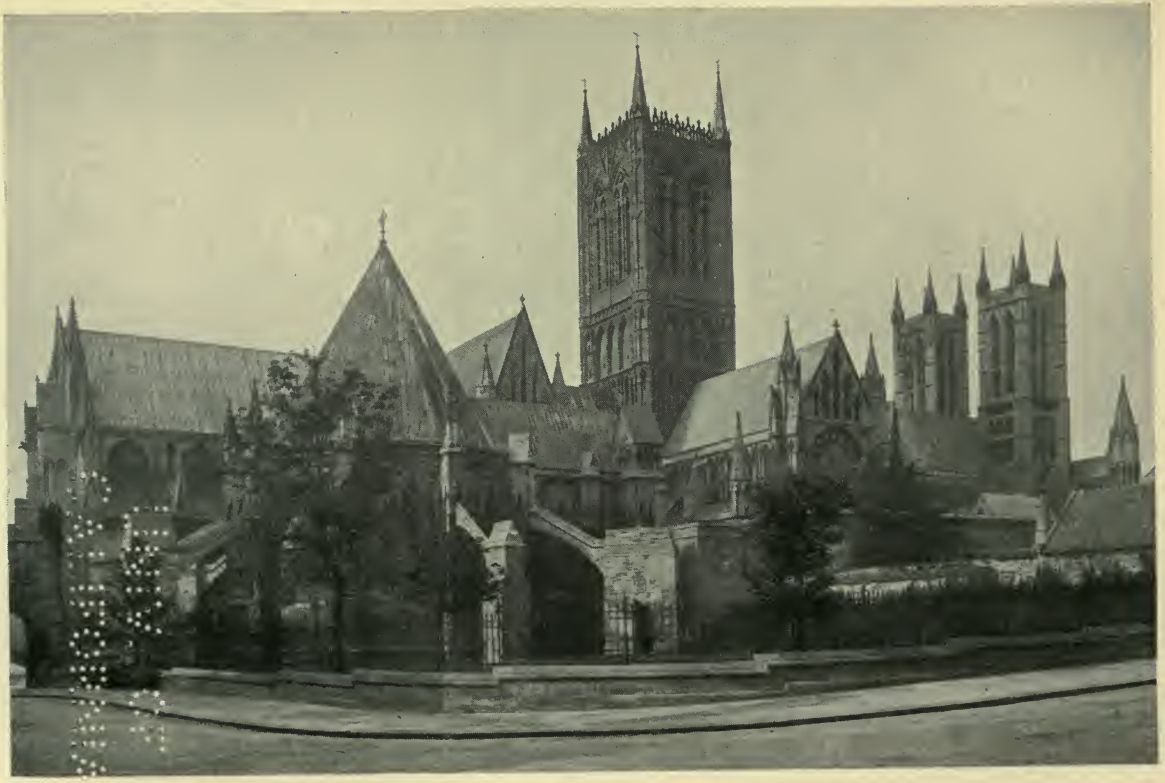

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PLATE XXXIX. LINCOLN CATHEDRAL

'port' or market, or market town—a state of affairs which continued for a time under the Normans—the national mint was centralized and fixed at London not later than the time of Henry II. Henceforward the silver pennies—the chief if not the only Norman currency—were no longer turned out by private smiths under special licence, but were struck at the London mint alone.

Commercial Life

Though as time went on the moneyer thus disappeared from the 'ports' and market towns, the market and the fair lived on as the centre of provincial trade. During the whole of the period now under review, throughout the country, in every city, town, manor, or vill, trade was carried on in strictly defined places under the control of definite and well-ascertained bodies. In the cities and towns the control of trade was almost exclusively in the hands of the various guilds. The guilds, indeed, represent one of the most remarkable social developments of the time. It has been calculated that by the reign of Richard II there were upward of forty thousand merchant and livery (craft) guilds in England. The first distinct reference to a merchant guild occurs in a charter granted by Robert fitz Hamon to the burgesses of Burford (*c.* 1087–1107), but the growth was rapid, and although it was not until the reign of Henry III that the Hanse merchants —the 'Emperor's men,' later known as the Easterlings of the Stilliard, the first of the great organizations called merchant adventurers—first obtained their charter, it is manifest that long before guilds were spreading over England, and were largely responsible for the growth in power of the borough, which in time began to take such a prominent part in English social life. By the end of Henry II's reign at latest the powers of the guilds were such that men began to band themselves

bury, Bedwind, Chichester, Southwark, Stamford, Maldon, Bridgnorth, Bristol, Canterbury, Dover, Hythe, Marlborough, Salisbury, Stafford, Wilton, Witney. The coinage was improved in Henry I's reign, when it was ordered that all coins should be round. The quality of the metal was also improved in that reign.

together in an attempt to exercise guild privileges without receiving a licence from the Crown, and as a result the Pipe Rolls contain a considerable number of references to fines imposed on *gilda adulterina*, which had sought without authority to exercise the rights of the recognized merchant associations.

In many ways the guilds benefited the community. They were the trade unions of the Middle Ages, and added to the aims of these associations the duty of looking after the social well-being of the guild brethren and the craftsmanship of their members. The social guilds were in all ways entirely desirable, and might be resuscitated with great advantage to-day. Although, as an ancient guild charter quaintly stated, they would never succour a brother who lay abed instead of being up and doing, they did look after a worthy member who had fallen, through sickness or misfortune, on evil days. They are most nearly represented to-day by such associations as the Freemasons. The craft guilds also did much good work, repressing poor and ignoble artifice and encouraging the improvement of craftsmanship. The continental artists' Guild of St Luke was largely responsible for the splendid Dutch school of painting, and in England many of our most treasured examples of silver and gold work are due to the enthusiasm of the old guild workers. The merchant guilds, however, reflected only too painfully the narrowness of commercial outlook which is so evident throughout the Middle Ages. At this period, indeed, protection against trade rivalry was universal. Each town regarded its neighbour with suspicion and some hatred. Men had not, as yet (and that applies to England as late as the fifteenth century quite as much as to the eleventh), begun to appreciate the fact that, at any rate as regards merely national trade, complete freedom of intercourse in trade is the only way to encourage and foster industry. The position of the foreigner was indeed unenviable.[1] As

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[1] There were some foreigners, however, who had *botsate*, *i.e.* they could remain here all the year round and trade like citizens and attend all fairs and markets. Of these were the Danes. The Norwegians also had similar, though limited, privileges. See *Liber Custumarum*, vol. ii, p. 531. In later years the position of the foreign merchant, at least in London, was sensibly

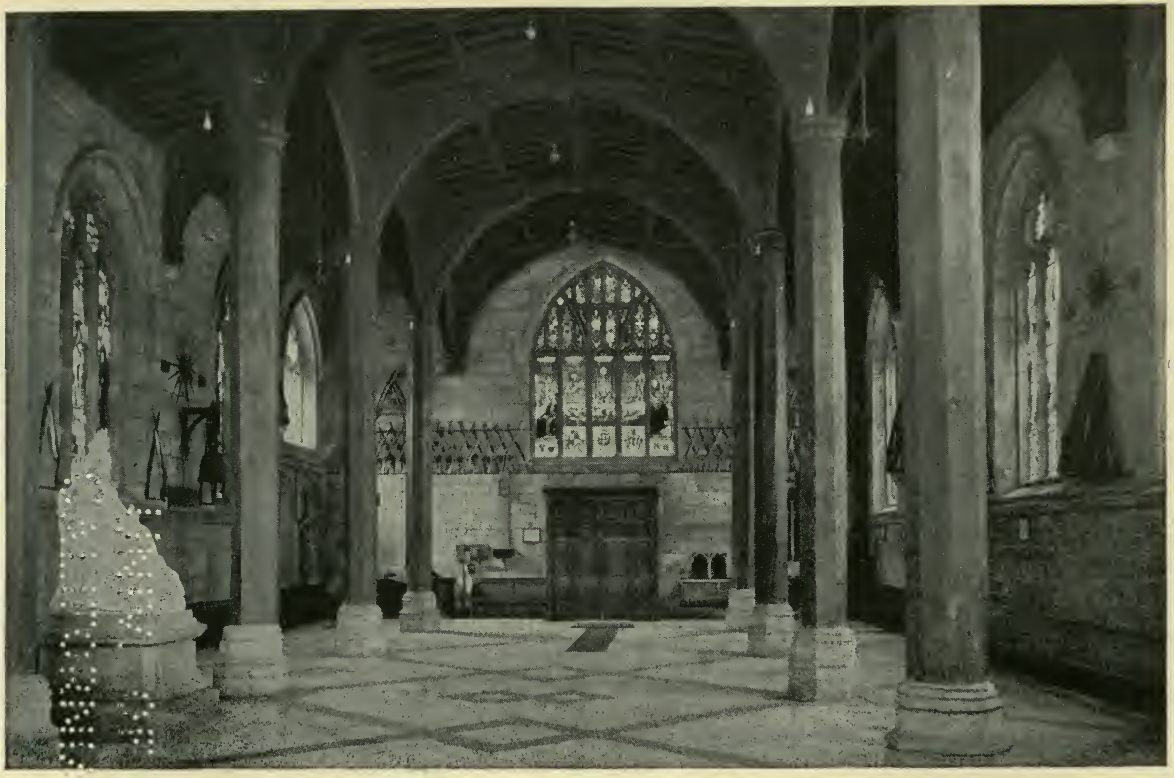

Plate XL. The Interior of the Guildhall at York

UNIV. OF
CALIFORNIA

Riley tells us in his introduction to the *Liber Custumarum*, "For many centuries the enterprising foreigner who ventured to visit this country for the purposes of traffic had to struggle against numerous discouragements and grievous restrictions, originating partly in the avarice of the English sovereigns and the insolence and rapacity of their officers, and, to a still greater extent, in the jealousy entertained toward them by the English population, the freemen of the cities and towns more especially." The guilds were not, however, content with attempting to exclude the true foreigner; they endeavoured also to stop the competition of those near neighbours whose borders were not more than a bow-shot from their own city walls. Hard, unrelenting monopoly was their policy—a policy which in the years to come was to see the weavers' looms of Norwich transferred to the freer air of the North, which was to see great Andover sink into humble insignificance and Birmingham and Manchester flourish under the warm sunshine of free and vigorous enterprise. Such being their policy, to be a trader at that time necessarily involved being a member of the appropriate guild. Such need it was which gave the guilds their power. To be expelled or excommuned meant not only social but commercial ruin to the recalcitrant tradesman. Not even the disgrace of the *collistrigium* could equal in coercive power the threat of expulsion. Such power in the hands of tradesmen little able to wield it justly resulted in some cases in a kind of commercial tyranny. Thus we gather from the findings of the jury in the case of the burgesses of Derby [1] that if any one brought leather, wool, or woolfells into the town of Derby to sell, and one of the guild placed his foot upon the thing brought and set a price for which he would like to buy it, no one but a member of the

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improved by the *Statutum de Nova Custuma*, and by the time of Richard II it would seem that all merchant aliens were given the *botsate*, but they were only permitted to buy and sell in gross and by parcels. In other words, retail trade was kept in the hands of the citizens and natives. See 2 Richard II, c. 1. An exception to this, again, was created in favour of the Easterlings of the Stilliard. See *Liber Custumarum*, vol. i, p. 63.

[1] *Placita de Quo Warranto*, pp. 160, 161.

guild would dare to buy it, nor would he to whom it belonged dare sell it to any one except a member of the guild.

But though the merchant guilds did harm in thus cramping trade, they did a good service in strengthening and developing the civic life of the borough, which they almost entirely controlled. To give the roughest outline of the rise of the borough is, of course, impossible in a short sketch such as the present, but it is possible to give an example of the way the guilds went to work to strengthen their civic life. We must also adumbrate the legal results which flowed from the divorce of borough from county administration.

At the time of the Norman Conquest and for many years afterward England was almost entirely an agricultural country. It was not, indeed, until the time of the first three Edwards that commerce reached a position of much importance in this country. Throughout the intervening years, however, the towns were growing and industry, apart from agriculture, was developing. As we have suggested, this growth was largely controlled by the guilds, and one of the means which they adopted to strengthen their position was the securing of a self-controlled civic life.

The administration of agricultural England as distinct from the boroughs in the two centuries following the Conquest was based on two distinct organizations, royal justice and manorial jurisdictions—the latter being created or continued by royal charters and being, in a sense, delegations of the royal power granted to feudatories. Such jurisdictions had existed from the earliest times, but were much increased after the development of what we may call Norman feudalism.[1] It was the aim of the guild brethren to cut themselves free both from the royal and the manorial courts. In many cases, indeed in nearly all, they shook themselves free of the manor, in many cases they escaped from the local jurisdictions of the county and hundred, but as a rule they remained subject within limits to the superior royal courts. In almost all cases their immunities were based on a charter or charters. Thus we have an interesting grant made to the Merchants' Guild at Reading whereby, among other things, the guild brethren were given freedom from attendance at county or hundred courts and from all pleas or plaints, except, of course, in their own borough court. Again, the fairs, in which a very considerable volume of business was transacted in those days and which go back to very early times,[1] had their own organization and fair courts, the courts of *pie-poudre*—so called because the suitors, being often travelling merchants, had dusty feet. The descendant of such a court exists to-day in Bristol.

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[1] The courts which operated this system (apart from the ecclesiastical courts) were, toward the end of our period, the *Curia Regis*, or Great Council, the King's Court, the Exchequer, all intimately connected with the king himself; the local county court (presided over by the king's county deputy, the sheriff), the hundred court—both relics of Saxon times—and the forest courts; finally, the manorial courts. It was not until Edward I's reign that manorial jurisdictions were generally called into question by the statute of *Quo Warranto*, requiring all who claimed such jurisdictions to show their charter of grant. This led to disputes between king and barons, which was

The separation of the borough organization from that of the county and hundred, the exemption of the guild brethren from attendance at and from pleading before such courts, had an important effect upon English law. It is fairly clear that although the Conquest resulted in the degradation of the Saxon nobility the older inhabitants retained much of their power in the cities of England. A London charter [2] dating from about the years 1125–1130 bears many signatures of prominent London citizens, most of whom have typically Saxon names,[3] and an examination of the Pipe Rolls and old guild charters

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compromised in 1290 by an arrangement whereby continued exercise of these rights from before the coronation of Richard I was declared to found a good title.

[1] The earliest grant which actually uses the word *feria* (fair) which has come down to us is, we believe, the grant made by Henry I to the Monastery of St Augustine in 1103, but fairs are much older. The Conqueror's laws used the word *forum*, which Coke believed to mean 'fair,' and fairs were common in Saxon times.

[2] Pipe Rolls, vol. x, p. 25.

[3] In this connexion it is curious to observe that though Parliament, statute, council, peer, baron, commons, sovereign, State, nation, people, citizen, burgess, mayor, are all words of French derivation, showing the effect of the Conquest on the national life, yet such words as give, buy, sell, let, hire, borrow, deed, will, bond, are Saxon in origin; on the other hand, estate, tenement, fee, manor, mortgage, lease, contract, agreement, debt, obligation,

shows that the control of the cities was still largely in the hands of pre-Conquest families. It is therefore not surprising to find, as Miss Bateson has remarked, that "the borough customs in one particular after another show retention of early law." [1] Thus, for example, the borough courts clung for a long time to the Saxon mode of 'proof' known as compurgation, and resisted continually the Norman innovation of the duel, or trial by battle. Compurgation, it is true, began to die out to all practical purposes in the reign of Henry II under the influence of the Assize of Clarendon,[2] but its place was then taken, not by trial by battle, but by the now developing system of trial by jury. Again, the Preston and Salford customals show that in those boroughs the earliest form of Teutonic formal contract, the 'gaging of the judgment,' existed and lived on for centuries after the Conquest. Such examples could easily be multiplied.

LAW

The continuance in the boroughs of legal archaisms would be a matter of small importance had it not been that during the eleventh and twelfth centuries English law was trembling on the borderland of Romanism. To-day the two great systems of jurisprudence in general use throughout the world are Roman law and English law. Roman law captured the Continent, the protagonist in the fight being the University of Bologna. It nearly captured England. Vacarius, as we have seen, was teaching Englishmen early in the twelfth century the rudiments of Justinian's compilations; at Bologna Irnerius and the glossators, Azo and the rest, were reviving the study of Roman law. As a result, when Henry de Bracton, the second of the great English writers on law, was writing his *De Legibus* we find that he introduced great blocks of Roman law learning.

master, and servant, are French. Yet again, though the Norman overthrew the Saxon nobility more than any other class of the Saxon State, such words as king, queen, lord, knight, earl, sheriff, alderman, are Saxon. This extraordinary mixedness of our language could be made to show some very curious results.

[1] *Borough Customs*, Introduction, p. xv.

[2] It was not formally abolished until the passing of 3 & 4 Wm. IV (c. 42, s. 13).

Bracton was an English judge of great experience. He was thoroughly acquainted with the practice of the law. His *Note-book* is our earliest and most treasured of law reports. Yet he found it desirable to copy into his treatise, and at some considerable length, the un-English theory of vestments which the Italian Azo, by a misreading of the Roman law, had given to the world.[1] When we compare this age, which has been called the period of formalism, with the Roman formulary period ; when we compare the early pleas in the *Year Books* with the pleas before the Roman praetor, we see how nearly England was won, how nearly her jurisprudence fell into line with that of the Continent. We suggest, though with diffidence, that it was largely because of the conservatism of commercial England, which preserved many of the ancient and admirable legal rules which date back to Teutonic times, that the English system was enabled eventually to emerge distinct from and, we believe, better than any other system in the world. To give an illustration, we might cite the case of the English law of contract. This is an important, a very important, branch of law. The principles of the law of contract under the English system are essentially different from those as developed under the Roman system. Why ? Ranulf de Glanvill, the first of the great English text-writers, tells us that the King's Court did not concern itself with private bargains. As a result the law of contract was largely developed in the various courts to which merchants and traders resorted, viz. the borough and fair courts. Such courts developed a practice quite separate from the Roman system, based largely on the value of evidence. When the time arrived in later centuries for the rise of the action on the case and the development of the theory of consideration the period had passed when English law could be anything but separate from Roman law. As a result, our present law of contract is entirely indigenous.[2]

But though the merchants of England did good work in preserving what may be termed the *identity* of English law, the Norman administrators did even better service in developing the law in general. The years which stretch from the Conquest to Edward I form the most important period which the student of the history of legal institutions has to study. Mr Jenks [1] expressed a correct appreciation of the effect of the Norman Conquest on our law when he wrote: "There is to be no longer a law of the Mercians, another of the West Saxons, and another of the Danes; not even a law for the English and a law for the Normans, but a law of the land." Apart from customary rules, a Common Law grew up common to all England, common to all classes and to all races. This was a great gain. But not only was a universal law created; it was also well and universally administered, apart from certain important exceptions based on grants and to which we have already adverted. By Henry I's reign, or even before, the king's justices were beginning to go round the country. Under Henry II the King's Bench was strongly constituted,[2] with powers that could overawe the most powerful and thus give equal justice to all. A charter given by the Empress Maud to Geoffrey de Mandeville in 1141 shows how the nobles attempted to kick against the jurisdictions of the king's justices. In that grant we find a clause providing that the king's justices should only come into the Earl's [3] jurisdiction "occasionally," and then they were to appear as the Earl's colleagues and not as the representatives of a superior authority. Moreover, they were to be men of birth. "The whole clause breathes the very spirit of feudalism. It betrays the hatred of Geoffrey and his class for those upstarts, as they deemed them, the royal justices, who, clad in all the authority of the Crown, intruded themselves into their local courts and checked them in the exercise of their power." [1] But though the extension of the power of the King's Court was hated by the nobility, it was beloved by the people. It was also pressed for by the highest officials, upon whose shoulders lay the burden of tax-collecting, for the fees brought in a ready revenue. The time had not come, however, when the King's Court was to be supreme, but already by 1166 the Assize of Clarendon had struck at such clauses as excluded justices, and under the vigorous administration of Henry II the growth of royal justice was such that we can say with Mr Jenks, "Before the end of the twelfth century the King's Court has become the most powerful institution in the kingdom; a highly organized body of trained officials, who make regular visitations of the counties, but who have headquarters by the side of the King himself [had been created]." Perhaps the most important of the instruments which brought about the supremacy of royal justice (apart from the essential strength of the kingship itself) was the royal writ. Like the inquest, that precursor of the jury system, the writ was originally used for royal purposes alone, but, also like the inquest, the subject could take advantage of it by paying. Thus the king gained money and the subject royal protection. Accordingly the archaic system of organized self-help died out except in certain boroughs, where the old customary distresses still lived on. As a result, in the period under review we have a strong judicial system created, we have the old systems of compurgation and ordeal declining, even wager of battle is on the wane, and the jury system has risen, and begins soon to have something of its modern form and characteristics.[2] There were other and important changes of a more technical nature. A professional class concerned exclusively with the law, with pleading and advising and arguing, was rising.[1] Of these matters we cannot stay to speak, but of another department, the Exchequer, we must say something, for it is never to be forgotten that in a feudal state the whole organism depends on the strength of the king, and the strength of a king very largely depends on two factors, his ability as a ruler and the value of the royal treasury.

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[1] See F. W. Maitland, *Bracton and Azo*.

[2] It is necessary to add, however, that English law nearly succumbed to Roman law under the pressure of the second and greater Renaissance which took place in Tudor times.

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[1] *Law and Politics in the Middle Ages*, p. 35.

[2] Henry II in 1176 made six circuits of three judges. In 1178 it appeared that the system had not worked satisfactorily; Henry thereupon recalled the eighteen itinerants and appointed five judges (two were clerics and three laymen) to sit wherever the King was for the trial of causes. This was the King's Bench. In 1179 England was divided into four districts, and into each district were sent "wise men to do justice."

Henry I, as we have said, sent itinerants. So did William Rufus toward the end of his reign. The system even then was not entirely new. The itinerants bear certain resemblances to the much older Carolingian *missi*.

[3] The charter had created Geoffrey Earl of Essex.

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[1] J. H. Round, *Geoffrey de Mandeville*, p. 111.

[2] It must be added, however, that it was about two centuries after the Great Charter had been signed before the change from the old form of jury to the present kind was complete. At first, of course, the jurors were called in not in order to hear, but to give, evidence. They were witnesses rather than judges of fact; they were chosen as men who already knew all about the case rather than as men whose very ignorance of the facts made them impartial. As Professor Maitland said, "The verdict [of such a jury] was the

The Exchequer and the Royal Revenue

The history of the period can hardly be thoroughly understood without an appreciation of this fact. As Mr Round remarked in his monograph on knight service,[2] when speaking of Ranulf Flambard, " Broadly speaking, his actions fall under a law too often lost sight of, namely, that when the Crown was strong it pressed, through the official bureaucracy, its claims to the uttermost ; and when it found itself weak, it renounced them so far as it was compelled. Take, for instance, [the] charter issued by Henry I, when he was ' playing to the gallery,' and seeking a general support. What was the value of its promises ? They were broken, says Mr Freeman, to the Church. They were probably broken, says Dr Stubbs, to the knights ; and they were certainly broken, I may add, to the unfortunate tenant-in-chief." Thus, before we can appreciate the political position at any given time we must have available many points of view, not the least important of which is that which springs from an acquaintance with the practice of the Exchequer.

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sworn testimony of the country-side ; and if the twelve jurors perjured themselves the verdict of another jury of twenty-four might send them to prison and render them infamous." As time went on, and as the population grew and life became more complex, the summoned jury were not all acquainted with the facts ; then others who knew the facts but had not been summoned to serve on the jury were called in to help the jury, and so insensibly the jury of witnesses lost its witness character and became an impartial body of men who listened to evidence given by witnesses who were not jurymen. When exactly the change was complete is not known, but it certainly was not later than the fifteenth century.

[1] This, however, belongs rather to the later thirteenth century.

[2] *Knight Service*, p. 2.

At the outset it is desirable to keep distinct the Exchequer and the Treasury. The Exchequer was an administrative office established at Westminster with the primary duty of collecting money; the Treasury was a department situated at Winchester for storing the money when collected. The Treasury goes back to early Saxon times; the Exchequer probably dates from, at earliest, the reign of Edward the Confessor, and was in existence in a developed form only from post-Conquest times.

When we consider the various methods adopted to raise the royal revenue [1] we find the sources divide up into two classes: regular and irregular revenues. The chief source of regular revenue was the royal domain, the king's own private estates, so to say. These were wide in extent and were scattered over England. The revenue from them enabled a careful monarch such as Henry I to 'live of his own,' had he so cared. Mean kings, however, are generally grasping, and neither Henry I nor Henry VII nor any other English king ever restricted himself to the income so derived. The next source of regular revenue was the profit which accrued from the exercise of royal jurisdictions. As we have seen, the subject could purchase the king's writ. In some reigns he could purchase the king's justice. The money flowing from the law courts was a valuable source of revenue, and was the chief cause of the oft-repeated and finally successful attempts to make the King's Court supreme over all. The king also obtained a considerable revenue from fines paid by wrongdoers. The third source of regular royal revenue consisted in the Crown rights of pre-emption and purveyance. In the words of Dr Cunningham, "The . . . right of pre-emption, when exercised on wares intended for sale, or right of *prise,* seems to have been the foundation of all the tolls which were charged at ports or fairs or markets on imported or exported goods; these were originally levied in kind, and this practice survived in the *prisage* [the right to one or more casks per vessel] of wine and in special cases connected with wool, but was generally commuted for payments in money." In other words, we find in these royal rights the foundation of the later claims to customs dues and to tonnage and poundage.

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[1] For further details reference may be made to Dr Cunningham's *Growth of English History and Commerce,* vol. i, pp. 148 *et seq.*

Beside these regular forms of taxation there were important irregular payments which went to swell the Treasury. Of these the most important were feudal dues, the payments extracted from the Jews, Danegeld, and various occasional taxes which fell upon the owners of movables. Examples of this last form of taxation[1] were the Assize of Arms of 1181 and the Saladin Tithe of 1188, which practically required every one to keep a supply of arms at hand.

To consider the first three of these forms of taxation in more detail it will be convenient to commence with the Danegeld and work backward. Danegeld has been called, not inaptly, the ship-money of those times, and was a land-tax of so many shillings per hide, varying in amount from time to time. It was originally levied by Ethelred the Redeless in order to raise money to resist the Danish invaders. After the Normans were fully established the reason for it ceased but the tax itself continued. Normally it had only been levied on extraordinary occasions and at the rate of 2*s*. per hide. In 1084 William the Conqueror levied a treble rate, William Rufus raised a double geld of 4*s*. per hide in 1096, and his successors extorted the tax annually. After Henry II's quarrel with Becket the King's unpopularity made it necessary for him to drop the hated geld, but it was almost immediately revived under the name of hidage, and under Richard I became a tax levied upon all holders of land of whatever tenure. The tax, now called carucage, had ceased to be an irregular and had become a regular form of revenue.

THE JEWS

The Danegeld was, as we can well believe, an unpopular form of taxation. Its true purpose had gone, and it lived on merely as a form of unjust exaction. But its unpopularity was as nothing compared with that under which the Jews laboured. The reason is not difficult to discover. However admirable as a people, when we remember that they were practically used by the Crown as a method of extorting money from its subjects, it can hardly be matter for surprise that popular fury eventually drove the Jews from the realm in the reign of Edward I.

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[1] Henry II's ministers introduced many new forms of taxation. The taxation of income and personal property was one of the most important of these.

It was probably early in the eleventh century that the Jews began to come here in considerable numbers. From the first their position was anomalous. Being unable to take a Christian oath, they could not swear fealty and could take no place in the feudal system. Being aliens, they could take no share in civic life or in the work of the guilds, social, craft, or merchant. As a consequence, they were largely prevented from taking part in ordinary commerce or craftsmanship and driven to usury, a form of traffic which from the earliest times has been regarded with disfavour.[1] The Norman and early Angevin kings seem to have seen that the Jew's position could be taken advantage of for the benefit of the Treasury, and as a result the following position was developed. The Jew was placed under the special protection of the king. Debts due to him were regarded as debts due to the king. The Jew was permitted to lend money freely at any interest he could get, and payment was enforced through the Exchequer. The Jew was not permitted to abate one particle of his bond, for the bond was deemed the king's bond, the Jew's gains the king's gains. To secure payment the Jew was permitted to hold land in mortgage, although, apart from this, he was not permitted to hold real estate. On the other hand, the Crown claimed control over all the Jew's wealth. The Jew was, in fact, the king's chattel, and was almost in the position of treasure trove. Frequently heavy demands were made upon the community. In 1188, when Henry II was levying the Saladin Tithe he demanded 60,000 pounds from the Jews—an enormous sum in those days, nearly half the sum raised from the country at large. Under John the protective privileges which had been obtained from Henry I were much enlarged. By John's charter of 1201 the Jews were given liberty to travel about and live where they pleased, sell their pledges after they had remained unredeemed for a year and a day, be free of all tolls and all jurisdictions except that of the king and his castellans. They were henceforward to be tried by Jews and could take oath on the Pentateuch. When Jew was sued by Christian the Jew could clear himself by such an oath; the Christian required twelve oaths.

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[1] Among almost all ancient peoples it was thought very dishonourable to lend money at interest to a countryman. It was always considered proper to lend money at any interest, however high, to a foreigner.

Some time before, during Richard I's captivity, some anti-Jewish riots in which great quantities of tally-deeds and bonds had been burnt had resulted in the establishment of registries or *archae* throughout the country. Here the loan transactions were recorded, the repayments enrolled, and from an analysis of the records the wealth of the Jew and the financial position of the victim could be ascertained at a glance. This was of great advantage to the Crown, for it enabled the Exchequer to tallage the Jews to the last penny that could be squeezed from them. Of course the burden was promptly transferred by them to the borrower. So extensive had the system become that by 1198—and probably they existed before—four *custodes Judaeorum* are found sitting with the Barons of the Exchequer for the purpose of controlling the taxation of the Jews. By Edward I's reign the community had got a considerable part of the land into their hands, and frequently lived in great state. Under Edward, however, anti-Jewish feeling reached its zenith, with the result that in 1290 the whole community was banished from the kingdom. We need hardly add that the exile was of a very temporary nature.

Feudal Dues

By far the most important of the irregular sources of income, however, was neither Danegeld nor Jew, but flowed from feudal dues. Some of these, such as the aids to knight the king's eldest son or marry the king's eldest daughter, were of a very occasional nature. Others, such as reliefs payable on succession, brought in large revenues, but are too technical for treatment here. The great feudal due, knight service, must, however, be considered. All the superior tenants of land held the land by knight service.[1] The chief liability cast upon the tenant by such a tenancy was the render to his lord (that is to say, in the case of tenants-in-chief, the king) of the service of a knight for so many days in the year for each fee unit. The Exchequer officials early began to consider how they could turn this liability into money, and the solution to the problem they found in the payment called scutage, or shield-money, a payment made in lieu of the knight service.

One of the earliest charters granting land in knight service is dated by Mr Round at *c.* 1123, but long before this military tenures had been invented, for they almost certainly date from before the time of Ranulf Flambard, and by the time of the Inquest of Knights (1166) the system as a means of tax-collecting was in full working order. Already, seven years before (1159), on the occasion of the Toulouse War, military service had been commuted for scutage, as had indeed been done years earlier, when Ranulf Flambard sent back the southern levies after having retained the money they had brought with them for expenses. The Inquest of Knights is, however, noteworthy as a further step taken by Henry II's Exchequer officials to obtain an accurate register of the taxable value of the various military fiefs. The inquisitors, journeying from fief to fief, obtained returns which enabled them to divide the barons into three classes: (1) Those who had sub-infeudated their land to inferior tenants to such an extent that the sub-infeudated fees were equal to the number of knight's fees due from them as their service; (2) those who had sub-infeudated more; (3) those who had sub-infeudated less. The returns also showed: (*a*) How many knight's fees had been carved out before the death of Henry I; (*b*) how many had been carved out since; (*c*) how many still remained to be carved out. Names of the sub-infeudatories, with particulars, were also required.

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[1] A few holdings were in grand sergeanty and frankalmoign.

Now suppose a barony was held on the terms that the lord should render the service of thirty knights, such a barony would be said to consist of thirty knight's fees. Let us assume that in 1099 twenty of these fees had been granted out to sub-tenants and in 1102 five more were granted out, leaving in 1166 five still in the lord's hands. The details of the sub-infeudations, or grants to under-tenants, were now obtained by the Inquest. These returns having been got, it was declared that fees remaining in the lord's hands should be regarded for the purposes of taxation as though they had been granted out before 1100. Further, if, as in the case given, his service was thirty knights and he had granted out twenty-five, his service was still fixed at thirty; but if he had granted out one hundred and twenty-five, or any number greater than his service, his assessment was lifted from thirty to one hundred and twenty-five, etc.

Meanwhile personal service had been exchanged for scutage. As a result the tenant who had got more from his under-tenants than he gave to the king, who had parcelled out land he held for thirty knights' services to sub-tenants at the rate of one hundred and twenty-five knights' services, found himself hoist with his own petard and forced to pay the full amount which he had claimed from his under-tenants. It was as though a man to-day leased land from the Crown at £30 a year and sublet it at £125 and then an inquiry was held and the Crown claimed £125 instead of £30. Such an economic revolution is worthy of note.[1]

When we consider the ways and means for getting in all this varied revenue we return once more to the Exchequer. To paraphrase Mr Hubert Hall's words,[2] if any of us could have peered through the woollen hangings or the flaxen drapery of the mullioned windows into the great chamber where sat the Barons of the Exchequer as arbiters of the mimic contest between Treasurer and Accountant, we should have seen something more than the mere playing of the game of exchequer round the chequered table; we should have seen the great men of the land—Justiciar, Chancellor, Constable, Accountant and Chamberlains, with the Marshal—taking part in the most important office of government in those days. There on the return days we could have seen the king's farmers proving their returns and getting their discharges, while the clerk made the necessary entries in the Pipe Roll. There we could have seen the reckoning made out, and perhaps in adjoining rooms the tallies cut and the money tried, or in place of trial an extra 'blancing' fee charged. It was in the council-chamber of the Exchequer that all the most cunning intellects around the king conceived new schemes for raising money with which to carry on campaigns or advance the king's majesty. It was around the Exchequer table that Ranulf Flambard, the notorious accountant of William Rufus,[1] hatched fresh plots for burdening the feudal nobles with fresh dues. This was the place where in Henry I's time the taxes were gathered which Stephen was to scatter to the winds; where Henry II was made great, wealthy, and absolute; where the money was obtained wherewith to ransom Richard Cœur de Lion. It was from the Exchequer that the first of the great royal courts broke away; at the Exchequer the Jews were aided in their oppressions, and the tally system—the most widespread, perhaps, of all the mediaeval merchant bonds—was developed, to live on well into the nineteenth century.

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[1] Mr Round is entitled to all the credit of this discovery.

[2] Pipe Rolls, vol. iii, p. 36.

From this short and somewhat jejune sketch it will be apparent that during this period many new movements were afoot. In all directions men seem to have wakened from the trance in which they had slept through the age of ignorance. The chroniclers are busy recounting for us national events. The schools and universities are crowded with a busy throng eager for knowledge. Throughout England fine buildings are being raised. Around the king's person men of talent are gathered who devote their genius to strengthening the business of government. The common law is growing into an ordered system and its administration is being developed. The feudal system is being worked out in all its details, to leave, for good or ill, a stamp on our social life which has not yet completely disappeared. Town life is expanding. Men are banding themselves into ordered guild associations, and the first steps are thus being taken which in the end, by a strange conjunction of mercantile and political events, were to give us India. Finally, almost throughout the period the king is strong and generally wealthy. It was, indeed, an age of vitality and virility. The first Renaissance had come.

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[1] See p. 412.

CHAPTER XVIII

WILLIAM RUFUS

1087–1100

WE have watched by the bedside of the Conqueror as he lay dying, we have followed him to his grave in the Church of St Stephen at Caen. We now turn and follow the fortunes of his son, William Rufus, from the moment when, having heard of the death of his father, he hurried from Normandy without waiting to pay his respects to the dead, until nearly thirteen years later, when he lay slain on the greensward of the forest called in Old English Ytene. William the Conqueror had left to his successor a kingship strong and centralized; the conquest of the Saxons was complete. A strong man, capable on occasion of great self-repression, his bursts of ferocious violence had cowed both rebel Saxon and rebel baron. The signs were not wanting, however, that between king and lord the struggle had but commenced. As parties to this struggle the commonalty took a hand, aiding first one side and then the other, according as King or noble stood for freedom or oppression. The reign of Rufus is most noteworthy for the fact that this great struggle now draws King and people for a time together. As a result the nobles are kept in check and all are tallaged to the uttermost. In the reign of John nobles and people joined together to oppose the King, with the result that a charter was gained which set a term on royal power and formed the foundation-stone of all our civil freedom.

The weak and veering character of Robert, the Conqueror's eldest son, had, as we have seen, raised many a bitter dispute between him, his father, and his brother. William I, bearing in mind the dangers which had beset his own path both in

England and Normandy, as he lay dying cannot but have turned an anxious mind to the problems which would burden his successor. Although it is not probable that the King made any definite attempt to nominate his successor, it is clear that he favoured Rufus as against Robert and was anxious for Lanfranc to support the pretensions of the second son. William, it is true, was a notoriously evil liver; his private vices made even his companions shudder. He was, however, a good soldier and a man of firm will. He had also been a dutiful son, and had never followed Robert in his attempts to thwart the Conqueror. As for Henry, the very fact that he was the youngest son made all question of his succession impossible unless the State was to be convulsed with civil war and the discord of factions.

The problem eventually seems to have been settled for the moment by the confirmation of Robert in the Dukedom of Normandy, while a letter was given to Robert Bloet, for delivery by him to Lanfranc, calling upon the Archbishop to use his best endeavours to secure the crown of England to Rufus. As for Henry, no territorial grant appears to have been made, but he was left a legacy of 5000 pounds of silver from the King's Treasury.

It was while William Rufus was near Boulogne[1] that he heard of his father's death. Without any delay the Prince hastened his departure and crossed over to England, taking with him Wulfnoth and Morcar, who had long been detained as prisoners. Meanwhile Henry had lost no time in getting possession of the 5000 pounds of silver. His eagerness was soon shown to be wise, for it was to Winchester—where, as we have seen, the royal treasure was kept—that William now hurried. Once there he took over the control of the Treasury and flung into prison once more the unhappy Wulfnoth and Morcar. Already the royal letter had been delivered to Lanfranc, who, if we believe Orderic, readily consented to support the claims of Rufus and hastened with him to London.

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[1] Ordericus Vitalis mentions Witsand as the place. Freeman, in *The Reign of William Rufus*, vol. i, p. 13 *n.*, suggests Touques.

There the ceremony of coronation was to be performed. So little time was lost, indeed, that on September 26, 1087, but seventeen days after the death of the Conqueror, William Rufus had secured the Treasury, gained Lanfranc to his side, hurried to London and been crowned at Westminster by the Archbishop. It has been said that Lanfranc hesitated to support Rufus. It is difficult, however, to see how he could have chosen more wisely than he did. The private life of Rufus was, it is true, discreditable to the last degree, but, on the other hand, he was a strong man, far more desirable from the political point of view than the weak, slothful, and indulgent Robert. England had been calmed by the Conqueror, but many a volcano slumbered beneath the surface, ready on the moment to burst forth. Lanfranc knew well the nature of Rufus. He had educated him. He had knighted him. He probably knew that this strong-minded, strong-built, ruddy-faced prince was more capable of holding the helm of government than was his weaker, though elder, brother. Irreligious though Rufus was, enemy of the Church and friend of the licentious, he still possessed a will of his own, and he succeeded in a task of no light nature. He held both the barons and the priests in check.

Hardly had he been crowned before we find him returning once more to Winchester. From that place he made large gifts to nearly all the churches and abbeys. Otho, the famous goldsmith of the Conqueror, was ordered to erect a splendid monument of gold and silver and precious stones over the late King's tomb. This command was carried out worthily, and the resplendent monument lived on until 1562, when it was destroyed by the Huguenots.

The year of William's coronation had not yet drawn to an end when the wisdom of Lanfranc's choice was made manifest. In Normandy the Conqueror was hardly dead when insurrections on the part of the nobles began to break out. Robert, affable and open-handed though he was, gained neither the love nor the respect of his subordinates, who openly flouted and despised him. As a result the whole country was shortly plunged into anarchy, from which it emerged bereft of much of the wealth which Norman conquests had gained for it. The numerous gifts and grants made by Robert soon had a more immediate effect. His available money being expended, we find the spendthrift applying to his miserly brother Henry for a loan. Henry was by no means ready to play the part of financier until he learnt that Robert was prepared to exchange land for money. Almost at once a bargain was struck, the Duke receiving 3000 pounds of silver in return for the Cotentin. It was here that Henry the Clerk now learnt the art of government.

Odo of Bayeux Rebels

The danger which had fallen upon Normandy soon threatened England. On the death of the Conqueror Odo of Bayeux had been set at liberty and received back into favour. He lost little time, however, in elaborating a conspiracy, in conjunction with his brother the Count of Mortain, which had for its purpose the overthrow of Rufus, the raising of a puppet-king in the person of the complaisant Robert, and the extension of the power and privileges of the baronage. The members of this conspiracy numbered among them such a host of great names that it is matter for surprise that Rufus was strong enough to defeat the schemes of his energetic, ambitious, and treacherous uncles. Besides Odo and Robert de Mortain there were Geoffrey, Bishop of Coutances, Robert de Bellême, Roger, Earl of Shrewsbury, Eustace, Count of Boulogne, Hugh de Grantmesnil, Robert of Rhuddlan, Osbern fitz Richard, Bernard du Neufmarché, and, by no means least, Rufus's former friend and favourite William of St Calais, Bishop of Durham, besides many men of less note. That the barons had a substantial and practical grievance in consequence of the severance of England and Normandy cannot be denied. Most of them held lands in both countries. In England their lord was William; in Normandy, Robert. Should England war on Normandy their oaths of fealty clashed, and forfeitures necessarily followed whichever side they took. We believe, however, that this formed the excuse for a revolt which really aimed at increasing the power of the aristocracy at the expense both of the monarchy and of the masses. The excuse, in any case, was sufficient to win over Duke Robert, who readily pledged himself to support the rebels. By Lent (March 1–April 9) 1088 the plot which had earlier been born in Normandy had been matured in England. Castles were fortified, stocked with food and drink, and fully garrisoned. Pillaging expeditions were undertaken in many directions. Hereford was attacked.

The conspirators had now flung off disguise and were in open revolt. The King's Court was almost denuded of noble followers. On all sides preparations for offence and defence were manifestly being made. Odo himself had strengthened Rochester and had dispatched messengers to Robert in Normandy assuring him that the crown was his for the taking and urging him to hasten over with his forces and accomplish the easy overthrow of his brother. Robert seems to have acted with some promptitude. Almost immediately a force was sent to strengthen Odo's position, more aid was promised, and the Duke announced his intention of leading in person the large force he was collecting. The first of the Norman auxiliaries soon arrived at Rochester, which was now put in their charge under the command of Eustace of Boulogne and Robert de Bellême.

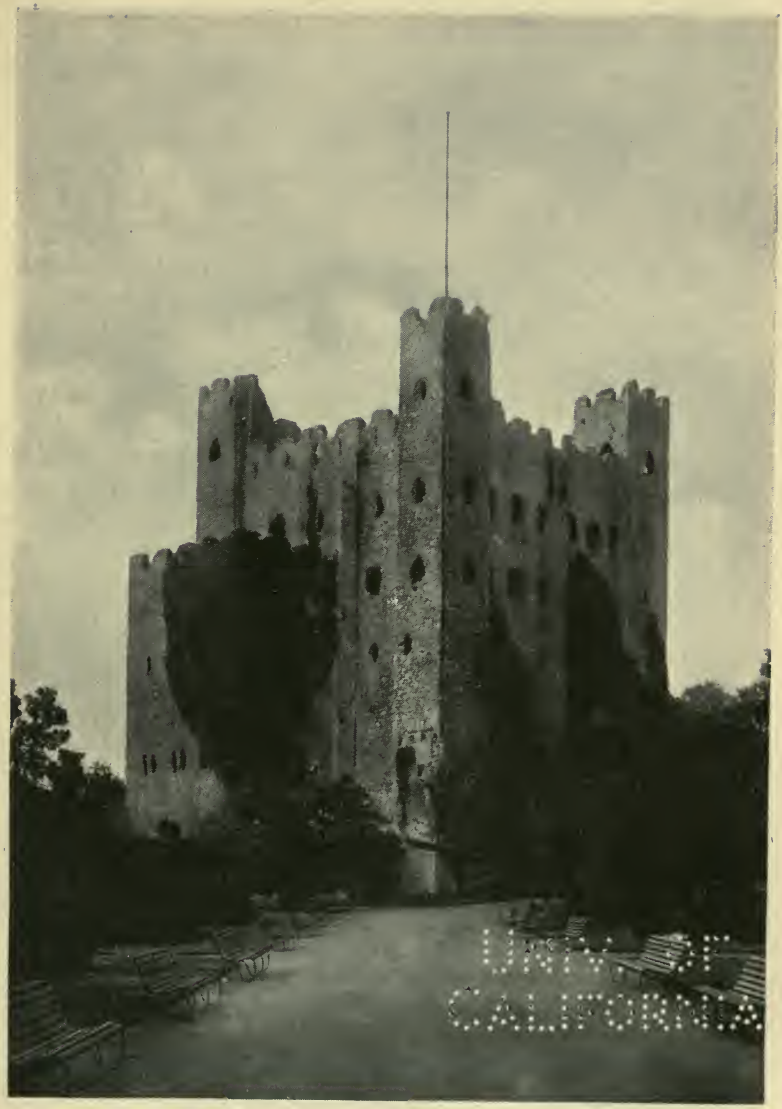
Meanwhile William, to use the words of Orderic, "by no means fled like a frightened fox into the depths of caverns, but came forth boldly with a lion's courage to strike a final blow at the rebels." A Great Council was called, in which the English took a prominent part, and it was decided to give battle to the King's foes. At first the King's army was but small, but under the persuasion of promises, ordinances, expostulations, and threats the English were gathered in by the thousand, and, strengthened by the addition to his forces of as many Normans as he could muster, the King commenced his march on Rochester. At the same time every effort was made by Rufus to weaken the coalition against him, and Roger de Montgomery seems to have been weaned away for the time being from his associates. Hugh of Chester, William de Warenne, and Robert fitz Hamon remained, as they had always been, faithful. The Church too flung its weight on to the side of law and loyalty. The English also may have hoped to undo part of the work of the Conquest by striking down the great nobles now in revolt, and to obtain once more for men of their own race the land which in earlier years had been taken from them. There is not, however, much evidence that the English *nobles* favoured or lent considerable aid to Rufus. His appeal seems to have been directed to the masses, who asked for liberty and freedom from oppression, good laws and strong justice, rather than wide estates. The citizens of London, as usual, led the native party, now committed to the support of the King.

Rochester, Tonbridge, and Pevensey

It was from London that the march on Rochester commenced. In that stronghold Odo had shut himself up with five hundred men-at-arms, there to await the arrival of Duke Robert and the promised reinforcements. Rochester itself was an admirable situation for the rebel leader. Almost midway between London and Canterbury, it held the threat of a devastating raid against both cities. Connected with the sea and within easy reach of all the coast of Kent, it could draw in new strength from overseas from almost any direction, while all the time communication could be kept up with the party in Normandy without much difficulty.

Before Rochester was reached the King learnt that Gilbert fitz Richard had fortified Tonbridge and was holding it against him. Rufus thereupon directed his forces against that town, laid siege to it, and took it by storm within two days. Having garrisoned it and taken Gilbert, who had been wounded, prisoner, the King continued his march on Rochester.

Almost immediately, however, news came in that Odo had gone to Pevensey to exhort Robert de Mortain to hold the castle there at all cost while he, Odo, defended Rochester



UNIV. OF CALIFORNIA

PLATE XLI. ROCHESTER CASTLE

Rufus, hearing that the two arch-conspirators were together at Pevensey, made for that place with all speed, taking in his train the various military engines with which he hoped to reduce the castle. While the resulting siege operations are being conducted we must turn aside for the moment and consider what was happening in other parts of England.

The Revolt in the West

At the very commencement of the revolt Roger de Lacy had attacked and taken Hereford from the King's party. He had next joined with Bernard du Neufmarché and Ralph Mortimer, supported by the vassals of Roger de Montgomery and a composite army of English, Normans, and Welsh. The rebels were next joined by Osbern fitz Richard, who held estates in Worcestershire, and the combined forces made an attack upon Worcester, threatening to burn the city and plunder the Church of God and St Mary. Worcester, however, was in the hands of an English bishop, the famous Wulfstan, who had already shown of what mettle he was made. A curious mixture of piety and astuteness, bravery and what Florence calls "dovelike simplicity," he had gained both the affection and the trust of his flock. All seem now to have turned to him for protection, and the Bishop, taking up his position in the castle, prepared to resist the rebels, and collected round him a strong force of citizens and Norman men-at-arms with which he proposed to meet the enemy in the open.

The details of the resulting battle are hidden from us by the mist of miracles. The rebels, having been cursed by Wulfstan, are supposed to have been partially paralysed and blinded, and so fell an easy prey. What is more probable is that the insurgents, finding that the populace was loyal, had little eagerness for the fight. However this may be, when the opposing forces met to contest the passage of the Severn the King's party won a notable success, which ended the most serious of the western revolts.

Worcester had been saved, but farther south Bath had fallen to the onslaught made upon it by the garrison of Bristol, which Robert de Mowbray was holding against the King.[1] The city having been given over to fire and plunder, the rebels invaded Wiltshire, which was ravaged, and laid siege to Ilchester. There, however, the royal garrison successfully resisted all attacks made upon them, and Robert eventually was compelled to retire. Meanwhile William d'Eu attacked Gloucestershire and plundered the royal vill of Berkeley.

The Rebels Overthrown

Despite these happenings in other parts of the country, Rufus continued tenaciously with his original plan of breaking the power of Odo and Robert de Mortain first. Pevensey was still besieged. With the King was Lanfranc and most of the fighting men of Kent, London, and Canterbury. As a result we find the Rochester garrison, led by Eustace of Boulogne and Robert de Bellême, making a couple of daring raids. Both Canterbury and London were attacked and many of the people killed by fire and sword.

According to the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle* the attack upon Pevensey lasted for full six weeks. There a curious drama was being unfolded. Two uncles of the King could look down from their castle walls upon the shore where twenty-one years before they had landed to help win the crown of England for their bastard brother. From those same walls they could see an English army marching, it may be along the very road which they had traversed when setting out to meet Harold of England. Now the English were fighting against them once more, but this time not in support of a Saxon but of a Norman king. They must have thought full often of the blindness of Fortune; but throughout they fought with a high heart, striving to keep the King at bay until Duke Robert should arrive for their relief. Robert, however, let precious week after precious week elapse before at last his fleet hove in sight in Pevensey Haven; and even now, though Robert's fleet was here, Robert himself had stayed behind. Meanwhile Rufus had had ample opportunity for taking all precautions to prevent a landing.

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[1] Ordericus Vitalis ranks Robert de Mowbray on the King's side.

His soldiers held the shore, his fleet sailed the sea. The Norman mariners were attacked and beaten; such few soldiers as succeeded in landing were captured or slain.

With the scattering of Duke Robert's expedition by proxy all hope of successful rebellion practically came to an end. Pevensey was surrendered on the terms that Odo should be spared but should leave England—an exile from which he was never to return. What happened to Robert de Mortain is not known. Rochester also was to be delivered up to the King, and Odo accompanied his nephew on the march toward that stronghold.

To Rufus it now seemed that no further resistance would be made. So confident was he that Odo was permitted to journey in advance of the main army with only a small bodyguard. The garrison of Rochester, when called upon to surrender, answered with a sudden sally, in which Odo was made a willing prisoner, and once more the King found himself compelled to sit down to a siege of a castle held by his crafty uncle.

It was, according to Ordericus Vitalis,[1] in the month of May that the King, with a powerful army, mainly composed of Englishmen, invested Rochester. All avenues of egress were closed, and two forts were constructed wherewith the more completely to invest the besieged. Roger de Montgomery, whose son, Robert de Bellême, was one of the most prominent of the defenders, was among the King's forces, but he was playing a traitor's part, pretending to aid the attack while in truth he and other Norman nobles were doing everything in their power to advance the interest of the besieged.

Notwithstanding this treachery in the royal camp, the plight of the defenders soon became desperate. A hot summer, combined with absence of sanitation, caused a plague of flies to torment garrison and citizens alike. The town, crammed as it was with people, was threatened with plague. Hopeless of aid from outside, unable longer to endure the miseries of the siege, the rebels at length were compelled to sue for terms. At first Rufus, enraged at Odo's treachery, refused to consider the pardoning of the nobles and threatened to hang them all. At length, however, the prayers and persuasion of his loyal followers, who could point out that these same men had largely aided his father to win his crown and might through leniency be won over to give equal support to the son, gained from Rufus a certain clemency. The rebels surrendered the city and marched forth in sorrow and dejection, while the royal trumpeters blared forth the notes of victory and while the assembled English cried, "Halters! Halters for the traitor bishop!" Rufus contented himself with banishing Odo and seizing his vast estates and enormous wealth.

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[1] Orderic is, however, not very clear in his account of this rebellion. He ignores Pevensey altogether. He also makes other statements which do not agree with the majority of our sources.

Thus ended the sojourn of Odo of Bayeux in this land. He was soon followed in his exile by the Bishop of Durham, who, once the trusted adviser of Rufus, was now compelled to flee to Flanders. Of further revolts we hear nothing. The King seems to have shown much statecraft in his treatment of the malcontents. The old barons who had aided his father in the past he spared, trusting that death would soon play the part of executioner; the new men who had thrown themselves into the struggle against him he destroyed. As a result of mingled sternness and leniency, both rigour and mercy being politicly adopted, the King held in his hand a lever with which he came near to overthrowing completely the barons' power. During the thirteen years of his reign, though the barons were to be taxed unmercifully by Flambard, and though the Church was to find no friend in the King, there was but one other revolt, and that was easily suppressed. The work of repression had been well and wisely done. Perhaps the political wisdom was Lanfranc's; if so, it was his last great service rendered to the first two Norman kings. He died the next year, on May 24, 1089.

ROBERT OF RHUDDLAN AND THE WELSH

Meanwhile the Norman marchers had been pushing their outposts farther and farther into Wales. Hugh d'Avranches, Earl of Chester, aided by his trusty lieutenant Robert of Rhuddlan, had reached as far as Deganwy, once the capital of the Princes of Gwynedd. Rhuddlan Castle, which in earlier years had housed Gruffydd ap Llywelyn, was now a Norman stronghold. It was to Robert of Rhuddlan that Gruffydd ap Cynan, one of the most prominent of mediaeval Welsh princes, appealed for aid in his struggle against Trahaearn. Robert had taken a part in the disputes which had arisen on the death of the Conqueror, and did not return to Wales until 1088. Seven years before Gruffydd ap Cynan had been imprisoned by the Earl of Chester and the lordship of Gwynedd had been granted to Robert. In the intervening years he had striven hard to obtain *de facto* what was his *de jure* according to the English view. As a result a bitter enmity was engendered between him and the men of North Wales. His absence in 1087–88 (he returned in the summer of the latter year) had been taken advantage of by the Welsh, who had ravaged his lands. Shortly after his return, while asleep one day after dinner in Deganwy Castle, he was awakened to find the Welsh renewing their depredations. Already much cattle and many women and children—these latter destined, probably, for the slave-markets of Ireland[1]—were being hurried on board vessels which lay at anchor in the bay. Realizing that instant action was necessary and impatient of waiting for the arrival of his hastily summoned retainers, he hurried in pursuit, accompanied only by a solitary knight. Such rash bravery had an inevitable sequel. Unprotected by armour as he was, he fell pierced by arrow after arrow. He died on a mountain path leading to the shore, and his head, severed from his body, was carried off in triumph.

Robert of Rhuddlan had done much to advance the marcher cause in North Wales, but his death did not stay the Norman forward movement. Earl Hugh of Chester pushed on through Arvon as far as Anglesey. Norman castles were built at Bangor, Carnarvon, and Aberlleiniog. In 1092 Bangor owned a Breton bishop and grants of manors were made by Hugh in Rhos and Anglesey.

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[1] In the Conqueror's time the slave trade between England and Ireland was suppressed.

In the south of Wales things moved more slowly, but even before the accession of Rufus much ground had been gained in the south. In the years 1091–93 Brycheiniog was being conquered. Cardiff Motte had already been built by Robert fitz Hamon, and in 1093 advantage was taken of disputes between various Welsh chieftains to ravage the whole of South-western Wales.

In the centre matters were more stationary. At this time Cadwgan ap Bleddyn was Prince of Powys, and for a time he resisted successfully all attempts at marcher encroachments, and was even able to harry the Normans of south and north. Throughout these years, indeed, the condition of the Welsh marches was hopelessly unsettled. Each year has its tale of attacks and counter-attacks, of plundering expeditions, of ravages and raids. Throughout, however, we find the Normans making a slow but almost continual advance.

The Campaign against Normandy

In the year 1088, while the barons of the Welsh marches were busy extending the Norman power into Wales itself, one of their number, Roger de Montgomery, Earl of Shrewsbury, left the control of the northern march to his mesne lords and tenants and hurried over to Normandy to take a hand in the quarrel which was being fought out between two of the late defenders of Rochester.

After the fall of Rochester Odo of Bayeux had, as we have seen, been banished. Once in Normandy he lost little time in gaining the ear of his nephew, Duke Robert, and soon contrived to become virtually master of Normandy. That unhappy dukedom had by now relapsed into a state of anarchy not unlike that which existed in England during the first part of Stephen's reign. "Strong places were everywhere constructed," we are told, "without lawful authority, where the sons of nobles were nourished like wolves' whelps to mangle sheep." Such a state of affairs offered great scope for the intrigue so beloved by Odo. On the other hand, his co-conspirator, Robert de Bellême, son of Roger de Montgomery, and one of the cruellest, most deceitful, vicious, brave, and able of all the Norman barons, had now gone over to the side of Rufus. Henry, Count of the Cotentin, had also, after the fall of Rochester, publicly thrown in his lot with the English King. In the autumn of 1088 Henry and Robert de Bellême returned to Normandy, probably with the intention of making war on Duke Robert. By advice of Odo the Duke took immediate steps to anticipate the attacks of the two knights, and while they were landing they were seized and bound and committed to the custody of Odo.

This imprisonment of Robert de Bellême instantly brought over to Normandy his father, Roger de Montgomery. Rufus now perceived that here at hand was a quarrel between his brothers from which he might reap much advantage. For a time Duke Robert, combining the forces of Normandy and Maine, was too strong for the Montgomery party, but after a few successes his sloth and love of pleasure soon brought the campaign to an end; peace was made with Earl Roger and Robert de Bellême was liberated. Bellême at once took steps to obtain revenge, with the result that Normandy was plunged still deeper into the abyss of anarchy. By every imaginable kind of treachery and terrorism he succeeded in time in winning many of the Duke's supporters from him.

Such was the state of Normandy when Rufus placed before the Easter meeting of the Great Council held at Winchester his proposal for the invasion of the Duchy. This was in 1090, and Rufus could truthfully point out how Robert had not only failed to rule his own land or protect the Church or control his barons, but had endeavoured repeatedly to stir up strife in England. The Council readily decided upon the proposed expedition against Normandy, and preparations were hurried forward. Two Norman nobles, William de Warenne and Robert fitz Hamon, were advanced in power; Stephen d'Aumale joined forces with the King and fortified his castle of Eu against the Duke; Gerard de Gournai, son-in-law of William de Warenne, placed three castles (at Gournai, La Ferté-en-Brie, and Gaillefontaine respectively) in the King's hands; while Walter Giffard and Ralph Mortimer, with many knights who held lands beyond the Seine, leagued themselves with the English and against the Duke of Normandy.

Meanwhile Duke Robert had endeavoured to strengthen his position. Robert de Bellême now appears for a moment as his friend; the Atheling Edgar, doomed perpetually to be on the losing side, is also found of the Duke's party. Overtures were made to Fulk, Count of Anjou. For the time being the Manceaux, who had shown signs of an intention to profit from the weakness of Normandy by obtaining the freedom of Maine, were kept in check by Fulk. The most important of Robert's allies, however, was Philip, King of France, whom Robert had invited into Normandy. William Rufus realized that before effective action could be taken it was necessary to eliminate Philip from the opposing ranks, and sent privately to the French King large sums of money. As a result Philip was persuaded to raise the siege of a castle he had been attacking and abandon his allies.

On Candlemas 1091 William himself crossed over to Normandy. He took with him a considerable force and established himself at Eu. Thither came a great number of Norman lords eager to pay their court to Rufus, and not only Normans but French, Bretons, and Flemings also gathered round his standard. We are informed that they admired his magnificence and generosity, and hoped by an early proffer of help to gain more in return when peace was made. However this may be, it is clear that Rufus was so strong that small hope of victory could remain with Robert. The Duke consequently made peace. The counties of Eu and Aumale and the fiefs of Gerard de Gournai and Ralph de Conches, with all the castles in their hands or held of them, the abbeys of Fécamp, of Mont-St-Michel, and of Cherbourg, were ceded to Rufus, who in return promised to aid Robert in his struggle with the Manceaux and his own revolting barons. It was also agreed that in default of heirs to either the other should be heir to

Normandy or England, as the case might be. This treaty was ratified by the oaths of twelve barons on the King's side and twelve barons on the Duke's side.

EXPEDITION AGAINST SCOTLAND

The gains of land thus obtained by Rufus had been made largely at the expense of Henry, who had been the object of an attack by both Rufus and Robert. The youngest son of the Conqueror was as the result reduced greatly in fortune, but when Rufus hurried back to England to oppose Malcolm of Scotland, who had crossed the northern border and was engaged in ravaging Northumberland, we find both his brothers accompanying him, apparently as friends. At the same time William of St Calais, who had been in exile since the fall of Rochester, was received back in favour and restored to the See of Durham.

The expedition against Malcolm was successful. Rufus having reached the Firth of Forth with his army, the King of Scots made peace without fighting and acknowledged Rufus as overlord. Early in the year following (1092) Gospatric's son, Dolphin, who had been causing trouble in Strathclyde, was expelled from Carlisle, and a castle was built there and became a centre of Norman power. This action Malcolm deemed a breach of faith, for Rufus had promised to restore to Malcolm all his possessions and Dolphin had held Carlisle as tenant of Malcolm. The King of Scots complained at a conference with Rufus held at Gloucester, but received no satisfaction. On his return to Scotland (1093) he immediately had recourse to arms to assert his right, and invaded Northumberland. His career, however, now came to an end, for he was treacherously slain near the river Aln. His son Edward, who was with him, was mortally wounded and died in Scotland a few days later.

RANULF FLAMBARD

It will have been observed that money played a considerable part in the campaign of 1190. It had gained peace with Philip of France; it had attracted many Norman nobles to the side of Rufus. The splendour and munificence of the

English King had raised his prestige, delighted his friends, and dismayed his enemies. We pause, therefore, to consider for a moment the very remarkable man who was mainly responsible for the control of the Exchequer throughout this reign.

Ranulf Flambard, the son of one Thurstan, a parish priest in the diocese of Bayeux, appears to have been brought up from childhood in the atmosphere of the lower ranks of courtiers. He early came over to England, and is mentioned in Domesday Book as a landowner in Surrey, Oxfordshire, and Hampshire. Ambitious and able, handsome, witty and eloquent, he soon succeeded in carving a way for himself among his associates. Even in William I's reign he had probably reached a prominent position as a lawyer and Crown pleader.[1] Whether he took a prominent or any part in the Domesday survey is open to grave doubt, for during the reign of the first William he would appear to have been mainly in the employ of Maurice, Bishop of London, and it was probably not until the accession of William Rufus that he was permanently engaged in the royal service.

The worldly courtier appealed to Rufus, who had need of a man who, as the King said, " would rack his brains, fearless of man's hatred so that he pleased his lord," and Ranulf advanced quickly in the royal service. What offices he held is not certain. Beginning probably as a lawyer, he was at first employed in devising fresh means of taxation and in developing the feudal system ; he was also probably a kind of Attorney-General, pressing in the courts the King's causes. Later he seems to have been attached permanently to the Exchequer, and may have held the post of Accountant; we also find him occupying a position not unlike that of the later itinerant justices, and in course of time he took charge of the administration of royal justice.[2] As a lawyer he was able, and has been credited with the writing of the first text-book dealing with

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[1] See the *Law Quarterly Review*, January 1915, p. 58.

[2] It is not clear whether or not Ranulf was Justiciar. For Dodsworth's error on this point see *Regesta Regum Anglo-Normannorum*, vol. i, p. 84. When he signs he signs as chaplain, but that is a wide title.

English law. This work—if indeed it was written by him—has been lost. Though capable, he was utterly unscrupulous, and did not hesitate to sell justice to the highest bidder, so that in his day the robber could buy acquittal and the rich suitor conquered the poor. It was, however, in consequence of his development of feudal incidents that he left his mark on the life of the time and on our history.

It was once the view held by historians that Ranulf Flambard was responsible for the creation of knight service in England. We now know that this is incorrect, and that knight service dates from the earliest years of the Conquest, if not before. What Flambard did was to extract from the feudatories of the Crown, spiritual or lay, great lord or lesser baron, the very utmost that could be exacted. The privileges of the King were stretched by him to the utmost; the measurements of land upon which taxation was based were scrutinized and altered so as to increase the amounts payable by tenants; gelds, and particularly the Danegeld, were frequently exacted upon specious but false pretences; the principle that feudatories held life, and not hereditary, estates was applied, as we shall see, to the injury of both clergy and baronage; the principle of scutage, which under Henry II did as much as anything to break down the power of the baronage, was anticipated on one occasion; the Domesday survey was revised and more stringent taxation in consequence imposed.

So far we see in Flambard ('the Consumer')[1] merely an able and unscrupulous minister of a despotic king. It is folly to blame him for the measures which were rendered necessary by the demands of his master, now supreme over both barons and clergy. We must remember that the feudal system of necessity tended to despotism when a strong king occupied the throne. We must remember that Rufus was a strong king. He it was who called for taxes; to Flambard fell the duty of gathering them. The King must share the blame for the resulting oppression at least equally with his servant.

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[1] He signs once as Ranulf Passeflambard. See *Regesta Regum Anglo-Normannorum*, No. 420.

In one respect, however, Flambard's activities resulted in something more permanent than the mere gathering in of money. His practice of regarding fiefs merely as life estates had far-reaching results, and raised disputes which were to disturb the councils of England for many years. To-day, of course, if a man obtains the freehold of land he obtains an estate which on his death descends to his heir. Similarly, the land attached to a bishopric passes on the death of a bishop to his successor. So much is this so that to-day a bishop is in law termed a corporation sole ; the bishop, like the king or like a company, never dies. In Flambard's time this position, this continuity of estates, was still being fought for between King and baron and King and clergy. The royal party took the view that when the King granted land to a baron, lay or spiritual, he granted it to an individual, and the grant terminated with that individual's death. The barons claimed a right to regard the grant as an inheritance, as a perpetuity.

Flambard, of course, upheld the interest of the King. In the past, except in the case of grants definitely expressed to be for life only, on the death of the tenant his successor or heir had generally been permitted to continue tenant on paying a fine called a 'relief.' This practice under Flambard was continued, but the relief was very greatly increased. In one case, that of Robert de Bellême when he succeeded his brother Hugh, Earl of Shrewsbury, we know that the relief was 3000 pounds, a huge sum at that time. In the same way the lord's rights of escheat, wardship, and marriage which had previously existed were now greatly extended in practice. The legal theory remained much the same as heretofore ; the application of that system was made more oppressive. It was, however, with regard to the Church that the principle of life estates raised questions which took many a year to settle. On the assumption that a grant to a bishop was a grant to a continuing corporation, a deathless legal entity, the death of any particular bishop would not vacate the tenancy. Flambard, however, insisted on the individualism of the grant, and consequently when a bishop died he claimed the right to receive the bishop's estates back into the King's hands. Here, of course, owing to the fact that bishops were, or were supposed to be, celibates, the dispute was not complicated by the existence of heirs of the body of the deceased tenant. The Church opposed this view that the grant of estates to a bishop were grants to an individual, and took the view that the grant was to the Church, that it could not be affected by the death of an individual, and that the King had no right to receive back the donated land and leave the bishopric vacant for years at a time. What we have said of bishoprics applies to abbeys and other spiritual fees.

The evil from the point of view of the Church was a grave one, and is probably responsible for many of the harsh things which cleric chroniclers have said about Flambard. There can be no doubt that he did in fact press the royal rights in this respect to the uttermost. To take an example, we find that when Lanfranc died, in 1089, the See of Canterbury was left vacant for nearly four years (May 24, 1089, to March 6, 1093) and its revenues farmed. This attitude of the Crown toward spiritual fees was not unconnected with the struggle about investitures which arose between Henry and Anselm.[1] The Church, desiring to avoid the paralysis of her life consequent upon such vacancies, endeavoured to make them impossible by denying the proposition that the spiritual fees were held of the King, like baronies; that, in a word, they were not subject to the incidents of ordinary military tenure, that they were perpetual and not defeasible.

Of the later history of Flambard we shall speak in the proper place. That he must have been a man of great talent is shown by the fact that although Henry I, mirroring the popular anger, flung the extortioner into prison at the commencement of his reign, Flambard escaped, to rise to high honour in Normandy for a time, afterward returning to England, where he was restored to the See of Durham, which Rufus had conferred upon him at the Whitsuntide festival of 1099. He died on September 5, 1128.

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[1] The dispute about investitures also raised the question whether the temporal power of the Church was to be equal to or greater than that of kings.

ANSELM

The struggles between King and clergy regarding vacant sees leads us to consider the protagonist of the Church party. Anselm of Aosta, gentle saint and spiritual philosopher, is in many ways the exact counterpart and complement of Ranulf Flambard. Of noble, or even royal, blood, a child of Lombardy, he had from his infancy been reared among books and away from the sordid paths of life. While yet a boy he sought to become a monk, but his father, Gundulf, forbade it, and on the death of his mother, Ermenburga, we find the shy, book-loving youth becoming more worldly. At the age of twenty-three frequent disputes with his father drove him from home, and he became a wanderer through Burgundy, France, and Normandy in search of fortune. Eventually he settled at Bec, where Lanfranc was now teaching in the abbey school. At the age of twenty-seven (in 1060), on the advice of Lanfranc and Maurilius, he took the step long contemplated and became a monk, and remained at Bec. Three years later he succeeded Lanfranc as prior, and in 1078, on the death of Abbot Herlwin, the founder, he became head of the abbey, and continued as abbot until 1093. Here we find him developing his genius as thinker and teacher, and one who believed (and in so believing was nearly a millennium in advance of his time) that the teacher should lead and not drive.

As we know, while Anselm was Prior and Abbot of Bec his master, Lanfranc, was Archbishop of Canterbury; we also know that on Lanfranc's death the See of Canterbury was left vacant. It was while the see was being farmed to fill the royal treasury that Anselm was invited to come to England by Hugh d'Avranches, Earl of Chester.[1] This was in the September of 1092. On his way to Hugh's castle the Abbot visited the royal Court, and was received with much honour. On the termination of the visit, however, when the Abbot desired the King's licence to depart from the realm and return to Normandy it was refused.

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[1] Anselm had lived for a time at Avranches.

It was while Anselm was thus an unwilling guest at the English Court that Rufus fell ill and was believed to be on the point of death. Like other sick sinners, he attempted to purchase forgiveness by repenting of his ill deeds, and the Church seized on the opportunity to persuade him to fill the long vacant See of Canterbury by appointing Anselm Archbishop. Anselm, for his part, was by no means anxious to accept the honour, foreseeing that he and a man of Rufus's temperament could hardly run in harness together. Even when the King's consent had been obtained and the pastoral staff had been forced into Anselm's hand by the King's bedside, he declared to the assembled bishops that they were yoking an untamed bull with a weak old sheep to the plough of the Church.

This provisional appointment of Anselm to the See of Canterbury took place on March 6, 1093. Anselm did not finally accept the Primacy, however, until after the King's recovery, and he then accepted only on condition that all the land belonging to the see in Lanfranc's time should be restored, together with all land to which the see had a longstanding claim. The Archbishop-elect also stipulated that the King should accept him as counsellor and spiritual father, and that of the two rival claimants to the Papacy Urban, whom Anselm had already acknowledged in Normandy, should be recognized. In return Anselm agreed to acknowledge the King as earthly lord.

To these conditions the King agreed as to the land, but reserved judgment on the other points. Even as to the land Rufus, doubtless advised by Flambard, required the Archbishop to regard it as land held by military tenure, and in order that this position should be made clear Anselm was summoned to the King's Court. Anselm refused to acknowledge the King's right to treat him as a tenant by knight-service, and fell into a temporary disgrace in consequence Peace was patched up, however, at the Great Council at

Winchester; the King renewed his promises and Anselm was installed and enthroned on September 25, 1093.

It was now, while the people rejoiced over the victory of the Church, that Flambard in person commenced a suit in court against the Primate[1] upon some charge the nature of which is now unknown. This was an evil omen, and it foreshadowed disputes between King and prelate which in future years were only too clearly realized. However, for the moment no serious attempt was made by Rufus to humble Anselm, and on December 4 he was consecrated Archbishop by Thomas of Bayeux, Archbishop of York.

On the Christmas following, at the Great Council held at Gloucester, it was decided to wage war once again upon Normandy. For the prosecution of the campaign large sums of money were required, and the King looked to Anselm for a handsome contribution. Anselm offered 500 pounds of silver—a sum which, though large, was deemed by Rufus, or perhaps we should say by Flambard, inadequate. Anselm, however, refused more and upbraided the King for his past behaviour, whereupon the quick Norman temper broke out, and we hear Rufus shouting in his rage: "Keep your scolding and your money to yourself. I have enough of my own. Begone!"

From this moment, though from time to time attempts were made to heal the breach between King and Primate, the two men were hopelessly opposed to one another. There can be no doubt that Anselm was largely to blame. His saintly mind was ill-suited to grappling with great problems of State. His tact was often blunted by his religious fervour, and as a result we find under this noblest of men the chroniclers declaring that Christianity had ceased to exist in the land. In short, Anselm, by being too stubborn with the worldly forces arrayed against him, lost all his influence with them and ceased to have any spiritual force. Moreover, in his dispute with the King over the recognition of Urban he took up an attitude which, had he succeeded in holding it, would have resulted in a grave weakening of the English State. His view, indeed, was the Hildebrandine view, that the Pope was above kings. That was a view which William the Conqueror had negatived; it was a view which Rufus refused to consider; it was a view which troubled English politics until it was finally obliterated by Henry VIII and the Reformation Parliament.

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[1] See *Law Quarterly Review*, January 1915, p. 58.

With regard to Urban, Anselm's position was admittedly difficult. There were at this time two claimants for the Papacy. Of these two Anselm, as Abbot of Bec, had already recognized Urban. The English Crown had recognized neither. The question now arose, Was Anselm to dictate to the Crown which Pope should be acknowledged or was the Crown to have full liberty of action? Such a question inevitably connoted the further one, Is the Church subject to the civil government in matters of foreign politics or not? The King, taking up a perfectly proper attitude, required Anselm to choose whichever Pope the King in council chose. Anselm, driven in a corner and required to cast away his obedience to Urban, claimed to have the dispute decided, not in the King's Court, but at Rome. This raised the larger question of the relation between King and Pope already referred to, and immediately brought down upon Anselm the anger not only of the King, but of a large number of the clergy. The nobles, however, appear to have prevented the King summarily banishing the Primate from the realm.

For the time being the dispute was left in abeyance by an adjournment until the octave of Whitsuntide 1095. Meanwhile the King, besides harassing Anselm with various claims and proceedings, dispatched two secret agents to Rome to acquaint themselves of the position of affairs there and to bring back the pallium, which was to be handed to the King on their return. The mission was successful, and Urban sent his legate, Cardinal Walter, Bishop of Albino, to England with the pallium.

On the arrival of the legate the King and his advisers made the fatal blunder of acknowledging Urban before they had made terms with either Anselm or the legate. As a result, when

Rufus demanded of the legate the deposition of the Primate he met with a categorical refusal, and the King found it necessary to enter into a temporary reconciliation with Anselm at the Whitsuntide meeting. For a time there was peace.

The Campaign of 1094 against Normandy

When we last considered the King's military campaigns Rufus was engaged in quelling disturbances on the Scottish border and in Strathclyde. We have seen that Dolphin had been expelled from Carlisle and Malcolm had been treacherously murdered. This was toward the end of 1093, a year which had been noteworthy for the illness of the King and the election of Anselm. The preceding year had been almost empty of events apart from the trouble with the Scots and the burning of a large part of London by a disastrous and accidental fire. With the advent of 1094, however, we are again concerned with military preparation, directed once more against Normandy, whence Robert had returned toward the end of 1091 after attempting to make peace between Malcolm and Rufus.

Meanwhile, in 1092, Henry and Robert had been at feud in Normandy, while Rufus showed signs of enmity toward his elder brother by accepting the fealty of the Count of Eu, one of Robert's most troublesome feudatories. Robert replied by calling upon Rufus to keep the terms of the peace of 1091, and, anticipating a struggle, entered into an alliance once again with Philip of France. Rufus, now recovered from his illness, answered Robert by hurrying forward preparations for an attack upon Normandy, and collected a force at Hastings. Before embarking on open hostilities he crossed over to Normandy and attempted to make peace with his brother at Rouen. The negotiations came to nothing, and Rufus established his headquarters at Eu, and by bribes succeeded in acquiring the support of a number of Norman nobles. Apart from the capture of the castle of Bures, however, Rufus accomplished but little, and matters became serious, when Robert captured Holme Castle, which had been held for Rufus by William Peverell and eight hundred men. The entire garrison were taken prisoners, and Rufus, alarmed by this disaster, sent forthwith to England for an army of twenty thousand foot-soldiers.

In obedience to the royal order a levy was made, and the required force was collected at Hastings. According to the custom of those days, each man took with him enough money to defray his expenses. This money the crafty Flambard seized and sent to the King, dismissing the soldiers to their homes. With the fund thus obtained Rufus bought Philip's neutrality and hired mercenaries to carry on the war. Henry, who had been holding Domfront Castle against Robert, was also persuaded, probably by bribes, to join forces with Rufus. But, despite all, Rufus was compelled to abandon the campaign without bringing it to a final result, and hurry back (December 29, 1094) once more to England, where trouble was brewing.

Rebellion of Robert de Mowbray

The Norman campaign had been a costly failure. To provide the money to bribe opponents, to buy adherents, and to prosecute the war Flambard had had recourse to every possible form of taxation. The Danegeld had been levied and increased; the twenty thousand soldiers had been robbed of their money; rich and poor, landed proprietor and peasant, had been heavily and oppressively tallaged. Nothing had been accomplished. At the same time King and Church were in open opposition and the baronage was throwing its weight on the side of Anselm. The times were ripe for revolt, and in 1095 a conspiracy to put Stephen d'Aumale on the throne was formed among the northern barons, headed by Robert de Mowbray, Earl of Northumberland.

As heir to Geoffrey, Bishop of Coutances, Robert de Mowbray held at this time two hundred and eighty manors in England. By marriage he was connected with the Earl of Chester. His wealth was great, and was almost equalled by his pride and daring. In no sense can he be regarded as the friend of the people or of liberty. His rebellion was directed, not against the wrongs under which the country was groaning, but merely to the furthering of his own selfish ends.

The trouble commenced in consequence of the seizure of several shiploads of merchandise which Scandinavian traders had consigned to England. At that time the trade with Norway and Denmark was an important source of wealth to England, and Rufus properly insisted on an immediate return of the ill-gotten gains, and even went so far as to compensate the merchants for the loss of their goods. Mowbray contemptuously refused to obey the King. Summoned to attend the King's Court, he refused to appear.

Rufus took up the gauntlet thus thrown down and marched against Mowbray's castle of Bamburgh. On the way he nearly fell a victim to an ambuscade, but, receiving intelligence of the plot to murder him from Gilbert of Troubridge, he was able to elude his enemies, and arrived at Mowbray's stronghold. Newcastle was soon taken and its garrison captured. Tynemouth and Bamburgh both stood long sieges. Even after Tynemouth had capitulated in the summer of 1095 Mowbray still held out in his powerful castle, which, built on basaltic cliffs, protected by water and marshes, was secure against direct assault or mining. Amply provisioned and supplied by a well of pure water, it could hardly be starved out, and Rufus was compelled to adopt the plan earlier resorted to with success at the siege of Rochester. A fortified tower called 'the Malvoisin' was raised on the landward side, and, having thus built a counter-castle which could prevent any aid from reaching Bamburgh, Rufus garrisoned it with trusty knights and left Time to bring about the submission of the Earl. The King himself, satisfied that Mowbray could not escape, left the garrison to hold the approaches to the castle and prepared to attack once more the Welsh border.

What promised to be a lengthy siege was soon brought to an end, however, by treachery. Mowbray was lured from Bamburgh to attempt the capture of Newcastle. He was seized and many of his companions were slain. The rebellion was now practically at an end. Bamburgh, it is true, was still held by Mowbray's bride,[1] Matilda de l'Aigle, who was forced eventually to yield by Rufus's threat that if she did not her husband's eyes would be torn out in view of the castle walls. Before the end of 1095 Bamburgh was in the King's hands and Mowbray was in the King's prison, to remain in confinement either as captive or as monk until the end of his life. The rebellion having failed, the participators in the conspiracy were tried at the great Christmas council (to which all the great tenants-in-chief were summoned, and which was adjourned from Windsor to Salisbury on January 13, 1096) and condemned. The sentences which resulted showed both the extent of the conspiracy and the strength and ruthlessness of the King. William of St Calais, Bishop of Durham, once again accused of treason, escaped condemnation only by the fact that a natural death overtook him; Hugh, Earl of Shrewsbury,[2] a suspect, was compelled to pay an enormous fine; Roger de Lacy was banished; William d'Eu, being appealed to a trial by battle by Geoffrey de Baynard, was overthrown on Salisbury Plain and condemned to be emasculated; and many lesser men were blinded and otherwise mutilated. One of the leaders was hanged and many lost their lands. Some of the most powerful of the conspirators, we are informed, were spared on grounds of policy, but even so the King's vengeance had been both public and stern. The kingship had been elevated in power, the baronage degraded.

THE KING INVADES NORTH WALES

We have seen that when the Malvoisin was built the King left the siege of Bamburgh and hurried to the Welsh border. For two years the marcher lords had been hard pressed by the Welsh, and the capture of the Norman stronghold of Montgomery persuaded Rufus that the time had come for his participation in the struggle. Already, however, the year was far advanced, and it was not until the autumn that Rufus had completed his preparations and was ready to march. An autumn campaign against Wales, as Henry II was to discover at a later time, was a fatal mistake. But despite the dangers of bogs and hunger, Rufus pushed on, and by November had reached Mur y Castell, in northern Ardudwy. According to a Welsh source, William's intention was to subdue the Welsh completely and " destroy utterly all of the people until there should be alive not so much as a dog." In fact, however, the campaign was a fiasco. Gruffydd ap Cynan, the leader of the North Welsh, adopting a plan of campaign which he and his sons often repeated in future years with similar success, collected his forces, placed ambushes and obstacles in the defiles and other places where they could be used most advantageously, and generally harassed the advancing army, at the same time withdrawing all the people inhabiting the line of march, with their property and food-stuffs. As a result Rufus found it impossible to feed his army, now some distance from its base. The King, realizing that the winter would prove fatal to his expedition, now determined to retire on Chester. Nothing was accomplished, and the Welsh could say in triumph, " He did not take with him any kind of profit or gain except one cow."

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[1] They had married but a short time before the revolt broke out.

[2] Roger de Montgomery, his father, had died a monk on July 27, 1094.

The Welsh affair having been abandoned, we next find Rufus turning his attention once more to Normandy, where the preaching of the First Crusade had brought about an important change of affairs.

The First Crusade

It was at the council held at Clermont in the autumn of 1095 that Pope Urban exhorted the Christians to expel the pagans from Jerusalem. The movement thus inaugurated was quickened by the fiery eloquence of Peter the Hermit, and soon spread through France, England, Italy, and Germany. Men of all ranks hastened to join the expedition and to obtain the mark of the Cross.

Such a movement readily appealed to a man of Duke Robert's type of mind. It promised those knightly exercises dear to twelfth-century chivalry, it also relieved him of further concern with the fortunes of Normandy.[1] We consequently find him offering to mortgage his dukedom to Rufus for the paltry sum of 10,000 silver marks. Rufus instantly took advantage of the offer. Every effort was made to raise money. The nobles, the Church, the people were taxed afresh. A fourfold Danegeld was imposed. Bishops, abbots, and abbesses, believing that the money was to be spent in a good cause, even broke up the gold and silver ornaments of their churches. The nobles extorted money anew from their under-tenants. Even Anselm, who had never been noteworthy for generosity, gave 200 pounds of silver. By September Rufus had collected sufficient to make terms with Robert. Crossing the Channel, he took with him 6666 pounds, which he lent to his brother, receiving in return Normandy as security. Even before this pawning of the land Rufus had got a strong footing in his brother's dukedom. He himself held many castles in Normandy, and he was also supported by Henry, Count of Eu, Stephen d'Aumale, Gerard de Gournai, Ralph de Conches, Robert, Count of Mortain, Walter Giffard, Count of Longueville, Philip de Breose, and Richard de Courci. Now as a result of Robert's chivalrous folly he was in possession of the whole duchy, a possession he retained until his death. Hence onward the affairs of Normandy during this reign raise no point for comment. For the next few years we shall be concerned with disputes and wars, but the disputes are with Anselm and the Papacy, the wars with Wales and Scotland. In Normandy there is peace.

The Quarrel with Anselm Renewed

Anselm, now that no danger threatened from Normandy, now that Scotland was passive and Wales for the moment quiet, deemed the time ripe for reform. Many a grievance clamoured for redress, but to Anselm's requests Rufus turned a deaf ear. Unable to obtain a hearing from the King, the

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[1] See as to this motive, which Orderic represents as the dominant one, Ordericus Vitalis, Book IX, ch. iii. Robert distinguished himself in the Crusade, particularly in the assault on Antioch.

Primate craved leave to go to Rome, there to lay his troubles before Urban. The request was refused, and upon Anselm's renewing it in August the King, enraged beyond measure, not only refused him licence to leave the realm but levied a heavy fine. Such treatment does not appear to have moved Anselm from his purpose. Throughout his struggle with the Crown he had showed himself a man of indomitable will, and he now determined to go to Rome, if not with leave, then without. After exhorting the King to rule more temperately, he declared his intention of departing from the realm, and in fact set out from the Court. The King at first decided to prevent him by force from leaving England, but better counsels prevailed, and messengers were sent after the Primate who carried to him a permission to depart, but only on the terms that he took nothing whatever with him belonging to the King. Anselm returned answer that he would go naked if need be, and pursued his course.

Before finally setting out he returned once to Court to give the King his blessing, which was received, though ungraciously. The meeting between the two men was the last they were destined to endure. In October 1097 Anselm left Canterbury as a pilgrim, and throughout the rest of the reign he was in effect an exile from England.

Hardly had he set sail before the royal officials seized all the lands pertaining to the See of Canterbury and cancelled all the Primate's decrees. The English Church was once more without a head, the royal treasury was once again increased by the revenues of the archiepiscopal see.

Arrived at Rome, we find Anselm received with much honour. The Pope, however, demurred at relieving him of his office, and Rufus's agent, William de Warelwast, who had followed Anselm, succeeded, by the aid of many bribes, in preventing any effective support being given to him. For the next few years Anselm was occasionally in Rome and occasionally in Apulia. It was probably in the latter place that he composed several of his philosophic works.

The intrigues between King, Pope, and Primate dragged on for years. Urban himself died in July 1099. Rufus followed him to the grave in August of 1100. It is in the next reign that we shall have to consider the fight which Anselm waged against the Crown in regard to lay investitures, a dispute which lingered on until 1107, less than two years before the Primate's death in 1109.

THE AFFAIRS OF WALES

The most important events of the later years of this reign, apart from the disputes with Anselm, centre round Wales. As we have seen, Rufus retired discomfited after the invasion of 1095. The Welsh, elated at the failure of the King's attempt at conquest, turned once more to castle-razing. In the south they were successful: Rhyd y Gors fell and Pembroke was closely beset. In the north, however, the Earls of Chester and Shrewsbury made a determined attempt to break the power of Gruffydd ap Cynan. Gruffydd sought the support of the Powysians, and the Welsh leaders adopted the policy of withdrawing the people of North Wales to Anglesey, where, we are informed, they defended themselves "as in a stronghold surrounded by the ocean." They also called to their aid Irish and Danish mercenaries, who came in sixteen long-keeled ships.

The two Earls soon made their appearance near Anglesey, which island they were shortly in a position to attack. They seem to have feared the Irish mercenaries, so that we find them offering the Irish the tempting bait of unlimited plunder if they would fail Gruffydd at the critical moment. The Irish agreed. The Earls attacked, and the Welsh leaders, deceived and betrayed by their allies, abandoned the struggle and fled to Ireland.

The Welsh leaders had fled, but their followers continued the battle. Suddenly there appeared sailing over the sea a royal fleet. King Magnus Barefoot, grandson of that Harold of Norway who had fallen at the battle of Stamford Bridge, swept down on the island and attacked the Normans. The Earl of Shrewsbury was slain, and many of his followers had fallen when the Norwegian set sail as suddenly as he had come.

The Normans were now in undisputed possession of Anglesey, for the Welsh resistance had been overcome. When Gruffydd returned from Ireland in the year following he found Anglesey deserted. Peace was made with the Earl of Chester, and the Norman marchers are found almost supreme in North Wales until the death of this Earl in 1101 and the fall of Robert de Bellême (who had succeeded his brother as Earl of Shrewsbury in 1098) in consequence of the rebellion of 1102.

THE NORTHERN BORDER

During the years 1097–98 Rufus had spent much time in Normandy and had taken no part in the Welsh wars. He had, however, kept a close eye upon the movements which were taking place on the Welsh marches and the Scottish border. The former we have considered. As for Scotland, Donald Bane was now King and had proved himself the enemy of the English. Margaret's policy of conciliation had been overturned and Edgar the Atheling had been driven out. At Michaelmas 1097 we find the Atheling, supported by Rufus, leading an army against Donald, whom he defeated and drove into exile. Edgar, the son of Malcolm and of Margaret, was established as King and acknowledged the overlordship of Rufus. Two years later another step was taken to increase the Norman control of the Border when Ranulf Flambard was granted, in recognition of his faithful service to the Crown, the important Bishopric of Durham with all its resulting rights and dues.

THE DEATH OF RUFUS

It was now, when his power was established fully in England, when Normandy was in his charge, when the Welsh were subdued and the King of Scots had sworn fealty, when the imposing structure of his power was symbolized by the new palace of Westminster, which was completed in 1099,[1] that the arrow was shot which resulted in his death. At the time even greater vistas of Continental dominion had been opened up by the negotiations which had been entered into by the Duke of Aquitaine, who, eager to join the Crusaders, had offered to pledge his duchy to the King of England even as Robert had mortgaged Normandy. Before the scheme was completed, however, William was dead.

The last scene was enacted on August 2, 1100, while Rufus was hunting in the New Forest. In his train rode Walter Tirel, Lord of Poix, in Ponthieu. This knight, while shooting at a stag, loosed an arrow which, glancing from its mark, struck and slew the King.[2] Immediately the whole of the royal suite, which included the King's brother Henry, dispersed, and the King was left to die untended. Having been found by charcoal-burners, his corpse was buried next day at Winchester, and, as Roger of Wendover tells us, " his tomb was watered by no one's tears."

Whether the King's death was the result of accident or design will never be known. Certainly Tirel fled, but so did his companions. Further, we find that Tirel's estates at Langham, in Essex, remained in his hands, or rather in the hands of his wife, Adeliza, daughter of Richard de Clare, as late as 1130, so that there was evidently no escheat, as there would have been had Henry suspected him of the murder of Rufus. It is interesting to note, as Mr Round has informed us, that Adeliza's son Hugh [3] mortgaged this estate at Langham to Gervase of Cornhill in the reign of Stephen in order to raise money to take part in the Crusade of 1147.

When we turn to the old chroniclers for an appreciation of the character of the dead King we find it painted invariably in sombre colours. Injustice, oppression, persistent and heavy taxation, and personal vice are always complained of. We hear much of the King's practice of holding spiritual fees in his own hand. Thus Roger of Wendover tells us that "This wicked King, odious to both God and his people, at the time of his death held for his own gain the Archbishopric of Canterbury, the Bishoprics of Winchester and Salisbury, and no less than twelve [1] abbacies." When he was buried no Mass was sung. When he died neither peasant nor baron nor priest mourned. Yet, despite his sins, his crimes and his oppressions, he had been a strong king, he had advanced the power of England. Had those who felt the weight of his taxation been able to look into the future and see what happened when a weak, indulgent, munificent, and kindly king such as Stephen reigned, they might have found it in their hearts to bless rather than curse this strong-willed Norman, who knew how to rule every one but himself. It was indeed a misfortune that he did not learn this last lesson in government, that he could not suppress his own passions and his own vices. We might then have acclaimed him one of our great kings. He had given England peace, he had repressed the barons, guarded the marches, extended his power over wide territories abroad. Yet, one and all, the chroniclers execrate him and hold him up to hatred and abhorrence. Perhaps they regarded too closely the man and too little the king. To us he appears by no means contemptible.

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[1] William declared that it was only a bedroom in proportion to the palace he intended to build. It seems to have struck his contemporaries, however, as being magnificent.

[2] Tirel afterward solemnly swore that it was not his hand that shot the fatal arrow.

[3] For a genealogical table of the family see Round, *Feudal England*, p. 473. Tirel was a Frenchman, not a Norman.

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[1] The *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle* gives eleven as the number.

CHAPTER XIX

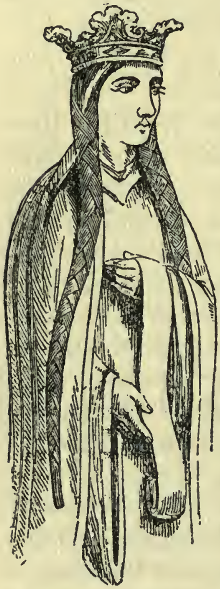
HENRY I

1100–1135

HENRY, the late King's younger brother, lost little time in asserting his right to the throne once it was known that William had been slain. Leaving the corpse lying in the New Forest, he took horse and rode at full speed to the Treasury at Winchester. There he demanded, as claimant to the throne, the keys from its keeper, William de Breteuil. For a time de Breteuil remonstrated with him, reminding him that he had sworn fealty to his brother Robert. Henry, however, was not to be denied, the townsmen supported him, and declaring that no 'foreigner' should lay hands on his father's sceptre, he drew his sword and prepared to gain an entrance by force.

William de Breteuil, seeing that persuasion was useless and fearing to resort to arms, now abandoned the castle and the treasure to Henry. Having obtained possession of Winchester Henry was now in a position to press forward his right of succession, election, and coronation. We find him hastening to London with Robert de Beaumont, Count of Meulan, and three days after the death of Rufus, on Sunday, August 5, 1100, he was crowned at Westminster, being anointed in the absence of Anselm by Thomas, Archbishop of York, assisted by Maurice, Bishop of London.

Once enthroned Henry left no stone unturned to strengthen his position with people, barons, and clergy. The people were already favourable to him, for he had been born in England and represented himself as an Englishman, and he immediately took steps to wed a representative of the royal house of Wessex in the person of Matilda, the daughter of Margaret of Scotland.[1] To gain still greater popularity the King seized Ranulf Flambard and imprisoned him in the Tower. Anselm was recalled. The Archbishop, who had set out from the Abbey of Chaise-Dieu in Auvergne on hearing of the death of Rufus, was met by the messenger bearing Henry's letter of recall as he was on his way to Lyons. He was back in England by September 22, in time to solemnize the marriage with Matilda, who was later crowned and consecrated Queen on the feast of St Martin.


QUEEN MATILDA

This marriage was one of convenience. Matilda was a pious lady of no great personal charm, who had spent most of her time willingly or unwillingly in nunneries, and had, in fact, taken the veil. She had in earlier life been wooed by William de Warenne but had refused to marry, and even when Henry, now King, paid his suit to her she appears to have been reluctant to quit the cloister for the Court. Later in life, when she had borne her husband two children, one doomed to an early death by drowning, the other to stir up perpetual strife in the reign of Stephen, she retired from the gaiety of the Court and spent much of her time in devotional exercises and in listening to music, of which she was an eager patroness. But though this was a purely political union it was undoubtedly one of great wisdom. The bulk of the commonalty were still Anglo-Saxon in sentiment, and although in the time of Edward the Confessor they had shown no great enthusiasm for the house of Wessex, now that they had experienced conquest they looked back with longing to the olden days and hailed with joy a ruler who by his own birth and his present marriage seemed to promise them a return to a line of native English kings. But though the union pleased the people it did not suit the barons, who laughed at Henry and his Saxon bride. Already, however, the King had measured his opponents, and knew that with the people and the Church on his side he could control the nobles.

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[1] See *ante*, p. 305.

The nobility had, indeed, received him coldly. They desired to have Robert as King. Once that puppet was enthroned they foresaw a period of unbridled licence. It is not remarkable, therefore, that such men as Robert de Bellême and the more lawless barons opposed Henry in favour of Robert. Lest the opposition should become formidable, Henry early took steps to paralyse opposition. He continued in office most of the men who had ruled the kingdom in the time of Rufus. This is remarkable when we bear in mind the laudations which have been sung about Henry's administration and the execrations levelled against that of Rufus. Yet it is undoubtedly the fact that apart from Ranulf Flambard all the prominent men of the previous reign retained their posts. This points to one or more of three things: either the individual character of the King was by far the greatest factor in feudal government, or Ranulf Flambard was personally responsible for most of the evils of the preceding reign (which we greatly doubt), or the chroniclers, misled by Rufus's private vices and by his repression of the Church, have painted the picture of his reign in too sombre colours or the picture of his successor's reign in too bright a light. However this may be, whichever alternative we accept, the fact remains that the Count of Meulan, Robert de Beaumont; Robert Bloet, chancellor to Rufus; Robert fitz Hamon, whose name is attached to many a charter of the preceding reign and who was throughout that reign high in honour; Roger Bigod, who had already amassed great estates in Norfolk (in place of the disgraced Ralph de Guader), who had fought at Senlac and been the firm friend of the first two Williams; William Giffard, chancellor to Rufus; Hugh, Earl of Chester, formerly high in favour with Rufus, and many others, continued in the councils of Henry I.[1] Robert de Beaumont, indeed, who had been perhaps the chief of the counsellors of Rufus, and had proved himself a statesman of much insight and much cunning, was Henry's most trusted adviser. He was soon to serve his new master to good purpose in the rebellion which was brewing, and which threatened to depose Henry in favour of his eldest brother.

So far Henry had sought popularity by marrying a Saxon princess, proclaiming his English sympathies, degrading the hated Flambard, recalling the beloved Anselm, calling to his councils his brother's most trusted advisers. We also find him filling the vacant bishoprics and abbacies. Gerard, Archbishop of York, was immediately installed in place of Thomas, who had died on Sunday, November 28, 1100; William Giffard was appointed to the See of Winchester; Robert, a young son of Hugh of Chester, was made Abbot of St Edmundsbury. Abbots were also appointed to Ely, Glastonbury, and Abingdon.

HENRY'S CHARTER OF LIBERTIES

The most important step, however, taken by the new King to placate his subjects was the issue of his Charter of Liberties.

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[1] Orderic tells us that later in his reign, after the barons' revolt, Henry raised many men of humble origin to the high places in the State. Such were Guillegrip and Robert de Bostare. But Orderic places in this list of 'low persons' many names which had long been famous. Thus Ralph Basset, Justiciar and founder of a famous Cornish house, was of good family and had previously been high in favour. Hugh of Bocland, another of the 'new men,' had been sheriff of Bedfordshire under Rufus and was sent by that King to enforce the judgment in the case of the monks of Saumur and Philip de Breose (see *R.R.A.-N.*, No. 416). Similarly Haimon de Falaise, though himself unknown before Henry's time, came of a famous family. A William de Falaise is found signing two important documents in the preceding reign (*R.R.A.-N.*, Nos. 121, 220), and both William and Geoffrey de Falaise were important men in the Conqueror's time. It will be observed that no Saxon names are prominent in Henry's reign. The King and in a greater degree his chief adviser, Robert de Beaumont, were antagonistic to the native Saxons in spite of Henry's pretence of being native born and his marriage with a lady of Saxon race. The time had come, however, when the Saxons and the Normans were losing their identity and were blending into a new race, the English. Thus many men bearing Norman names had a considerable admixture of Saxon blood in their veins. The racial line was, indeed, becoming blurred.

This was a document of great constitutional importance, containing numerous and important provisions. It is true these provisions were broken by the King at the expense of barons, clergy, and people in turn, yet the charter formed a precedent which was relied upon and referred to by many a patriot struggling against monarchic tyranny in the years which lay ahead.

The Charter of Liberties was in form similar to the covenant entered into by the King on his coronation. It was, however, much fuller than the usual coronation oath, was reduced to writing, and was circulated widely, copies being sent to all the sheriffs of counties and other important men. Grievances were removed and rights recognized in favour of clergy, barons, and people. The first class was promised that no longer would benefices be left vacant, an engagement which in time was broken. The second class was promised a termination of oppressive feudal incidents. The incidents remained, but their oppressive nature as developed in the reign of Rufus was struck at. For example, the *relief* continued, but now the heir was to pay only a reasonable relief—he was not required to *buy* his inheritance. Such, at least, was the King's promise. In time this promise also was broken. Another gain, apart from the more equitable exercise of feudal rights, obtained by the nobles was the right to make a will bequeathing personalty, and the securing to the deceased's next of kin control over personalty left by a person dying intestate. The third class, the nation at large, was granted the laws of Edward the Confessor as altered by William the Conqueror with the consent of his barons. This was sufficiently vague, and was doubtless meant by the King's counsellors to please the people by giving to the new reign a flavour of the Anglo-Saxon polity without in fact doing anything of the sort. In other directions, however, the people obtained, either immediately or at a later date, definite advantages. The King's peace was extended, with the result that it became possible for men to travel with valuables about them without being in momentary fear of death from some robber band; the coinage was improved;[1] fines were reduced to the level which had existed in the time of Edward the Confessor.

In one direction only did Henry retain an unpopular royal right. The forests were still to be the King's. The King's sole right of hunting apart from licence was preserved, and was rigorously insisted upon throughout the reign.

The Barons' Revolt

Notwithstanding all the efforts made by the King to satisfy the desires of all the estates of the realm the more turbulent of the Normans are found in open revolt in the following year (1101). Already in the September of 1100 Duke Robert had returned to Normandy from the Crusade, having married on the way home Sibylla, a descendant of Robert Guiscard. No sooner was he back than the old vices of licentiousness and laziness renewed their hold over him, and the country, leaderless, became once more the prey of anarchy.

Meanwhile Ranulf Flambard, once Lord High Treasurer and Justiciar,[2] had, as we have seen, been imprisoned in the Tower. This step seems to have been taken by Henry in order to please the mob and not out of enmity toward Flambard, who had been a most faithful servant to the late King. Once in the Tower we find the prisoner treated with marked favour and liberality. There by means of his insinuating manners and perpetual good humour he soon made friends with every one. The two shillings a day which he was allowed were sufficient at that time to enable him to keep a splendid table, to which he invited his jailers. One day, having made his keepers thoroughly drunk, he let himself down from the upper room in which he was confined by means of a cord which had been conveyed to him in a flagon of wine. Orderic gives a humorous description of the fat Bishop[3] as with his pastoral staff in one hand he slipped down the rope, cutting his ungloved hands to the bone as he did so. Once on the ground he was assisted on to a charger by some tried followers. He succeeded in reaching the coast, and eventually took ship and reached Normandy, where he presented himself to Duke Robert, and soon became his most trusted counsellor.

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[1] Florence of Worcester, who deals with the matter at length, gives 1108 as the date of the improvement in the coinage.

[2] If we follow Orderic, but see *ante*, p. 412.

[3] He had now grown fat by over-eating and over-drinking.

It was partly due to the persuasions of Flambard, partly to the insistence of the barons, headed by Robert de Bellême and William de Warenne, that Duke Robert was aroused and almost driven[1] to make another bid for the English kingship. It was not, however, until the summer was well advanced that Robert set sail from Le Tréport, to land at Porchester on August 1 with a small force, after having bribed the mariners whom Henry had commanded to guard the southern coast. Once in England he was soon joined by many important barons, and commenced his march on Winchester supported by an imposing army.

It was now that Henry and the Count of Meulan began to earn the characters which Henry of Huntingdon has awarded them. Of the King that outspoken chronicler wrote that he "practised consummate duplicity," and of the Count of Meulan he has left it on record that he was "the most sagacious in political affairs of all who lived between this land and Jerusalem . . . his counsels were profound and his wisdom great." The times, indeed, called for both duplicity and wisdom if the State was to be saved from civil war. Both qualities were present. The King and the Count, after a long consultation as to the means to be taken to repress the claims of Robert, decided to make fulsome promises, adroitly conciliate the more important of the rebels, buy off Duke Robert, soothe the baronage, wait until the royal power was consolidated, and then fall on the rebels and destroy them one by one.

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[1] It is clear that Robert had no desire to undertake the campaign against his brother. We are told that when he returned from the Crusade he was so worn out with the toils of the pilgrimage that he was more desirous of going to bed than of going to war, and when urged to attack England he exclaimed: "I am tired out; Normandy is enough for me." Further, at this time he was, as usual, hopelessly poor. The dowry he had received with Sibylla, large though it was, had already gone. His type of mind was, indeed, ill-suited to a serious campaign. He was far too much attracted by the tales of chivalry which were being developed in all the countries of western Europe about this time. Thus we find him turning aside on his march to Winchester for Alton in Hampshire because he heard that Matilda was awaiting her confinement in Winchester, for, said he, "He would be a villain who would besiege a lady in such a case."

The plan worked perfectly. Instead of fighting, Henry arranged a meeting with his brother, after the efforts to bring about an agreement made by envoys had failed. Once face to face with Robert, Henry had little difficulty in persuading him to relinquish his claim to the throne during Henry's lifetime in return for an annuity of 3000 marks[1] and the cession of all Henry's Norman possessions except Domfront. Besides relinquishing all present claim to the crown, Robert also formally absolved his brother from his oath of fealty given by him when Count of the Cotentin. Robert had in truth been bought off, and once bought off, the danger over, Henry soon took steps to stop payment of the purchase price.

Meanwhile the barons who had supported Robert had got nothing for their pains.[2] Robert returned to Normandy after a time and left his supporters to be ruined in detail. On the other hand, the commoners, the masses, soon realized that they had a King who loved not war, who had saved them from the horrors of faction fights. Clamorous with joy, the common soldiers returned to their homes and tranquillity reigned. Henry, by the exercise of a diplomacy rare in those days, had defeated a dangerous conspiracy, had increased the love and admiration of the people for himself, and had marked out the barons whom it was desirable to crush.

From now onward Henry was firmly established on the throne. His only real rival had earned the contempt and hatred of all who could support him. Once his position was secure the King turned his hand to two great tasks: the overthrow of the rebel barons and the cleansing and strengthening of the administration.

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[1] Or 2000 pounds of silver. Orderic gives 3000 pounds as the sum.

[2] A clause in the treaty provided for restitution of forfeited fiefs on both sides. Robert did not see, what was clearly apparent to Henry, that once he himself was bought off he ceased to be dangerous, since no one could be expected to trust him as a leader again. Henry was thus able almost immediately to break the treaty and punish the barons.

The work of eliminating the traitors proceeded slowly and methodically. Robert Malet,[1] Ivo de Grantmesnil,[2] and Robert of Pontefract,[3] among many others of less note, were brought to trial; some cleared themselves, some were condemned to pay heavy fines, some were disinherited and exiled. Even William de Warenne, Earl of Surrey and head of a house that had been foremost among the Conqueror's most faithful supporters, was for a time disgraced and exiled, forfeiting his earldom and its yearly revenue of 1000 pounds of silver. It was, however, against Robert de Bellême that Henry acted with the greatest caution and the greatest severity.

OVERTHROW OF ROBERT DE BELLÊME

For a whole year Henry had spies set upon Robert de Bellême, whether in Normandy or in England. All his deeds and his treacheries were carefully recorded with the utmost precision. At the end of the year the case against Robert was complete and he was summoned to the King's Court to answer an indictment containing forty-five separate counts, each alleging a different offence. Robert, having received safe-conduct for himself and his friends in order to attend the trial, took advantage of it to slip away, and, mounting his horse, fled in haste to Shropshire.

It was now evident to Robert that any attempt to clear himself of the charges against him would be hopeless. Not only was he indicted as a traitor, but as a private individual he was accused of almost all the offences known to criminal law. He was, however, powerful, perhaps the most powerful of all the King's subjects, and he now prepared to fight to the end. His strength is evident when we remember that in addition to the Earldom of Shrewsbury, to which he succeeded in 1098, he possessed the lordships of Arundel and Chichester, besides wide territories in

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[1] Forfeited honours and exiled.

[2] Heavily fined and died on Crusade. (Robert de Meulan was his friend.)

[3] Forfeited honours and exiled.

Normandy, including later the Bishopric of Séez. Only a little while before, in 1101, he had become Count of Ponthieu. Such territorial possessions alone gave great power, but Robert possessed besides such an extraordinary character and such a ruthless type of mind that his capacity for evil was much greater than even his wealth or station ill-used might suggest. Henry of Huntingdon in his *Epistle to Walter* [1] has vividly described to us this terrible man, who he says was "a very Pluto, Megaera, Cerberus, or anything that you can imagine still more terrible." "To slaughter men in the most horrible manner was a delightful feast for his soul." "He tore out the eyes of his godson as a joke." [2] His freaks became a byword even in that age of cruelty, and Henry of Huntingdon adventured the opinion that the devils themselves would be terrified of Robert. Now the time had come when a cold-hearted statesman was on the throne. The day had passed when such men as the Earl of Shrewsbury could easily be tolerated; an excuse had been given and the blow fell.

Robert de Bellême required no warning to know that once Duke Robert had been bought off he, the Earl, was marked out for destruction. Hardly had the conference of Alton broken up ere the Earl had fortified his castles at Shrewsbury, Tickhill, and Arundel, and had hastened the completion of his strong castle at Bridgnorth and another at Carreghofa in Wales. All his strongholds were kept in instant readiness for defence. The Welsh were bribed to render him support. When the summons to answer the forty-five charges was served, it took him neither by surprise nor unprepared.

Once it became evident that Robert had decided to appeal to arms the King went deliberately to work to destroy him. Arundel Castle was besieged, and forts, like the Malvoisin of Bamburgh, were built around it, preventing either egress or ingress. These forts having been garrisoned, the King, after a short delay, marched on Bridgnorth with a powerful army composed largely of English levies. Meanwhile Robert Bloet,

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[1] *H.A.H.H.A.* (Rolls Series), *Epistola de contemptu mundi*, p. 310.

[2] "*Filioli sui oculos sub chlamide positi quasi ludens pollicibus extraxit.*"

Bishop of Lincoln, patron of Henry of Huntingdon, and later Justiciar, was directed to lay siege to Tickhill.

Even before Bridgnorth was besieged Arundel had capitulated. Within three months Bridgnorth itself was surrendered, but before its investment had begun Robert had already departed for Shrewsbury, leaving it in the charge of Roger Corbet and Robert de Neuville. About this time Robert lost one of his strongest Norman supporters in the person of William Pantulf, who had been prominent in the expeditions against Wales and who now, having been insulted by his overlord, became his fiercest enemy. The Welsh also were soon persuaded by William Pantulf, acting as Henry's agent, to abandon Robert. The defection of the princes of Powys, Iorwerth in particular, was secured. Iorwerth's desertion of his ally was fatal to Robert, for he had been entrusted with most of Robert's supplies. It is probable that it was the loss of the support of the Welsh in such circumstances in conjunction with the capitulation of Bridgnorth which brought about the Earl's sudden submission.

The surrender of Bridgnorth had not been easily obtained. The castle itself was extremely strong and the barons around the King were fearful of bringing the most powerful of their class too low. They argued, "If the King destroys this mighty Earl we shall be like women to be trampled underfoot if he so desires." We consequently find them advising the King to be lenient. On the other hand the common soldiers pressed for a vigorous exercise of royal justice, and after certain overtures the garrison was forced to surrender by a threat to hang all, garrison and townsmen, unless the place submitted within three days.

Bridgnorth once taken, the King marched on Shrewsbury with a large army, including some sixty thousand infantry and a large number of woodmen, who were employed in cutting a wide passage through the numerous woods which rendered dangerous the line of march.[1] For a time Robert seems to have meditated further resistance, but his position was hopeless. His Welsh allies were gone, taking with them most of his food-stuffs, his strongest castle was reduced, and he himself, an object of hatred even to his own vassals, was threatened with a siege which could only have one result. The Earl, therefore, after consulting with his friends, set out from Shrewsbury with the keys of the place in his hand to meet the King. Once in the presence of his lord he confessed his treason, placed the keys at the King's feet, and submitted. His punishment was the forfeiture of all his lands in England —a loss which those who had joined with him also suffered [1]— and banishment. At Robert's exile we read that "all England went wild with joy." The most powerful of barons had been humbled and the forms of law had been observed.

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[1] It ran along the Huvel Hegen, or Evil Hedge. Wenlock Edge may have been the line of march.

ENGLAND AND NORMANDY

With the departure of Robert to Normandy, though tranquillity was gained for England, Normandy was at once plunged into anarchy. When Henry first commenced his campaign against Bellême he called upon Duke Robert his brother to keep the treaty between them and help him to punish traitors. As a result Duke Robert took some ineffective steps against Robert de Bellême's Norman castles and vassals. In the resulting struggle a number of Norman lords had declared themselves enemies of Robert de Bellême, and upon these the exiled Earl, "boiling with rage," now sought to revenge himself. For three years the most frightful crimes were committed in Normandy. We are told that Robert preferred torturing his prisoners to death to having them ransomed, and every conceivable crime and cruelty was perpetrated by him. Although practically the whole dukedom was opposed to him he succeeded in doing almost whatever he desired.

It is now necessary to retrace our footsteps for a moment in order to be able to describe the position of Robert of Normandy. After the first abortive invasion and after the conference at Alton the Duke had stayed for a time at the English Court, and had then returned to Normandy in no great favour with the nobles whom he had led to their ruin. One of these, William de Warenne, having represented to Robert the loss he had sustained, persuaded the Duke, who was intensely chivalrous, to use his good endeavours to bring about a reconciliation between him (William) and Henry. The Duke, assenting, forthwith crossed over to England on a visit to the King.

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[1] In particular Robert's brothers, Roger of Poitiers and Arnulph, were banished and lost all their English estates. Thus the whole house of Montgomery was brought to ruin.

In those days it was deemed a warlike act for one feudal leader to enter the territories of another without licence or invitation. Robert's easy good nature had persuaded him that his visit, being a friendly one, could not be the subject of a quarrel. Henry, on the other hand, saw at once that his brother, by entering England, had placed himself in his power. The Duke was taken prisoner and brought to the English Court under escort. Outwardly, of course, he and his associates were treated with respect, but it was obvious even to the Duke that he was in truth a captive and not a guest. For a time Robert hid his alarm under an assumed gaiety, but when Henry reproached him for failing to take effective action against Robert de Bellême [1] and accused him of breaking the treaty of Alton the Duke realized his danger and at once offered to submit to whatever terms were imposed upon him. In the sequel he relinquished, in favour of Queen Matilda, the pension which had been agreed upon at Alton; on the other hand the King restored William de Warenne to favour and regranted to him his Earldom of Surrey. Henceforward de Warenne is found one of the most loyal of Henry's supporters. His lesson had been well learnt.

Duke Robert returned shortly afterward to Normandy. The negotiations had proved once more the far-sightedness of the younger and the weakness of the elder brother.

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[1] Of course the truth was that Duke Robert was too weak to repress Robert de Bellême.

While the treason of William de Warenne was being purged at the cost of Duke Robert, the treason of Robert de Bellême had resulted, as we have seen, in his exile and in a recrudescence of anarchy in Normandy. Such was the state of that unhappy country that Henry decided to take a hand in the struggle, and in 1104 made a journey to his castle of Domfront, returning to England later in the same year, having been conciliated by the grant of the Countship of Évreux. In fact, however, Henry's real grievance was one which the Duke was unable to remedy. Normandy had become a hotbed of revolt. Every disappointed noble who desired to see the overthrow of the English State was now busy plotting in Normandy against Henry. Over all Robert de Bellême stood as leader and shield. Against the quondam Earl of Shrewsbury and his satellites Robert of Normandy was powerless. The time had come for Henry's interference unless he was to see his arch-enemy the ruler of Normandy and the leader of a powerful coalition of lesser nobles who desired above all to work Henry's overthrow. In a word, Normandy had to be pacified or England was in peril.

The question of Normandy was still further complicated as a result of the disgrace of the young but powerful Earl of Cornwall, William, Count of Mortain, in 1104. In that year we read that his wide estates were confiscated on account of his treason and that he fled to Normandy. Once there he was soon busily engaged in levying a fearful toll in life [1] upon the supporters and feudatories of King Henry. At the same time, if we are to believe Roger of Howden, England herself was groaning under the weight of heavy taxation, a state which at all times encourages disaffection.

Before Henry felt himself free to attack Robert he took steps to eliminate from the struggle two rulers who might otherwise have aided the Duke of Normandy. Both of these, the King of France and the Count of Flanders, were bribed to remain neutral while a powerful army of mercenaries was collected, well equipped and armed. Such preparations, which had only been possible in consequence of Henry's well-filled treasury, were beyond the power of the pauper Duke of Normandy, who could only rely on the revenue of a few fiefs and whose dukedom had for years been exhausted by his own thriftlessness and his country's disordered state. When, therefore, Henry in 1105

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[1] Such appears to be the meaning of *werram* in Henry of Huntingdon and Ralph de Diceto.

> Mid gret est and poer to Normandie wente

he found the Norman nobles who were not of the Bellême-Mortain faction and who had up to this time supported Robert ready to desert the Duke and hurry to the King's side. Doubtless bribery hastened their footsteps, but apart from this it was patent to all how the struggle between the brothers would end. For the moment, however, Henry did nothing beyond receiving the submission of many barons, burning Bayeux and taking Caen.[1] In Whitsun week a conference was held between the King and the Duke at Cinteaux and an attempt was made to come to terms without result. After some pillaging Henry returned to England and pushed forward preparations for the final conquest of Normandy.

TINCHEBRAI

There is mention made in many of the chroniclers of a visit paid by Robert to Henry in England in the spring months of 1106. The conference is stated to have taken place at Northampton, and Robert we are told humbly begged his brother to restore to him his favour and to return to him his fiefs. It seems almost impossible that such a visit should have occurred, but even if it did it was unproductive of any result. Robert having been rebuffed returned "in a rage" to Normandy. We now find the Duke definitely combining with Robert de Bellême and the Count of Mortain against Henry. In the autumn of 1106 the King was to test the strength of the confederates, for by September 28 he had collected a "vast multitude of adherents" and had constructed a fort to threaten Tinchebrai, a stronghold near Domfront held by the Count of Mortain.

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[1] Henry of Huntingdon tells us that Caen was won by bribery and that many other towns fell. The expedition of 1105 seems to have been mainly undertaken to rescue fitz Hamon, who had been imprisoned by the castellan of Bayeux. Henry may have decided to postpone further operations after the release of fitz Hamon had been accomplished, because of the contagious disease which raged in France in 1105. As to Caen, Orderic mentions the vill of Darlington as the price of its surrender and says that in his day Darlington was called 'the traitor's village.'

The young Count appears to have been a good military leader, and succeeded in keeping the King's forces at bay for some time while he revictualled his stronghold and at the same time sent urgent messages to Duke Robert and Robert de Bellême requesting aid. In the meantime, while supports were being asked for by and sent to the Count of Mortain, Henry had collected round himself the vassals of the Counts of Meulan, Maine, and Évreux, the Earl of Surrey, and the barons Ralph de Bayeux, Ralph de Conches, Robert de Montfort, and Robert de Grantmesnil. To these were added the forces of lesser men and the King's own mercenaries. On the other side were ranged Duke Robert, Robert de Bellême, the Count of Mortain, Robert d'Estoteville the elder, and William de Ferrers. We are told that despite the power of Henry's supporters Robert's infantry was the more numerous.

Before the opposing sides came finally to blows some efforts were made to bring about peace. The time had passed, however, for truces or agreements. Henry had determined once and for all to strike a blow which would end the anarchy of Normandy. It is true that Henry offered Robert a moiety of the revenues of Normandy if the Duke would give him the sole control of the dukedom. This offer, which Robert seriously considered, was eventually rejected by his advisers. Had it been assented to it would have resulted in the conquest of Normandy by Henry without a battle; as it was one blow had to be delivered.

The armies of Duke Robert and Robert de Bellême had now come up to the aid of the Count of Mortain, and it was around the town of Tinchebrai that the one, final, and decisive battle of the campaign was fought. For a time the Duke's men flung themselves with desperate valour against the steady line of the English, and a fierce hand-to-hand conflict raged. The fortune of the day was completely altered, however, by the charge of the cavalry under Elias, Count of Maine, which fell on the left flank of the attacking infantry and slaughtered a goodly number of them. At the sight of this set-back Robert de Bellême, who seems to have felt thus early that the day was lost, took to flight, and the Duke's army, bereft of his support, was soon thrown into utter confusion, partly surrounded, and completely defeated.

PACIFICATION OF NORMANDY

As a result of this victory, which was hailed by the English with joy as their revenge for Senlac, Duke Robert, the Count of Mortain, and Robert d'Estoteville were captured, and Normandy was brought in time to complete submission to the King of England.

The pacification of the province was not, however, the work of a moment. Some castles were reduced, others were voluntarily surrendered, some barons submitted, others had to be repressed, but as early as October Robert had formally transferred the allegiance of his feudatories to Henry and the King was strong enough to call a meeting of the chief barons of Normandy to be held at Lisieux. This place had formerly been the centre of Ranulf Flambard's Norman estates. The wily Bishop had, however, taken no great part in the late conflict, and early sought an opportunity of making his peace with Henry. It was probably at his suggestion that this present meeting was held in his cathedral city. Certainly from now onward he was reconciled with Henry, and shortly afterward returned with him to England to hold again the See of Durham.

At this Council of Lisieux, and at the later one held in March of the following year, it was decided what steps should be taken in order to give to Normandy peace and an administration capable of repressing crime, whether committed by noble or peasant. The steps taken seem to have been adequate and the whole dukedom was rapidly reduced to a state of order. Even Robert de Bellême, though he still held his thirty-four castles, finding no one ready to support him in rebellion, submitted to the King on terms that he retained his father's Norman possessions, the lordships of Falaise and Argentan, surrendering on his side all the other fiefs he had seized from Duke Robert.

The King, having now put in train the various schemes decided upon for the good government of the duchy, returned to England some time before April 14, 1107, having previously sent there as prisoners his brother and the Count of Mortain. Both were kept in confinement for the rest of their lives, and there is a whisper of a still more terrible punishment meted out to Robert, for John de Oxenedes tells us that the King deprived his brother of his sight.[1] Normandy was now Henry's, and remained his until the end of his reign. The adulterine castles which had sprung up under the weak Duke, as they were to spring up in England under the weak King Stephen, were levelled with the ground. Henry was back in England, ready to conclude another quarrel in which he had been engaged throughout these years—that with Anselm.

ANSELM AND HENRY: THE QUESTION OF INVESTITURES

We left Anselm after his unsuccessful attempt to persuade the Pope to relieve him of his office.[2] We have seen that Pope Urban died in the July of 1099. He was followed on the chair of Peter by Paschal, who was elected Pope on August 13, 1099. It was this Pope who fought so strenuously with the Emperor Henry V over the question of investiture until he was at last captured by the Emperor in 1111, to be kept a prisoner until the Papacy abandoned for the time being the attitude it had adopted. It is, therefore, not matter for surprise that we find a stiffening in Anselm's attitude under the new Pope. On the other hand, Henry I

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[1] *Chron. Johannis de Oxenedes* (Rolls Series), p. 42: "*Rex Henricus Robertum fratrem suum . . . cepit, et incarceratum tandem luce oculorum privavit.*" He certainly blinded the Count of Mortain. See Henry of Huntingdon, Book VIII. The blinding of Robert is generally discredited.

[2] See *ante*, p. 427.

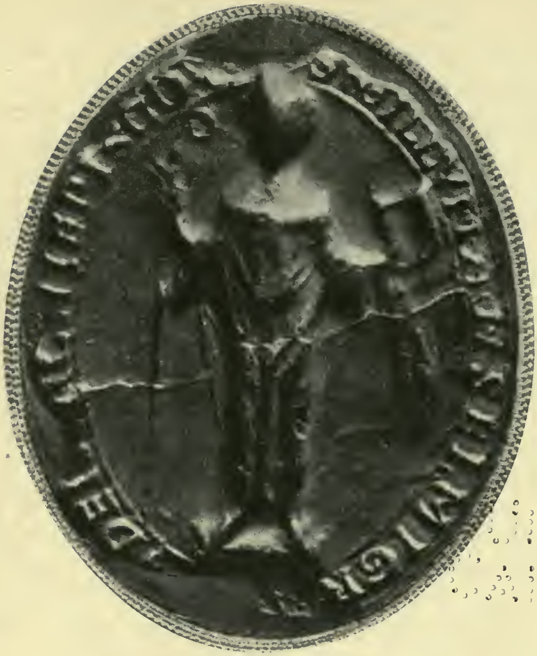

PLATE XLII. SEAL OF ANSELM

was by no means the man to relinquish readily such valuable regalities as those struck at by the Papal See.

The point in dispute, we remind the reader, was in essence this: Was a bishop as bishop the vassal of the king or was he independent of the king, and was a bishop entitled as bishop to the temporalities of his see? Bearing in mind the immense political importance of the higher Church dignitaries in those days, had the Papacy succeeded in this dispute it would have been in a position to dictate to the world on matters temporal as well as spiritual.

Anselm from the first had adopted a pronounced pro-papal attitude. He regarded himself as absolutely bound by the edicts of the Councils of Clermont, Bari, and Rome, which had formally forbidden clerics either to receive investiture at the hands of laymen or render homage or swear fealty to laymen for their temporalities. Meanwhile Henry had established his claim to the throne, and soon felt himself strong enough to take up the dispute, which had remained in abeyance since the death of Rufus. In the intervening time Anselm had indeed proved himself a valuable supporter to the Throne. He had, as we have seen, arrived in England shortly after Henry's accession; he had consented, though not without some hesitation, to the King's politic marriage with the nun Matilda; he had during the troublous months of 1100, when the two Roberts were threatening the realm, actively supported the King and used his best endeavours to steady the loyalty of clergy and barons. At the same time when Henry required him to render homage for the temporalities of the See of Canterbury Anselm refused, taking up the position that he was bound to obey the Papacy and the decrees of the papal councils.

The issue having now been joined afresh, Henry proposed an embassy to Rome to gain the Pope's consent. As a result, for some time the matter was left pending while the envoys were journeying there and back. At last the Pope's answer was received, and was found to be unsatisfactory from Henry's point of view. The King, hoping to gain time or to gain the day by the exercise of diplomacy, dispatched another embassy to Rome. The Pope, however, remained unmoved, and in his written reply urged the Archbishop to hold to the position he had taken up. With the return of the envoys (the Archbishop of York and the Bishops of Thetford [1] and Chester) a dramatic turn was given to the dispute, for after the written answer had been read the three envoys declared that the Pope had assented to investiture by the King, but had done so orally and secretly so as not to prejudice his position with other rulers. This deliberate lie,[2] as it proved to be, brought about a complete conflict between the written and the spoken word. To determine which was correct another embassy was sent to Rome, Anselm in the meantime accepting the statement made by the envoys.

By the Lent of 1103 the envoys were back again and the written answer was confirmed. Henry at length realized that Paschal was obdurate, and he consequently had recourse to an exceedingly able subterfuge which practically resulted in the exile of Anselm without any comment being raised. Anselm was persuaded to go to Rome. After some hesitation the Archbishop once more set out from England. By now the Papacy probably foresaw that if no compromise could be arrived at the English Church might be lost to Rome. As a result we find a weakening of the papal attitude. Diplomatic manœuvring was, however, extremely difficult, since Anselm could not be got to blind himself to the light of truth and honesty even in the name of the god Expediency himself.

Things were still dragging on when the King took a fresh step. Ignoring the solemn promises of his Charter of Liberties, he confiscated the revenues of the Archbishop's see. Simultaneously another embassy was on its way to Rome to attempt to determine the apparently interminable dispute.

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[1] The Bishopric of Thetford was later moved to Norwich.

[2] We suggest that this incident had been planned by Henry when the embassy was originally dispatched. The whole thing was a mere play for time.

Now Paschal was prepared for compromise, but Anselm's curious combination of obstinacy and honesty prevented agreement.

We have now reached the year 1105. The King was in Normandy. Anselm set out to meet him. It does not appear that the meeting was intended to be a reconciliation, for on the way the Archbishop declared his intention to excommunicate his King. The threat seems to have had a considerable effect. The revenues of Canterbury were restored, the Archbishop was welcomed back, but only on condition that he consented to recognize those who had accepted investiture from the King's hands. Again Anselm refused, qualifying his refusal, as before, by offering to consent if the Pope's permission could be gained.

The qualification opened the way to yet another embassy. It was not until April 1106 that the envoys returned, and in the meantime the King had both fined and taxed the clergy heavily. Of these fines and taxes Henry offered to relieve the Church if Anselm would return and submit. After further delay the long-absent Archbishop at last ended his exile and landed in England. It was not, however, until early in August 1107 that a compromise was entered into at the famous Council of London, whereby the investiture dispute was at last settled. The Pope in effect conceded the King's right to demand homage and fealty; the King conceded the Pope's right to make investiture. Henceforth no bishop or abbot was to be invested with his bishopric or abbacy by any layman whatsoever. On the other hand, henceforward bishops and abbots as tenants of land were deemed to be the King's vassals. The victory of the Church had not been complete, but, on the other hand, it had been very considerable, especially when we remember that it was fought against so strong a king as Henry.

One more battle of importance was fought by Henry against the Church. On the death of Anselm in 1109 the King, ignoring the oaths and terms of the coronation charter, left the See of Canterbury vacant until 1114, in which year Ralph d'Escures, Bishop of Rochester, was raised to the Primacy. A few months later Thurstan, who had been one of the royal chaplains, became Archbishop of York. The two new appointments, following as the one did so closely on the other, raised in an acute form the old dispute concerning the dependence of York upon Canterbury. The matter was aggravated by the attitude of the Pope, Paschal II, who was preparing to oppose Henry's ecclesiastical policy. In the year following Paschal is found protesting that the legates were denied the kingdom [1] and that the King had dispensed with the papal licence in matters of Church preferment. In the resulting dual dispute between York and Canterbury and Rome and Westminster the Pope definitely ranged himself on the side of York. Thurstan refused to make profession to Canterbury, and in that refusal was supported by Paschal and his successors the unfortunate Gelasius II and Calixtus II.

The dispute between York and Canterbury was an old one. Lanfranc had protected the rights of his see by requiring a submission from Thomas of York before consecration, but on Lanfranc's death Anselm found it impossible to extract a submission from York. Thomas's successor, Gerard, was more compliant, but he was followed by another Thomas who revived the dispute. At that time, however, Anselm was at Canterbury and Paschal stood by Anselm. Thomas was forced to submit. When Thurstan took up the quarrel he was supported at first by the King rather than by the Pope. Henry, however, seems to have perceived that a dual authority would tend to grave political differences and quickly swung round to the side of Canterbury. Now, however, Paschal took the side of York, Henry was required to restore Thurstan to the see of which he had been deprived, Ralph was ordered to consecrate his rival. The answers to the Pope's letter setting forth these views were very different in the case of King and Archbishop. Henry restored Thurstan. Ralph refused consecration. As a result the fight dragged on. Paschal died (1118), Gelasius died (1119), and it was not until October 20, 1119, that Calixtus II himself consecrated Thurstan. Even so the dispute was not at an end, for now the King declared the Archbishop of York an exile. The Pope replied in the following year (1120) by declaring York independent of Canterbury and by threatening to excommunicate the King unless he made peace with Thurstan. The King was obdurate. In 1121, however, new forces were at work. Thurstan proved both his loyalty and his ability in the negotiations which resulted in peace between Henry and Louis VI, and the Pope, determined to gain his point, carried the matter as far as to threaten a general interdict. Thurstan was permitted to return. Canterbury was still, of course, bitterly hostile, and the dispute raged until the death of Ralph in the autumn of 1122.

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[1] As the Rev. H. K. Mann says (*Lives of the Popes*, vol. viii, p. 92): "By threats, soft words, or gold, Henry often succeeded in preventing the papal legates from landing in England or from executing their commissions." Ralph was also at this time pressing his claim to be the sole legate of the Holy See. Hence the papal opposition to the King was connected with the Pope's support of Thurstan.

Reform

After Tinchebrai there was a lull for a time in martial matters. It was to prove the lull before the storm, for the years which lay ahead were to test the King's steadfastness even more than had the rebellions which marked the opening years of the reign. For the moment, however, we may turn away from the battlefield, we may forget the squabbles between clerics, and dwell upon the fairest aspect of this reign—the steps toward administrative reform.

We have already seen how in 1108 the coinage had been improved. Sixteen years later the wars with France had resulted in such poverty and such a debasement of the currency that a pound was said to be hardly worth a penny. In part, no doubt, the moneyers were to blame. Certainly upon them the royal wrath was vented. The principal moneyers throughout the realm were seized and barbarously mutilated. Steps were taken to give the coinage something of its proper value.

The improvement of the currency was one of the lesser of

Henry's reforms. The great need of the age was freedom from the evils of lawlessness. Each castle resting on its moated mound offered to the surrounding country-side peace and prosperity or death and destruction. Which of the alternatives was to be present depended mainly upon the King. Henry consistently endeavoured to keep the barons in check. Naturally cruel, he often tore out the eyes of those who rose against him or sought to overthrow law and order. The busy fingers of his mutilators spared neither gentle lady nor child nor man. " Great was the awe of him," declares the chronicler. " No man dare do ill to another in his time." It has been stated that Henry's system of repression was based on a natural love of law and order. There is no evidence to prove it. This cold, cruel, licentious, pitiless King may win our admiration by his ability, but his selfishness, his boundless treachery, his vulgar scheming, his love of gold, his readiness to bribe, to wean away and then discard his dupes hardly prepare us to look for any lofty motive underneath his manifold endeavours. It is manifest to us that Henry loved peace because war threatened his ruin. He attacked the baronage because the nobility favoured Robert, and after Robert William Clito his son, rather than Henry. But though the King's motives were dubious, the result of his energetic policy was unquestionably beneficial to the State. England became peaceful. The judges who in the preceding reign had begun their peregrinations were permitted of necessity to enter the jurisdictions of even the most powerful lord. The presence of royal justice was visible throughout the land.

In another direction a foundation-stone was being laid in the structure of our great departments of State. The Exchequer was developed. That it had existed before we have no doubt, but it is now that we begin to know something definite about it. The earliest Exchequer Roll which has come down to us was written in the thirty-first year of this reign. At that time the royal revenue was about 66,000 pounds. The reign probably witnessed a development in the Exchequer system and the amount was, if anything, increased. Though the abuses springing from the royal right of purveyance were checked, the general taxes were increased and Danegelds tended to become perpetual.

The regular routine of the Exchequer, however, pointed the way to a more ordered system of government. The highest council of the realm, the *Curia Regis*, became more powerful as government became better organized. The strength thus generated, increased by the overthrow of rebellious barons, spread downward to the lower courts. The itinerant justices could not only penetrate into all parts of the country, but could punish. And they did punish. A rage for hanging similar to that which in Henry VIII's reign possessed Bishop Lee and which was so evident in the eighteenth century seized upon the judges. Forty-four thieves were hanged together at Leicester in 1124. "Whoso bears his burden of gold or silver, no man dare say anything to him but good." For once it would seem that repression and severity had their effect, that laws were observed and robbery checked.

William Clito

We must now turn back and consider what had been happening in and around Normandy since the Council of Lisieux (March 1107). In July 1108 Henry found it necessary to cross over once again to Normandy. A new danger was threatening. After Tinchebrai William Clito, the son of Robert Duke of Normandy, had been given into the charge of Elias de St Saens (to be distinguished from Elias de Maine). St Saens proved himself a better friend to William Clito than to Henry, and one Sunday morning, while the township of St Saens was worshipping, the Vicomte Robert de Beauchamp came by the King's command from the neighbouring castle of Arques and appeared before the castle gate to take the young William into his custody. Elias at the time was absent; the boy was asleep in bed. Despite the favourable opportunity this offered to make an easy capture, Robert de Beauchamp missed his quarry. The boy was secreted by his servants and escaped. St Saens Castle was taken, however, and given to William de Warenne, second Earl of Surrey.

The abortive attempt at capture forced the once loyal Elias de St Saens into the opposing ranks and drove the graceful and charming young Prince into the homes and hearts of half the nobles of Normandy. What the piteous tales of Elias did not accomplish the polished manners of his youthful ward succeeded in effecting. What the personal gifts of William Clito had begun the hatred of the nobles, and particularly of Robert de Bellême, for Henry completed. Robert and Elias, we are told, " toiled unceasingly." Louis VI, who had recently succeeded Philip of France (1108), William Duke of Poitiers, Henry Duke of Burgundy, and Alan of Brittany, among others, were approached. Louis VI in particular espoused the cause of William Clito. For the time being, however, the presence of Henry in Normandy was sufficient to prevent the storm breaking. Moreover, Louis had only lately been crowned (August 3), and was hardly ready to strike. It was not until 1110 that the two came to blows in consequence of an attack made upon the castle of Gisors.

The Empress Maud

By Whitsuntide 1109 Henry was back in England, and was present at the Court to which the ambassadors from the Emperor Henry V came to ask on behalf of their imperial master for the hand of Henry's daughter, Maud.[1] The embassy was successful, and in the spring of 1110 the child, now eight years of age, was sent to Germany in the care of the Bishop of Cambrai and Roger fitz Richard, taking with her a dowry of 10,000 marks. On Easter Day (April 10) she was betrothed to the Emperor, and on May 8 was crowned at Mainz by the Archbishop of Cologne aided by the Archbishop of Treves. Four years later, on January 7, 1114, the marriage was celebrated with much pomp at Mainz.

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[1] We shall refer throughout to the future Empress as Maud and not Matilda, in order to distinguish her from Matilda, Stephen's Queen. Other names have been given her, *e.g.* Mold (like her mother), Adela, Aaliz, Aethelic.

Henry and Normandy

While the betrothal festivities were being witnessed in the towns of Utrecht and Mainz the state of the Norman border had grown steadily worse and more dangerous. Henry marched on neutral Gisors, and Louis at once raised an army and marched against him. The train once fired, Robert de Bellême and the Count of Anjou, with other nobles, were soon in arms.

Notwithstanding the apparent strength of the opponents, Henry easily managed to control the situation. Little fighting took place, but the trend of events is shown by the fact that by 1111 the Count of Blois had deserted Louis and gone over to the side of Henry. In the same year, however, Fulk V, Count of Anjou, who had married the heiress of the house of Maine, joined the ranks of Henry's enemies. The addition was an important one. Fulk's power was great and his territories were wide. Further, there was probably even now some talk of the betrothal of Fulk's second daughter Sibyl to William Clito.

Capture of Robert de Bellême

Henry's position was one of danger. He met the danger in his accustomed manner. In England already steps had been taken to eliminate still further the discontented nobles. In 1110 Philip de Breose, William Malet, and William de Baynard had been banished. On the Continent the King relied upon bribery and diplomacy. The coalition was weakened and the King's party strengthened by the scattering of much English gold; fulsome promises were made, not without effect. In the following year a fortunate occurrence removed all immediate danger, for on November 4, 1112, Robert de Bellême was captured while acting as an envoy from the King of France. To make prisoner an ambassador was of course the grossest treachery, but Henry felt that the end justified the means. Robert was seized, tried, and, after being taken to England, imprisoned in Wareham Castle. There he was probably blinded and remained in the straitest captivity for the rest of his life.

PEACE

As the result of the capture of Robert and the secession of many of the nobles of Maine to the King's side Fulk was prepared to make peace with England. Early in Lent Fulk and Henry met near Alençon, which had lately surrendered to Henry, and peace was made. By the terms of this peace Fulk swore fealty and did homage for Maine and betrothed his daughter Matilda to William, Henry's only son. On the other hand Évreux was restored by Henry to its long-exiled Count and other nobles were pardoned.

The Count of Maine having thus made terms, Robert de Bellême being captured, and the more discontented of the nobles having been deprived of their more weighty grievances, the time had come when Louis of France had to reconsider his position. Originally the supporter of the discontented nobles of Normandy in general and of Robert de Bellême and William Clito in particular, he had carried on a desultory war for some time with little vigour and less success. The Count having made peace, however, Louis hastened to follow his example. The two Kings met at Gisors in the latter part of March 1114. Henry was granted the whole of Maine and Brittany, as well as the lordship of Bellême. Henry's natural daughter Matilda was betrothed to Conan, the heir to Brittany. Friendship between the two Kings was sworn, and amid rejoicings the sword for a time was sheathed.

WALES

The last flickers of the Bellême revolt having been extinguished by the capture and destruction of Robert's chief stronghold of Bellême Henry was free to return to England. There affairs had been quiet except on the Welsh border, where the Normans were pressing the Welsh vigorously.

Already both St David's and Llandaff had been compelled to own Norman bishops, and in Pembrokeshire a colony of Flemings had been established. These men of Flanders, who had been rendered homeless by the incursion of the sea, had sought refuge in England; had thrown themselves on the mercy of the Queen, and for a time had been accommodated in or near London. The arrangements were, however, temporary, and Henry, in 1111, made them a present of the land of others by granting them the whole of southern Dyfed. Even to-day the men of Pembrokeshire, the descendants of these Flemish settlers, can readily be distinguished from the neighbouring Welsh. 'Little England beyond Wales' is not only distinct from South Wales, but is apt to be somewhat proud of the distinction.

FRENCH WAR RENEWED

Apart from the Welsh affair few events of moment had taken place in England. The Scots border throughout this period was quiet, owing in large measure to the ties which linked England with Scotland through Matilda. The young David had, indeed, passed his early years at the Court of Henry, and had married Matilda, widow of the Norman Earl of Northampton and daughter of the English Earl of Northumbria, the ill-fated Waltheof. He combined in later years the title of King of Scotland (1124) with that of Lord of Huntingdon, and it was in his capacity as an English baron that he took part in the ceremony of swearing fealty to the Empress Maud, Henry's daughter. On the north-western borders, however, some movements had been on foot. Carlisle had been given an earl, had been made a county, and had been organized in the Norman-feudal manner. On the north-eastern side Ranulf Flambard had kept in order the Durham district, a task which, thanks to the friendliness of the Scots, was one of no great difficulty.

While affairs in England had thus been running smoothly, storm-clouds were gathering in France. William Clito was at large, though exiled, and he seems to have persuaded both Louis and a large number of the nobles of Normandy to espouse his cause once more. The peace of Gisors, however, was first broken by Henry, who in 1116 had aided the Count of Blois, then at feud with Louis, and had captured the Count of Nevers, one of Louis' allies. In support of Blois forces invaded France, and the castle of St Clair was attacked and captured. Louis, nothing loath, retaliated by seizing Gane (Gue Nichaise) by a stratagem in which he and his knights entered disguised as monks. The cell of St Ouen was fortified and the passage of the Epte thus made good.

Henry replied by bringing up his forces against Gane and St Ouen. Two forts were built to hold the French in check. One of these, however, was stormed by the French, and the whole border appears to have suffered from the constant, fluctuating, and desultory warfare, which threatened the country with utter desolation. The chief events of the years 1116–18 are not to be found in the battles fought, which were all minor engagements of an indecisive nature, but rather in the various moves which were made on one side and the other to gain adherents. The astuteness of Henry enabled him to claim as supporter Stephen, the future Count of Blois and King of England, now Count of Mortain by grant from Henry, Count of Boulogne in right of his wife Matilda, and soon to be Lord of Alençon. Stephen's brother Theobald, Count of Blois, was also of the King's party, while Brittany, Maine, and of course Normandy, were now subject to Henry. On the other side, Louis was joined by Baldwin, Count of Flanders, and Fulk of Anjou, while many Norman barons, among them Amaury de Montfort (who now laid claim to Évreux), Henry, Count of Eu, Stephen, Count of Aumale, Hugh de Gournai (who had been one of the King's most favoured friends), Eustace de Breteuil, Richard de l'Aigle, and Robert du Neubourg, revolted against Henry and took up arms in support of William Clito.

DEATH OF ROBERT DE MEULAN

With numerous enemies thus threatening him the King had to witness the invasion of his duchy without being able effectively to retaliate. In the year when matters abroad became most serious (1118) Henry lost his best and most faithful counsellor, for in that year Robert de Meulan died, having in his last days suffered from the betrayal and desertion of his wife and the clouding of that brilliant intellect which had enabled him to steer the fortunes of his country past many a treacherous shoal.

MARRIAGE BETWEEN WILLIAM AND MATILDA

Although his chief counsellor was dead, Henry still followed his previous practice of meeting opposition with bribes and diplomacy. In the early part of 1119 Fulk, Count of Anjou, was weaned away from Louis. The bribe in this case was the marriage of Fulk's daughter Matilda with Henry's son, together with more English gold. The position of England was further strengthened by the death of the Count of Flanders, who had been wounded in a fight at Eu by Hugh Boterel. His successor, Charles, having little interest in the dispute, soon made peace with Henry.

France and the discontented Norman lords were still in the field. As Orderic tells us, " Treason chilled and numbed the hearts of eighteen of the noble castellans of Normandy." The balance of strength had now, however, swung definitely round to the side of Henry. The war was practically ended by the English victory of Brémule, fought near Noyon.

BATTLE OF BRÉMULE

It was on August 20, 1119, that King Henry, having heard Mass at Noyon, marched out to meet the French in battle. Riding over the wide plain of Brémule, the English cavalry, five hundred in number, could see the smoke rising from the granary of Boucheron, which the enemy had fired. The King, realizing that Louis was near, donned his armour and arranged his forces for battle. It was not long before his enemy appeared with a goodly company of knights. The French King, eager to get to grips with the wily Henry, who had so long avoided a pitched battle, called upon four hundred knights to ride at the English and do battle valiantly for the honour of French arms. Foremost among the chivalry who responded was William Clito, who now armed himself for a contest which should give him back his patrimony of Normandy or for ever destroy his hopes.

The French, having made their preparations, gallantly charged down on the English, who awaited the attack mostly on foot. The attackers, relying entirely on cavalry, advanced without order and were checked. A few of the English were scattered, but the main line held; the French were beaten off, and some eighty of the foremost knights were surrounded and captured. A second assault was more successful. The foremost line of Henry's forces was driven back; but, the first shock of the encounter over, the English rallied and again captured many of the French, including some of the foremost knights. Of feats of arms performed by William Clito we hear nothing. He appears to have taken part in the ignoble flight of the French.

Brémule had been won. A considerable number of the French knights had been captured. William Crespin d'Etrepagne, who had led the first assault, had been taken. This knight, however, had nearly succeeded in slaying Henry, for after he had been made prisoner he flung off his guard, dashed at the King, whom he hated, and struck him a terrible blow on his helmet with a sword. The chevet of Henry's hauberk saved his life, but blood was seen to flow. Roger fitz Richard (de Bienfaite) hastened to his lord's assistance and bore Crespin to the ground, while others around the King attempted to slay the captive as he lay powerless. Roger, however, true knight that he was, protected the fallen enemy, though only at the peril of his own life.

It is a matter worthy of notice, as showing the tournament nature of the battles of this period, that in this engagement—in which the Duchy of Normandy was at stake, in which the Kings of France and England were personally leading the flower of their chivalry, in which some nine hundred knights were engaged, in which the French King's standard was taken, and from which the French King eventually fled, riding at a gallop to an island in the Epte—but three men were killed. Orderic tells us that this was because they were covered with armour and mutually spared each other for fear of God and out of regard for the fraternity of arms. " Christian warriors," we are told, " did not thirst for their brothers' blood." Those were the days when war was a splendid sport.

Though France had been defeated at Brémule the leader of the Norman rebels, Amaury de Montfort, was still in active opposition. He had already had much success. Évreux had been conquered, and he now persuaded Louis to march with him to the reduction of Breteuil, held for Henry by Ralph de Guader. Against this stronghold Louis appears to have assembled a large but disorderly mob of untrained levies, which Ralph easily held at bay. Henry meanwhile sent his natural son Richard[1] in haste to Ralph's assistance, while the King himself prepared a considerable force and followed Richard to France. The French masses were driven back into their own country, and although a few more isolated fights took place none were of moment and the way was open for peace. The complaints which Louis made to the Pope at the Synod of Rheims in the October of 1119 had little effect except to extract from Calixtus a promise to meet Henry personally and discuss with him the accusations which Louis had made. The promised meeting took place the following month at Gisors, and in the meantime most of the Norman rebels had submitted. At Gisors Henry was able to satisfy the Pope that the charges levelled against him by Louis were ill-founded,[2] the Pope sent legates to the King of France announcing that England's replies made peace possible, and in the following year (1120) hostilities were formally ended, the *status quo* was established, and Louis received the homage of William, the heir to England, and in return swore to support his succession to all of Henry's territories.

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[1] A prince who showed much energy and ability. He was the child of a woman of low rank.

[2] Henry's defence, which is given at length in Ordericus Vitalis, Book XII, chap. xxiv, is an extraordinarily able performance. See also Eadmer, *Historia Novorum.*

THE WHITE SHIP

It was in this year (1120) when all appeared established, when William's title to his father's honours seemed secure, when the support of France and Anjou had been gained, that the blow fell which destroyed in a moment all of Henry's careful plans.

For years Henry, who appears to have had a genuine love for children—despite the mutilating of his two granddaughters, the children of his natural daughter Juliana—and who had a still stronger desire to see a settled crown descend to his own heir, had both petted, honoured, and schemed for his son William. Two years before, on May 1, his Queen Matilda had died, and although Henry had been favoured with a great number of illegitimate offspring by his numerous mistresses only two lawful children had been born—the Empress Maud and the Prince William. All Henry's efforts had consequently been directed toward William's succession, and as early as 1115 he had made the Norman barons do homage and swear fealty to William as their future Duke, while in the following year, at a council held at Salisbury, the young Prince's right to the throne was acknowledged by all the magnates of England. In June 1119 the marriage with Matilda, daughter of Fulk of Anjou, was celebrated, and now, in 1120, his title had been recognized by Louis of France. Then came the disaster of the *White Ship*.

The story of the *Blanche Nef*, or *White Ship*—the ill-fated vessel belonging to the son of Stephen fitz Evrard, who had commanded the ship which took William the Conqueror to England—has often been told. How the King entrusted his sons William and Richard and their followers to this captain's care; how the mariners, overjoyed at the signal honour thus done them, got drunk; how the ship, overladen with passengers, who had joined in the general merriment, struck a rock and sank; how all but two, Berold, the butcher of Rouen, and Geoffrey fitz Gilbert de l'Aigle,[1] sank out of sight after the young William had swamped the one boat safely launched in attempting to save his illegitimate sister, the Countess of Perche; how the unhappy captain, coming to the surface, cried out, "Where is the Prince?" and when he found him gone plunged again into the depths, never to be seen again—these things are known to all. We are told by the old chroniclers that so great was the loss of life that there was hardly a noble family that had not cause to mourn some near relative. For a time the King was left unacquainted with the disaster, but at length Count Theobald devised a plan for breaking the news. A boy, being sent to the royal presence, threw himself at the King's feet weeping. When questioned as to the reason for his grief he recounted what had happened to the *White Ship*.

So great was the shock of this news that Henry fell senseless to the ground. For a long time the King mourned for his son and for the many friends and supporters who had been lost in the disaster. When at last he again undertook public business his first concern was to provide for the succession which had so suddenly become imperilled.

Henry marries Adelaide

The loss of the *White Ship* occurred on November 25, 1120. On January 29, 1121, Henry, on the advice of his Council, married Adelaide, a beautiful daughter of the Duke of Louvain. We are told by Orderic that she "adorned the Court and kingdom, but, unhappily, she did not bear the King a child." The Empress Maud, the child of Matilda, the King's first Queen, was still, of course, alive, but the times were not suitable for the rule of a woman. As it became increasingly evident that Adelaide was to be childless the King took every step possible to advance his daughter's claim to the throne.

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[1] He was later overcome by exposure, lost his hold of the yardarm to which both were clinging, and perished.

In the meantime the death of the Prince had greatly strengthened the position of William Clito, whose right of succession not only to the Dukedom of Normandy but to the Kingdom of England now appeared to many to be indisputable. Many ambitious men who looked to the future left once again the King's side and joined forces with William Clito. In default of issue to William of England, who on his death had left his bride surviving him, it does appear that William Clito's title was clear. That there would be issue born of Matilda, the unfortunate Prince's child-wife, was almost impossible, for she was only just in her teens when the *White Ship* went down. For a time she remained at the English Court, where she was kindly treated; the King, however, seeing fit to appropriate her dowry. After her return to her native Anjou (1122) she appears to have lived in retirement until 1129. In that year, at the age of twenty-two, this unhappy lady, who when a child seemed destined to be Queen of England, became a nun in the Abbey of Fontevrault.

MAUD MARRIES GEOFFREY OF ANJOU

The withholding of Matilda's dowry had caused Fulk to attempt a recompense by the granting of the county of Maine to William Clito, who was now (1122) betrothed to Sibyl, the Count's second daughter. Next year Henry was much exercised in preventing this match. His negotiations were made chiefly with Rome and were successful in their object. The Pope having threatened excommunication if the young people married, on the ground that they were too nearly related,[1] the union was frustrated. It is possible that Fulk would not have thus tamely submitted to a ridiculous attack had not Henry shown a desire to unite again the houses of Normandy and Anjou by a marriage between his daughter, the Empress Maud, and Fulk's son Geoffrey. For the time being, however, any such scheme was impossible, for the Emperor was still alive. On May 23, 1125, that obstacle was removed, the Emperor was dead, and in dying had placed his sceptre in the hands of the Empress. Almost at once Maud joined her father in Normandy, and in the September of 1126 was back in England. In the January of 1127 the barons, including Stephen, took the oath to support her title to the throne should Henry die without legitimate male issue. By Whitsuntide 1127 open negotiations were begun for an alliance between Maud and Geoffrey, and on June 17, 1128, the Bishop of Avranches solemnized the marriage in Le Mans Cathedral.

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[1] There were eleven degrees between William Clito and Sibyl of Anjou!

We can well believe that Maud looked forward with no great pleasure to what must have seemed to her a dishonourable union. One who had received the imperial diadem from the supreme Pontiff, who had been the beloved consort of a powerful monarch, who had been offered the crown of the Empire after the Emperor's death, was hardly ready to sink to the position of the wife of a boy who was but fifteen years of age and whose father was merely a count. Henry I, however, saw clearly what might be gained by the junction of Anjou to England and Normandy. His foresight was shown when Henry of Anjou, the child of this union, mounted the throne of England as Henry II, to reign there a monarch wielding his sceptre over territories which stretched from Cheviots to Pyrenees.

For the time being, however, Henry II was still unborn. Maud and Geoffrey were continually quarrelling, and the Empress had to submit to being driven from her husband's dominions.

Revolt in Normandy

Throughout the years which lay between the drowning of William and the re-marriage of the Empress Maud (1120–1128) the state of Normandy had been somewhat unstable. Early in 1122 Amaury d'Évreux and Waleran de Meulan (grandson of the great Robert de Meulan, but lately deceased) raised a rebellion. Castles were put in a state of preparation and the Count of Anjou was urged to countenance the marriage between William Clito and Sibyl. Though this union, as we have seen, was eventually frustrated, for two years Normandy was the centre of the discontented among the barons. By September of 1123 the conspiracy was complete. By October, however, Henry had gathered together a large force at Rouen, and on a certain Sunday in that month Hugh de Montfort, brother-in-law to the Count of Meulan, was summoned to the royal presence. Hugh attended and was commanded to place his castle of Montfort-sur-Risle in the King's hands. De Montfort, realizing that the conspiracy had been discovered, acted with prudence, pretended to submit, and accompanied the King's officers on the road to Montfort-sur-Risle. On the way he succeeded in galloping ahead and escaping from his companions, and arrived at his castle alone. Instantly steps were taken to put it in a state of defence. Hugh himself hastened to Brionne to warn Waleran de Meulan. Pont Audemer, Waleran's castle, was made ready for resistance. The preliminary steps had been taken on both sides: the treason was declared, and for the next few weeks Henry was engaged in reducing his vassals once more to a state of subjection.

Within two days the tower of Montfort-sur-Risle was burnt down. The castle itself, however, withstood a month's siege. Terms of peace were then made, and Henry was free to march on Pont Audemer. A strong resistance was offered there. The garrison included many renowned fighters, among them Luke de Barré, the gallant troubadour. At length, after a six weeks' siege, in which the assaulting parties were aided by a berfrey constructed under the direction of Henry himself, the stronghold was surrendered. Before the end of the year Gisors and Évreux had also been gained by Henry.

BATTLE OF BOURGTHÉROULDE

During the winter-time operations were suspended. The time was utilized in strengthening the royal castles. With the coming of spring the struggle was renewed. The various operations consisted entirely of attacks upon castles and were of a desultory nature. On March 24, 1124, however, the opposing parties met at Bourgthéroulde, near the forest of Brotonne. There Ralph de Bayeux, leading the King's forces, defeated the youthful Waleran de Meulan, making many prisoners, including the Count of Meulan himself, Hugh de Montfort, and Luke de Barré.

The rebellion was now at an end, for all the leaders were captive. In April Henry was able to pronounce judgment on his enemies at Rouen. The sentences were severe. Many were imprisoned, some had their eyes torn out. Among the latter was Luke de Barré, who had angered the King by ridiculing him in song. This was a particularly disgraceful act since Luke was not a vassal of Henry's and had been captured in fair fight. He should have been treated as an honourable prisoner of war. Yet because, as Henry said, "the merry gleeman made scurrilous sonnets on me," he was now condemned to lose his eyes. As Orderic tells us, "the butchers did their work." Luke was blinded after frantic struggles. Thus mutilated, the brave troubadour, fearing a life of darkness, dashed his brains out against the walls of his prison.

DEATH OF WILLIAM CLITO

The next few months were occupied in the reduction of the remaining fortress which was being held for the Count of Meulan, and before the end of 1124 peace was made. It was now that Henry succeeded in annulling the marriage which had been arranged between William Clito and Sibyl of Anjou. William Clito once more became a wanderer, and although Louis of France succeeded in persuading the assembly of barons which met during the Christmas of 1127 to support William Clito, and although as a result a strong league was once more formed, and although William added to his influence by a fortunate marriage and became Duke of Flanders, he was unable during these years to attack successfully the King, who now took steps to strengthen his position by hastening the marriage between the Empress Maud and Geoffrey. All danger was finally extinguished in 1128 when the unfortunate William Clito was killed in an assault on the castle of Alost.

Last Years

The death of William Clito had cleared the political atmosphere, and although there were some minor insurrections in Normandy during Henry's later years, they were of small importance. Some anxiety was caused by the unfortunate disputes which had from time to time arisen between Geoffrey and the Empress Maud, but on March 5, 1133, the birth of a son, the future Henry II, seemed to promise success to the King's schemes. In the August of that year Henry embarked for Normandy. The visit was to prove a long one. Until 1135 Henry appears to have stayed with his daughter at Rouen. In the meantime another son had been born to the young couple. In 1135 trouble on the Welsh border would have caused the King's return to England had not Geoffrey laid claim to lordships in Normandy and England, which required Henry to remain in Normandy in order to be at hand should Geoffrey see fit to support his claims by force of arms. Geoffrey replied by insulting Henry by every means in his power, and at the same time encouraged the nobles of Normandy to revolt The revolt was suppressed, but the treatment of Talvas, one of the rebels whom Maud favoured, resulted in a quarrel between Henry and his daughter. Maud left her father in a rage and joined her husband at Angers.

The King was now hastening to his end. Already in the February of 1134 his eldest brother, Robert, had died a prisoner at Cardiff, having reached the age of nearly eighty. His captor was soon to follow him to the tomb. For some time Henry's health had been failing, his sickness being accentuated by the frequent quarrels between himself and his daughter, his son-in-law, and his nobles which marked the year 1135. The final scenes took place at the hunting lodge at Lyons on Sunday, December 1. Six days before the King, after the quarrel with Maud, had arrived there intent on hunting. On that Monday, November 25, he had given orders relating to the next day's sport. In the course of the 25th, however, he ate a dish of lampreys contrary to advice, and during the night was seized with what was to prove his final sickness. By Sunday, after confessing his sins, pardoning criminals, restoring the exiled and the disinherited, he was dead. On Monday 20,000 men did honour to the corpse, which had been carried to Rouen; there it was embalmed, and part was buried at Emendreville, in the Church of St Mary-du-Pré, part—in the year following—in the monastery at Reading. On the same day that the corpse arrived at Rouen, or very soon after, Stephen, Count of Boulogne, was speeding his shipmen to get him to England. By December 15 he had been enthroned and the oaths[1] which the barons had sworn to support the Empress Maud had been broken.

No sooner was the King dead than the lawlessness began which was to make men cry that Christ and His saints slept. The crimes which were committed so soon after his death show that Henry had held in check evils far worse than any he had been guilty of. Repellent as his character may seem, he merits our admiration by the manner in which he held down the powerful and, by so doing, protected the weak. He had indeed smitten "the backs of the rebellious with the scourge of justice." With his death the way was open to anarchy. The way might have been stopped had Stephen been a strong king. Stephen, however, had none of Henry's pitilessness. Moreover, Stephen had opposed to him a very able and energetic woman who was determined to fight to the last for what she deemed to be her right to the throne. The resulting quarrel makes the next reign perhaps the gloomiest in our history.

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[1] The oath had been repeated by the nobles as late as 1131 as a result of the advice given to the King by the Council which met at Northampton in that year.

CHAPTER XX[1]

STEPHEN

1135–1154

MAUD LADY OF ENGLAND

1141

AT the time when Henry lay in his last sickness his daughter, the Empress Maud, had quarrelled with her father and was absent from his side, being still in Anjou. On his death-bed the King is stated to have made Stephen his heir, but Robert of Gloucester declared that the will of the King touching the succession was unchanged. However this may be, while Stephen was hastening to London neither Maud nor her staunchest supporter, Robert of Gloucester, made any immediate attempt to claim either the crown of England or the Duchy of Normandy. It may be that the Empress, relying on the oath which Stephen had taken in 1127 and probably in 1131 to support her title, did not deem it possible that he would be so insensible to the many benefits he had received from Henry's hands and so ready to break his knightly word as to disregard the promises he had made and ignore the late King's expressed desires. If such was her expectation it was not realized. By December 15, as we have seen, Stephen had been enthroned in London. Already, however, the seeds of civil discord had been sown. The new King on his way to London had seen the gates of Dover and Canterbury closed against him, and although the citizens of London had received him with open arms he was coldly regarded by both the Church and the nobles. Stephen was not slow to realize the weakness of his position and attempted to win favour by fulsome promises to uphold the law and check disorder.

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[1] Mr J. H. Round's *Geoffrey de Nandeville* is perhaps the most vivid account of this reign and has been constantly relied upon.

For the moment the King was able to keep his word. The lawless adventurers who had been threatening London were dispersed and Stephen with a loyal city supporting him was able to journey to Winchester in order to secure the royal treasure. Possibly Stephen had another and equally important reason for his visit. At that time the Bishop of Winchester was Henry, a brother of Stephen. To Bishop Henry therefore Stephen went, hoping to gain at one stroke the support of one of the most powerful of the clergy and the wherewithal to buy the loyalty of the nobles.

At Winchester Stephen was received with acclamation. Once in the cathedral city he was met by William, Archbishop of Canterbury, Henry, Bishop of Winchester, and Roger, Bishop of Salisbury. For a time the Archbishop of Canterbury, who had been the first to take the oath to support Maud, hesitated, but perhaps already Hugh Bigod, the late King's seneschal, had spread the rumour that Henry on his death-bed had disinherited Maud. However this may be, the Archbishop's scruples were quickly overcome. Stephen by his offer to restore and preserve liberty to the Church—a promise which was backed by the Bishop of Winchester—brought over a large part of the clergy to his side, and the way was open for the solemn act of coronation, which took place at Westminster about December 22.

As yet, however, the nobles had hung back, and the West was almost solid for the Empress. Maud had also by no means been a passive spectator of what had occurred. The Bishop of Angers had been sent to Rome to accuse Stephen of breaking his solemn oath. Stephen wisely met this move by accepting the Pope's jurisdiction. At the same time it was made clear that the Church had nothing to fear from Stephen as king. In the result the Pope adopted a neutral policy. Stephen was neither condemned nor acquitted.

At the time of the coronation the King had deepened the impression made on the citizens during his former visit to London by the issue of a charter re-granting the liberties and laws of Henry and the laws and customs of Edward's time. At the same time with the wealth got from the Winchester treasury he was able to dazzle the eyes of his subjects by the display of magnificence throughout the Christmas festival.

It is probable that by now Stephen had succeeded in persuading, either by open bribery or by promises, a considerable proportion of the nobility to ignore their oath to Maud and throw in their lot with the King. But at the time of Henry's funeral at Reading (which took place early in 1136) a charter was given to Miles of Gloucester which contains very few noble signatures, and it would appear that as yet the King's hold on the barons was weak.

From Reading the King journeyed to Oxford, and there saw fit to renew the promises of good government which he had made on the day of his coronation. The pledges which were then given must not be confused with the charter which was given by Stephen at Oxford later in the year.

So far the King had acted with energy and prudence. By promises of good laws and good government, of liberty for the people and freedom for the Church, he had gained a strong following. But his position was still one of great difficulty, and long remained so. It is a mistake to regard the anarchy which devastated England in the years which followed as due entirely to the weakness and folly of the King. It was due rather to the force of circumstances, which were such that none but a great statesman could have overcome them. Stephen, good soldier and brave man though he was, had not the iron will necessary to crush opposition at its birth. Open-handed, he scattered the contents of Henry's hoard, wrung as it was from the people by oppressive taxation, without gaining any permanent good for either himself or his State. Charming in manner, courteous and gracious, he possessed qualities which, had he been a private man, would have gained him friends, while, as a king, they lost him adherents by giving an impression of weakness. The root cause of his troubles was, however, hardly his personal failings so much as the fact that in a feudal age his throne was founded on a broken oath. What the King had done the nobles did. Oaths of fealty ceased to have binding force; opportunism was rampant; lawlessness mated with faithlessness and gave birth to anarchy, an anarchy which Stephen never spared himself to repress, but which steadily increased as England grew weaker under the civil discord due to the struggles of the factions headed by the King and the Empress.

Already while the King was at Oxford news reached him which presaged the coming storm. David of Scotland, who, as we have seen, had been much at Henry's Court, had been made an English baron and had taken the oath to support Maud, crossed the Border and took Carlisle and Newcastle. It was probably on the receipt of this news that the King renewed his promises of good government. Having thus strengthened his position he quickly gathered a large army and marched to Durham. Here on February 5 the King of Scots was met, and without an encounter a treaty was made by which David restored Newcastle and retained Carlisle. David did not do homage to Stephen, but David's son Henry swore fealty for the Earldom of Huntingdon.

By March 22 the King was back again at Westminster, where he kept his Easter Court and called an important meeting of the Great Council of the realm. At the meetings of this body of the magnates and clergy the position of the Church was further considered. On the social side the Court was kept with the greatest pomp and splendour. The effect of so much magnificence was considerable. The nobles began to gather to the King's side.[1] The charters which were then granted bear large numbers of signatures, differing greatly in this respect from the charter given at Reading a few months before.

As yet, however, the strongest man on Maud's side had held aloof. At the time of this Easter Court Robert, Earl of Gloucester, was abroad, but probably early in April 1136 he was present at the Council which met at Oxford and had adjourned from London.[1]

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[1] The meeting was not, however, free from discord. A quarrel arose between Henry, David of Scotland's son, the Archbishop of Canterbury, and Ralph, Earl of Chester, touching the question of precedence and the fief of Carlisle.

By this time not only had Stephen secured the support of well-nigh the whole of England, but Normandy too had been gained. At first Maud had made an effort to seize the duchy, but the folly of her husband, Geoffrey, who allowed his soldiers to ravage the lands of those who had received the Empress as their lady, caused the Norman lords to rise against him. Maud and Geoffrey were driven from the duchy, and Theobald, Stephen's elder brother, would have been accepted as Duke had not news arrived that Stephen had been elected King of England. Theobald, thereupon, showing at once a wisdom and an altruism rare in those days, abandoned his claim and supported his brother, who now united the Kingdom of England to the Duchy of Normandy.

When Robert of Gloucester arrived in England we thus find Stephen acknowledged as King of England and Duke of Normandy. The King of Scots had been persuaded to abandon opposition, the Church had been won over, the baronage were flocking to Stephen's Court. On the other hand, Maud and her husband had been driven ignominiously from Normandy. The people in so far as they had spoken had supported the King. Future events make us suspect that Robert had come to stir up opposition, but circumstances counselled caution. He did homage and swore fealty to the King.

STEPHEN STRENGTHENS HIS POSITION

So far all appeared to be well. All important opposition seemed to be overcome. Yet there must have been grave danger apparent to Stephen, or we can hardly account for the so-called Second Charter which the Church now extracted from him, and which gained for the clergy all that Anselm had fought for in vain. Danegeld was also renounced for ever.

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[1] See Round, *Geoffrey de Mandeville*, pp. 22–24.

More important than all from the constitutional point of view, Stephen based his title to the throne partly on the Pope's confirmation of his election. Already the King had surrendered two great principles for which William the Conqueror, William Rufus, and Henry I had fought. The Church had been bought rather than gained, and the price was papal supremacy and ecclesiastical independence. It has been well said that the King was conditionally recognized by the Church. So secure did Stephen now feel that after subduing a rebellion which had broken out in the West, and after taking the castle of Bampton and the stronghold of Exeter, which had been held against him for some months by Baldwin de Redvers, he abandoned himself to the pleasures of the chase, putting in motion the hated forest laws, and in the following year left England and crossed over to Normandy.

Though Stephen had been successful in quelling the minor revolt in the West and had forced Hugh Bigod to surrender his castle of Norwich, which he had garrisoned on hearing a rumour of the King's death, he had in neither case shown anything but easy good nature in his dealings with his enemies. Hugh Bigod had proved his friend in the past and had acted believing him dead, so that punishment for an act of war might hardly appear to be called for, but Baldwin was a rebel. For a time Stephen would seem to have meditated harsh measures, but was won over to the side of leniency, less by the tears of Baldwin's wife than by the advice of his own baronial supporters, who urged pardon for one of their own class. Stephen yielded as Rufus had yielded at Rochester and as Henry had yielded at Bridgnorth, but in the circumstances the chroniclers who declared it unwise in the King to pardon so readily were proved by after events to be right. Perhaps they judged in the light of after events, and all can be wise when they know the result.

Another act of the King which was done in the November of this year (1136) cannot be so easily excused. We have seen what a strong bid Stephen had made for the support of the Church. Among other promises he had declared that the personal property of bishops should be disposed of by the Church. The promise was soon to be tested. William, Archbishop of Canterbury, died in November, and the royal officers promptly seized for the King the hoard of gold which he had stored up. Meanwhile Stephen was at once frightening and alienating the nobles by his policy of surrounding himself with mercenaries drawn from Brittany and Flanders, the latter under the able leadership of William of Ypres, who in the years to come was to prove his most faithful adherent.

In Normandy, however, despite the jealousy which the Norman barons felt for William of Ypres, Stephen was warmly welcomed. In the September of 1136 Geoffrey had made another attempt to gain the duchy, but had been wounded and had retired once again to Anjou. At the same time a considerable amount of internal strife had made the men of Normandy eager for the coming of their Duke, who, it was hoped, would suppress disorder. Shortly after Stephen's landing, however, in the May of 1137, Geoffrey once more invaded Normandy and marched on Caen. As a result of the valour of William of Ypres rather than that of the Normans the expedition came to nothing. In the following month Stephen prepared to attack Geoffrey, but the Normans hung back. A truce was arranged, Stephen apparently paying Geoffrey a considerable sum of money in order to obtain peace.

Meanwhile Robert of Gloucester had crossed to Normandy and was probably engaged in silently undermining the King's position. Even Theobald seems to have been stirred to rebellion, but was bought off. William of Ypres attempted to capture Robert, but was unsuccessful, the only result of his adventure being to make Robert more suspicious and more dangerous. The incident was terminated for the moment by Stephen's swearing not to attack the Earl.

In the very month when Geoffrey was marching on Caen, Stephen and Louis VI of France had met. Louis recognized Stephen as Duke of Normandy, and received the homage of Stephen's son, Eustace, for the lands of the duchy held of him.

Apart from the restlessness of the Norman barons and the disaffection created by Robert of Gloucester, Stephen's position on the Continent seemed in no way threatened. In England, however, the King's absence had resulted in the tearing up of the Peace of Durham. David collected his army and threatened the Border. He was met, however, by Thurstan, Archbishop of York, and a truce was patched up. Except for this threatened invasion and some disturbances in the South Wales marches directed mainly against the Flemings of Dyfed—a renewal of the much more serious disorders which had occurred in the previous year, and which culminated in a battle fought near Swansea (where the English and Flemish colonists lost heavily), in the murder of Richard de Clare, and in the ravaging of Ceredigion—the kingdom of England had remained peaceful throughout the King's absence ; but the Scots were again threatening, and toward the end of the year Stephen crossed over from Normandy in time to hold his Christmas Court at Westminster.

The King's Power Declines

The Court was never held. Christmas Day was to see the King laying siege to the royal castle of Bedford, now held against him by Miles of Beauchamp. Before it was taken Stephen had to hurry north to oppose the Scots. The first steps had been taken on the downward path, but as yet the descent was by no means rapid. The Scots were compelled to recross the Border, but already there were murmurings in the ranks of the King's noble followers. The barons showed that their support was half-hearted. In the south Bedford Castle had surrendered to the warlike Bishop of Winchester, but in the north Stephen had seen himself reduced to impotence by the action of his own supporters. The King retired south. So far Stephen had neither gained nor lost. By May of this year (1138), however, he was to realize that there was a worse canker than indifference at the root of the baronial tree. Treachery declared itself. In Normandy Robert of Gloucester had fanned the flames of disaffection, and William of Ypres was sent with the Count of Meulan to quieten the duchy. By June Stephen learnt that the Earl of Gloucester had renounced his allegiance. Already the south-west of England had risen in revolt, and David was once more marching into England, penetrating as far as Yorkshire. Geoffrey Talbot held Hereford Castle and defied the King; and although Stephen captured the fortress by the middle of June, Talbot escaped and the garrison was foolishly pardoned. Meanwhile Robert of Gloucester had come openly into the struggle. Acting probably in concert with him were many lesser men, including a brother of that Payne fitz John who had been one of the first to join Stephen. Both these men fortified their castles and defied the King.

For the time being the loyalists were masters of the situation. The Earl of Gloucester's strong castle of Bristol, to which Talbot had fled, was besieged by an army which the King had raised round London. The Queen, Matilda, attacked Dover, another of Gloucester's strongholds, by sea and land. Lesser castles were reduced. Meanwhile the rebels had organized themselves as marauders and had begun that system of terrorism which is the outstanding feature of the reign.

Both Dover and Bristol still held out when Stephen decided to divide his forces and march against Shrewsbury Castle, which was held for the rebel party by William fitz Alan. The attack was successful. The fortress was taken by storm, and the King, convinced at last that stern measures were called for, hanged part of the garrison. The effect was soon seen. Dover Castle was surrendered to the Queen.

Battle of the Standard

The move against Shrewsbury had probably been decided upon because of the state of affairs in the north. David was again threatening, and later in July crossed the Border. He was joined at once by one of the disaffected nobles, Eustace fitz John, and Northumberland and Durham were ravaged. Stephen was still occupied with Shrewsbury and the insurrection in the south. He had, however, one staunch supporter who had before opposed the Scots. Now in the face of a grave danger Archbishop Thurstan of York, old though he was, rose to the occasion, raised an army, preached a holy war, and planted the King's standard at Northallerton ready to meet the enemy. In the Archbishop's army were some of the greatest of the Norman nobles, including Aumale, Bruce, Percy, Roger de Mowbray, and Ilbert de Lacy. Balliol came up later with William Peverell and Robert de Ferrers. There, round a wagon carrying the banners of saints and a pyx holding its sacred contents, the aged prelate arrayed his forces, exhorting them to stand fast, conscious as they were of the righteousness of their cause and the strength of their arms. Even as he spoke the Scots advanced, answering the English "Amen!" with their war-cry of "Alban! Alban!" In the van came the fierce but unarmoured men of Lothian, who assailed the armoured ranks of the English with a rain of darts, which they followed up with an impetuous attack in which the Scotsmen's long spears sought the breastplates of the English men-at-arms. The attack, carried out though it was with great energy and bravery, was a hopeless failure. The English knights, protected by their coats-of-mail, withstood the shock of the encounter and held their ground. Meanwhile the English archers had made dreadful havoc in the advancing host. At last, after the leader of the men of Lothian had been killed by an arrow, despair filled the Scotsmen and they fled. The retreat was immediately communicated to the main body of the Scots army. Even King David's body-guards lost courage and deserted their lord, until at last David stood almost alone. Finally he too was compelled to mount horse and gallop away. Meanwhile, however, his son, Henry, collected a small force of cavalry and made a fierce attack on the English. Setting spurs to their horses, the Scots charged the close column of the mail-clad knights. The shock of the impact shattered their lances, but it did not break the English line. Driven back, the Scottish knights were compelled to follow hastily in the footsteps of the beaten army, which was now fleeing as impetuously as it had once attacked. The result of the battle was a complete victory for the English, who lost very few men and slew some 11,000 Scots on the field of battle alone, besides many more who were overtaken during the flight. Much booty, also, fell into the hands of the English. For a time the war dragged on, but early in 1139 Stephen was able to advance into Scotland and compel David to make peace, a peace the keeping of which Stephen sought to secure by taking Henry of Scotland with him to England as a hostage.

The Scotch danger over Stephen could devote his attention more closely to the condition of affairs in the West, where the rebellion had by no means been crushed. That he considered his position one of grave danger we cannot believe, for it was toward the end of 1138 that he thwarted the desire of his powerful brother, Henry, Bishop of Winchester, to become Archbishop of Canterbury. Instead of Henry, however, Theobald gained the Primacy, largely in consequence of the King's attitude. The result was to produce in Henry a certain coldness toward the King's cause.

MAUD LANDS IN ENGLAND

Even though the loyalty of the Bishop of Winchester was thus weakened, the opening of 1139 saw Stephen still firmly seated on the throne. Henry of Scotland now married into the noble English family of Surrey and espoused Stephen's cause, being present at the siege of Ludlow, where he was saved from capture by the King himself. Peace with Scotland had been brought about partly by the exertions of the papal legate Alberic, Bishop of Ostia, and partly by the persuasions of the Queen Matilda. The split with Henry of Winchester, however, was to have momentous results. From the commencement of the reign the support of the Church had been of the first importance to Stephen. Within the Church many of the leading men had been raised from nothing by Henry I and were pledged to support Maud. Such persons had been kept loyal partly by the firmness of Henry of Winchester, partly by the great concessions which Stephen had made to the Church, and partly by the fact that as yet Maud had not appeared in England to lead personally her supporters. Now all these checks were removed. The Bishop of Winchester had been aggrieved. The election of the Archbishop had not been resigned by the King to the Church in the manner contemplated by his charters, and Maud was to land at Arundel with a handful of followers in the last days of September in this year 1139.

Before the landing of the Empress, however, the Church had been thoroughly alienated. After Ludlow had been taken the King had moved to Oxford. Already, in January 1139, the legate Alberic had returned to Rome, accompanied by the Archbishop and four bishops. To propitiate the Bishop of Winchester he had been created legate, but there appears to have been much grave disorder in the kingdom, of what nature we can only guess. It is probable that the powerful clerical family headed by Roger, Bishop of Salisbury, and including his son Roger, the Chancellor, and his nephews Alexander, Bishop of Lincoln, and Nigel, Bishop of Ely, were already meditating rebellion on behalf of the daughter of their benefactor, Henry I. At any rate Stephen appears to have thought it desirable to seize their persons. It is noteworthy that he seems to have felt himself strong enough to risk such a drastic action against three bishops and the Chancellor. Taking advantage of a brawl between the servants of Bishop Nigel and those of the Earl of Richmond, the Bishop was called upon to answer before the King. The summons was disobeyed. Nigel fled to his castle. The King replied by seizing Bishops Roger and Alexander, whom he kept without food until they surrendered their castles to the royal officers. At the same time Roger the Chancellor was banished the realm, after William of Ypres had forced the surrender of Devizes by the threat to hang Roger in sight of the city walls. The capture of Devizes had yielded up to the King Bishop Nigel, who had fled there. The *coup* was complete. Its effects were far-reaching. The support of the Church was lost to Stephen, the disorder of the year before, which had never been quite suppressed, broke out afresh, and the Empress Maud, seizing a favourable opportunity, set sail, crossed to England, landed at Arundel, and proceeded to prosecute in person her claim to the Crown. In the meantime Stephen had dashed off to the West to check the barbarities which William de Mohun was perpetrating from his castle of Dunster, on the shore of the Bristol Channel. At the same time Bristol itself was still being held against the King. While the King left Henry de Tracy to watch Dunster and hold in check another rebel, William fitz Odo, Baldwin de Redvers, who had been in revolt in the first year of this reign, as we have seen, landed at Wareham and was received into Corfe Castle, one of the strongest places in England, which he proceeded immediately to put into a state of defence. As soon as he heard of this new move Stephen marched to attack Corfe. It was while he was so engaged that he learnt of Maud's intended landing. The King at once acted with energy and prudence. All ports were commanded to be watched by day and night, the siege of Corfe was raised, and the royal forces collected in order the more easily to overwhelm the Empress should she effect a landing.

The steps taken by Stephen proved, probably as the result of treachery, to be insufficient. The Empress and her foremost and most loyal supporter, Robert, Earl of Gloucester, landed, as we have seen, at Arundel. Arundel Castle threw open its gates and received Maud, while the Earl, with scarcely a score of followers, marched across England by devious ways and by-paths to Bristol.

Meanwhile Stephen was hurrying by forced marches to Arundel, having called upon Henry of Winchester to join him. Arundel was reached while Maud was still in the castle, but the Earl of Gloucester, with his small band, made his way past the forces of Henry. Some of the old chroniclers hint that Henry connived at his escape. However this may be, Maud was trapped. It was now that Stephen showed that terrible weakness born of chivalry which permitted him to allow the Empress safe-conduct to join Robert of Gloucester at Bristol. Such folly is hardly explainable. The anonymous author of *Gesta Stephani* suggests that Stephen permitted the Empress's escape acting on the advice of Henry of Winchester, who suggested that, Gloucester having escaped, rebellion in the West was certain, and, if Maud remained in the East, rebellion there was probable, and that it would be better to send Maud to the Earl so that the rebellion could be limited to one district, against which the King could then direct the whole of his energies. It never seems to have occurred to either Stephen or Henry to eliminate the Empress.

With Robert of Gloucester and the Empress both at Bristol the interest shifts once again to the West. Bristol became the rallying-place for all the disaffected nobles. Many a man who had hitherto paid a faithless and hollow submission to the King now hastened to pledge himself to support the Empress. Brian fitz Count and Miles of Gloucester were among the first to show themselves openly in revolt. Isolated friends of the King were attacked and their lands laid waste. All over England the fire of revolt spread and acts of terrorism were everywhere being committed.

Stephen with his usual energy collected a considerable army. His first vigorous steps, however, were reduced to nought by vacillating counsel. First Wallingford, where Brian fitz Count was holding the castle against him, was the objective. A close investment was begun, but abandoned in favour of the slower policy of building Malvoisins against it. Leaving a garrison in these counter-forts Stephen hastened to attack Trowbridge, which Humphrey de Bohun was holding for Miles of Gloucester. On the way Cerney Castle was captured and Robert fitz Hubert was taken in Malmesbury, a town which after being fortified against Stephen had been compelled to yield.

While the King was thus hastening to Trowbridge and successfully overcoming resistance on the way, Miles of Gloucester was racing on horseback to Wallingford attended by a picked troop of cavalry. Wallingford was reached at night and immediately a successful attack was made upon the hastily built counter-forts. The King's garrison was captured and led back by Miles in triumph to Gloucester.

Gloucester now became a centre of rebellion equal in importance to Bristol, for in October Maud made for the city. From all sides men assembled to support Miles. The surrounding villages and towns were pillaged, the peasants butchered and robbed. Hereford was captured. Meanwhile Stephen had found it impossible to make headway at Trowbridge despite the use of many engines of attack. Fearing a rear attack by the Earl of Gloucester, and urged to caution by his supporters, the King at last determined to retire on London, leaving a garrison at Devizes to form a nucleus for the royal party in the West.

It was now, while anarchy was spreading, while the King was leaving the West to its fate, that the great servant of Henry I, one of that King's most able administrators, Roger, Bishop of Salisbury, died on December 11, 1139. His death, largely caused as it was by the rigorous treatment meted out to him by Stephen earlier in the year, caused a still further split between King and Church. Bishop Nigel of Ely became, in the words of the writer of *Gesta Stephani*, "a man of blood." Hiring bands of villains, he began in the East, at Ely, those depredations against the neighbouring folk which were causing such misery in the West around Bristol and Gloucester and Hereford. The King was more successful in his attack on Ely, which was instantly undertaken. Guided by a monk, his men were able to thread their way through the marshes and gain a footing on the island. Once there the Bishop's followers were soon overwhelmed, Nigel himself escaping with difficulty, to fly in haste to Gloucester.

For a time the capture of Ely checked the spread of the rebellion, but soon the King was busy attempting to repress fresh outbreaks. Cornwall was now being terrorized by William fitz Richard. Thither Stephen marched in haste, and was successful in his immediate objective; but while he was attacking castles in the peninsula Robert of Gloucester assembled a larger force and marched against him, hoping to hem him in and prevent his escape. The King, however, was forewarned and greatly strengthened his army, with the result that Robert decided to retire, falling back once more upon Bristol.

The next trouble which arose occurred in Passion Week, when the ruffianly Robert fitz Hubert by a night attack, in which leather scaling ladders were used, succeeded in capturing Devizes. For a time Robert of Gloucester deemed fitz Hubert to be acting on behalf of the Empress. He was soon enlightened. Devizes was held by fitz Hubert for his own benefit, and neither King nor Empress could get it from him.[1] Civil war was giving place to mere open lawlessness.

By now we see the west and south-west of England in the hands of the Empress's party, the royal treasury empty, the kingdom a prey to intestine wars and predatory bands. In the words of Henry of Huntingdon, "slaughter, fire, and rapine spread ruin through the land." Henry of Winchester was still apparently loyal and made some efforts to bring about peace, but by the end of the year the King was reduced to buying supporters. Hugh Bigod, who had been causing trouble in Norfolk, was granted an earldom. Even Geoffrey de Mandeville, Constable of the Tower, had been given the Earldom of Essex.

BATTLE OF LINCOLN

Such was the position at the beginning of 1141. The King still had a number of powerful followers, including the Count of Meulan, the Count of Aumale, Alan Count of Brittany, the Earl of Northampton, and William of Ypres, as well as the newly created Earls of Essex, Norfolk, Yorkshire, and Derbyshire. Against him were arrayed nobles equally powerful and more devoted to their cause. Until now the rival strengths had hardly been tested. On February 2, 1141, however, the opposing forces met in a decisive battle fought outside the gates of Lincoln, a battle which resulted in the defeat of the royal army and the capture of the King himself. Lincoln had been seized some time toward the end of 1140 by Ralph, Earl of Chester. Stephen had hastened to lay siege to it, while the Earl of Gloucester, together with many other nobles, strained every effort to raise the siege. Ralph himself, who had escaped Stephen's army, had in the meantime hurried to Chester, raised an army composed partly of Welsh mercenaries, and by forced marches had returned in time to join with Robert of Gloucester, to whose cause in support of the Empress he now for the first time definitely allied himself. The opposing armies met at last on the northern side of the city. Stephen, aided by Meulan, Aumale, Brittany, Norfolk, de Warenne, Northampton, and William of Ypres, decided on a pitched battle and arrayed his troops in three lines, of which the King led the rear line and William of Ypres and the Count of Aumale the first and second lines. On the rebels' side the composite army of English and Welsh was also posted in three lines, the Welsh holding the wings, the Earl of Chester commanding the van, and Robert of Gloucester keeping the rear. Behind the rebel army was an extensive marsh precluding retreat. The die had been cast and no alternative remained save victory or utter defeat. Strengthened by their very peril, conscious of the power of their own force, which included much cavalry, an arm of which the King had practically none, the rebels prepared to attack. On the King's side an ill omen had appeared, for while the King was attending Mass the blessed taper had broken and the pyx had fallen. Confidence, however, still existed on the royal side when the rebels were seen advancing, heralded by the blare of trumpets. At the first onset, nevertheless, Stephen's army was scattered, and although William of Ypres, leading the mercenaries, was able for a time to check the Welsh and rout them, Chester brought up reinforcements and turned the tables on the Fleming. Stephen was surrounded, and the battle raged with the greatest fury round the King, who fought with the utmost bravery and terrible effect. Another cavalry charge, however, brought the rebel army still nearer to the King. The Earl of Chester, leading his men-at-arms, then fought his way to where Stephen was wielding his battle-axe. At last the haft of the battle-axe snapped, and the King drew his sword. For some time longer the fight raged, but finally, his sword shattered by repeated blows, the King stood unarmed, at bay. Then William de Kahains, "a brave soldier," rushed on Stephen and, seizing him by his helmet, shouted: "Behold! behold! I have taken the King."

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[1] He was soon captured, however, by another lawless baron, John fitz Gilbert, who handed him over to Robert of Gloucester, who hanged him in Devizes market-place.

MAUD ELECTED QUEEN OF ENGLAND

With the capture of Stephen the struggle was over, for the time being. The King was carried to Bristol and there kept in close custody. Hardly had Stephen been received at Bristol before Maud set out from Gloucester,[1] travelling as a queen to Winchester by way of Cirencester. At the latter place negotiations were completed with the Bishop of Winchester, and "on a wet and gloomy Sunday in the first week of March" the Empress and the legate, Henry of Winchester, met at Wherwell, near by the cathedral city. In the words of Mr J. H. Round, "The compact which followed was strictly on the lines of that by means of which Stephen had secured the throne. The Empress, on her part, swore that if the legate would accept her as 'duenna' he should henceforth have his way in all ecclesiastical matters."

The next day (March 3) Winchester opened its gates to Maud. In the cathedral the legate and the Bishop of St David's formally received her as Queen. Rather more than a month later she was in that same place elected Queen of England.

In the meantime Maud, after her reception at Winchester, met the Archbishop of Canterbury at Wilton. We next have the strange spectacle of Theobald, the Primate, journeying to Bristol to obtain Stephen's permission to render homage to Stephen's great rival. While he was travelling westward Maud went north to Oxford, where the Easter Court was kept. As yet, of course, Maud was ' Lady of England ' rather than ' Queen of England,' but she was already beginning to act in an imperious manner that would have offended many had she been really Queen. She even saw fit to appoint Robert d'Oilli to the Bishopric of London, and to the commonalty showed what Henry of Huntingdon termed " insufferable pride."

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[1] See Round, *Geoffrey de Mandeville*, p. 55.

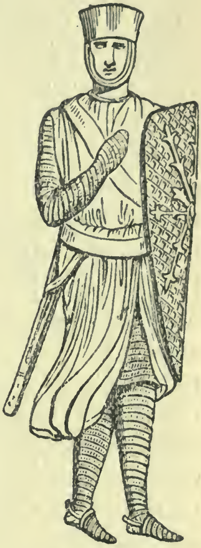
From Oxford Maud journeyed to Winchester for the election of which we have already spoken. Thence, after obtaining the keys of the castle from William de Pont de l'Arche, the Constable, and of the Treasury, which was almost empty save for the regalia, which included the crown, and having thus journeyed half the way to the throne, she now turned east and made for London, there to be formally crowned Queen of England at Westminster.

The ceremony never took place. The men of Kent and of London were still faithful to Stephen. William of Ypres and the Queen Matilda were busy gathering the royal forces. Many of the magnates hung back from giving Maud active support. So antagonistic was the attitude of the Londoners that Maud found it necessary to break her journey to Westminster at Reading while overtures were made and bribes offered to Geoffrey de Mandeville, Constable of the Tower. Meanwhile riots broke out in the city in favour of Stephen. By June, however, the citizens had been persuaded to receive the Lady of England, and she was met at Knightsbridge by a loyal deputation.

Her following, however, was very small. Few names of note, apart from that of the legate, appear in the charter which she now gave to Geoffrey de Mandeville confirming him in his Earldom of Essex, and before a week had elapsed, on the appearance at Southwark of the forces which Queen Matilda had raised by the exercise of tireless industry and every expedient, including the mortgaging of part of her private estates, the Londoners rose against this arrogant Lady of England and caused her to flee, attended by hardly a single follower, to Oxford, whence she made her way once more to Gloucester.

Meanwhile, in Mr Round's words, Matilda was "bribing left and right." Geoffrey de Mandeville was brought over to the royal side and London thus secured. The legate was persuaded to devote himself to re-establishing his brother Stephen's power. The mercenary army was increased in numbers.

On the other side Maud had not been inactive. The two royal ladies were now indeed truly at grips. While the Queen was winning over the legate and the Constable of the Tower, Maud had rallied her powerful followers and had persuaded the King of Scots to aid once more in establishing her claim to the throne. The loss of Henry of Winchester had been, however, a great blow. Politically he was the most powerful man in the realm. Without him the support of the Church could hardly be gained. But if he could not be won he had to be destroyed. The Empress and Robert of Gloucester, accompanied by David of Scotland, decided to march on Winchester.



GEOFFREY DE MANDEVILLE

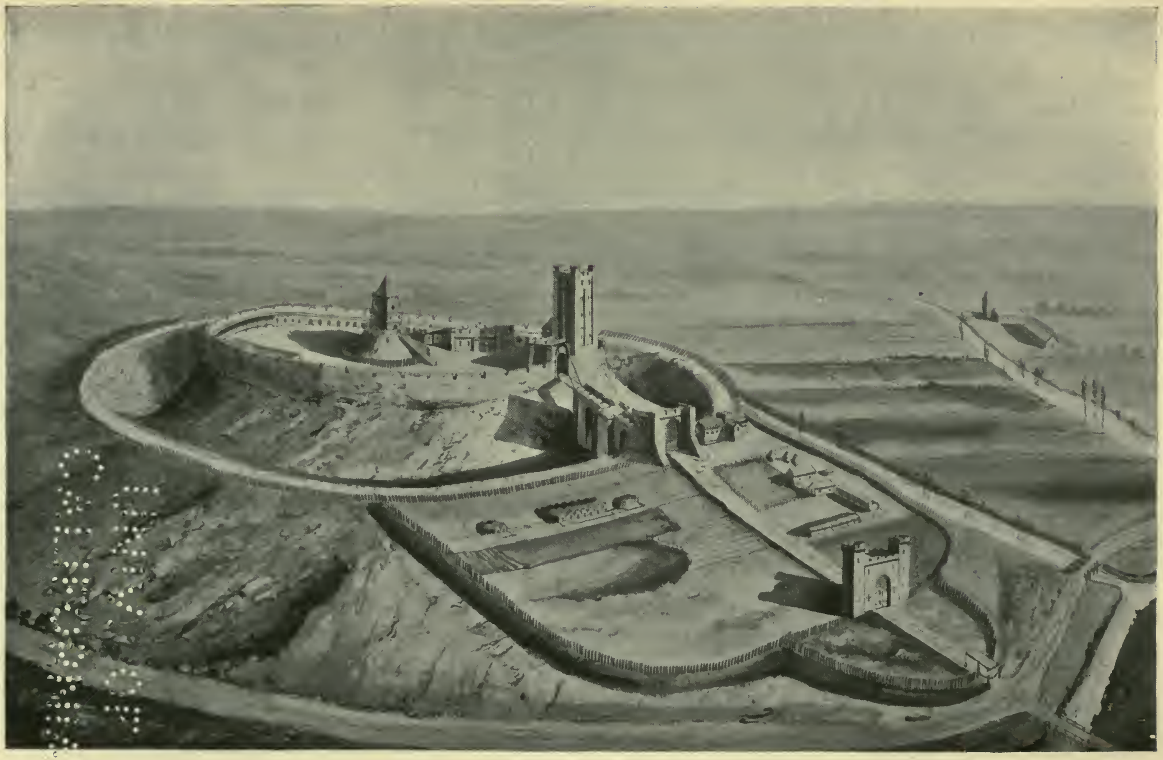
THE SIEGE OF WINCHESTER

By July 31 Winchester was besieged by the forces of the Empress. For a time the city gates were closed against the attackers, but later they were opened, the citizens possibly favouring the 'Lady.' The struggle was now narrowed down to a siege of the Bishop's palace and castle. In the meantime the legate had appealed for help. Queen Matilda had increased her efforts and a thousand Londoners had rallied to her side. William of Ypres and, according to Henry of

Huntingdon, " almost all the barons of England " were preparing to raise the siege. While relief was thus hastening to the cathedral city Winchester had been half destroyed by the rain of stones and Greek fire which the defenders of the palace had flung against the besieging army. The legate still held out, and now the Queen's army was approaching and had soon almost encircled the besiegers. To cut off Maud from the West Andover had been taken, and south of Harewood Forest a fierce fight raged for the passage of the Test. It was around the nunnery of Wherwell that the most exciting scenes of the campaign were enacted. Maud had sent a small force to hold the passage of the river and thus protect her communications. Against this force William of Ypres now flung his troops. The nunnery was fired, and amid the roar of the flames and the shrieks of the nuns a bloody battle was fought out in the church, to which John the Marshal, leading the Empress's men, had retired. His followers would early have surrendered, but we read in the *Histoire de Guillaume le Maréchal* how the undaunted man threatened to kill with his own hands any one who attempted to submit. At last, however, the defending force was overwhelmed and the survivors captured, the Test was crossed, and the circle round the Empress drawn closer.

FLIGHT OF MAUD

The position was now one of the greatest danger for Maud. Her forces were outnumbered, her supplies were cut off. If she was not to be surrounded and compelled to surrender instant retreat was necessary. Even this was difficult, but thanks to the bravery, generalship, and self-sacrifice of Robert of Gloucester it was accomplished. While the Earl seized and held the passage of the Test at Stockbridge, some four miles south-west of Wherwell, Maud made good her retreat, losing, however, a considerable part of her army and having eventually to fly with all speed to avoid capture. The Earl of Gloucester, on the other hand, was himself taken. As for Maud, now fallen utterly from her former high fortune,



UNIV. OF CALIFORNIA

PLATE XLIII. BRAMBER CASTLE IN THE NORMAN PERIOD

we must leave her as she arrives in a litter at Gloucester in the last extremity of fatigue, having previously galloped on horseback without rest for more than forty miles through Ludgershall, Devizes, and Bristol.

Stephen exchanged for Gloucester

The capture of Gloucester was instantly seized upon as a means of forcing the King's enlargement. By November 1, 1141, Stephen was free. A few days later Robert of Gloucester arrived at Bristol. The short quasi-reign of the Lady of England was over; but the rebellion was by no means completely crushed.

The imprisonment of the King, the overbearing demeanour of the Empress had, however, resulted in an increase in Stephen's popularity. He was received with transports of joy by the Londoners, and was recrowned at Canterbury on Christmas Day, 1141, the legate and a considerable number of nobles being present at the ceremony. It would seem that already Stephen was prepared to stamp out the rebellion ruthlessly, and with every probability of complete success. For a time, however, illness hindered the King. There was need of vigorous action. The state of England at this period was more disordered and more terrible than ever before. Though the Exchequer still continued to levy taxes with its accustomed regularity the people were dying of famine and distress. Many sought refuge overseas. Houses were left unoccupied, their tenants flying to the churches for sanctuary from the abominations practised by the swarms of cut-throats who were creating a reign of terror throughout the land. Justice was unknown. The King, at one time captive, at another ill, could not for the moment keep even the semblance of order. The clerics, who might have exercised a powerful influence on the side of law and humanity, were divided, some favouring Stephen, some Maud, and all more anxious for the advancement of their privileges than for the good of the people, all quailing before a condition of anarchy which had now become general.

The Siege of Oxford

By the summer of 1142 Stephen had recovered from his sickness and was able to push on energetically with his plans for the final overthrow of his rival. Maud was at this time at Oxford. Robert of Gloucester was in Normandy endeavouring to persuade Geoffrey to participate actively in his wife's cause. Before his departure from England he had made arrangements, deemed by him sufficient, for the safety of the Empress: the rebel barons had sworn to protect her; Oxford Castle had been put in a state of defence.

Oxford itself, however, appears to have been but slightly guarded, and Stephen, on the summer's day when he led his army along the southern bank of the Isis, was able to scatter the burgher band that sought to stay his advance and pursue the fleeing remnant into the town. The looting of Oxford Town which followed was, however, but a prelude to the sterner task of overwhelming the defences of the castle. This the King now set himself to accomplish. Despite the use of every offensive weapon then known, direct attack proved abortive, and Stephen was compelled to institute a siege. The summer departed, the leaves of autumn fell, the winter snows whitened the surrounding earth, and still neither catapult nor battering-ram had succeeded in breaking down the castle walls, nor had starvation destroyed the spirit of the defenders.

Already on December 1 Gloucester had returned from Normandy; already the barons had gathered at Wallingford; already steps had been taken preparatory to an attempt to raise the siege. These inchoate plans, however, were not ripe when famine at last compelled surrender. But before the castle gates were thrown open to the King, Maud, dressed in a gown of white, attended by a few close adherents, escaped by a rope hung down from the battlements, fled on foot to Abingdon, piercing the encircling lines by great good fortune, and from Abingdon took horse to Wallingford.

LATER YEARS OF STEPHEN'S REIGN

The flight of Maud from Oxford introduces us to a period when Stephen's reign becomes more ordered. The struggle between the rival parties still continued, but in a desultory manner. On the Continent it was otherwise. The activities of Geoffrey, which had been stirred by Gloucester's mission, resulted in the loss, for a season, of the Duchy of Normandy. In England, however, Stephen's power waxed rather than waned. In the summer of 1144 one of his strongest opponents, Geoffrey de Mandeville, who had recently sold himself once again to the Empress's party, was destroyed, being slain by some one whom Wendover refers to as "a low foot-soldier." Two years later the Earl of Chester joined the royalists, after having been for years a thorn in the side of Stephen. During this time (1242–46) there had, of course, been numerous affrays, sieges, skirmishes, and minor engagements between the King and the rebels. The country was by no means tranquil, lawlessness was still rife, but the King was gradually creating a semblance of ordered government when a new danger confronted him.[1]

NORMANDY

Geoffrey of Anjou had been acclaimed Duke of Normandy by the citizens of Rouen in 1143. Six years later he granted the duchy to his young son, Henry, contrary to the prohibition of Louis of France, who was Geoffrey's overlord. As a result, in the following year Louis, supported by Eustace, the heir to the English throne, assembled an army for the overthrow of the new Duke of Normandy and his father, the Count of Anjou. Eventually terms were arranged whereby Henry swore fealty to Louis for his duchy, and the French King for his part retired peaceably to the Isle of France. Later in the same year (1150) Geoffrey died, and Henry succeeded him as Count of Anjou. Shortly afterward his marriage with Eleanor of Aquitaine, the divorced queen of Louis, was solemnized, whereby the quarrel with France was renewed and the territories of Henry were increased by the addition of the Duchy of Aquitaine and the county of Poitou.

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[1] Maud left England in 1148, but probably returned to assist her son Henry.

Thus in little more than a year Henry, the rival of Eustace for the crown of England, the child of Maud, Lady of England, had risen from the position held by the eldest son of the Count of Anjou to be Duke of Normandy and Aquitaine and Count of Anjou and Poitou. Already his territories were wide, his power coequal with that of Stephen. For a time he was unable to press his claim to the throne of England in consequence of the rebellions and alliances which Louis contrived against him. Hardly had a truce been arranged between King and Duke when Henry began to consider plans for seizing the throne of his grandfather.

His position as claimant was improved to some extent by the death in the next year (1152) of Matilda, Stephen's queen. Unless the King should marry again only one probable claimant [1] stood between Henry and the crown. This barrier was removed in the year following, when Eustace, while engaged in a marauding expedition, was slain. He was buried in the Abbey of Faversham, built by Stephen, near the place where the Queen lay, and where the King himself was soon to find rest.

Before the death of Eustace, however, Henry had landed in England in order to raise the siege of Wallingford, the last stronghold of the rebels, which Stephen was now threatening. Henry brought with him the important but not overwhelming force of 3000 foot-soldiers and some seven-score men-at-arms. The resulting contest between King and Duke was typical of the age. The barons on both sides fought without enthusiasm for their overlords or him whom they wished to have as overlord. Changes of side occurred, and the Earl of Chester once again passed over to the rebels; castles were attacked and often surrendered. It was while the struggle was continuing in a somewhat desultory manner, though in a way which pointed to the ultimate triumph of Henry, that Eustace was slain, or, as some of the old chroniclers would have us believe, was smitten with a fatal madness by St Edmund.

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[1] William, Stephen's second son, seems never to have been regarded as a probable claimant to the throne, and had married the daughter of an ordinary nobleman.

THE TREATY OF WALLINGFORD

The Archbishop of Canterbury, who had been banished in 1148 for refusing to obey the King's prohibition to attend the papal council held at Rheims in that year, had since returned and been reconciled with Stephen. He appears, however, to have favoured the claim of Henry and he had been prominent in the movement which resulted in the Duke's taking an active part in the invasion of England, and in this Theobald had been aided by his young secretary, Thomas Becket, who occupied an important position in the Primate's chancery. Theobald now took steps, in conjunction with the Bishop of Winchester, to bring the opposing parties to terms. Peace was urged, and on November 6, 1153, Stephen and Henry, with the Great Council of the realm, met at Winchester, and a comprehensive treaty was drawn up, probably along the lines of the truce which had been arranged earlier in the year at Wallingford. The treaty, which is generally referred to as the Treaty of Wallingford, practically resulted in the adoption of Henry by Stephen as his heir and successor to the kingdom of England. On the other hand, Stephen was acknowledged King, and it was agreed that Stephen's son, William, should retain all the estates which he could claim by private right through his father or his wife.

The Treaty of Wallingford thus solemnly ratified in the national council established Stephen on the throne so long as he should live, gave to Henry the succession, and placed Stephen's son in the position he would have occupied had his father never seized the crown. It did more. It struck at the lawlessness of the barons. The lordlings who had terrorized the country-side with their adulterine castles, the mercenaries who had supplemented their pay with plunder from the people, had to realize that the long years in which right had been exchanged for might had come to an end. The adulterine castles it was agreed should be destroyed; property which had been wrongfully seized should be returned to the true owners; the mercenaries should depart to their homes; law should again occupy its high seat in government.

Hardly had the Council dissolved when Henry prepared energetically to attack those evils. Hundreds of castles were demolished; the mercenaries were disbanded; law was established as an effective force once more. A plot to murder him, however, appears to have been hatched by Stephen's followers, and although the King remained his seeming friend, the Duke deemed it wise to retire to Normandy in 1154. It was not for long. In the autumn of that year Stephen, the charming and chivalrous King, whose reign had been one long struggle against all that was most evil in the feudal system, whose reign was looked upon by his people as a time when the angels slept and when devils usurped the throne of justice, Stephen was dead and lay at rest at Faversham.

Though this period had been one of great unhappiness for the people the gloom was not unlit by any ray of light. Though adventurers and mercenaries had harried the country-side the great revival of learning had made some progress. We must remember that it was in this reign that Vacarius taught to eager students at Oxford, we must remember that it was now that scores of stately abbeys were built. The Church was now, indeed, stronger than she had ever been. Monastic orders flourished. The clergy, emancipated for a time from the restraints imposed by a powerful monarch or nobility, were attaining an almost unassailable position. Literature was by no means dead. A younger generation of statesmen was arising which was to make of the succeeding reign one of the great constitutional epochs of our history.

CHAPTER XXI

HENRY II

1154–1189

THE news of Stephen's death reached Henry when in Normandy. For more than a month contrary winds detained the King at Barfleur, and it was not until December 7 that he landed in England, to be joyfully received by both laity and clergy. Twelve days later he was crowned at Westminster by Archbishop Theobald before the assembled nobles of England and Normandy.

The youthful Prince—he was but twenty-one at the time of his accession—was in large measure the child of his age. Even as his grandfather, Henry I, had learnt to love law and strong personal rule from the evils which had befallen Normandy through the weakness of its Duke and the lawlessness of nobles such as Robert de Bellême, so the second Henry, reared in a feudal atmosphere, had seen in the state of England during Stephen's reign the weakness of that system. As a result of a similarity of view and of aim, we find Henry II continuing and advancing the legal and constitutional reforms which had been so abruptly stopped by the anarchy of the preceding reign.

Henry, indeed, brought qualities to the task not dissimilar from, and in some directions superior to, those possessed by his ancestor. Though Henry I's cold statesmanship was absent from his grandson's councils, Henry II possessed more vitality, energy, and strong-wilfulness. He was, indeed, the very incarnation of practical endeavour. His mind, lacking the refinement of Beauclerc's, possessed sufficient learning to appreciate the learned. Though too unpolished to recognize the wide meaning of the movements taking place in monastery and school and university, he was practical enough to see a danger in a clergy free from the shackles of law, self-contained and self-governed. His vigorous intellect, spurred on by a consuming energy to work harder and for longer hours than any of his ministers could endure, was directed throughout his reign toward holding together his wide domains in an impossible unity. Too obtuse to see that conflicting factions, aims, interests, and races must break apart in time, he was too strong and too virile to permit the breach to occur in his lifetime. We see in him, indeed, a man standing alone and successfully against the strong forces of nationality; we see him in this tragic though grand position, by the strength of his own personal rule, holding together peoples who hated one another; we see him battling against disruption in the grades of society, against faction disputes between noble and noble, and against the increasing influence of the Church, using always as his weapons practical expediency and the forms of law. We find as a result that with but few exceptions the years of his reign pass by peacefully for England, that the Church is being slowly brought into line with the principles of monarchical government, that the barons are held in check and the common folk look up to their King as to a true ruler; but we also find those great fundamental forces against which no man can battle working silently the while, so that when at last the King lay dying his last breath breathed out the spirit of a man who had fought and lost, who had lived to see that what he sought could not be gained. In the next reign what in Henry's dying moments may have been clear to him became clear to all. The conflicting interests of England, of Normandy, of Anjou, Maine, Touraine, and of the seven provinces of the south[1] resulted in strife which, in the period of England's weakness under John, caused the loss to the kingdom of most of the Continental possessions which Henry had gained by inheritance or marriage.

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[1] Poitou, Saintonge, Angoumois, La Marche, Limousin, Périgord, and Gascony.

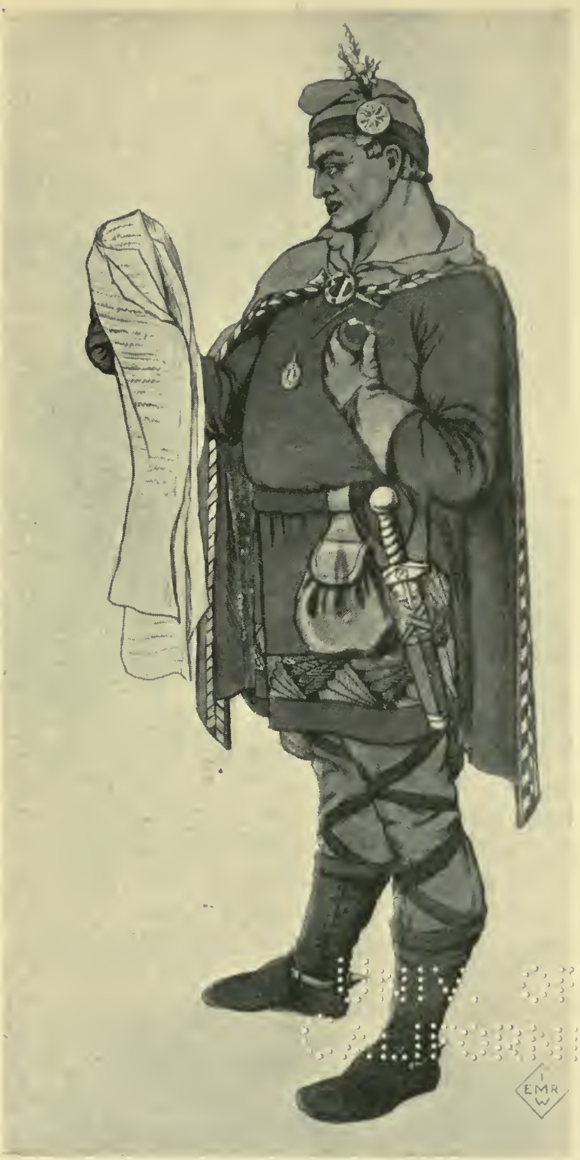

PLATE XLIV. HENRY II

At present, however, Henry was in the heyday of his youthful vigour, the King of England was a great and powerful Prince. From Cheviots to Pyrenees men called him lord. The signs of future cleavage were indiscernible. The chroniclers penning their pages in monastic cells felt themselves living in glorious times when to be an Englishman was to be the subject of a mighty monarchy. At the King's chancellery at Westminster clerks were settling letters and writs which could affect the destinies of Europe, which could overawe a baron of the King however distant, however powerful.

PERSONAL CHARACTERISTICS OF HENRY

The practical vigour which we have noted as the outstanding quality of Henry's mind was manifest from his bodily appearance. Leonine in feature, strong of build, with piercing grey eyes, ruddy complexion and reddish hair, he seemed the embodiment of strength. His hairy hands and strong bowed legs added to the impression of coarse vigour. Ill dressed, hastening from business to business, he had little of the outward graces common among courtiers. Fiery in temper, immoral, careless of Church forms, blasphemous and irreligious, he yet possessed much charm of manner, was affable and not condescending to his associates, ready with a gay word for those whom he met though they might be the humblest of his subjects. Intolerant of what he deemed unimportant trivialities of doctrine, yet insistent on the forms of law and on the minute observance of rules which he had laid down for the governance of his subjects, he was the very embodiment of utilitarianism as opposed to idealism.

ATTACK ON WALES

Already, as we have seen, Henry had taken steps to put down the evils pointed at in the Treaty of Wallingford. Once on the throne little further trouble was encountered with the English nobles. Occasional acts of crime, such as the poisoning of Ralph, Earl of Chester, by William Peverell, were immediately punished. Even the powerful Henry of Winchester, who had aided the King's mother, the Empress Maud, had three of his castles razed for daring to leave the kingdom without the King's licence. Two nobles of the Welsh march, Roger, Earl of Hereford, and Hugh Mortimer of Wigmore, who attempted to raise a rebellion soon recognized that Henry was no Stephen and early made their peace with the King, though Hugh did not surrender until his castle of Bridgnorth had been captured.

Two years later, in 1157, Henry took steps to gain a footing in both Wales and Scotland. For the conquest of Cymru he made elaborate preparations. A special levy was raised, arrangements were made whereby a long term of service was assured, a fleet was collected.

At that time Owain Gwynedd was the leading Welsh chieftain, and some years before, in 1153, he had been at feud with his brother, Cadwalader, who had married into the Norman family of Clare. Cadwalader was banished and retired to Henry's Court, where he was received. He now joined his Welsh supporters to the powerful forces raised by Henry.

The first blow struck by the King was in the nature of a *coup de main*, for Henry, leaving his army to advance on Rhuddlan by the northern coast route, plunged with only a few lightly armed troops into the forest of Cennadlog with the intention of taking Owain completely by surprise.

The plan failed, and failed disastrously. Owain's sons, David and Conan, ambushed the royal forces. A furious fight took place in the "trackless wood." The Constable of Chester and Robert de Courci were slain. Henry himself would have been slain but for the bravery of Roger of Hereford. Panic seized the royal standard-bearer, Henry of Essex, Constable of England, who fled. Only with difficulty did the King succeed in extricating his scattered forces and in making good his retirement.

Meanwhile Owain, uncertain of the issue of the fight, had withdrawn his forces to Bryn-y-pin and contented himself with harassing Henry's forces with guerrilla bands. Almost at the same time a landing of marines in Anglesey resulted in a battle in which the English lost many men and gained little advantage. So ill was the campaign advancing that Henry offered peace upon terms which Owain was wise enough to accept. Hostages were given by the Welsh chieftain as surety for his good behaviour, and Cadwalader was restored to his former estate.

THE SCOTS

Some time before, in the summer of this year (1157), Henry had met Malcolm IV of Scotland and had received from him the territories which Malcolm's grandfather, David, had wrested from the English. Now once more Northumbria became English, Malcolm receiving in return the Earldom of Huntingdon, which his ancestor had once possessed. This same year also saw the delivery up to the King of several castles which certain nobles, chief of whom was Hugh Bigod, lately made Earl of Norfolk, were holding against him both in England and Normandy. By now we may say the period of pacification was at an end. Not only England, Wales, and Scotland, but also Normandy, Anjou, and Maine, had felt the strength of the King. An attempt on the part of his brother Geoffrey to gain Anjou and Maine had been defeated in the preceding year (1156). Even in respect of his wife's lands Henry had strengthened his position by obtaining Louis VII's acknowledgment of his tenure. As Professor Adams has said, "The age of Stephen was at an end, the Norman absolutism was once more established, and the influence of the time of anarchy and weakness was felt no longer."[1]

THE KING'S COUNCIL

We must now return and see what steps Henry had taken to secure the administration of the government his energy had succeeded in establishing. At his accession the King had published the customary coronation charter, which in nature was not unlike Stephen's. In effect it promised the good rule of Henry I's time. Unlike Stephen, however, Henry took immediate steps to translate words into action. A strong ministry was formed. Robert de Beaumont, Earl of Leicester, became Justiciar, in conjunction apparently with Richard de Lucy. Nigel, Bishop of Ely, son of Roger of Salisbury, was placed in charge of the Exchequer, while Archbishop Theobald's brilliant young *protégé,* Thomas Becket, was appointed Chancellor. On the other hand, such men as William of Ypres, more noted as leaders of mercenaries than as wise givers of counsel, were dismissed from the King's Court, the forces they led being disbanded and sent back to the countries whence they had come.

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[1] *Political History of England,* vol. ii, p. 267.

With representatives of such loyal and distinguished families as those of Beaumont and Salisbury at the head of the administration, with such talent as that possessed by Thomas Becket near at hand, it is not matter for surprise that the next few years saw order and good government established in the realm. Councils were frequent and were well attended by the baronage, thus bringing to the King the support of the most powerful class of his subjects. The clergy, led by one of the greatest of the Archbishops of Canterbury, and looking back with distress to the dark years of the preceding reign, supported for a time whole-heartedly the King's effort to gain strong personal rule.

In one of the King's Great Councils which was held in 1155 a further step had been taken by Henry to establish the position of the Angevin line. In that assembly, held at Wallingford, the barons swore to support the succession of the King's eldest son, William, or, should he have predeceased the King, the baby Henry, to whom Eleanor had given birth in the March of this year. At the next Great Council new means were sought to advance the dignity of the King's youngest son, and it was determined to attempt the conquest of Ireland to provide a suitable portion for that Prince.

According to John of Salisbury, the King approached the Pope, the Englishman Nicholas Breakspear,[1] requesting the donation of Ireland in perpetuity. Apparently the grant was made, and certainly was acquiesced in by a later Pope. For the time being, however, no active steps to reduce the donation to actual possession were taken, and the conquest of Ireland was reserved until a later date.

BECKET

The intervening years are chiefly noteworthy for the great fight which raged between Church and State, a struggle which brought to true greatness the newly appointed Chancellor, who earned by his fearless advocacy of the rights of the Church a high place in English history and a martyr's tomb.

Thomas Becket, son of the Port-reeve of London, was now (1156) in his thirty-eighth year. Possessed of a brilliant mind, which had been trained in the school of the canons of Merton and later in the schools of London, Oxford, and Paris, he had, as we have seen, in early youth entered the service of the Archbishop Theobald, and had quickly risen to a position of importance in Theobald's chancery. During these years his career had not been one of continual advance. The evil gossip of a jealous rival had for a season driven him from his patron's household, and this time he spent in acquiring a knowledge of law, civil and canon, at the far-famed university of Bologna. He had also visited and studied at Auxerre.

The period of disgrace was of short duration, and on his return his farther advancement proceeded speedily. The efforts he had made in conjunction with his master to defeat the plan for the coronation of Eustace and to obtain the crown for Henry were rewarded almost immediately after Henry had ascended the throne. By 1155 Thomas had already occupied several livings, had been Prebend of St Paul's, Archdeacon of Canterbury, and Provost of Beverley, and in that year, as we have seen, he was appointed Chancellor of England.

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[1] Hadrian IV.

Hence onward until these two almost equally despotic minds came finally into conflict Henry and his Chancellor were dear friends and boon companions. Becket's graceful tact was of great service to the King, and frequently he was sent as representative of King or Primate to the Courts of France or Rome.

It was during his ambassadorial visit to the French King for the purpose of negotiating a marriage between Prince Henry and Margaret, the baby daughter of Louis, that Becket showed that love of splendour and display which seems to be for ever associated with his name. Frenchmen looking upon his splendid equipage, his gorgeous attire, his troops of retainers, whispered to one another, "If this be but the Chancellor, what must be the wealth and power of the English King?" The negotiations were successful, the marriage was arranged, the reputation of Henry was enhanced.

In the year following (1159) Becket was again prominent in organizing and helping to carry through the Toulouse War. The King of France had opposed Henry's claim to Toulouse, which Henry deemed his in right of his wife, Eleanor. To obtain possession of the county a considerable army was raised, chiefly composed of mercenaries, whose services had been purchased with money obtained by taxation of a new type which Becket is credited with having invented. This new tax, scutage, had an important effect upon the position of the feudal nobility, and deserves more than a passing mention.

SCUTAGE

As we have already seen,[1] an attempt had been made many years before by Ranulf Flambard to change feudal levies into mercenary bands. Before the Toulouse War the expedient then adopted by Flambard stands isolated and alone. Now for the first time a definite system of taxation was begun which had for its purpose the substitution of mercenaries for the ordinary feudal soldier.

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[1] See *ante*, p. 421.

In the past, under the feudal system, the bulk of the land of England had been held by grants from the king in return for the supply of a definite number of knights and men-at-arms. This military service took the place of rent, and failure to render it was a cause of forfeiture of the fief. Until now, with the one exception above mentioned, when the King went to war he had relied mainly upon the performance by his tenants of this service, and only to a comparatively small degree upon the aid of mercenaries gained by the offer of wages paid out of his treasury. Such a system naturally created a strong nobility. The strength of the king lay in great part in the forces which his loyal tenants brought to his standard. Should loyalty change to disloyalty the rebel's retainers were at hand ready to fight for their lord rather than their king. The result of this system under a king who had small control over his tenants is seen in the anarchy of the preceding reign. Under a strong king it is true the system worked well, but even then the elements of disruption were always present.

To the practice of waging war with feudal levies the introduction of scutage made a vital difference. Now the tenant was not called upon to send so many soldiers to fight, but was given the alternative of sending soldiers or money (scutage or shield-money) in lieu of soldiers. In many cases the latter alternative was chosen. The money was sent, the rustics who in former wars would have constituted the feudal levy remained on the lord's farms. The money obtained was used to pay for mercenary troops whose business was war, who were bound to no one but their paymaster, and who came from all countries in search of service.

Attack on Toulouse

By means of this commutation of personal service for payment mercenaries (mostly Flemish) were hired for Henry. Some private aid was also given by Becket. Cahors was attacked and taken, and the army advanced on Toulouse, where the French King, with a small force, had taken up his position.

Becket advised an assault, hoping for the capture of Louis, but Henry hesitated to draw sword against his suzerain and retired into Normandy, leaving Becket to consolidate the gains already made. After some further trifling incidents peace was made, which, however, lasted but a month.

War with Louis Renewed

Hardly had the Toulouse War terminated when Louis, after mourning his queen, Constantia, for two weeks, married Adelais, niece of the late King Stephen. Henry, not unnaturally, regarded the marriage as an act hostile to himself, and in order to strengthen his position hurried on the marriage[1] between Margaret (aged three) and Henry (aged five), which Becket had already arranged. As a result of this union the Prince Henry became lord of the three castles in the Vexin which Margaret brought as her dower, and which had been held pending the marriage by members of the body of Knights Templars. This action on the part of Henry caused a renewal of hostilities, but a reconciliation was soon brought about and in 1162 Becket returned to England with the heir-apparent for the purpose of obtaining recognition from the barons of the young Prince's right to the crown.

Death of Theobald

Meanwhile, in April 1161, the Primate had died and the See of Canterbury became vacant. For thirteen months Henry failed to appoint a successor, and diverted the revenues of the see into the royal treasury. In the spring of the following year (1162), however, the King was at last persuaded to fill the vacancy, and, sending for Becket, who was then at Falaise, he told his favourite that his choice had fallen upon him.

Becket, possibly bearing in mind the quarrels between Anselm and Rufus and the first Henry; aware of Henry's intention with regard to the Church; knowing that his own soul would revolt against being made a pawn in an attack on institutions which a godly mother and a wise and beneficent patron had taught him to love and reverence, soldier and courtier though he had thus far been, begged the King to permit him to decline the preferment.

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[1] The parties not being of marriageable age a dispensation was obtained from the Pope.

The King, however, was obdurate. Knowing his own plans, believing that his friend would prove a submissive minister, determined to press on until the Church was made finally subordinate to the State, he would brook no refusal.

Becket becomes Archbishop

On Becket's arrival in England he was unanimously chosen Archbishop by the Chapter. On June 2 he was ordained priest in Canterbury Cathedral, and on the day following was consecrated by the Bishop of Winchester.

It was not long before the Bishop of Hereford's jeer that Henry had miraculously turned a soldier into a priest was shown to be no jest but solemn fact. Becket's outward character completely changed. The gay, light-hearted soldier, the reckless, spendthrift courtier had died. A sober priest had arisen. The memory of his worldly life, which had seemed to him proper and in place while yet he was Chancellor, now caused him sorrow and mortification. The King's request that he would retain the Seals[1] was refused. Men of his own age believed that he had truly determined to reform his whole mode of living and to fill worthily and as a priest should the high office he now occupied. Modern writers have been less lenient, accusing him of hypocrisy linked with ambition.

Quarrel between Henry and Becket

For a year no sign of the coming storm was visible apart from Becket's refusal to retain the Seals. As a result, however, of the proposal put forward by the King at the Great Council held at Woodstock in 1163, Henry and his Primate are found in open opposition. The question was scarcely one which affected the Church, but Becket's sense of justice appears to have been outraged. In past times the sheriffs had received a special 'aid' from their shires as a privilege of their office and as payment in part of their services. These aids Henry now proposed to appropriate for the benefit of his treasury. Becket alone opposed the King's will, but his reasons for his attitude were so cogent and the stand he took was so firm that the King was forced to give way. Already irritated by this thwarting of his will, Henry's anger was roused by Becket's laying claim to all the property belonging to the See of Canterbury which had been seized and alienated by the King.

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[1] A dispensation had been obtained to enable him to hold office as Chancellor as well as Archbishop.

As yet, however, no open breach had been created between King and minister. But a dispute was brewing of the highest moment to Church and State which placed them in irreconcilable opposition.

Benefit of Clergy

The point in dispute may be stated shortly as follows: When William of Normandy with papal benediction succeeded in conquering England he had, in part payment of his debt to Rome, separated the spiritual from the temporal courts. As a result of this separation the Church gradually gained a grip upon the administration of justice. It was not a mere question of trying priests for infractions of the canon law. Laymen frequently were tried before the ecclesiastical judges, tried according to canon law and according to a system of evidence which was already becoming archaic. The Church had begun to penetrate into the law of civil wrongs and into the law of contract (where the doctrine of good faith was working important changes) as well as into the law relating to marriage, wills, intestacy, advowsons, tithes, and all the more peculiarly ecclesiastical wrongs, such as heresy, sorcery, and sexual immorality.

Nor was this the whole extent of the Church's part in the direct administration of law. It was much larger. Where a clerk was accused of crime the Church was beginning to take the definite stand that none but an ecclesiastical court had a right to try him. Whatsoever the crime, though it might be treason to the State or to the King, Becket's view in effect was that judgment must be pronounced and punishment awarded in the appropriate ecclesiastical court. Moreover, it was asserted that the highest court of appeal was not the archbishop's court nor the Great Council, but the pontifical court.

Such a view had the support neither of history nor of law. Odo, William Bishop of Durham, Roger Bishop of Salisbury, Osbert the Archdeacon, all clerks, many of them great and powerful men, had all been tried or punished as laymen in the reigns of William I, William II, and Stephen.[1] Again, Becket's theory that a clerk unfrocked by the ecclesiastical court should not be punished by the lay court, since such an act involved a double punishment, was feeble reasoning, as any canonist with half his learning well knew. It was not supported by papal authority ; it was opposed to the teaching of the greatest masters of canon law ; it was opposed to the practice of the Church itself, for it was as common a happening in those days for a lay felon, after being punished by the lay courts, to be excommunicated by the Church, as in later times for a heretic to be condemned to spiritual punishments by the ecclesiastical courts and then handed over to the secular arm for the purpose of being condemned to death by burning.

This attitude that criminous clerks were outside the jurisdiction of the lay courts had, however, been taken up by the Church before Becket's time. As a result it was already becoming a scandal and was undermining the whole administration of justice. The records of judicial proceedings in those times have been mainly destroyed, but we can well imagine that what happened in the thirteenth was not unknown in the twelfth century. The clerk was practically outside the criminal law. 'Clerk,' it must be remembered, is not a synonym for 'clergyman.' Any monk, any priest, any person who had received the tonsure, whether he had been received into holy orders or not, any nun, could claim benefit of clergy. The time had not yet come when a few gabbled verses in Latin were sufficient to stamp a man a clerk, but already almost any one of any education possessed the privilege.

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[1] See Pollock and Maitland, *History of English Law,* vol. i, p. 450.

When we turn to consider what happened to the criminous clerk, we find that the whole procedure was little more than a farce. In the first place the clerk was haled before a lay judge. When his case was called on he refused to plead on the ground that he was a clerk—or if he did not an ecclesiastic who was there for the purpose [1] did so for him. Thereupon he was sent to the ecclesiastical court. In the ecclesiastical court the method of 'proof' was by compurgation. In other words, if the accused produced a few persons who swore he was not guilty he was acquitted altogether. Thus, for example, Bishop Jocelin of Salisbury cleared himself of the charge of complicity in Becket's murder by bringing forward five compurgators. If the accused could not obtain the oaths of a few friends then indeed he was condemned, but the punishment was greatly limited by the canonical law that the Church could not be guilty of shedding blood. In other words, capital punishment could never be resorted to. This, perhaps, would not have been a matter of great importance had the Church exercised the powers of punishment which it did possess. It could sentence to imprisonment, to whipping, to branding, to immurement or close confinement, but with a reprehensible leniency to its own order it practically reserved these punishments for laymen accused of ecclesiastical offences, with the result that the clerk, murderer, poisoner, felon though he might be, was usually punished by being degraded from clerk to layman. In later times it was said that a clerk could commit one murder with impunity; only for the second was he hanged.

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[1] This was so in the thirteenth century. It is not clear whether it was so in the early twelfth century.

This question of ecclesiastical jurisdiction in the criminal law was one great point of difference between King and Church.[1] Another equally momentous we have already alluded to, when considering the quarrel between Anselm and the Crown. This dispute, which had been ended for a time by the diplomacy of Henry I, had slumbered during the troubled reign of Stephen, but was now once more revitalized.

THE CONSTITUTIONS OF CLARENDON

Henry's first attack on the ecclesiastical courts was directed against their criminal jurisdiction. The archbishops and bishops were summoned to meet the King at Westminster, and at that meeting the King proposed that when a clerk had been unfrocked by the judgment of a spiritual court for a crime, he should then be sent to the appropriate lay court for punishment as a layman. The reply was given that this could not be, since it would result in a man being tried twice for the same offence. Henry, recognizing that the answer, doubtful in law though it was, weakened his position, gave way for the moment, but called for a promise that the clergy would observe the ancient customs of the realm. To this Becket, and following him all the bishops except Chichester, replied that he would promise 'saving his order.'

Such a reply meant clearly that the Church claimed as a Church the right not to observe the ancient customs of the realm. As a man Becket promised to observe these customs, as an archbishop he impliedly refused to observe them. The question was now simply, Is the Church above the law or not? That problem Henry took steps to resolve.

The King's wrath fell chiefly upon Becket as the leader and pillar of the opposition. The Archbishop was commanded to surrender the honour of Eye and the castle of Berkhamsted.

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[1] The fees, fines, and forfeitures accruing to the court having jurisdiction were extremely valuable, and it was for these that the rival parties mainly fought. It is to be added that English law is greatly indebted to the ecclesiastical judges, who were far better lawyers than the judges in the royal and manorial courts, and who developed the doctrine of good faith, thus improving the law of contract and of marriage.

For a moment it almost seemed that Becket had decided to give way. He travelled to Oxford to meet the King, and there promised to observe the ancient customs of the realm without adding the obnoxious saving clause.

Almost immediately Henry summoned a Great Council to meet at Clarendon shortly after Christmas. There, after a stormy scene, resulting from the Archbishop's attempting to retract and impose the saving clause, a scene culminating in a wild burst of rage on the part of the King, who threatened with death all bishops who opposed him, Becket once more gave way, and the famous Constitutions of Clarendon were agreed to.[1]

This legislative act practically resulted in the ecclesiastical courts being made subordinate to the royal courts and in the clergy being made subordinate to the King. The spiritual weapon of excommunication was blunted ; the link between the ecclesiastical courts and the Pope was severed ; the baronial nature of spiritual fees was recognized ; the departure of clerics from England without the King's leave was stopped.

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[1] The main clauses are substantially as follows:

(1) No tenant-in-chief or officer of the king's household or demesne to be excommunicated or have his lands put under interdict without the consent of the king or, if he should be absent, his justiciar.

(2) The custody of every ecclesiastical foundation based on royal grant to be given and its revenues during non-occupancy to be paid to the king. The election of a new incumbent to be made in obedience to the king's writ with the assent of the king, who could call to advise him such prelates as he might choose.

(3) All clerks accused of crime to appear in the first instance before a lay court, which was to determine whether the offence ought to be tried in a lay or a spiritual court. If the latter the accused was to be handed over to the spiritual court, the proceedings therein to be watched by an officer to be appointed by the king and to be a layman. If proved guilty the accused was not to be protected by the ecclesiastical court, but was to be sent back to a lay court for punishment, the accused being thus bereft of benefit of clergy.

(4) All disputes concerning advowsons and presentation to livings to be determined in the King's Court.

(5) All pleas of debt, whether involving good faith or not, to be determined in the King's Court.

(6) All disputes between clerks and laymen as to land to go before the king's justice and a jury to determine whether it was held by feudal or spiritual tenure. If the former the suit to be tried in the King's Court.

(7) Laymen tried for spiritual offences (*e.g.* heresy, sorcery, certain offences against sexual morality, etc.) to be tried according to the rules of evidence found in the common law.

(8) All the higher clergy holding lands of the king as tenants-in-chief to hold their baronies like lay barons (with slight exceptions).

(9) No ecclesiastical appeals to go farther than the archbishop's court, *i.e.* appeals to Rome forbidden.

(10) None of the higher clergy to leave the realm without the king's licence.

(11) Sons of villeins not to be admitted to orders without their lord's consent.

The Quarrel Renewed

Henry had won a signal victory over forces the strength of which he but dimly appreciated. The Archbishop, however, was not finally vanquished. From Clarendon the Primate hastened to Canterbury, and thence wrote a long account of the proceedings to Rome, ending with a plea for the Pope's forgiveness. The Pope (Alexander III) immediately took a firm stand and refused to recognize the Constitutions, and Henry, believing that Becket was responsible for this attitude, showed in the most unmistakable manner his high displeasure. When the Primate sought audience of the King at Woodstock he was refused admission.

Becket seems to have felt that his very life was in danger, and endeavoured to leave the kingdom, partly in order to consult with the Pope, partly, it may be, to allow the King's anger to subside. The attempt failed. A spy informed the King, and on October 6, 1164, the Primate was summoned to attend the King's Council at Northampton. The Archbishop obeyed the command, but Henry was unappeased. Coldly received, Becket soon learnt that he was to be tried on an indictment presented by John of Oxford for contempt of the royal authority in having once appeared by attorneys instead of in person when summoned to the King's Court. The wrong thus complained of was a trivial one, but Becket was heavily fined. Nor did the King's anger stop there. Becket's rents as warden of Eye and Berkhamsted were demanded of him, and finally an account was called for of all the vacant abbeys and bishoprics which Becket had held while Chancellor. The sum thus demanded was an enormous one, probably not less than 40,000 marks, and Becket had almost certainly been released from all liability when he became Archbishop of Canterbury.

The point had long been passed, however, at which Henry was prepared to act with justice or clemency. Becket's downfall was being deliberately aimed at. The Archbishop, seeing no way of escape, for a time refused a reply. He appears to have been irresolute between resignation and complete submission. The bishops,[1] far from supporting him, advised the former course. In the end Becket decided neither to resign nor to rely on the King's mercy, but to fight.

Further action was stayed for a day or two by an illness which overtook Becket, but by October 13 he was sufficiently recovered to attempt once more to see the King. Carrying the archiepiscopal cross and followed by the bishops, he entered his sovereign's presence. Henry, followed by his barons, instantly withdrew, and shortly afterward Roger of York and the Bishop of Exeter also withdrew, advising Becket to submit as the King had threatened with death the man who first spoke in his favour.

Becket, however, was insensible to threats, and when shortly afterward the King sent the bishops to inform him that he had no longer claim to their obedience he replied, simply, "I hear you," and remained unmoved.

The next step was taken by Henry, who sent Becket's friend, the Earl of Leicester, to pass sentence upon him. The Primate, seeing at length that any attempt to reason with the King was hopeless, retired. His departure was marked by the clamours of his retainers, who begged him to release them from his service.

BECKET'S FLIGHT

The attempt previously decided upon, but promptly thwarted, to leave the kingdom was now renewed. Wishing if possible to placate the King, Becket asked for leave to depart, but upon receiving an evasive reply he determined to go without leave. Wearing the garb of a monk, he fled to Lincoln, whence three weeks later he went on shipboard, crossed the sea, and was joined at Gravelines by his faithful follower Herbert of Bosham, who had succeeded in carrying away with him from Canterbury most of the Archbishop's plate.

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[1] The Bishop of Winchester alone stood out.

Meanwhile Henry had sent over bishops to meet the Pope and endeavour to persuade him to give no aid or support to the fugitive. Becket, however, by an adroit surrender of his archbishopric into the Pope's hands gained a diplomatic triumph, receiving the Primacy once more from the Pope.

WELSH WARS

For a time Henry was too busily engaged in the pacification of various dominions to take further active steps against Becket, except to confiscate the revenues of Canterbury, command the exile of Becket's relatives, prohibit all appeals to the Pope, and punish the clerks who had accompanied the Archbishop. As for Becket, he retired to Burgundy to the Abbey of Pontigny, where for a time he enjoyed comparative repose.

For the moment we leave the quarrel to follow Henry as he journeyed to Normandy in the spring of 1165 to meet an embassy from the Emperor, a meeting which resulted in the marriage of the Princess Matilda with Henry the Lion. Henry also seems to have made some vague promises to support the Emperor in his quarrel with the Pope ; if made, however, they were quickly disavowed, and Henry, after having come to an agreement with Louis of France and the Count of Flanders, hastened back in May for the purpose of making a further organized attack upon the Welsh, who had been extremely restive for some time.

Henry had collected a numerous army, largely composed of mercenaries, at Oswestry. Considerable preparations had been made. The sheriffs of London alone paid nearly 170 pounds for shields and clothing. Troops were requisitioned from many of the King's Continental dominions, heavy cavalry was collected, large stores were assembled and sent down to Shrewsbury. Danish mercenaries from Dublin were engaged to harass the Welsh from the sea.

In the face of national peril the Welsh took up a steadfast attitude. Their leader, Owain Gwynedd, had by his side almost all the chiefs of Wales. As the Welsh chronicler puts it, "Together, united, and undaunted, they came into Edeyrnion, and encamped at Corwen."

The result of this unity was soon seen. Henry, unable to make headway against a united people in a land where almost every foot offered positions for defence, was compelled to abandon his schemes of conquest. Before the year was ended Henry had retired and the mercenaries were paid off. The Welsh hostages whom Owain had given after the former campaign were condemned by Henry in a fit of rage to be blinded.

STRUGGLE WITH BECKET CONTINUED

The year 1166, which was marked by a diplomatic triumph for Henry, whereby he obtained control over Brittany through a marriage which was arranged between Geoffrey and Constance, the infant daughter of Conan of Richemont, is mainly noteworthy for the active steps taken by Becket against the King's supporters. No fewer than seven of Henry's companions were excommunicated, including the Justiciar, Richard de Lucy. Even the King himself was threatened, and the Constitutions were declared not to be binding on the clergy.

Henry replied vigorously. Persons who brought communications from the Primate were declared to be traitors; clergy who obeyed the Archbishop had their livings taken from them; Becket's name was erased from the liturgy, and all his relations, some mere children, to the number of 400, were driven from the realm. The King even went so far as to declare that if Pontigny continued to harbour Becket all the Cistercians[1] in his realm should be expelled. As a result of this threat Becket journeyed to Sens, which had been placed at his disposal by Louis.

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[1] Pontigny was a Cistercian abbey.

It was now that Becket, living the life of an anchorite, seems to have definitely decided to suffer a martyr's death rather than abandon the principles for which he was contending. Meanwhile Henry was beginning to feel that he had gone too far. The Pope stood firm as an upholder of the Archbishop. No support could be found among the English bishops for Henry's tentative policy of aiding the Emperor and the Antipope. The barons were averse to taking any measures against Becket's personal safety. By 1169 it almost seemed that a reconciliation would be brought about. Becket was twice received by the King while on the Continent, but Henry stubbornly refused to break the oath which he had made never to give the Archbishop the kiss of peace.

CORONATION OF 'THE YOUNG KING'

Throughout this time the Pope and Louis of France had been supporting Becket, while the Primate on his part had been excommunicating bishops and others in great number in England. A general interdict was threatened after the negotiations broke down, but was prevented by the strong action which Henry took to prevent papal interference. By the end of 1169 Henry had also become reconciled with Louis and a formal peace had been arranged between the two monarchs. Anjou and Maine were given to Henry's eldest surviving son, who had, as we have seen, married Louis's daughter, and Aquitaine was granted to his second son, who was betrothed to a second French princess. Both grants were made so that the tenants held of the King of France in feudal service. Outwardly this appeared to be a triumph for Louis, but Henry was in fact playing for time. Henry was indeed making every effort to pacify foreign enemies and reduce to quiescence the troublesome Archbishop pending the coronation of his son Henry, which was arranged to take place in 1170. The coronation ceremony was performed by Roger of York, and 'the young King' received the homage

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not only of the English barons, but also of William, King of Scotland, and David his brother.

Becket returns from Exile

The recognition of his son as his successor had been gained, but not without some cost. Louis was incensed because his daughter, 'the young King's' wife, had not been crowned; Becket was enraged at the coronation of an English king by the Archbishop of York. War was threatened by France, but was averted, and Henry agreed to a reconciliation with Becket. It was not, however, until November 12, 1170, four months after he had declared to Becket, "I will make those who have betrayed both of us such return as traitors deserve," that he restored the lands of the See of Canterbury.

At last, amid almost universal rejoicing, Becket returned to England, and on December 3 reached his own cathedral city. The joy was short-lived. Hardly had he returned when it became obvious that the peace which was no peace, and which had been arrived at without either party surrendering what he contended for, was doomed to a speedy end. Already Becket was busy launching fresh sentences of excommunication. Already he was being refused admission to 'the young King.' The climax came shortly after he had preached his Christmas sermon from the text "On earth peace, good will toward men." Having challenged his enemies and declared his conviction that death was near, he excommunicated his old enemies, Ranulph and Robert de Broc. Staying with the de Brocs at that time were four knights, Reginald fitz Urse, William de Tracy, Hugh de Morville, and Richard Brito. When in Normandy some time before they had been stung by a taunt flung by the King at his courtiers, "Is there not one of the cowards who eat my bread who will free me of this turbulent priest?"

Next day (December 29) it was announced to Becket that four knights were waiting without. They were permitted to enter. Three of them had previously been in Becket's service; now none returned his greeting, but demanded of him that the sentences of excommunication be withdrawn and that satisfaction be made to 'the young King.'[1] The demand, singularly enough, was not met by a curt refusal. Becket offered to remove the excommunication from all bishops. York, however, he refused to absolve, expressing at the same time the ardent desire that the young Henry should succeed his father. Other demands were made, but no further promise was extracted. The four knights then withdrew to arm.

BECKET'S DEATH

It was now the time for vespers. On all sides Becket's followers were filled with apprehension, and sought to protect their Archbishop by dragging him to the sanctuary of the church. Hardly had the great door been barred when the knights were heard without demanding entrance. Becket, ashamed it may be of the timidity of his priests, commanded that the doors be opened. It was done. Meanwhile the timid clerics had fled to safety. One alone stood by him.[2]

At length the knights, with a clerk leading them, entered the transept. It was now dusk, and the knights cried out: "Where is the traitor?" There was no reply. Then they demanded: "Where is the Archbishop?" Whereupon answered Becket: "Here am I, no traitor, but Archbishop and a priest of God. What will you?" "We seek your death," they answered.

The time had almost passed. Words proved useless to stay the blow which Reginald fitz Urse aimed at the Primate. But Becket's spirit was unquelled. "Wretch," cried he, "slay me here if you will, but," raising his hand to curse, "if you touch any of my people you are accursed." The knights sought to drag their victim from the church. Becket, aided by his one stalwart clerk, Edward Grim, resisted, and the knights, weary of continuing the struggle, determined to make a sudden end. Already Grim had lost an arm in warding off a blow aimed at Becket, and now the Archbishop, with the cross in his hands, having commended his soul and the Church's cause to the care of God and the blessed Mary, to the patron saints of his church and to St Denis, was struck down, murmuring as he died: "I am ready to embrace death for the name of Jesus and for the defence of the Church."

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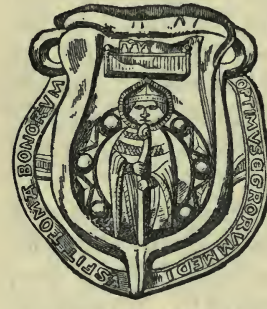
[1] Becket had excommunicated Roger of York among others, and theoretically this made void the coronation which Roger had solemnized.

[2] At first three remained with him, but soon Edward Grim appears as his sole protector.

Pilgrimages to Becket's Tomb

Next day the corpse of the martyr was buried in the crypt without any religious service being held, but almost immediately the tomb became the object of pilgrimages and a holy spot at which miracles were believed to be worked. In later years one of the greatest treasures of the cathedral was a flask of blood said to be from the body of the saint. So great were the throngs of pilgrims that along the routes most commonly followed inns sprang up to meet the needs of the travellers. In Canterbury itself a vigorous trade developed in small flasks, or *ampullae*, of lead and pewter, fashioned to hold a little of the wonder-working water drawn from a place near by the tomb and supposed to be capable of healing the sick. These flasks, small enough to be carried on a string hung round the neck, were worn by thousands. Another souvenir was shaped like a small silver bell, and became so common that it gave its name to the flower whose bell-shaped blossom resembles it.



A St Thomas Ampulla

All classes were represented in the pilgrim bands, as may be seen from the *Canterbury Tales*, and so universal, so wide-spread, and so intense was the feeling of regret for the death of Becket, whom all now regarded as a saint and martyr, and of anger against the King, who was looked upon as the author

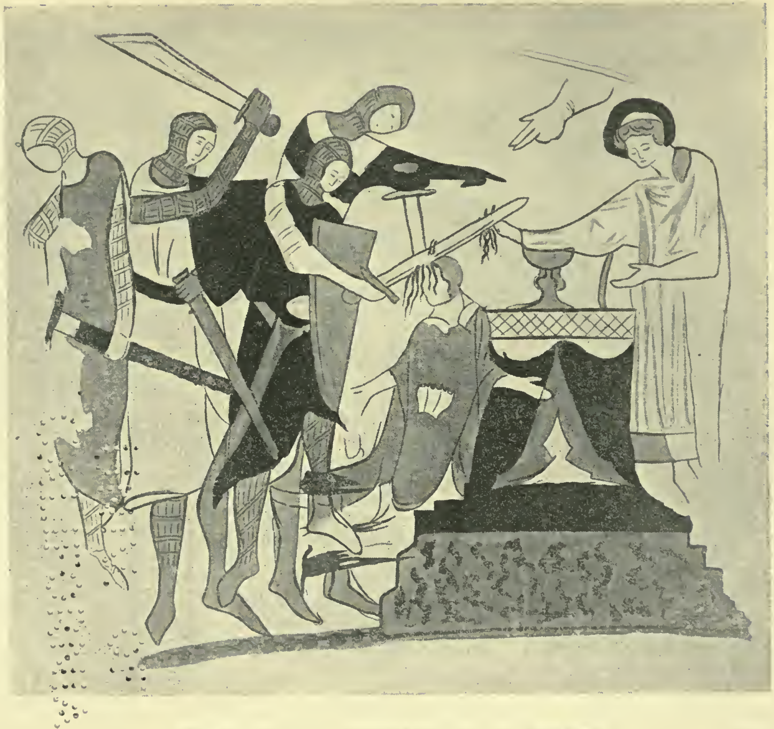


PLATE XLV. THE MURDER OF BECKET

of the murder, that for a season Henry found himself completely shut out from the hearts of his people.

Henry, on his part, when he received the ill news in Normandy, was horrified and filled with despair. For three days he shut himself away from his fellows. As for the assassins, he knew not what attitude to adopt. To punish them for obeying what they had believed were his orders seemed unjust; to spare them was to convict himself in his people's eyes of being the direct instigator and author of their crime. He finally resolved to leave them to the judgment of the spiritual courts. They travelled to Rome, and were exhorted, and indeed directed, to make the pilgrimage to Jerusalem. There apparently fitz Urse died.[1]

Expedition against Ireland

With the death of Becket the main interest of Henry's reign instantly centres in his administrative reforms. Becket, saint and martyr though he may have been, had suffered in the cause of the Church rather than in support of his country. Eminent as a man and as a minister, he inspired but few, if any, of the reforms which have gained for Henry II the position of the greatest of English kings save one. His very fame is based on opposition to a wise and statesmanlike measure. With his death an obstacle was removed and Henry hastens from reform to reform.

For a space, however, Henry, threatened with stringent ecclesiastical action (which however he averted) on the one hand and the hatred of his people on the other, deemed it prudent to engage in some diversion which would at once remove him from close contact with the Church and distract his people's minds from the martyr's death.

The necessary change was found in the invasion of Ireland, which, as we have seen, had been decided upon fifteen years before, and which had received some support from Rome.

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[1] Tracy reappears as Justiciar of Normandy in 1174–76. Hugh de Morville was alive until 1202. Brito probably shared the fate of fitz Urse.

Of the steps which had already been taken, and of Henry's actions while in Ireland, we propose to say but little. In 1166 the dispute between Dermot, King of Leinster, and the O'Connor had resulted in Dermot's entering into alliance with a number of adventurous Norman-Welsh knights, of whom Richard de Clare (Strongbow, Earl of Pembroke), Robert fitz Stephen, and Maurice fitz Gerald were the most important. Before 1170 Waterford and Dublin had been taken, the Irish leader, Dermot, had been killed, and Strongbow had allied himself more closely with the Irish by his marriage with Dermot's daughter, Eva.

Henry, fearful lest what had begun as an adventure, promising gain to himself, should end in the kingship of all Ireland being obtained by the Earl of Pembroke, ordered Strongbow's recall. The command was, after a time, obeyed. The Earl did homage for the territory gained, surrendered his rights over Dublin, and retained the major part of the remaining conquests as a tenant-in-chief of the King.

Affairs had reached this stage when Henry determined on a personal visit to Ireland. He set sail with 500 knights and squires and a considerable army of soldiers and landed at Waterford. There he received the homage of the surrounding chieftains, and eventually marched on Dublin. The allegiance of many of the Irish princes who had hitherto held back was received. Even the O'Connor, who had at first refused to communicate with Henry, at last consented to receive the King's messengers, and on the banks of the Shannon promised submission. The princes of Ulster alone refused to own Henry as overlord.

Henry meets the Papal Envoys in Normandy

The King appears to have intended to spend the summer of 1172 in consolidating his position in Ireland. The building of castles throughout the land was determined upon, and it is possible that, owing to the disunion of the native chiefs, the simplicity of the social state, and the energy and determination of the King, had his plans been brought to fruition under his personal guidance Ireland would have been, for a season at least, completely subjugated. It was not to be. In the spring of 1172 Henry found it necessary to journey to Normandy to meet the legates sent by the Pope to pronounce sentence for the murder of Becket. When he returned to Ireland he could claim an indefinite lordship over five provinces, but the territories over which he had actual control were hardly greater than those already gained by Strongbow and his associates before the King's arrival.

John Lord of Ireland

We need not stay to consider the various changes in command and fortune which befell the English in Ireland in the next few years. Hugh de Lacy is appointed leader and then recalled. Strongbow regains his ascendancy for a time. The papal authority given in earlier years is used to persuade the Irish clergy to support the King. The native chiefs, however, make peace with one another, and Roderic, King of Connaught, becomes lord of the whole island except the demesne lands of Henry and his barons, which included Dublin, Meath, Wexford, and Waterford.

Some time about 1177 a new step is taken, when de Courci invades Ulster, and Henry, ignoring the facts of the case, declares the young Prince John (then a boy of ten) lord of the whole of Ireland. Hugh de Lacy is made lord-deputy, but having aroused the King's suspicion by marrying Roderic's daughter he is recalled. Philip of Worcester is next appointed, and later, in 1185, Prince John is sent with a large force to restore the failing fortunes of the English. The change of leadership was disastrous, and although on John's recall nine months later de Courci endeavours, not without success, to preserve the English gains, the Irish might have regained their independence, despite the Council of Lismore and the imposition of English law on Irish subjects and the garrisoning of Irish castles with mercenary troops, had it not been for disunion among their leaders and the state of general anarchy into which the polity had fallen.

Legal and Administrative Reforms

It is as a lawyer and administrator that Henry has made his mark—and a great, incisive mark—on the history of our country. We therefore leave him arguing with Albert and Theodwine, the papal envoys, at Avranches over the responsibility for the murder of Becket, merely noting that after he had sworn that he was innocent, that he would support 200 knights in Palestine, permit appeals to Rome, and abandon the customs recently introduced which were opposed to the liberties of the Church, he was absolved. Four years later (1176) the King went farther in his desire to remove the curse which he felt had fallen upon him and surrendered some of the provisions of the Constitutions of Clarendon, for which he had fought so stubbornly. Clerks were not to be arraigned before lay judges for crimes committed; spiritual fees were not to remain vacant for more than a year; special provision was also made to prevent the murder of clerks, and clerks were never to be required to make wager of battle.

In the reforms directed against the Church we thus see that Henry had gained something, but had also been compelled to surrender something. His astute and wilful mind, capable of opposing or circumventing his enemies, had been partially subdued, at the revolt of his sons, by those same superstitious fears which had caused him to do penance at the shrine of the martyr. No such influence could affect him in his struggle with the baronage, and consequently we find him marching from triumph to triumph in the bloodless battles he was waging against seigneurial jurisdictions.

Nature of Henry's Reforms

The nature of the changes which Henry succeeded in making in the administration of our law is largely responsible for the lack of knowledge of the details of those reforms. Magna Carta being a written statute which has come down to us in many editions, which was the product of open rebellion, and which is manifestly a document of the highest constitutional importance, is known to us all. The various assizes, such as the Assize of Novel Disseizin, which went far to break the power of the barons, which created the king's justice as the dominant power in the State, which affected the whole current of our law, is hardly understood by any but legal historians. Henry II's important legislative acts are few in number and indefinite in texture. The truth is that, in the main, and apart from such changes as were introduced by the Assize of Arms (1181), the Assize of the Forest (1184), the Assize of Bread, the ordinance relating to the Saladin Tithe (1188), and the assizes which were passed at Clarendon and Northampton, Henry's reforms were brought about by improvements in the administrative departments of government.

THE ASSIZE OF NOVEL DISSEIZIN[1]

To take an example, let us consider this Assize of Novel Disseizin. In the earlier Norman period the feudal system had been developed. Manors ruled over by lords had been created or organized in the Norman-feudal manner. Tenants-in-chief had parcelled out their lordships, their manors, their seigneuries, among lesser men. These lesser men held freeholds, but their holding was subject to the rendering of service. The service to be rendered was generally military service. One of the peculiarities of the manorial system was the lord's right to hold a court. At such courts disputes between tenants were determined.

It is thus evident that the lord, the baron, the chief man of the manor, was gaining a very real power over the land and over the administration of justice. His tenants fought for him, his tenants were suitors in his court, his tenants settled their disputes with regard to their holdings in his court before him or his deputy. The system crossed the road to centralization at two points. The rendering of military service tended to make the king dependent on the goodwill of his barons rather than on the goodwill of his subjects and weakened the king's military resources. The rendering of court service strengthened the seigneurial jurisdictions and weakened by that amount the king's justice. The first weakness was struck at by such expedients as scutage. The second weakness was removed by extending the royal justice even into the domains of manorial lords.

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[1] For what follows I desire to acknowledge my indebtedness to Pollock and Maitland's *History of English Law*, Book I, chap. vi.

At a Great Council held in 1166 at Clarendon the Assize of Clarendon, dealing with criminal matters, was passed, and an ordinance was agreed upon which, after the King's most able clerks had spent nights of toil working out the details of the new system now determined upon, resulted in the Assize of Novel Disseizin. Hence onward if a person is in possession of land and is dispossessed unjustly he can obtain a royal writ, he can go before a royal court, and in the presence of a royal judge an inquest is to be held to determine whether or no he is entitled to his possession. If it is decided that he is entitled then the whole power of the royal arm is at hand to gain him the possession he has lost. Thus at one bound we have a great encroachment made on the powers of manorial courts, and a new and important use made of the inquest, which was becoming more and more akin to the later jury.

HENRY'S ATTEMPTS TO STRENGTHEN JUSTICE

The Assize of Novel Disseizin is given simply as an example. Many other such changes were made, not less important but less significant since later in date. Perhaps the Grand Assize, whereby the defendant in an action for the possession of land was permitted to move that the action be taken from the feudal court into the king's court, there to be decided by an inquest or jury, was as important as any change that Henry made. The Assizes of Mort d'Ancestor and Darrein Presentment, to give them the Norman-French names which have lived to the present day, were of almost equal importance.

It would, however, have been of little purpose to throw open royal justice to all, or to compete with the feudal courts, had royal justice been feeble, or unfair, or bribable. Henry, therefore, took steps to make his courts strong and competent, and, by taking fees which went partially to pay the judges, popular. We can see the King himself in some important cases sitting as president of his court, aided in the work of judging causes by the wisest bishops and laymen. We can follow him as he moves from place to place, now the chapter-house of the monks at Colchester, now the chapel of St Catherine at Westminster, now Clarendon, now London, dispensing justice and, on occasion, showing wisdom, as monkish chroniclers inform us, comparable with that of Solomon. It was, however, only in great and important cases that the King appears to have taken a personal part. In other cases he contented himself with delegating the administration of justice to a small band of picked men who formed the Court of King's Bench, and to a larger circle of justices who went throughout the kingdom to the circuits established in earlier years by Rufus and Henry I.

When we read the names of these royal justices we find among them some of the most famous men in the history of our law: Ranulf de Glanvill, Richard fitz Neal, Thomas Becket, Hubert Walter. There were many others almost equally noted in their own day, such as Richard de Lucy, Richard of Ilchester, Geoffrey Ridel, John of Oxford, Thomas Basset, William de Lanval, Gerald the Welshman, Hugh of Cressi, Roger of Howden, Walter Map. These and others were working out the elements of English law, developing the practice of the Exchequer, consolidating the power of the King, arming the subject with royal writs, hearing pleas of the Crown in all parts of England, consulting with the King on fresh reforms.

In this reign two great works concerned with the business of government were being written, one, *Tractatus de Legibus*, by Ranulf de Glanvill, being concerned with law, and the other, *Dialogus de Scaccario*, by Richard fitz Neal, treating of the business of the Exchequer. This last work shows clearly the strength of the King, for in an age when the craft of statesmen was kept secretly it disclosed to all, presumably with the King's consent, the details of why taxes were raised, by whom, and in what way.

Henry's Quarrels with his Sons

The change from these beneficial movements, from the wisdom of Glanvill, the learning of Map, the profundity of fitz Neal, from the organization of the departments of State, the development of the jury system, the criminal law, the circuit system, to the disastrous disputes between Henry and his rebellious sons is an abrupt one. From great and memorable events which have left their impress to the present day and which strengthened the State we pass to the follies of disordered minds impatient for power which weakened the kingdom and created that disunion which tended toward and finally resulted in the loss of most of our Continental possessions.

Already in 1172 Hugh de St Maur and Ralph de Fay were urging, with Queen Eleanor's connivance, 'the young King' Henry to assert his right as 'King' to exercise royal authority in the kingdom. Shortly afterward we find the young Henry taking the same oath as his father with regard to the recompense to be made for the murder of Becket. In the August of the same year a standing grievance was removed by the coronation of Margaret 'the young King's' wife at Winchester.

Almost immediately, however, the quarrel increased in violence. Henry demanded of his father the lordship of either England or Normandy, a demand which resulted in the dismissal of the Prince, who immediately withdrew with Margaret to the Court of Louis, carrying with him the blessing of Eleanor. Shortly afterward the rebellious Prince was joined by his brothers, Geoffrey, Count of Brittany, and Richard, Duke of Aquitaine, and finally by his mother, the Queen.

From now until the end of his reign almost without intermission Henry was embroiled in quarrel after quarrel with his sons and with his Queen. Eleanor, who had little cause to reverence her spouse, who was notorious for his infidelity and for his affairs with Rosamond Clifford and many others, was soon captured and imprisoned. Already, however, numbers of the barons were throwing in their lot with the rebel Princes. The Earl of Leicester, the Earl of Chester, William de Tankerville, and many others deserted the King almost at once. In the year following (1174) Roger de Mowbray, the Earl of Norfolk, and several lesser men renounced their allegiance. Meanwhile the rebel Princes had gained the active support of the King of France, the Count of Flanders, and the King of Scotland, so that although Henry had gained several successes against his enemies in England, on the Scotch border, and in Normandy, and although he had succeeded in collecting some 20,000 adventurers, "the aggregate refuse of all the nations of Europe," as they have been called, the horizon looked so gloomy in 1174 as to persuade the King that he was the object of divine anger.

At this time a concerted attack was being planned by the rebels, the King of France, the Count of Flanders, and the King of Scotland against Normandy, Aquitaine, Brittany, the north of England, and the south coast. So serious did the state of affairs appear that the King, who was abroad, hurriedly returned, and on July 11, after spending a night in prayer in order to propitiate his God, made his pilgrimage to Becket's tomb.

The following two months must have appeared to the superstitious King a time of miracles. On July 13 the King of Scots was captured by Ranulf de Glanvill[1] near Alnwick, and the leaderless Scottish army retreated over the Border. By August 6 England had been pacified and Henry was on his way to aid his supporters in Normandy. Rouen was relieved, Louis destroyed his siege appliances and fled, and by September 8 a conference had been called at which to settle the terms of peace. For a time Richard continued in rebellion, but before September was over the King and his three sons had come to terms. Practically it was agreed that all should be in the position they occupied before the war. To Henry, "the King son of a King," two castles in Normandy and an income of 15,000 pounds a year were granted. Richard was granted two castles and half the revenue of Poitou; Geoffrey obtained half the income accruing from the dowry of Constance of Brittany, and the whole when the marriage should be finally made and assented to. The one son who had not joined in the rebellion, the Prince John, was also provided for, and for a time there was peace.

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[1] At this time he was Sheriff of Lancashire.

REBELLION RENEWED

From now onward the state of England was stable and Henry was able to develop the schemes of reform which his genius had shown him to be necessary. Already a commencement had been made, and now in the years of peace which followed the revolt Henry's system of government could have adequate scope.

Abroad, however, the position was different. The King ruled over conflicting nationalities, and it is probable that only his unbending will, just rule, and iron hand had succeeded in welding into a seeming unity the many diverse elements among his subjects. This unity had been shaken by the late rebellion, and the remaining years of the reign are generally marked by some act of revolt in one or other of the counties and duchies possessed by Henry on the Continent. These troubles, which were probably born of the nature of the case, were increased by the continued disloyalty of Henry's children. Thus, in 1176, while Richard was seeking aid from his father to put down a rebellion in his duchy (Aquitaine) which had assumed dangerous proportions, the two Henrys crossed to France, both ostensibly to aid Richard. Hardly had 'the young King' landed, however, when he left the King and with Margaret journeyed to the Court of Louis, there doubtless to indulge his taste for tilting and conspiracy.

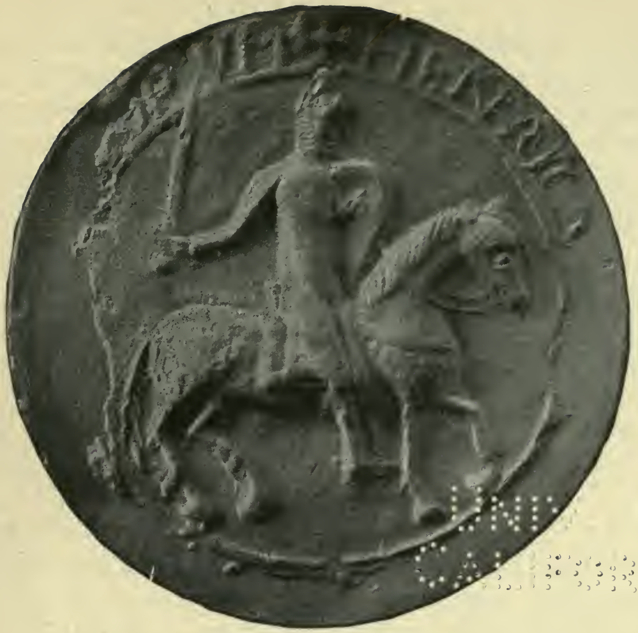

PLATE XLVI. SEAL OF HENRY II AS DUKE OF NORMANDY

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DEATH OF 'THE YOUNG KING'

For three years the pleasures of the exercises of chivalry appear to have engaged the attention of 'the young King.' It has been well said of the Prince that his popularity—which is undoubted—is inexplicable except it were due to his winning manners and his skill in the tournament and in all knightly exercises. Of the qualities of the true knight he had none. Weak, unstable, ungrateful, treacherous, selfish, impolitic, he seemed to possess none of the strength of his father and all his faults. Throughout his life, however, he retained the love though not the trust of his father, and when in 1183 he died at the castle of Martel he was still in favour with the King, and was about to attack Richard, whom Henry had called upon to do homage for Aquitaine to 'the young King.'

DEATH OF GEOFFREY

Three years later Geoffrey, who possessed a character not dissimilar to that of his brother Henry, and who, like 'the young King,' had constantly shown bitter dissatisfaction with his father's treatment of him, and an intense desire to rule but complete inability to do so, died of a fever induced by a wound received at a tournament. At the time of his death Richard and Philip the King of France appear to have been meditating an attack upon him. His death, however, changed their plans and furnished material for a dispute with Henry. The wardship of Geoffrey's heiress, Eleanor, was demanded by Philip. Henry, unwilling at the moment to wage war, sent an embassy, under the direction of Ranulf de Glanvill, to Philip and a truce was arranged. Early in 1187, however, Henry found it necessary to confer in person with Philip, but despite this and the birth of a posthumous heir to Geoffrey in the person of Arthur, Philip persisted in his preparations for war and entered into an alliance with the Emperor Frederick Barbarossa.

War with Philip

The war which followed between Philip and Henry must be divided into two parts. The first phase took place before the disastrous news had been received from the Holy Land, news which persuaded Henry, Philip, and Richard to take the Cross; the second phase occurred after the tragic scene at Bonmoulins, when Richard in the presence of Henry and Philip renounced his allegiance to his father, who had declined to recognize him as his successor, and swore fealty to Philip as his overlord. During the first phase Richard fought on the side of the King of England, and it is probable that but for a fatal mistake made by Henry in the interest of his youngest son, Richard would never have joined Philip in active warfare against his father.

To mention all the causes of dispute between Philip, Henry, Richard, and John is impossible in a compressed narrative. The great point at issue was the supremacy of the house of Anjou or Capet. The main cause of Richard's defection centred in the marriage of Adela of France.

Henry, it appears, should above all have striven to retain the allegiance of the men of Anjou; he should have aimed at gaining finally the support of Richard and John; he should have sought a firm alliance with France. It may be that he saw this, but realized the impossibility of such a scheme. We cannot know what acts of perfidy were being committed behind his back. It is, however, a matter for surprise that he adopted the plan eventually decided upon.

Philip began with an attack upon Richard's duchy of Aquitaine. He was opposed by Richard and compelled to abandon the siege of Châteauroux by the approach of Henry. The campaign was swinging evenly, negotiations were opened, when suddenly Philip received a letter from Henry which entirely changed the outlook. The letter proposed that John should marry Adela, and should after the marriage receive all the fiefs held by the Angevins in France except Normandy.

Richard was thus to succeed to England and Normandy alone. The letter was forwarded by Philip to Richard.

The results which flowed from this act of folly, of folly so great that we are tempted to see in it some act of perfidy on the part of John, were not immediate. For a time peace was established.

THE SALADIN TITHE

Before war broke out again the ill news from the Holy Land had been received in Europe. The Pope had died of grief at hearing of the capture of the true Cross. Jerusalem was seized by Saladin.

Hardly was the news known when Richard took the Cross ; the Emperor prepared to place himself at the head of the Crusaders. Even Philip and Henry, neither of whom possessed an emotional or spiritual temperament, were persuaded by the eloquence of the Archbishop of Tyre and the pressure of public opinion to join the Crusade.

For England the only immediate result, however, was an important change in the methods of taxation, for in order to raise funds for the projected expenditure a new tax depending on a new principle was imposed. The Saladin Tithe indeed commenced the system of income-tax and tax of personalty which was so extensively developed in the succeeding centuries.

RICHARD DOES HOMAGE TO PHILIP

Before, however, Henry could keep his vow to fight against the infidels a new rebellion had broken out against Richard in Poitou, and had developed in a manner which threatened the gravest complications. The Poitevins were quickly suppressed, it is true, but in the course of subduing their revolt Richard had become embroiled with the Count of Toulouse. Toulouse was raided and some important captures were made. Philip now entered upon the scene. Possibly he desired to protect his feudatory ; probably he was glad of an excuse to avoid the Crusade ; certainly he invaded Auvergne and gained almost the whole of Berri.

It was now that Henry decided to take part in the dispute. By July 11, 1188, he had landed in France. At first he endeavoured to make peace with Philip, but without success. The war drifted on for some time, Richard still fighting on the side of his father and being engaged in an attack on Berri. The war was, indeed, going in favour of Henry when Philip proposed peace. The offer was accepted. The peace which followed was, however, illusory. Philip gathered fresh forces, largely by hiring mercenaries whom he never paid. He also appears to have tried to wean Richard from his allegiance. He was successful in persuading Richard to arrange a meeting at Bonmoulins on November 18. There, after three days of discussion, which became more and more heated as hour succeeded hour and in which Henry was out-manœuvred, the marriage of Richard with Adela was proposed. Richard also demanded that he be recognized as Henry's successor. It was only after the refusal of Henry to assent to this that Richard there and then flinging off his sword offered to the French King his homage for all the French fiefs. Even then he reserved his allegiance to his father and his father's rights during Henry's lifetime. When the conference broke up Henry had gained a two months' truce and had lost his son. Richard, ignoring his father, rode off with Philip of France.

Death of Henry

Henry was now ill. The conference which had been arranged to meet in the January of 1189 had twice to be postponed. The Christmas Court, deserted by all but a few faithful barons, had been very different from those which but a few years before Henry had held in England and Normandy. On Easter Day, however, a meeting was arranged. The opposing sides were unable to agree and the war was renewed. Philip's forces were immediately successful. Henry narrowly escaped being seized when Le Mans fell. Tours was captured, and on July 4 Henry, who was now so ill that he was almost incapable of further action, met his enemies at Colombières and peace was arranged. Richard was acknowledged as heir to the throne by King and barons ; an indemnity was paid to Philip, who received Henry's absolute submission ; all claim to Auvergne was surrendered.

It may be that Henry viewed these terms, bitter though they were, as but an episode in a struggle which he intended to wage to a victorious conclusion. But his end was drawing nigh. Racked with pain, worn out with anxiety, he was already dying. One last blow remained. As he rode to Chinon after the conference, much dejected and cursing the day on which he was born, he received the list of those who had conspired against him. At the head was the name of John.

Within two days the King was dead. When he learnt of the treachery of the darling he had risked all to aid the great will of the King broke down, and, taking to his bed, he turned his face to the wall, crying, "Now let things go as they will; I care no more for myself or for the world." He died whispering, "Shame, shame on a conquered King."

Next day he was borne to his grave dressed in his royal robes with his face uncovered. Roger of Wendover would have us believe that when Richard, going to meet the mournful procession, drew near the corpse blood flowed from the dead King's nostrils, and the unfaithful son, seeing in this a judgment on his actions, turned aside and burst into tears.

CHAPTER XXII

THE AGE OF CHIVALRY

RICHARD I

1189–1199

THE history of the reign of Richard Cœur de Lion is less insular than that of any other reign in early English history. For a season we are perforce hurried through strange lands, into strange schemes and exploits having so little bearing on the development of our polity that it is almost an impertinence to intrude them into a history of our State. Yet all the while the dominant figure of England's King stands out in each enterprise, seeming beside the jealous Philip, the wily Henry, and the traitorous John the ideal knight of the ideal chivalry. The King, indeed, carries the history of his time with him. Where he is all is glamour and romance; where he is not is often sordid dullness. From the moment when, turning from the corpse of the dead King, he departed to take up the reins of government, to his last hour, when he fell to a chance arrow shot in an affray which originated in a dispute over buried treasure, his every action breathes the spirit of his age. When passing from the England of Henry II to the England of Richard I we seem to pass from the merchant's steelyard to the noble's tilt-yard, from an age of prudent, sober business to an age of chivalry such as troubadours delighted then to sing of. We may follow this kingly knight, whose wonderful feats of arms live still in many a Turkish story, as he journeys to the Holy Land; we may watch with the crowds which gather at the sound of his heralds' trumpet-blasts when he arrives at

Messina; we can be with him as he leads his soldiers to capture Messina citadel, "in less time than it takes a priest to chant the Matins"; we can watch him plan his castle of Mate-griffon to hold a Greek tribe at bay; we can discreetly watch his wooing of Berengaria of Navarre and be present at the wedding ceremony which graced his conquest of Cyprus; we can disembark with him at the Holy Land, having seen the capture on the way of the biggest ship since Noah built his ark;[1] we can admire his tact and tactics at Acre, his personal triumphs against Saladin's hosts, his progress to within sight of Jerusalem the Holy, his relief of Joppa; we can journey with him into the midst of the followers of the 'Old Man of the Mountain,' the Moslem fraternity of the Assassins; returning we can watch him, after having suffered shipwreck, travelling as pilgrim through the land of his jealous rival the Duke of Austria; we can see him captured and incarcerated and handed over to another rival, the Emperor Henry, follow the faithful minstrel as he seeks his King, and observe the transports of a delighted people as they welcome back their ruler; we can watch 'Saucy Castle' rise, and listen to the taunts that Philip and Richard exchange during its building; indeed, we can follow the King from accession to grave, and throughout the whole story we shall hardly know whether we are reading sober history or some romantic tale woven around an imaginary hero.

Romantic Literature

We are now treating of a period when the stories of Chrétien de Troyes, of Geoffrey of Monmouth, Marie de France, Wace, Walter Map, Robert de Borron, and Layamon, must have seemed far more real than they do to-day. The Celtic tales tell us indeed much of the state of noble society in those days. War was idealized, love was idealized not only in the written word but sometimes in action. It is true that these years give us many examples of perfidy, or treachery, or mere lust quite as gross as those which come from other periods, but it was now that the society of the noble aimed at showing at least outwardly the graces and the generosities so prominently portrayed in those old romantic tales. The King of England sought to be a King Arthur; his knights emulated the courtesy of Sir Galahad. Prowess in the tilt-yard and at the tournament was necessary if a knight was to be deemed worthy of his class. From his early youth every page possessed his lady-love. The formal courtesies of babee and squire and knight were punctiliously observed. Society was elevated by many high and worthy ideals which went far to soften the asperities of the old feudal nobility. Yet in fact there was another side to the picture. Treachery and vice found a ready key to the gates of wickedness in the knightly trust which was one of the tenets of the cult of chivalry. Women, though idealized in word, were often degraded and dishonoured in fact. Both Richard and, in a lower and greater degree, John were notorious for their amours. Both were guilty time and again of treachery. As with the King, so with the nobles. As a result the period seems an unreal one in which the forms and manners of society are noble, the practices of society often ignoble. As for the common folk, their lives are spent much as in previous years. While wealth increased from increased commerce, it was lessened by heavier taxation. The towns, it is true, were growing in importance, and many won valuable privileges in this and the succeeding reign. Luxury, however, which had ceased to be rare among the nobles, was as yet but little known to the commoners. The glamour of life was still restricted to the castle and the Court. The lowly had no share in the pageants of the great except as onlookers.

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[1] According to Richard of Devizes.

The Third Crusade

The King, whose imagination had early been fired by the desire to take a part in rescuing the Holy Sepulchre from the infidels, lost little time in giving effect to his intentions. By

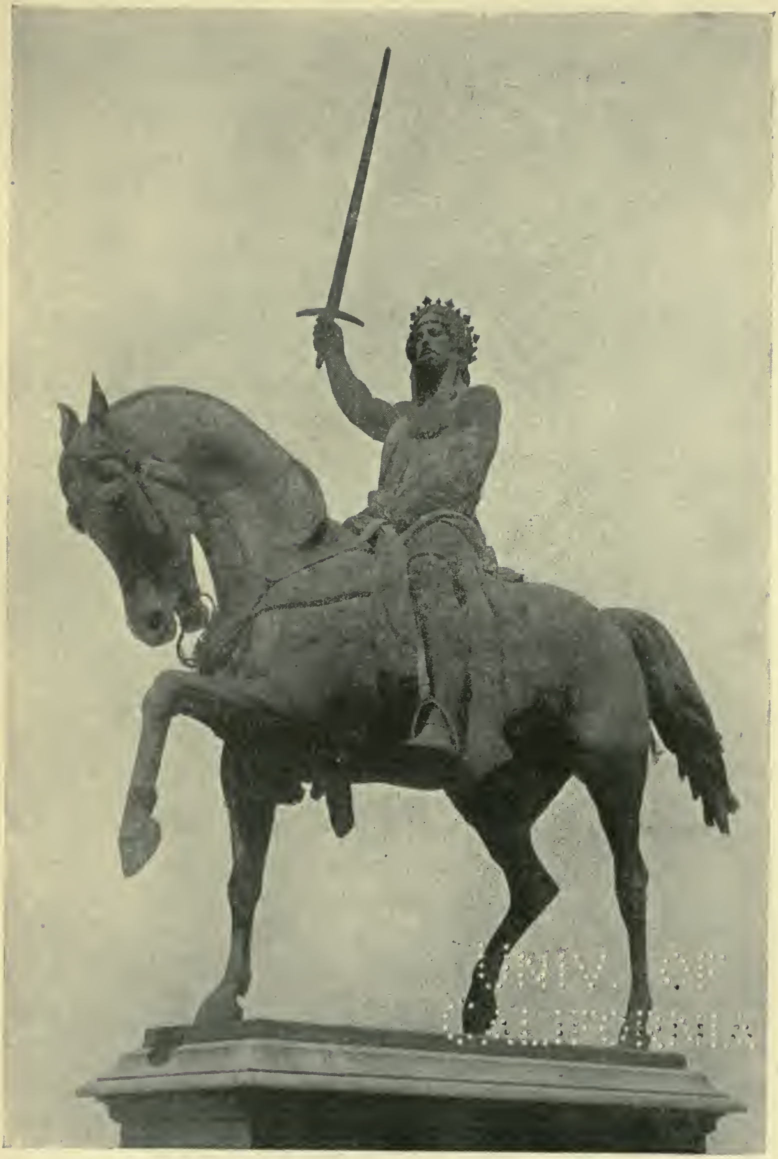

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PLATE XLVII. RICHARD I

the autumn of 1189 he had returned to England in order to be crowned and consecrated King by Baldwin, Archbishop of Canterbury, and in order to raise the money necessary for his campaign. The day of his coronation (September 3) was marked by the outbreak of anti-Jewish riots. Richard of Devizes tells us how in London many of the Jews were dispatched to "their father the devil." Other massacres occurred. Winchester "but mildly spared the vermin," and a little later the Jews at York, having been shut up with their wives and children in the castles, were offered the alternative of martyrdom or apostasy. They chose the former, and the second year of this reign of chivalry is marked by the terrible spectacle of these Jews slaying their wives and their children, and then themselves, rather than submit to be Christianized.

Meanwhile Richard, who had taken no part in these anti-Jewish attacks, and who eventually took the unhappy people under his protection, had been raising money by every means at his disposal. Everything he had was for sale to the highest bidder. Jesting with a friend one day he offered to sell London itself if he could find a chapman. Ranulf de Glanvill, Henry's great Justiciar, was given into custody and forced to ransom himself for 15,000 pounds of silver. Hugh de Puiset, the high-born Bishop of Durham, bought the Justiciarship and freedom from service in the Crusade by paying 1000 silver marks. Geoffrey, the natural son of Henry and child of a woman low in station and character, who alone of all the late King's children had remained with his father to the end, bought the Archbishopric of York for 3000 pounds. Richard even went so far as to release William of Scotland from his allegiance on payment of a fine of 15,000 marks.

On the other hand, Richard, with true knightly generosity, bestowed great estates on his mother, Eleanor, now released from the long captivity into which she had been thrown by Henry, and upon his brother John. Eleanor, indeed, now possessed a triple dower, having been given her own dower and those of the Queens of Henry I and

Stephen. John for his part could not find in poverty a cause for rebellion. The Earldoms of Devon, Cornwall, Dorset, Somerset, and Derby, the honour of Lancaster, together with the castles of Marlborough and Ludgershall, became his princely portion, and in addition he gained the county of Gloucester on his marriage with Isabella, daughter and heiress of the late Earl.

Richard leaves England

It was not until the June of 1190 that the King was able to set out on the Crusade.[1] Although intensely anxious to be gone, common prudence demanded that his going should synchronize with that of Philip of France, and Philip delayed. Moreover, careless though he sometimes appeared of his kingdom of England, he was of no mind to leave it to be seized by some usurper in his absence. To protect his rights as King he relied upon his mother and upon his old minister, William Longchamp, a man of common birth who had risen to eminence in his service, and who was throughout his loyal and devoted servant. Longchamp now became, jointly with Hugh de Puiset, Justiciar. They were an ill-yoked couple, and Hugh was soon driven to restrict himself to the district north of the Humber.

Some time before Richard's departure from England, at the Council convened to meet at Pipewell Abbey on September 15, 1189, many other important offices had been filled by worthy men. There Hubert Walter, a relative and follower of Ranulf de Glanvill, was made Bishop of Salisbury, to become shortly afterward Archbishop of Canterbury, and Richard fitz Neal was made Bishop of London. Two other men now rising to greatness, William Marshal and Geoffrey fitz Peter, were rewarded by justiceships.

These positive steps taken by the King to preserve his throne were wise ones, but Richard was not yet content. At Canterbury, shortly before he set sail, he required his brothers

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[1] He left England, however, on December 11, 1189.

John and Geoffrey[1] to take an oath not to enter England within three years of his departure. At Eleanor's request John was soon afterward freed from his oath, with what result we shall see.

The Charter of Sea Laws

It was after Richard had met Philip at Tours and Vézelay, where it was decided that their armies should proceed to Messina, and before the English, numbering some 8000, and including, besides the King, Archbishop Baldwin, Ranulf de Glanvill, and Hubert Walter, had set sail, that Richard at the Council of Chinon drew up his Charter of Sea Laws addressed "to all his subjects about to proceed by sea to Jerusalem," laws which aimed at preventing private quarrels and lawlessness. In these laws we find some unusual punishments decreed. Thus in the case of robbers convicted of theft it was commanded that the felon's head was to be cropped, boiling pitch poured thereon, and the feathers of a cushion shaken upon him.

Richard at Messina

Shortly after the Council of Chinon had been held the English fleet arrived at Marseilles and Richard's army embarked for Messina. The King himself followed shortly afterward, and landed amid a pomp and ceremony more suited to a conqueror than a Crusader. At Messina the army remained throughout the winter months, and it was not until the April of 1191 that Richard set sail for the Holy Land. Of the intervening months we propose to say but little. We cannot stay to follow the King in his alliances, enmities, and final friendship with Tancred, whom he recognized as King of Sicily in opposition to the Emperor Henry VI. We pass by the attacks on the Griffones. Even the capture of Messina itself, following on a quarrel over the dowry of Joan, Queen of William, the preceding King of Sicily, must not detain us except to notice that a tactless deed[1] committed by Richard after the capture of the city added a peculiar personal hatred to Philip's jealousy of the rival house of Anjou, hatred which was further increased by Richard's wooing of Berengaria of Navarre, whom Queen Eleanor had lately brought with her to Naples.

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[1] His half-brother, the Archbishop of York. The Archbishop of Canterbury (Baldwin) accompanied Richard on the Crusade. Both the Archbishops were thus absent from the realm.

In earlier years Richard had been betrothed to Philip's sister Adela. The young Princess had, however, caught the errant fancy of Henry II, and would appear to have become his mistress; later, as we have seen,[2] Henry had offered to marry her to John. We have seen how John was now married to Isabella of Gloucester. Richard, deeming himself no longer bound to Adela, desiring to strengthen his position in the south, and captivated by the charms of Berengaria, "a damsel of the greatest prudence and most accomplished manners," would have married this daughter of Navarre at once in Sicily had it not been Lent. As it was, while Eleanor on Richard's departure set sail for England, Berengaria, accompanied by Joan of Sicily, sailed with Richard.

CYPRUS

The voyage proved an eventful one. Delayed by storms, which caused some loss, it was not until May 6 that the fleet eventually put into harbour, not in the Holy Land, but in Cyprus, then ruled over by Isaac, a descendant of that Alexius Comnenus whom we have already mentioned.[3] Isaac, friend to neither Norman nor Angevin, had taken prisoners the crews of two of the Crusaders' ships which had been wrecked. When the main fleet soon after put into the harbour of Limasol Isaac showed himself openly hostile; but Richard, having landed his forces, and aided by Guy of Lusignan, King of Jerusalem, attacked the Cypriotes, and captured their king and their island. Then, in the harbour town into which the fleet had first put in, Richard and Berengaria were married, his lady being afterward crowned Queen of England by John, Bishop of Evreux.

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[1] When the city was taken the banner of the English King alone was flown on the city battlements. Subsequently Richard condescended to allow Philip's standard also to be flown, but the incident caused much irritation to Philip.

[2] Page 534.

[3] Page 337.

RICHARD AT ACRE

By June 5 Richard was able to leave Cyprus, and three days later arrived at Acre, then in its second year of siege. The town itself was held by Saladin, and was besieged by Guy of Lusignan, who in turn was besieged by Turks and Thracians. Already, in April, Philip had arrived to relieve Guy, but had given support to Guy's rival for the Kingship of Jerusalem, Conrad, Marquis of Montferrat. As yet, however, Jerusalem had to be won and Acre had to be taken—no easy task, and one requiring all the military skill possessed in such abundance by the English King.

Richard at once began to superintend the preparations for the attack upon the city. The forces which had lately arrived were added to those of Guy (which had never been entirely encircled), and the King, although suffering from an attack of fever, by his energy, bravery, and military ability soon became the acknowledged leader of all but a few of Philip's Frankish followers. Despite his splendid example there seems to have been considerable laxity in the conduct of the siege, and at one time the town would easily have been taken had not the larger part of the Crusaders been breakfasting at the time a breach in the defences was made. At length, however, after battering-ram and sap, and berfrey, trebuchet, and catapult had done their work, and after several minor battles had been fought, the Turks were forced to assent to terms of peace, whereby they agreed to surrender Acre, the Holy Cross, some 1200 prisoners, and a large number of hostages.

PHILIP AND THE DUKE OF AUSTRIA RETURN

The fall of Acre was marked by an incident similar to that which had angered Philip when Messina was taken. Among the leaders who had invested Acre before Richard's arrival was the Duke of Austria, and he, deeming himself entitled to a prominent share in the glory of the capture, caused his standard to be raised beside that of Richard on the conquered citadel. The standard of the Duke was cast down and trampled in the mud, if not by the command at least with the consent of the King, and the Duke, enraged at the insult, returned to Austria, having sworn to be revenged.

Philip, while yet negotiations with Saladin were in progress, having taken an oath to Richard not to injure his men or encroach upon his territory in France, having granted to Conrad, Marquis of Montferrat, his share of Acre, and having given the command of the French Crusaders to the Bishop of Beauvais and the Duke of Burgundy, also retired from the Crusade and returned to France.

ADVANCE ON JERUSALEM

The peace arranged with the Turks had already been repudiated by Saladin. For a time there followed some desultory warfare, marked by continual disagreement between the English and French leaders. Richard was, however, able to raid some of the coast towns, and to win an important victory at Arsuf (September 7) over Saladin. The relief of Jerusalem was only prevented by the defection of the Duke of Burgundy, and Richard was compelled to retire on Ascalon. This was in the January of 1192, and the next few months were spent in rebuilding Ascalon, which had been almost razed to the ground by Saladin. Meanwhile further dissensions had arisen. Montferrat had been elected King of Jerusalem, and had been murdered by Assassins. Henry of Champagne, Richard's nephew, had succeeded, and Guy of Lusignan had been appeased by the grant to him by Richard of the kingdom of Cyprus.

RICHARD'S RETURN

In June Richard attempted once more to reach Jerusalem, but had to content himself with a fleeting glance at the walls of the city. The King was destined to get no nearer to his goal, when a failing cause, continued ill-health, and the news of the expulsion of Longchamp by John decided him to abandon for the moment any further effort to drive the infidels from the Holy City. Before he finally set sail he was able, however, to relieve the small and hard-pressed garrison of the castle of Joppa by a sudden onslaught, in which his personal bravery and military skill enabled him to defeat a numerically superior force. By the October of 1192, however, a truce had been arranged with Saladin for 3 years 3 months 3 weeks 3 days and 3 hours, and as the King sailed away amid the lamentations of his followers, gazing upon the land of all his high endeavours, he prayed: "O Holy Land, to God do I entrust thee. May He, of His mercy, grant me such span of life that, by His good will, I may bring thee aid. For it is my hope and purpose to aid thee at some future time."

No military commander ever departed from the territories of his enemy so admired by those against whom he had fought. We hear one Turkish leader, smarting under a defeat, saying of the King, "He is the first in every enterprise, he is the most brave and splendid soldier, superior to any man that we have ever seen." Safadin, Saladin's brother, once when Richard was lying ill prayed to the God of the Christians to save the life of this great and needful man, and in another place speaks of Richard as being burdened by the French King like a cat with a hammer tied to its tail. It is quite probable that the Third Crusade would have been completely successful had not the Crusaders' counsel been divided, and had Richard been given sole control. As it was, the Crusade, bereft of all its leaders, died away, having attained nothing lasting but the conquest of Cyprus.

STATE OF ENGLAND

In England the condition of affairs rendered the King's immediate return imperative. Longchamp, after his victory over Hugh de Puiset, had for a time been supreme and had assumed the state of an emperor. To entertain him meant ruin for his unhappy host; to meet the expenditures incurred by the minister in England and the master in the Holy Land the resources of the Exchequer were taxed to the utmost. The result was a widespread feeling of discontent, which was given impetus and direction when John landed in the early months of 1191.

John had already determined upon rebellion and the overthrow of the plan devised by Richard and Longchamp to obtain the early recognition of Arthur as Richard's successor. It was not, however, until late in the spring of 1191 that John's party was actually in arms, and in the meantime Walter of Coutances, Archbishop of Rouen, had been sent by Richard to England armed with secret powers. By the summer peace had been made, and in the treaty signed at Winchester a famous clause made its appearance whereby it was provided that no baron or freeholder should lose land or goods without trial according to the law of the land. The clause, however, ended very differently from the similar one which later appeared in Magna Carta, for it added, "save by the command of the King." It was directed not so much against royal prerogatives as against the Justiciar.

The position of Longchamp had already been undermined, but his overthrow was due rather to an act of folly on his part than to the opposition of John. We have seen how Geoffrey, Archbishop of York, had, at the time of Richard's departure, been required to remain absent from the kingdom for three years. That period had not yet expired when Geoffrey, saying that he had been relieved of his oath, attempted to land at Dover. He was opposed by the agents of Longchamp, who, as soon as the Archbishop had disembarked, endeavoured to arrest him. Geoffrey sought sanctuary in the priory church of St Martin, but was dragged out and carried off a prisoner. The deed resulted in the excommunication of Longchamp and in his deposition from office. He was even driven to seek personal safety by taking refuge in the Tower of London.

LONDON A COMMUNE

It was now, in order finally to win the citizens of London over to his side, that John offered them a privilege which we are told Richard would not have sold them for a thousand thousand marks.[1] London became a commune, headed by a mayor aided by *échevins* (? aldermen) and a common council of *probi homines*. In its corporate capacity it occupied the position of a great feudal vassal. It was able at once to organize its citizens and to oppose the King's will more effectively.

RICHARD A PRISONER

Not only were affairs unstable in England, but also on the Continent. Philip after his return hastened his preparations for an attack upon Normandy. By the end of 1191 he was back in his kingdom, and before winter was over had offered the hand of Adela once more to John,[2] together with all the fiefs held by the King of Philip. The plan was considered by John, already growing restive under the loyal rule of the Archbishop of Rouen, and was only thwarted for the time by the interposition of Eleanor.

Matters were, indeed, too unstable to permit of the King's continued absence from his realm, and Richard, having abandoned the Crusade, hastened back with all speed. Hiring a swift merchant ship in order the more quickly to make the journey by sea, he intended to reach England by the end of 1192. Misfortune, however, overtook him. Wrecked in the Adriatic, he was cast on inhospitable shores and compelled to continue his journey overland, through the territory of his enemy, the Duke of Austria. Dressed in the garb of a pilgrim he attempted to escape recognition, but was discovered, and in the December of 1192 was arrested by command of the Duke. Two months later the captive was handed over to the Emperor Henry VI, and when the news of the King's capture reached England he had already been compelled to recognize the Emperor as overlord.

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[1] The immediate result was that Longchamp was forced to fly. He escaped to the Continent, disguised as a woman.

It was proposed to get a divorce for John.

Philip lost little time in taking full advantage of Richard's capture, and John, insensible to the interests of the kingdom, aided the King of France in his attack upon Normandy and in his efforts to keep Richard in captivity. Already Gisors had been taken and the Vexin occupied and Philip was before Rouen when in February 1194, almost a year after Richard's place of captivity had been discovered, the major part of the King's ransom of 150,000 marks was paid over to the Emperor. On March 2 Richard was free, and John, who had in January surrendered all the frontier towns of Normandy to Philip, hastened to join the King of France; but already Philip had counselled submission with the words, "The devil is loose. Beware!" By May Richard had reached Normandy, his coming being celebrated with great rejoicings. At Lisieux he was met by John, who, falling on his knees, begged the King's forgiveness, forgiveness which, though ill-deserved, was readily granted.

MODES OF TAXATION

The money which had been raised to ransom Richard had not been collected without resort to new means. The reign is, in fact, noteworthy for the development of the Exchequer. Hubert Walter, now Archbishop of Canterbury, Justiciar and legate, was mainly entrusted with the raising of the revenue in the later years of the reign. Besides the ancient taxes, taxes on personalty and income were frequently resorted to; carucage was devised; tournaments were promoted throughout the country, and licences were sold to permit participation in them, an earl paying twenty, a baron ten, and a knight four marks for the right to attend. More important from the national point of view, the Justiciar, in order to render the increased taxation less burdensome, encouraged trade. Measures were passed designed to check cheating and encourage honest dealing, assizes of weights and measures were passed. Some of these laws appear quaint rather than useful. Thus it was decreed that "no trader shall hang up outside his shop red or black cloths or anything else by which the sight of purchasers shall be deceived in choosing a good cloth." For the purpose of raising the ransom more exceptional methods had been resorted to. A quarter of all personalty had been taken. The Cistercians, then the greatest wool-dealers in the kingdom, surrendered a great part of their wool. Churches and monasteries gave up much of their plate and many jewels.

Richard and Philip

During the remaining years of his reign Richard almost entirely concerned himself with his French possessions. England was left in charge of Hubert Walter, who, with the aid of the Council, ruled wisely and with temperance. On occasion heavy taxation and the awakening sense of civic freedom resulted in some riots, as in those which followed on the eloquent harangues of William the Bearded,[1] citizen of London. In the main, however, England was quiet. On the other hand, throughout the King's Continental possessions warfare was almost continuous, and, in the words of Roger of Wendover, "the two kings played at castle-taking." The whole campaign was rather a mighty tournament than a serious war. Yet in truth both Philip and Richard were intent upon the destruction of the other. For years, long before Richard's accession, the houses of Capet and of Anjou had been at enmity. So far we have seen how for a season Henry II had held his territories together, how at the time of his death his fortunes were declining, and how further loss was checked for the moment by the Crusade, which absorbed the military energy of both Richard and Philip. Hardly had Philip returned, however, when the attacks on the English possessions in France were renewed. The Treaty of Messina, by which the Vexin was returned to Richard and Arthur was acknowledged Richard's heir should he die childless, was broken, and for the rest of the reign the two Kings are almost continually at war.

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[1] William fitz Osbert. He was eventually hanged, after being dragged from Bow Church and drawn on a hurdle to the gibbet.

Of the various castles built, attacked, destroyed, or captured we do not propose to speak. Touraine and Poitou were early cleared of the enemy in the course of a campaign which nearly yielded Philip as prisoner to Richard. By 1197 Richard had carried the struggle to a higher plane, had formed alliances with the Count of Flanders, and had obtained the support of his relative the newly crowned Emperor of Germany, Otto IV, a Guelf and an opponent of the Hohenstaufer.

Already, partly on an island in the Seine, partly on its banks where it bends through the valley of Les Andelys, Richard had built Château Gaillard, his 'Saucy Castle,' the most wonderful military structure of his age, to hold firm the Norman border. Already the Counts of Brittany, Champagne, Chartres, and Boulogne had been persuaded to join Richard against Philip. It almost seemed that the King of England would overwhelm the King of France. Richard had shown both tenacity of purpose and breadth of view. When the Archbishop of Rouen laid Normandy under an interdict because the King persisted in the building of Château Gaillard on Church lands, Richard had replied by continuing the work and sending an embassy to Rome.

DEATH OF RICHARD

Despite the heavy expenses of the Crusade and his ransoming, the King demanded yet more money to complete his plans against Philip. He was awaiting the arrival of a military levy from England in order to make a final attack upon Philip, when he was fatally wounded by a poisoned arrow shot in a small affray while attacking the castle of Chalus in his own Duchy of Aquitaine, in order to compel the surrender of some buried treasure. The castle was taken by the King, who was unaware of the serious nature of the wound. Twelve days later Richard was dead.

The death of Richard marks the end of England's hold on Normandy. While he lived he had increased his power

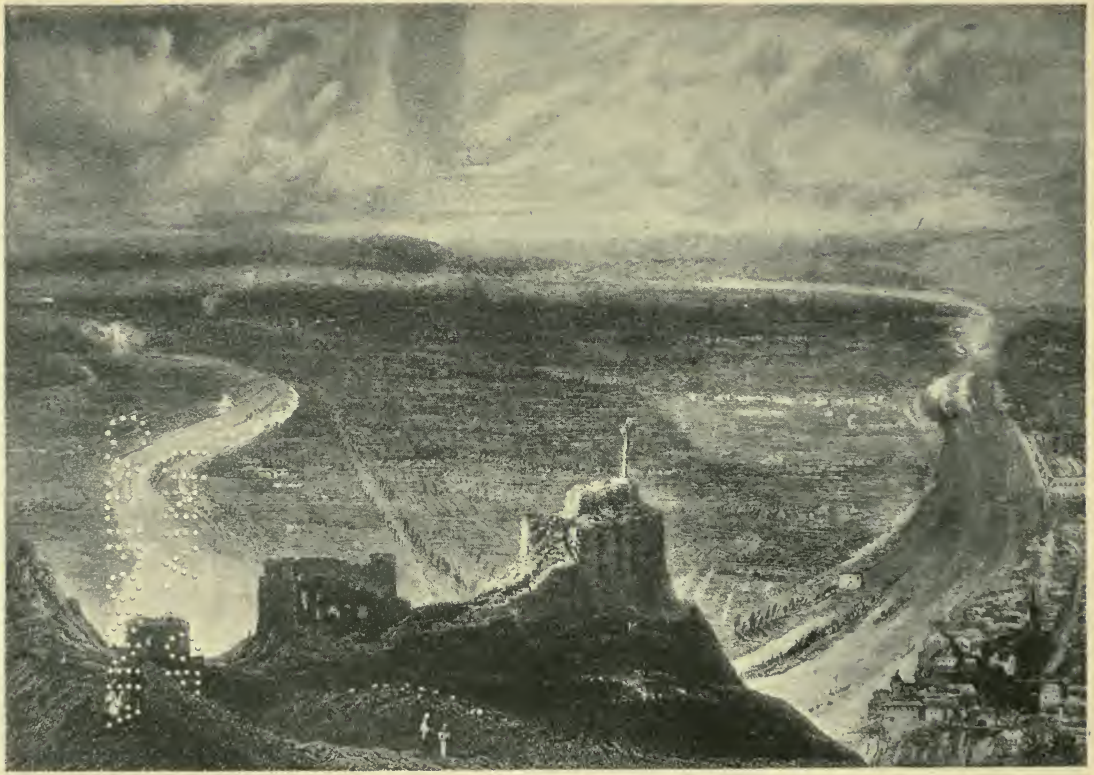

PLATE XLVIII. CHÂTEAU GAILLARD

abroad rather than the converse; he had also created a combination against Philip which might have proved overwhelming had he lived to lead his allies in person against the man he hated. Hence onward there is a change in the tide.

A vile and vicious King succeeded. France gained almost at a blow most of the English King's Continental possessions, and although John, by the exercise of that ability which was his one good quality, came near to recovering all that had been lost, his schemes were thwarted by his own misrule, and France remained mistress of nearly all the disputed territory. Had Richard lived it may be that from Château Gaillard and Boutavant armies would have moved to the capture of Paris itself, and the whole history of Europe might have been changed. The dead King has left a high and glorious reputation as warrior and knight. He might, had he lived, have been famed as a conqueror; but he was dead, and with him died " alike the pride and honour of the chivalry of the West."

CHAPTER XXIII

LOSS AND GAIN

JOHN

FROM ACCESSION TO MAGNA CARTA

1199–1215

THE change from Richard to John is in every sense an abrupt one. Whereas we have been speaking of an ornament of chivalry, of a period when England was at peace, when the kingship was worthily enhanced in dignity and power, when the unstable elements on the Continent were being brought into a union of seeming strength, we must now pass to a time of civil discord, when the throne was occupied by a King destitute of any grace of character, when conflicting nationalities abroad broke away from England. As we have seen, even in Henry's day the loss of the Continental dominions of the King had with difficulty been averted. Richard's manifold abilities had delayed the severance, but no sooner was John enthroned than they began to fall away. Philip was able to take them one by one with hardly a blow being struck to retain them.

John must not be too hastily blamed for these losses. Philip's conquests had occurred before it was clearly seen what manner of king now ruled. Years after Normandy had gone John had gained for himself a position in England more unassailable than that occupied by any ruler who had preceded him. When at last he fell, through the state of civil discord which his vices had produced, he had almost succeeded in creating a coalition of forces against Philip which might have regained for England all that she had lost. John, indeed, while possessing all the personal vices of his race, also possessed their great abilities. It was his unbounded immorality that worked his downfall and gained for England her Charter of Liberties, rather than any want of industry or skill in government. Neither his treacheries nor his submission to the Pope caused the barons to rise against him; that was due rather to the fact that his cruelty and immorality drove the barons in their own defence and in the defence of their homes to pull down a despotism which was neither benevolent nor just.

ARTHUR OF BRITTANY

At the outset John's position was gravely weakened by the existence of a rival for the throne. Arthur of Brittany, son of his elder brother Geoffrey, was, if the succession was to follow the law of primogeniture, unquestionably entitled to rule. That law had yet to be fully established. Arthur could claim, however, not only that he was the representative of the elder branch, but also that his succession to the throne had at times been favoured both by Richard and his ministers, and on the late King's death he by no means abandoned his pretensions. While John rode to Chinon to obtain the royal treasure, Arthur's party was busy raising troops in Brittany. Angers joyfully threw open its gates to the young Count, and John barely escaped capture at the hands of his rival's forces. Maine also declared for Arthur, and Le Mans, which had treated John coldly, received him gladly.

John meanwhile had received the allegiance of Normandy, although already he had offended the clergy by his irreverent behaviour, and while in Normandy had taken steps to gain the support of the leading men in England. Hubert Walter, William Marshal, Geoffrey fitz Peter, and William de Breose were, in fact, able to win for John the support of nearly every party in England, and John felt himself strong enough to conduct a punitive expedition against the capital towns of Maine and Anjou. Le Mans was razed to the ground and Angers was fired. Aquitaine was being held by the aged

Eleanor, but already the French were threatening when John, leaving the Continent, took ship for England.

The journey to England had been undertaken for the purpose of his coronation and in order to settle the affairs of the kingdom and to receive the homage of the King of Scots. His right to the throne was acknowledged by the barons at a Great Council held at Northampton after John had sworn to give to each man his right, and on May 27, 1199, the Primate performed the ceremony of coronation. The King later proceeded to meet William of Scotland, but the King of Scots was meditating war, and his envoys delivered an ultimatum later in the year when John was about to sail for Normandy. Northumberland and Cumberland were demanded as the price of peace. John chose war, and appointed William de Stuteville as guardian of the northern march.

JOHN IN NORMANDY

By the July of 1199 John was back in Normandy. Meanwhile Arthur had not merely done homage to Philip for Anjou and Maine, but had handed those provinces over to the French King, who took the young Count into his charge. Eleanor had also done homage for Aquitaine, receiving back the fief for life.[1] John's first step was to endeavour to come to terms with Philip, but he refused to cede the Norman Vexin and to acknowledge Arthur's rights to Anjou and Maine. For a moment it seemed as though Philip would be confronted with an alliance between the Emperor, the Pope, and the King of England, but John failed to take advantage of his opportunity and war found him isolated.

Philip's first step was, however, directed against Arthur. Maine was seized, and William des Roches, fearful for the young Count, took him to John, trusting rather in the mercy of the boy's uncle than in that of Philip. But Constance, Arthur's mother, judged better the true character of the King, and escaped with her son the next night. For a time no

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[1] She was then nearly eighty years of age.

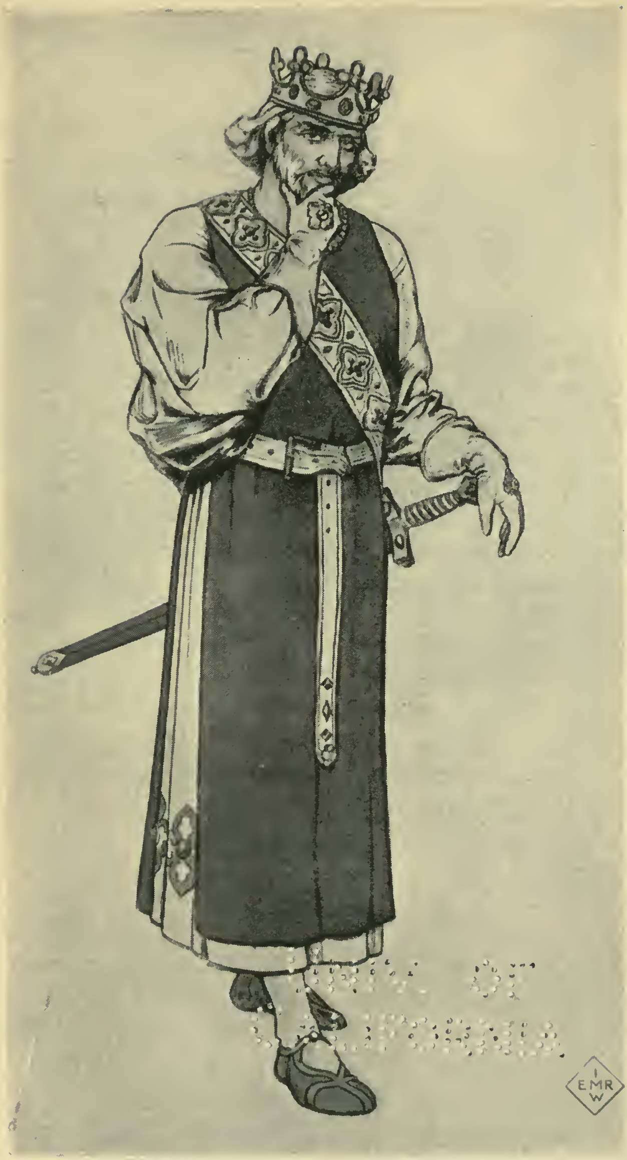

PLATE XLIX. JOHN

further act of war was committed by Philip, and in the May of 1200 peace was declared, following upon a truce which had been arranged in the preceding January.

JOHN AND ISABELLA OF ANGOULÊME

Already by the end of 1199 John had divorced his wife Isabella of Gloucester, and, while negotiations were proceeding for his union with a Portuguese princess, had seen and admired the youthful Isabella of Angoulême, then but twelve years of age. Toward the end of the summer they were married, and journeyed to England for the coronation of the young bride. The marriage was destined to be the first step in the loss of Normandy. Isabella had already been betrothed to Hugo of Lusignan, a member of one of the most powerful families in Poitou, and in revenge Hugo raised a rebellion. This revolt might have been ended through the mediation of Philip, who persuaded John to promise not to dispossess any Poitevin except after lawful trial, but John evaded his bargain by making a mockery of the court in which such trials were held.

By now Philip, who had been embroiled in a bitter dispute with the Pope over his divorce of Ingeborg, had terminated the resulting quarrel and was free once more to act. John was summoned to Paris to answer the charges which were being made against him by the barons of Poitou. The summons was not unnaturally ignored, and Philip, having dubbed Arthur knight, invested him with the countships of Brittany, Maine, Anjou, Touraine, and Poitou, and betrothed him to his daughter Jeanne, attacked Normandy in the summer of 1202.

THE MURDER OF ARTHUR

The loss of Normandy is intimately connected with the murder of the young Count. The commencement of the campaign saw Philip taking several castles without meeting any serious opposition, and Arthur besieging his grandmother Eleanor in the castle of Mirebeau in Poitou. Eleanor sent messengers to John, who was then at Le Mans, and before two days had passed John by forced marches had come up with Arthur's forces, had fallen upon them unaware, and heavily defeated them. Arthur was captured, together with Hugo of Lusignan and some 200 knights. Some of the knights were ransomed, some perished of starvation in Corfe Castle, Hugo of Lusignan was freed, but Arthur was kept a close prisoner. Early in 1203 Arthur was removed to Rouen, and some few months later his body was recovered from the Seine. It is more than probable that the young Count, then seventeen years of age, had been murdered by John's orders, and it would appear that John was summoned to Paris to be tried for the crime, and in his absence was condemned.[1]

The Loss of Normandy

The imprisonment of Arthur, which was contrary to an oath which the King had sworn, had driven the young Count's supporter, William des Roches, into active opposition; the terrible crime now committed swung the whole of public opinion against the King and drove the Bretons to rebellion. Philip, who after the King's victory at Mirebeau had retired from Normandy, now returned to the attack, taking with ease castle after castle. Château Gaillard, the great defensive key position designed by Richard to meet this very danger, was besieged and, apart from a feeble effort made by John to relieve it in August 1203, was left to defend itself. By March 1204 Philip's knights stormed the keep, and the greatest defensive position in France had been gained. Falaise, Caen, Bayeux, and finally Rouen itself capitulated. By April 1, 1204, when Eleanor died, little remained to John abroad save Gascony and part of Aquitaine.

Quarrel with the Pope

We leave John immersed in schemes for raising troops for the recovery of Normandy—schemes which were thwarted by the Primate and William Marshal, who resisted John's attempt to take abroad troops raised for home defence—in order to introduce upon our stage another figure destined to take a leading part in the great constitutional struggles already impending.

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[1] This, although stated in a contemporary chronicle, should be regarded as doubtful.

On July 13, 1205, the death of that able and wise Archbishop of Canterbury Hubert Walter, a Primate who had kept England tranquil, had raised without unnecessary hardship the heavy taxes to meet the ransom of Richard and the heavy military expenses of the succeeding decade, and who has left us a worthy monument in the Chancery records, the Charter, the Patent and the Close Rolls, opened a dispute touching the filling of the now vacant See of Canterbury.

"Now am I King," John had exclaimed when he heard of the Primate's death. One of his first acts was to choose John de Gray, Bishop of Norwich, as Hubert Walter's successor. The choice does not appear to have satisfied the monks of Canterbury, who in fact had already decided in favour of their sub-prior Reginald, who was now secretly elected and sent to Rome to obtain the pallium. Reginald proved to be more garrulous than discreet, and John learnt of the action of the monks. The disclosure of the scheme caused the repudiation of Reginald, and the monks offered to proceed to a regular election of the King's candidate. On December 11, 1205, John de Gray was elected by the monks, and invested by the King with the temporalities of the see.

The necessary embassy now set out for Rome in order to obtain confirmation of the election and the pallium. The chair of Peter was at this time occupied by the greatest Pope since Hildebrand. Innocent III, by the exercise of statesmanship of the highest order, was already raising the Pontificate to a position of almost unrivalled power. Innocent realized that here was an opportunity to consolidate his position in England, and he considered the matter from every aspect before giving his decision. It was not indeed until the March of 1206 that the Pope made his decision known. The confirmation of de Gray's election was then refused, and a representative deputation of monks was ordered to be sent to Rome to consult with Innocent concerning the choice of a candidate.

John, feeling himself able to rely on the monks again declaring for de Gray, allowed the deputation to depart. It was a fatal blunder. Even had de Gray been chosen, John's acquiescence in the means adopted to fill the vacancy would have created a precedent which would have destroyed a right which every king since William had claimed, the right of the king to choose his own Primate. Innocent, indeed, had struck against the principle that the King of England was head of the Church on its temporal side as well as of the State. John, however, did take steps to secure the election of de Gray. The monks who formed the deputation were bribed before setting out to elect the King's nominee. This poor scheme proved vain. Innocent was able to persuade the deputies to choose Stephen Langton, a man well fitted to hold the keep of the English Church against the strongest of royal attacks. Himself an Englishman, he had already risen to the rank of cardinal by virtue of his learning, industry, and piety. He was neither monk nor courtier, but a cleric of the finest type, possessed of all the qualities necessary to fit him to fill the *rôle* Innocent had assigned to him.

Stephen Langton consecrated Archbishop

To the Pope's written request for John's assent to the election of Langton the King returned a curt refusal. Innocent now made his next move. The royal assent was declared unnecessary, and the Archbishop-elect was consecrated by the Pope himself on June 17, 1206. John, enraged, and cursing the monks of Christ Church, seized their property, drove them from the monastery lands, and took possession of the temporalities of Canterbury. Innocent countered this action in the August of 1207 by threatening an interdict. For a moment John endeavoured to effect a compromise, but the Pope demanded an unconditional surrender of the prerogatives which John had claimed for himself and for his heirs.

To such a demand the King could hardly submit, and John, utterly irreverent as he was, saw no great spiritual terrors in an interdict which would bear more hardly on his subjects than on himself. Negotiations were suspended, and war against the Church was in fact declared. All clergymen who obeyed the interdict were threatened with loss of property. Clerics from Italy were threatened with loss of sight.

JOHN REGAINS POITOU

During the period which had elapsed between the election of de Gray in England and of Stephen Langton in Rome John had made some effort to retrieve his fortunes abroad. In June 1206 an important force had been landed at La Rochelle and Poitou was recovered. Anjou was also for a time regained, but on Philip's approach the King found it impossible to make further progress, and on October 26 a truce was arranged for two years.

The King returned in mid-winter to a country murmuring at the heavy taxation which had been wrung from it to carry on a campaign that had gained nothing abroad save Poitou and the part of Anjou south of the Loire. It was now that the dispute with Canterbury was becoming acute. John, however, wanted money and more money, and he turned to the Church to get it. At the Council of London the King demanded a heavy income-tax of the clergy. The demand was refused. Later at the Council of Oxford a grant of a thirteenth of the incomes and personalty of non-clerics was given, although the Church still refused to bear a share of the national burden. The King now determined to effect by force what he had failed to obtain by consent. The required tax was collected from the clergy, all the monastic orders apart from the Cistercians were compelled to contribute, and the Archbishop of York, who attempted to champion the cause of the Church, was forced to depart from the realm after his lands had been seized by the King.

GENERAL INTERDICT PROCLAIMED

Such was the attitude of the King to the Church when the interdict was threatened. We have seen how John had answered. For a time Innocent hesitated to use one of the most terrible of papal weapons, but at last, on March 23, 1208, the general interdict was proclaimed.

The threatened blow had fallen. In England all religious services, all Church ceremonies, save only baptism and the viaticum, were suspended. Marriages could no longer be performed in church, the burial-ground of the dead was unconsecrated. In time Mass was permitted once a week, but the people had still good cause to know what a change in life God's curse could effect. Only two bishops remained, the one John de Gray, the other Peter des Roches, who was to show his qualities more fully in the time of Henry III. The clergy were harassed with every kind of oppression and practically outlawed. The murder of a cleric seemed to the King simply the removal of an enemy, and the courts were shut to cleric suitors.

John, however, remained utterly unmoved. The struggle waged by his predecessors against baronial power had not been waged in vain. The loss of Normandy seemed almost to increase his strength. The towns were in the main with him. The force of law had grown so that the nobility was unable successfully to oppose him. The Exchequer was by now so far developed as to enable the King to hire mercenaries if feudal levies failed. Neither loved nor respected, John was still supreme.

THE KING EXCOMMUNICATED

Innocent had as yet, however, by no means exhausted his means of attack. The interdict had simply hurt an innocent people and had caused heavy loss to Church property. The next blow was aimed at the King himself. John was declared excommunicate. Again the blow glanced off. No bishop was to be found to read the sentence in England, and the news only reached the kingdom by way of rumour. John himself, utterly irreligious as he was, cared nothing at being consigned to eternal damnation or at being excluded from the company of all Christian men. His brothel Court held few who would hesitate to speak with one outside the pale of the

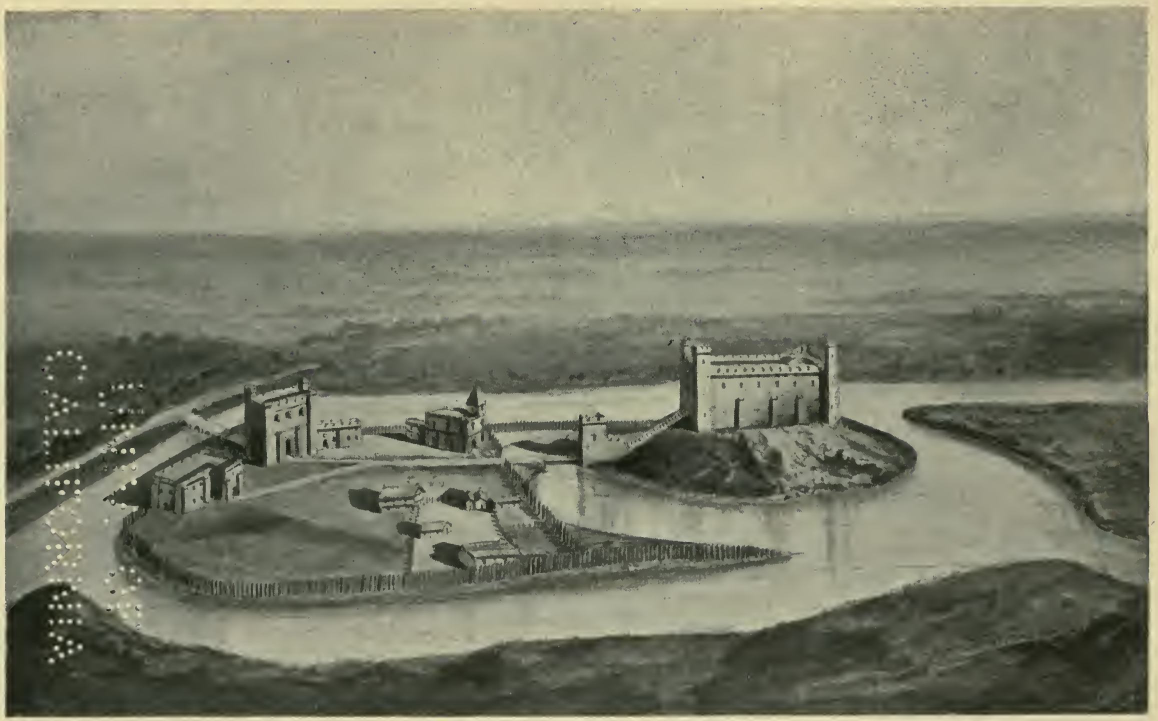

Plate L. Waytemore Castle in the Time of King John

Church. His ministers were either his creatures or were compelled to serve him and give him counsel. The Archdeacon of Norwich, who desired to be excused service at the Exchequer on the ground that John was excommunicate, was dragged in chains to prison, shut up in a tiny room, and pressed to death under a cope of lead. Bishop Robert of Bangor had his cathedral town burnt to the ground for a like reason. The Court held at Christmas 1209, two months after the sentence had been pronounced at Rome, was well attended. The following years saw John at the height of his power.

JOHN SUPREME

Already in 1207 John had quarrelled with the important marcher house of de Breose, either because money had been withheld or because Matilda, the wife of William de Breose, refused to give up her son as hostage to the murderer of Arthur.[1] William de Breose was required to surrender all his lands, which John handed over to Faulkes de Breauté. William and his sons resisted, and fled to Ireland.

To Ireland John followed in the year 1210. To finance the campaign another scutage was demanded, and the Jews were heavily taxed. In Ireland three important Welsh marcher families had sought safety—Pembroke, de Lacy, and de Breose. On John's landing the Earl of Pembroke received him as a guest; Hugh de Lacy shut his castle gates against him, but was compelled to surrender. Some of the de Breoses were captured, others driven to seek safety in Scotland. The native Irish kings rendered homage, and the English system of government and English laws were introduced.

John returned from Ireland to complete the schemes which he had been maturing against Wales. The unhappy Matilda de Breose and the son she had sought to save were meanwhile thrown into a dungeon at Windsor, where they were starved to death.

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[1] John when the sentence of excommunication was impending sent an armed force to all the men of rank in the kingdom whom he suspected to demand their sons as hostages. The fact that de Breose had the demand made of him shows that he was already under the King's displeasure.

Fresh taxation enabled John to raise a considerable army for the subjugation of Wales. At that time the most important Welsh prince was Llywelyn, called 'the Great,' who had married Joan, John's natural daughter. Opposed to Llywelyn were the rival chiefs Gwenwynwyn of Powys and Maelgwn, who had considerable power in the south. For years John had endeavoured to play chief against chief, weakening each in turn. He had now so contrived it that Gwenwynwyn and Maelgwn were united against Llywelyn, who also had the Earl of Chester at war with him in consequence of an attack which Llywelyn had directed against the Earl in 1210. Before the end of 1211 Llywelyn had been compelled to submit, to deliver hostages and cattle and to surrender a considerable tract of land.

Two years before (1209) Scotland also had been reduced to submission. We are told that the King of Scots refused to engage the forces which John had drawn up before the castle of Norham "because of the cruelty of the English King." Three years later, in the Lent of 1212, the young Alexander of Scotland was sent to the English Court, where he was knighted at table in the hospital of Clerkenwell.

By now we might indeed say, in the words of the *Histoire des Ducs*, "Never since the time of Arthur was there a king so greatly feared in England, in Wales, in Scotland, or in Ireland." So strong, indeed, was his position that John felt free once more to plan the recovery of the lost territories abroad.

John makes Submission to the Pope

The year 1212-13, which had opened so auspiciously and which held so much promise of a great coalition against Philip, was to see John fall from the position of tyrant to that of humble suitor. Abroad everything seemed favourable to the King's plans. Otto IV was at feud with the Pope and ready to aid his kinsman. Ferdinand of Portugal, Count of Flanders, had suffered like John at Philip's hands, and now entered into an alliance with the English King. The Count of Boulogne, who also had a grievance against the French King, swore to be John's man. At home steps had been taken to raise a great army with which to attack France, but when all seemed promising the Welsh broke into revolt. The King, engaged as he was in the north with William of Scotland, was unable personally to lead his army against Wales. The marcher lords were on the point of being overwhelmed when John came to the rescue, relieved Robert Vieuxpont, and hanged a number of the hostages who had been given by Llywelyn after the former rising.

John now assembled at Chester considerable forces with which to crush the Welsh. Llywelyn was, however, urged by the Pope to oppose the excommunicated King, the interdict was removed from Wales, and Llywelyn, Gwenwynwyn, and Maelgwn were absolved from their oaths of fealty. It is probable, however, that John would have pacified Wales had he not learnt of a widespread conspiracy among the baronage to kill him. Warnings received from several sources, including Joan, Llywelyn's wife, persuaded him that his murder in the fastnesses of Wales was meditated. Fearful of such a fate, he cancelled all preparations and abandoned the campaign.

By November of 1212 John's position at home had grown so serious that he made overtures to Rome, and proposed a settlement of the dispute which had been dragging on for so many years. Perhaps even now he was aware of Innocent's intention to declare him deposed. The Pope for his part seems to have regarded John's proposals as a mere play for time, and decided to compel complete surrender by passing sentence of deposition. Certainly by the opening months of 1213 that sentence had been passed and Philip had been given the task of carrying it into effect. The French King needed little persuasion to take steps to seize the proffered crown. A large fleet and a considerable army were collected, and at the Council held at Soissons in the April of 1213 it was decided by the nobility of France that Philip's son Louis, who had married Blanche of Castile, John's niece, should be King of England in the event of the enterprise succeeding.

cf Luch

Meanwhile John had not remained quiescent. Ships were collected at Portsmouth, an army was assembled and posted at various places along the coast. There was as yet no sign that John was prepared to surrender unconditionally to the Pope. It was becoming evident, however, that the King could not rely on the support of his army, composed as it was chiefly of feudal levies. The fleet was also suspect. On all sides were signs of discontent among the nobles. The time had come when John could resist no longer. He submitted as abjectly as an abject nature could permit. Stephen Langton was received as Archbishop, and in order that papal support should no longer be given to Philip, John surrendered his kingdom to Innocent, receiving it back again as a fief of Rome. The reasons which induced John to make this submission were many. He had good reason to fear that his barons would desert him on the field of battle. The day (May 24) fixed in the prophecy of Peter of Pontefract as that on which he was to lose his temporal kingdom was approaching, and John the irreligious was deeply superstitious. Whatever the cause, John received Pandulf, the papal legate, and surrendered all that he had fought for, and in the presence of his barons declared himself the vassal of the Pope, agreed to pay a yearly tribute to Rome, and degraded himself yet further by permitting his submission to be secured, not by his word, but by the oaths of four of his earls, William of Salisbury, Reginald of Boulogne, William de Warenne, and William of Ferrers. The clergy were received back, the confiscated lands were restored, and the payment of heavy damages to various bishops and to Stephen Langton himself was promised.

JOHN ATTACKS FRANCE

John's submission completely changed the trend of affairs. The Pope now forbade any attack upon his vassal, and Philip found it necessary to divert his assembled forces to Flanders. The Count of Flanders, who as we have seen had earlier become an ally of John, sent to the King for aid, and John dispatched the Earl of Salisbury with a moderate army to oppose any further progress on the part of Philip. Salisbury almost immediately gained a great success by destroying a large part of Philip's fleet while it lay in harbour, and Philip in a moment of tempestuous rage commanded that the rest be burnt. The danger of an invasion of England was over.

The war in Flanders had been successful, but it was not popular. Both commoners and barons wanted peace, and when John called for an army to aid him in a projected attack upon Poitou he was met by a curt refusal. The wilful Angevin set out almost alone, but having reached Jersey was compelled to abandon a hopeless enterprise and returned. He now endeavoured to re-create the alliances almost perfected when the Welsh rebellion had delayed his attack upon Philip in 1212. Otto and Ferdinand were to unite to attack the French from east and north, while he himself attacked from Poitou. For a time, however, the disaffection among the barons rendered him powerless, and in the July of 1214 the defeat of Otto and his supporters (including the Counts of Flanders, Boulogne, Holland, Brabant, Limburg, and the Earl of Salisbury) at Bouvines rendered the grandiose scheme impossible. Bouvines, indeed, gave the Hohenstaufer the Empire, an autocracy to France, and the Charter of Liberties to England.

At the time of Bouvines John was in France, having landed at La Rochelle with a considerable army. Some successes had been gained in Poitou and Angoulême, the Loire had been crossed and Angers occupied, but John had been forced to abandon the siege of La Roche-au-Moine owing to the refusal of the Angevins to support him and the approach of Louis. It was less than a month after he had been compelled to cross the Loire again that Bouvines was fought and lost. That victory sealed with success the policy of Philip. John, realizing that his hopes of present conquest were vain, abandoned the campaign. By September peace had been made with France, and by the end of October John was back in England.

Steps leading to the Charter

John on his return found a kingdom ripe for revolt. The King's personal character had slowly driven most of the barons into opposition. For years he had retained his supremacy by the exercise of stern repressive measures, the taking of hostages, and the use of violent punishments. The machinery of the law had been used by him to give effect to his own will. The country had been kept down by the royal castles, garrisoned with mercenary troops. Meanwhile the commonalty had not been entirely neglected. Geoffrey fitz Peter had done much for commerce, had encouraged self-government in cities, and had granted to Lincoln, Norwich, Nottingham, Northampton, Shrewsbury, Ipswich, Gloucester, and Derby valuable privileges. The wine and wool trade had increased considerably, despite the loss of the French possessions. Indeed, had it not been for the interdict it is probable that John would have been no less popular with the commonalty than his predecessors. Geoffrey fitz Peter had, however, died in the October of 1213, and John had cried out in joy at the death of his great Justiciar: "Let him go to hell and take my greetings to Hubert Walter." In his place Peter des Roches, a man of a very different stamp, was set. At the same time Stephen Langton and the clergy generally had been neither idle nor dumb. We can well believe that at many a parish church the people first learnt what manner of King they had when the clergy at last returned to their ministrations.

The first overt acts of rebellion were not, however, taken until the King on his return demanded of the barons a scutage to prosecute the war in Poitou. The tension between King and people had reached breaking-point. The barons, lacking interest in the French wars and fearing that the mercenaries whom the new tax would hire would be used against themselves, refused the demand, and a northern party was formed which asserted the principle that neither service in the field nor scutage in lieu thereof was claimable of right for the prosecution of a foreign war. With a man of John's temper and nature on the throne, once a rebellion was begun it had to be prosecuted to the alternative conclusion of victory or death, and a meeting was held at Bury St Edmunds to decide by what means the King should be kept in check and compelled to observe the forms of law in his dealings with his subjects.

As yet, it was true, John had expressly asserted no principle which contravened the feudal laws. His injustices were personal rather than general. The great principle that he was in fact asserting, though not in terms, was that the king was above the law, that he could deflect the course of justice, crush his private enemies, claim a victim for every licentious mood without being answerable to any one. Society was emerging from the stage when such despotism was possible. Barons and clergy determined to curb the royal power. At first it was sought to bring the King to terms peaceably. The confirmation of the Charter of Henry I was for the time being alone demanded; but the demand was backed by the threat of force.

It was in the January of 1215 at London that the confirmation of the Charter had been asked of the King. John replied in his accustomed manner by requiring time to deliberate, and April 26 was fixed as the date on which his answer should be given. In the meantime John used every means to raise a force with which to crush his enemies. Throughout the land men were required to take an oath of allegiance and to support him in opposition to the baronial Chartists. The country, however, was almost solidly against him, and the order to take the oath had to be withdrawn. By Easter 2000 knights and many men-at-arms had gathered to the standard of Robert fitz Walter, who had been chosen head of the Chartists with the title "Marshal of the Host of the Lord and Holy Church," and although John endeavoured to gain the Pope on his side he received a neutral reply. When, however, it appeared that John was hiring troops from every country that would supply them, the barons determined to give the King no further grace, and marched on Oxford, where he was then staying. As yet the King was not entirely alone. William Marshal the elder and Stephen Langton were both with him, although both were well known to be favourable to the Chartists. It was these two who, with certain "prudent men," went on the King's behalf to learn of the insurgents, who had reached Brackley, the nature of the laws and liberties demanded. The barons had prepared their demands in detail, and these, written on a parchment scroll, were now carried to the King. John, having learnt from Stephen Langton the general purport of the Charter which he was required to read, scornfully refused to grant such liberties, swearing that never would he be his people's slave. For long William Marshal and Stephen Langton endeavoured to persuade the King to submit. He remained obdurate.

Nothing remained now but to gain the Charter at the sword's point if need be. By May 24 London had thrown open her gates to the Chartists. John, finding scarcely any one remaining true to him, was compelled once more to play for time, sent messengers declaring his intention to grant the Charter, and agreed to meet his barons on an island in the Thames lying between Staines and Windsor. To that place of meeting John, with hate in his heart and submission on his lips, came on the morning of June 15, 1215. Before the day was ended the Great Charter had been agreed to and sealed by the King. John retired to Windsor, where, during a sleepless night in which he was convulsed by bursts of rage, he meditated on his revenge.

THE CHARTER

For its period Magna Carta was a lengthy document, and it is impossible in these pages to even sketch out its many clauses. Its importance has indeed often been misunderstood. It is not so much for what it contains as for what it stood that Magna Carta is important. He who looks in it for any recognition of the rights of democracy will look in vain. Yet in truth it is the basis on which our democracy has been founded. Even the famous clause, "*Nullus liber homo capiatur, vel imprisonetur, aut disseisiatur, aut utlagetur, aut exuletur, aut aliquo modo destruatur, nec super eum ibimus, nec super eum mittemus, nisi per legale judicium parium suorum, vel per legem terrae,*"[1] meant something very different from what

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[1] "No free man shall be taken or imprisoned, or disseised, or outlawed, or exiled, or anyways destroyed; nor will we go against him, nor will we send against him, unless by the lawful judgment of his peers and/or the law of the land."

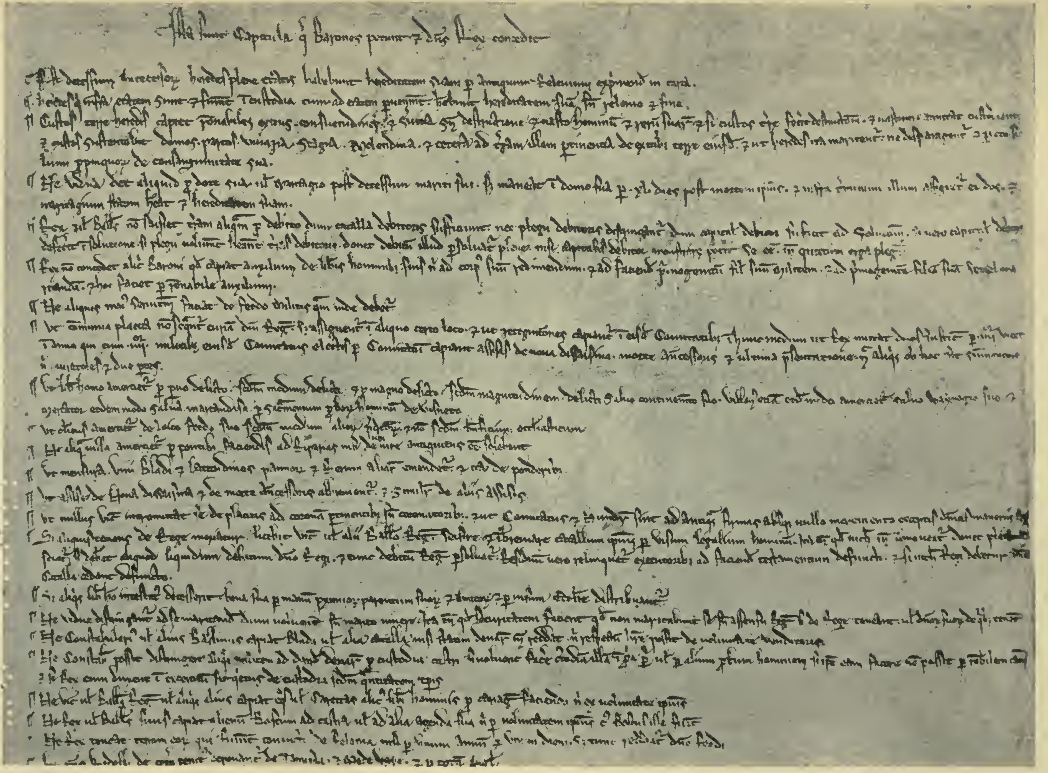
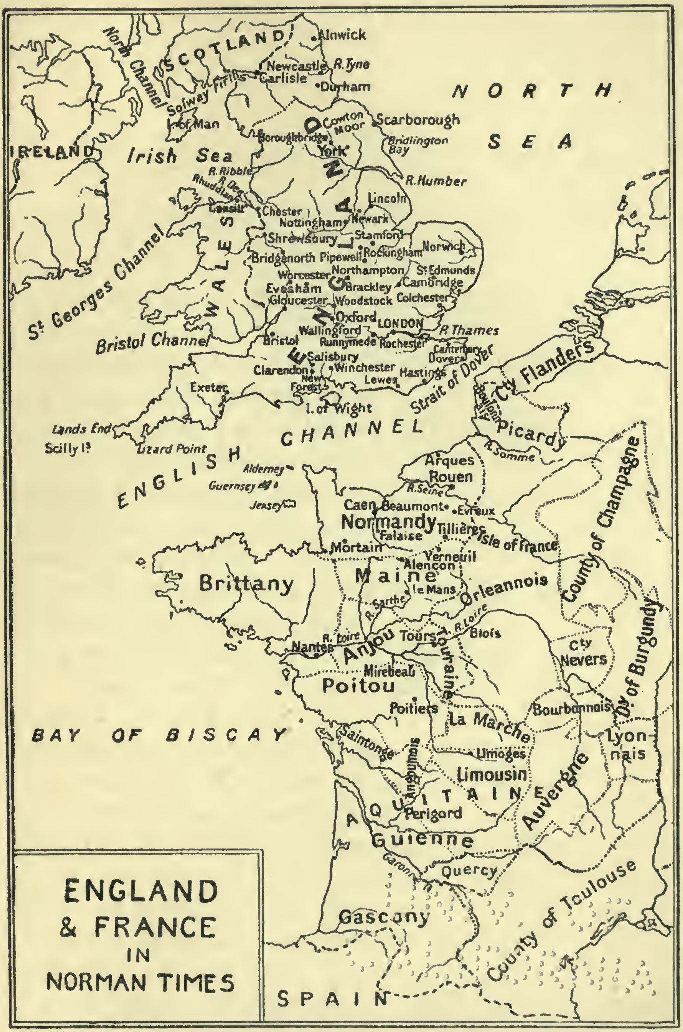


PLATE LI. A PORTION OF MAGNA CARTA

it was made to mean in future years. Here was no promise of trial by jury; here was no right wrested from the King for the benefit of the people. It was simply an admirable expression of the principle that the King should not henceforward attack a subject except according to the forms of the law, and that if any man was put on trial he should be judged by his equals. In a similar law ascribed to David of Scotland we read: "No man shall be judged by his inferior who is not his peer; the earl shall be judged by the earl, the baron by the baron, the vavassor by the vavassor, the burgess by the burgess; but an inferior may be judged by his superior." The *parium suorum* clause was the creator of the original jurisdiction of the House of Lords to try peers on criminal charges rather than of trial by jury, for it is to be observed that the clause speaks of 'judgment,' *judicium*, rather than 'verdict.' In future years barons and earls and nobles generally were to complain that a commoner judge had no right to try them, for he was not their peer, and there is no doubt that the barons who drafted the Charter were well aware of the meaning of the words they used.

We thus see in this single instance—and the same spirit pervades the Charter—that the Chartists were less careful of the rights of the people than of their own rights. But far surpassing in depth and intensity any such class selfishness was the firm resolve that henceforward the king should be subject to the law. A subject when attacked by his king could claim that he should first stand his trial, and that his punishment should be according to the law of the land; it mattered little whether he who tried was an equal or an inferior so long as he was a just citizen. Such a clause as the one, "To none will we sell, to none will we deny right or justice," may have been too general to be effective in a court of law, but it had a true ring and proved a veritable sheet-anchor to the future patriot struggling against tyranny. Above all, the clause which provided for a council of twenty-five to see that the provisions of the Charter were kept, while representing an expedient common to feudal society, had a powerful effect in reducing the power of the king by giving to his subjects a conditional right of rebellion if the standard of justice and good government set up by the Charter were not adhered to. It was this that perhaps more than anything tended to make the Charter the object of such veneration in the future.

The granting of Magna Carta is, however, noteworthy from another point of view. Quite apart from its exact terms, the mere fact that John, a man who yearned for absolute power, who was insensible to the rights of others, who was utterly careless of his people's good, should have had wrung from him this standard of government showed clearly that the danger of despotic rule had passed. That was all that could be hoped for. Many a fight was yet to be waged before a free democracy could arise ruled by a constitutional king. Centuries were to roll by before the people was to emerge triumphant. At the stage of development which we have now reached the best that the people could hope for was a balance of power between king and barons. In past days for a season the nobility had appeared to be getting the upper hand, and England knew years of oppression; then came the great Henrys, striking the lords temporal and spiritual with the hammer made of legal and administrative reforms. So surely had they struck that the nobility was becoming too weak and the monarchy threatened to become a despotism. It was from this that England was saved on the banks of the Thames at Runnymede.



ENGLAND
& FRANCE
IN
NORMAN TIMES

North Channel
SCOTLAND
Alnwick
Newcastle
R. Tyne
Carlisle
Durham
Solway Firth
I. of Man
NORTH SEA
Cowton Moor
Scarborough
Boroughbridge
York
Bridlington Bay
IRELAND
Irish Sea
ENGLAND
R. Ribble
R. Dee
Rhuddlan
Consilt
Chester
Lincoln
R. Humber
Nottingham
Newark
WALES
Shrewsbury
Stamford
St Georges Channel
Bridgenorth
Pipewell
Rockingham
Norwich
Worcester
Northampton
St Edmunds
Evesham
Brackley
Cambridge
Gloucester
Woodstock
Colchester
Oxford
LONDON
R Thames
Bristol Channel
Bristol
Wallingford
Runnymede
Rochester
Canterbury
Dover
Salisbury
Strait of Dover
Clarendon
Winchester
Hastings
New Forest
Lewes
Exeter
I. of Wight
Cty Flanders
Boulonnais
Lands End
Scilly Is
Lizard Point
ENGLISH CHANNEL
Picardy
R. Somme
Alderney
Guernsey
Jersey
Arques
Rouen
R. Seine
Caen
Beaumont
Evreux
Normandy
Tillières
Falaise
Isle of France
Mortain
Verneuil
Alencon
County of Champagne
Brittany
Maine
le Mans
Orleannois
R. Sarthe
R. Loire
Blois
Nantes
R. Loire
Anjou
Tours
Touraine
Cty Nevers
Mirebeau
Poitou
Dy of Burgundy
Poitiers
Bourbonnois
La Marche
BAY OF BISCAY
Saintonge
Angoumois
Limoges
Lyonnais
Limousin
AQUITAINE
Auvergne
Perigord
Guienne
Garonne
Quercy
County of Toulouse
Gascony
SPAIN

LIST OF IMPORTANT DATES

The numbers in parentheses indicate the pages in the text in which the subject is chiefly dealt with.

c. 2000 B.C. Beginning of the Bronze Age (7).
c. 1000 B.C. Coming of the Gaels (8).
c. 400 B.C. Coming of the Britons (9).
55 B.C. Caesar's first landing (18).
A.D. 43. Roman occupation begins (24).
c. 52. Caratacus overthrown (30).
78. Agricola's campaigns begin (36).
c. 120. Hadrian's Wall built (38, 70).
208. Septimius's campaign begins (41).
287. Carausius acknowledged Augustus (45).
306. Constantine in Britain (46).
383. Maximus leads the Britons to Gaul (48).
407–409. Constantine the Tyrant (51).
c. 429. Hallelujah Victory (86).
449. Hengist and Horsa land (83).
495. Cerdic and the West Saxons arrive (89).
c. 500. Battle of Mount Badon (89).
547. Kingdom of Northumbria established (91).
c. 560–616. Ethelbert King of Kent (91, 109).
563. Columba settles in Iona (94).
577. Battle of Deorham (110).
588. Aelle dies (113).
593. Ceawlin of Wessex dies (111). Ethelfrith of Northumbria begins to reign (113).
597. Augustine arrives in England (96, 99).
c. 613. Battle of Chester (115).
627. Conversion of Edwin of Deira (123).

633. Battle of Hatfield Chase (126).
642. Oswald slain at Maserfield (131).
655. Penda slain at Winwaed (137).
664. Synod of Whitby (147).
671. Death of Oswy (141, 147).
688–726. Ine King of Wessex (178–179).
716–*c.* 757. Ethelbald King of Mercia (180–182).
752. Battle of Burford (182).
757–796. Offa King of Mercia (183–190).
775. Battle of Otford (184).
c. 789. First landing of the Danes (190, 192).
802–839. Egbert King of Wessex (191–197).
c. 828. Egbert Bretwalda (196).
839–858. Ethelwulf King of Wessex (198–202).
851. Danes remain over winter (199).
871–*c.* 899. Alfred King of Wessex (209–235).
871. Battle of Ashdown (214).
877. The Navy developed (217).
885. Alfred at peace (220).
892. Danes renew the attack (229).
c. 899–*c.* 925. Edward the Elder King of Wessex (236–242)
c. 924. King of Scots submits to Edward (242).
c. 925–940. Athelstan King of Wessex (244–248).
937. Battle of Brunanburh (247).
c. 957–975. Edgar King (255–262).
978–1016. Ethelred the Redeless King (264–273).
991. Battle of Maldon (267).
1002. Massacre of the Danes (269).
1013. Ethelred flies to Normandy (272).
1016. Death of Edmund Ironside (276, 277).
1017–1035. Cnut King (278–288).
1037–1040. Harold Harefoot King (291–292).
1040–1042. Harthacnut King (292–293).
1042–1066. Edward the Confessor King (293–311).
1053. Death of Godwin (304).
1066. Harold King (313–324). Battles of Fulford and Stamford Bridge (317–319). Battle of Senlac (321–324).

IMPORTANT DATES

1066–1087. William I King (329–366).
1068. Coronation of Matilda (340).
1069. Northumbria wasted (344).
1070. Lanfranc Archbishop (346, 348).
1085–1086. Domesday Book compiled (359).
1087–1100. William II King (399–429).
1088. Odo of Bayeux rebels (401).
1093. Anselm Archbishop (417).
1096. First Crusade (424).
1100–1135. Henry I King (431–471).
1102. Overthrow of Robert de Bellême (439).
1106. Battle of Tinchebrai (446).
1107. Question of investitures settled (451).
1118. Death of Robert de Meulan (461).
1119. Battle of Brémule (461).
1120. Loss of the *White Ship* (464).
1128. Maud marries Geoffrey of Anjou (467). Death of William Clito (469).
1135–1154. Stephen King (472–498).
1138. Battle of the Standard (481).
1139. Maud lands in England (483).
1141. Battle of Lincoln (488). Maud Lady of England (489). Siege of Winchester (491). Stephen exchanged for Gloucester (493).
1153. Treaty of Wallingford (497).
1154–1189. Henry II King (499–537).
1159. Attack on Toulouse (507).
1161. Theobald, Archbishop of Canterbury, dies (508).
1162. Becket Archbishop (509).
1164. Constitutions of Clarendon (513).
1170. Coronation of 'young King' Henry (519). Becket returns from exile (520). Death of Becket (Dec. 29) (521).
1172. Henry II in Ireland (524).
1173. Henry's quarrel with his sons (530).
1174. Henry's pilgrimage to Becket's tomb (531).
1183. Death of 'the young King' Henry (533).

1186. Death of Geoffrey (533).
1188. Rebellion of Richard (536).
1189–1199. Richard I King (538–552).
1190. Richard departs on the Third Crusade (542).
1191. Conquest of Cyprus (544). Richard takes Acre (545). Battle of Arsuf (546).
1192. Richard leaves Palestine (547).
1199. John becomes King (556).
1203. Murder of Arthur of Brittany (558).
1204. Loss of Normandy (558).
1205. Death of Hubert Walter (559).
1206. Stephen Langton Archbishop (560).
1208. England under an interdict (562).
1209. John excommunicated (562).
1213. John submits to the Pope (566).
1214. Battle of Bouvines (567).
1215. Magna Carta signed (570).

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