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## THE WELDING OF THE RACE

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# THE WELDING OF THE RACE

("449"—1066)

COMPILED BY THE

REV. JOHN E. W. WALLIS, B.A. (OXON.)

ASSISTANT MASTER AT CHRIST'S HOSPITAL



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The order of the extracts is strictly chronological, each being numbered, titled, and dated, and its authority given. The text is modernised, where necessary, to the extent of leaving no difficulties in reading.

We shall be most grateful to teachers and students who may send us suggestions for improvement.

S. E. WINBOLT.  
KENNETH BELL.

## NOTE TO THIS VOLUME

("449"-1066)

The following extracts have been taken, where possible, from contemporary authorities. I have attempted to make this selection in some degree a companion book to the late Dr. Thomas Hodgkin's Volume I. in Messrs. Hunt and Poole's *Political History of England*—a book to which my obligations are great, as the reader may easily perceive. I am responsible for the translations marked "W." I am greatly indebted to Mr. E. Barker, of New College, and Mr. W. H. Stevenson, of St. John's College, Oxford, who have very kindly looked through the proofs, and corrected many blunders. A brief note on the chief authorities for the period has been added.

JOHN E. W. WALLIS.

SAYERS FARM,  
TWO MILE ASH, HORSHAM.  
*September, 1913.*





	PAGE
<a href="#">INTRODUCTION</a>	<a href="#">v</a>
"449." <a href="#">THE COMING OF THE ENGLISH:—</a>	
1. CONTEMPORARY EVIDENCE:	
(a) <a href="#">CHRONICA GALLICA</a>	
(b) <a href="#">CONSTANTIUS</a>	<a href="#">1</a>
2. LATER EVIDENCE:	
(i.) <a href="#">A BRITON'S ACCOUNT</a>	<i>Gildas</i> <a href="#">3</a>
(ii.) <a href="#">THE ENGLISH TRADITION:</a>	
(a) <a href="#">BEDE</a>	<a href="#">6</a>
(b) <a href="#">THE WESSEX ACCOUNT</a>	<i>A.-S. Chronicle</i> <a href="#">8</a>
597. <a href="#">THE MISSION OF AUGUSTINE</a>	<i>Bede</i> <a href="#">10</a>
c. 600. <a href="#">ETHELBERT'S DOOMS</a>	<i>Thorpe</i> <a href="#">13</a>
601. <a href="#">POPE GREGORY'S LETTER TO AUGUSTINE ON THE ORGANISATION OF THE CHURCH</a>	<a href="#">15</a>
603. <a href="#">AUGUSTINE'S ATTEMPT TO UNITE THE ROMAN AND THE CELTIC CHURCHES</a>	<i>Bede</i> <a href="#">17</a>
625. <a href="#">PAULINUS AND EDWIN</a>	<i>Bede</i> <a href="#">19</a>
627. <a href="#">EDWIN OF NORTHUMBRIA HOLDS A CONFERENCE</a>	<i>Bede</i> <a href="#">22</a>
635. <a href="#">THE CHARACTER OF BISHOP AIDAN</a>	<i>Bede</i> <a href="#">24</a>
642. <a href="#">OSWIN OF NORTHUMBRIA AND AIDAN</a>	<i>Bede</i> <a href="#">25</a>
664. <a href="#">THE SYNOD OF WHITBY</a>	<i>Bede</i> <a href="#">27</a>
664. <a href="#">ABBOT BENEDICT BISCOP'S ZEAL FOR RELIGIOUS ART</a>	<i>Bede</i> <a href="#">28</a>
673. <a href="#">THE SYNOD OF HERTFORD</a>	<i>Bede</i> <a href="#">31</a>
678. <a href="#">THEODORE AND WILFRID</a>	<i>Eddius Stephanus</i> <a href="#">34</a>
680. <a href="#">THE STORY OF CÆEDMON</a>	<i>Bede</i> <a href="#">35</a>
681. <a href="#">WILFRID CONVERTS THE SOUTH SAXONS</a>	<i>Bede</i> <a href="#">37</a>
687. <a href="#">SAINT CUTHBERT (1) AS ABBOT, (2) AS ANCHORITE</a>	<i>Bede</i> <a href="#">39</a>
c. 700. <a href="#">THE DOOMS OF INE</a>	<i>Thorpe</i> <a href="#">41</a>
716. <a href="#">CEOLFRID, ABBOT OF JARROW</a>	<i>Bede</i> <a href="#">44</a>
720-730. <a href="#">A RIDDLE OF CYNEWULF</a>	<a href="#">48</a>
722. <a href="#">POPE GREGORY II. COMMENDS BONIFACE</a>	<a href="#">49</a>
731. <a href="#">THE STATE OF ENGLAND</a>	<i>Bede</i> <a href="#">50</a>
731. <a href="#">BEDE'S ACCOUNT OF HIMSELF, HIS HISTORICAL AUTHORITIES AND METHODS</a>	<i>Bede</i> <a href="#">52</a>
786. <a href="#">THE FAITHFUL THEGNS</a>	<i>A.-S. Chronicle</i> <a href="#">54</a>
787-870. <a href="#">THE COMING OF THE DANES</a>	<i>A.-S. Chronicle</i> <a href="#">56</a>
796. <a href="#">A LETTER FROM CHARLES THE GREAT TO OFFA</a>	<a href="#">59</a>
827. <a href="#">THE BRETWALDAS</a>	<i>A.-S. Chronicle</i> <a href="#">61</a>
871-878. <a href="#">ALFRED AND THE DANES</a>	<i>A.-S. Chronicle</i> <a href="#">62</a>
c. 885. <a href="#">ALFRED AND GUTHRUM'S PEACE</a>	<i>Thorpe</i> <a href="#">66</a>
c. 890. <a href="#">ALFRED'S DOOMS</a>	<i>Thorpe</i> <a href="#">67</a>
c. 890. <a href="#">OHTHERE'S VOYAGE OF EXPLORATION, TOLD TO KING ALFRED</a>	<i>Alfred's "Orosius"</i> <a href="#">70</a>
907-925. <a href="#">EDWARD'S POLICY</a>	<i>A.-S. Chronicle</i> <a href="#">73</a>
c. 930. <a href="#">ATHELSTAN'S DOOM CONCERNING HOT IRON AND WATER</a>	<i>Thorpe</i> <a href="#">76</a>
937. <a href="#">THE BATTLE OF BRUNANBURH</a>	<i>A.-S. Chronicle</i> <a href="#">77</a>
940. <a href="#">A LAND BOC</a>	<i>Earle</i> <a href="#">79</a>
946. <a href="#">DUNSTAN IS MADE ABBOT OF GLASTONBURY BY KING EDMUND</a>	<i>"B."</i> <a href="#">82</a>
973. <a href="#">EDGAR'S CORONATION, WHITSUN DAY</a>	<i>Anon.</i> <a href="#">84</a>
978. <a href="#">THE MURDER OF EDWARD AT CORFE</a>	<i>Anon.</i> <a href="#">86</a>
980-1002. <a href="#">THE REDELESS KING AND THE DANES</a>	<i>A.-S. Chronicle</i> <a href="#">88</a>
991. <a href="#">THE BATTLE OF MALDON</a>	<i>A.-S. Poem</i> <a href="#">92</a>
c. 1000. <a href="#">COUNTRY LIFE AT THE END OF THE TENTH CENTURY</a>	<i>Ælfric</i> <a href="#">95</a>
1016. <a href="#">EDMUND AND CANUTE</a>	<i>A.-S. Chronicle</i> <a href="#">100</a>
c. 1025. <a href="#">PEOPLES' DUTIES AND RIGHTS IN THE TIME OF CANUTE</a>	<i>Thorpe</i> <a href="#">103</a>
1027. <a href="#">CANUTE'S LETTER FROM ROME</a>	<i>William of Malmesbury</i> <a href="#">107</a>
1029-1060. <a href="#">RANKS AMONG THE ENGLISH</a>	<i>Thorpe</i> <a href="#">110</a>

1051.	<a href="#">SAXON AND NORMAN</a>	<i>A.-S. Chronicle</i>	<a href="#">110</a>
	<a href="#">CHARACTERISTICS OF THE ENGLISH BEFORE THE CONQUEST</a>	<i>William of Malmesbury</i>	<a href="#">113</a>
1066.	<a href="#">A NORMAN ACCOUNT OF THE BATTLE OF HASTINGS</a>	<i>William of Malmesbury</i>	<a href="#">115</a>
1066.	<a href="#">THE LAST OF THE NORTHMEN AND OF THE ENGLISH</a>	<i>A.-S. Chronicle</i>	<a href="#">117</a>
	<a href="#">NOTE ON THE CHIEF AUTHORITIES</a>		<a href="#">119</a>

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THE WELDING OF THE RACE  
("449"-1066)

## THE COMING OF THE ENGLISH ("449").

## 1. CONTEMPORARY EVIDENCE.

**Source.**—*Chronica Gallica*, written up to 511, probably early in the sixth century. *Mon. Germ. Hist., Auct. Antiq.*, ix., 2, pp. 653, 660.

The sixteenth year of Arcadius and Honorius [*i.e.*, A.D. 410]: at this time the strength of the Romans was utterly wasted by sickness, and the provinces of Britain were laid waste by the incursion of the Saxons.

The eighteenth year of Theodosius II. [*i.e.*, A.D. 441]: the provinces of Britain, which up to this time had been torn by various slaughters and disasters, are brought under the dominion of the Saxons.

**Source.**—Constantius, *Life of St. Germanus*, written about A.D. 480, quoted by Bede, bk. i., c. 20. Translated by J. A. Giles. Bohn's Antiquarian Library.

A.D. 429.—In the meanwhile the Saxons and the Picts, driven into one camp by the same necessity, with conjoined force undertook war against the Britons, who, thinking themselves unequal to their enemies, implored the assistance of the holy bishops; who, hastening to them as they had promised, inspired so much confidence into these fearful people, that one would have thought they had been joined by a mighty army. Thus, by these apostolic leaders, Christ Himself commanded in their camp. The holy days of Lent were also at hand, and were rendered more sacred by the presence of the bishops, insomuch that the people being instructed by daily sermons, resorted in crowds to be baptised; for most of the army desired admission to the saving waters; a church was prepared with boughs for the feast of the Resurrection of our Lord, and so fitted up in that martial camp, as if it were in a city. The army advanced, still wet with the baptismal water; the faith of the people was strengthened; and whereas human power had before been despaired of, the Divine assistance was now relied upon. The enemy received advice of the state of the army, and not questioning their success against an unarmed multitude, hastened forwards, but their approach was, by the scouts, made known to the Britons; the greater part of whose forces being just come from the font, after the celebration of Easter, and preparing to arm and carry on the war, Germanus declared he would be their leader. He picked out the most active, viewed the country round about, and observed, in the way by which the enemy was expected, a valley encompassed with hills. In that place he drew up his inexperienced troops, himself acting as their general. A multitude of fierce enemies appeared, whom as soon as those that lay in ambush saw approaching, Germanus, bearing in his hands the standard, instructed his men all in a loud voice to repeat his words, and the enemy advancing securely, as thinking to take them by surprise, the priests three times cried Hallelujah. A universal shout of the same word followed, and the hills resounding the echo on all sides, the enemy was struck with dread, fearing, that not only the neighbouring rocks, but even the very skies were falling upon them; and such was their terror, that their feet were not swift enough to deliver them from it. They fled in disorder, casting away their arms, and well satisfied if, with their naked bodies, they could escape the danger; many of them, in their precipitate and hasty flight, were swallowed up by the river which they were passing. The Britons, without the loss of a man, beheld their vengeance complete, and became inactive spectators of their victory. The scattered spoils were gathered up, and the pious soldiers rejoiced in the success which heaven had granted them. The prelates thus triumphed over the enemy without bloodshed, and gained a victory by faith, without the aid of human force; and, having settled the affairs of the island, and restored tranquillity by the defeat, as well as of the invisible, as of the carnal enemies, prepared to return home. Their own merits, and the intercession of the holy martyr Alban, obtained them a safe passage, and the happy vessel restored them in peace to their rejoicing people.

## 2. LATER EVIDENCE.

### (i.) *A Briton's Account.*

**Source.**—Gildas, *Liber Querulus*, §§ 22-26, written about A.D. 540-560. Translated by J. A. Giles. *Six Old English Chronicles*, Bohn's Antiquarian Library.

A vague rumour, suddenly as if on wings, reaches the ears of all, that their inveterate foes [the Picts and Scots] were rapidly approaching to destroy the whole country, and to take possession of it, as of old, from one end to the other.... A council was called to settle what was best and most expedient to be done, in order to repel such frequent and fatal irruptions and plunderings of the above-named nations. Then all the councillors, together with that proud tyrant [Vortigern], were so blinded, that, as a protection to their country, they sealed its doom by inviting in among them (like wolves into the sheep fold), the fierce and impious Saxons, a race hateful both to God and men, to repel the invasions of the northern nations. Nothing was ever so pernicious to our country, nothing was ever so unlucky. What palpable darkness must have enveloped their minds—darkness desperate and cruel! Those very people whom, when absent, they dreaded more than death itself, were invited to reside, as one may say, under the selfsame roof. A multitude of whelps came forth from the lair of this barbaric 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, for it was foretold by a certain soothsayer among them, that they should occupy the country to which they were sailing three hundred years; and half of that time, a hundred and fifty years, should plunder and despoil the same. They first landed on the eastern side of the island, by the invitation of the unlucky king, and there fixed their sharp talons, apparently to fight in favour of the island, but, alas! more truly against it. Their motherland, finding her first brood thus successful, sends forth a larger company of her wolfish offspring, which, sailing over, join themselves to their bastard-born comrades.... The barbarians being thus introduced as soldiers into the island, to encounter, as they falsely said, any dangers in defence of their hospitable entertainers, obtain an allowance of provisions, which, for some time being plentifully bestowed, stopped their doggish mouths. Yet they complain that their monthly supplies are not furnished in sufficient abundance, and they industriously aggravate each occasion of quarrel, saying that unless more liberality is shown them, they will break the treaty and plunder the whole island. In a short time they follow up their threats with deeds. For the fire of vengeance, justly kindled by former crimes, spread from sea to sea, fed by the hands of our foes in the east, and did not cease, until, destroying the neighbouring towns and lands, it reached the other side of the island, and dipped its red and savage tongue in the western ocean.... So that all the columns were levelled with the ground by the frequent strokes of the battering ram, all the husbandmen routed, together with their bishops, priests, and people, whilst the sword gleamed, and the flames crackled around them on every side. Lamentable to behold, in the midst of the streets lay the tops of lofty towers, tumbled to the ground, stones of high walls, holy altars, fragments of human bodies, covered with livid clots of coagulated blood, looking as if they had been squeezed together in a wine-press; and with no chance of being buried save in the ruins of the houses, or in the ravening bellies of wild beasts and birds.... Some, therefore, of the miserable remnant, being taken in the mountains, were murdered in great numbers; others, constrained by famine, came and yielded themselves to be slaves for ever to their foes, running the risk of being instantly slain, which truly was the greatest favour that could be offered them: some others passed beyond the seas with loud lamentations instead of the voice of exhortation.... Others, committing the safeguard of their lives, which were in continual jeopardy, to the mountains, precipices, thickly wooded forests, and to the rocks of the seas (albeit with trembling hearts), remained still in their country. But in the meanwhile, an opportunity happening, when these most cruel robbers were returned home, the poor remnants of our nation (to whom flocked, from divers places round about, our miserable countrymen as fast as bees to their hives, for fear of an ensuing storm), being strengthened by God, calling upon him with all their hearts that they might not be brought to utter destruction, took arms under the conduct of Ambrosius Aurelianus, a modest man, who of all the Roman nation was then alone, in the confusion of this troubled period, by chance left alive. His parents, who for their merit were adorned with the purple, had been slain in these same broils, and now his progeny in these our days, although shamefully degenerated from the worthiness of their ancestors, provoke to battle their cruel conquerors, and by the goodness of our Lord obtain the victory. After this, sometimes our countrymen, sometimes the enemy, won the field, to the end that our Lord might in this land try after His accustomed manner these His Israelites, whether they loved Him or not, until the year of the siege of Bath-hill [Mons Badonicus], when took place also the last almost, though not the least slaughter of our cruel foes, which was (as I am sure) forty-four years and one month after the landing of the Saxons, and also the time of my own nativity. And yet neither to this day are the cities of our country inhabited as before, but, being forsaken and overthrown, still lie desolate.

### (ii.) *The English Tradition—(a) Bede.*

**Source.**—*Eccl. Hist.*, i. 15. A.D. 731. Translated by J. A. Giles. Bohn's Library.

The Britons consulted what was to be done, and where they should seek assistance to prevent or repel the cruel and frequent incursions of the northern nations; and they all agreed with their King Vortigern to call over to their aid, from the parts beyond the sea, the Saxon nation; which, as the event still more evidently showed, appears to have been done by the appointment of our Lord Himself, that evil might fall upon them for their wicked deeds.

In the year of our Lord 449, Martian being made emperor with Valentinian, and the forty-sixth

from Augustus, ruled the empire seven years. Then the nation of the Angles, or Saxons, being invited by the aforesaid king, arrived in Britain with three long ships, and had a place assigned them to reside in by the same king, in the eastern part of the island, that they might thus appear to be fighting for their country, whilst their real intentions were to enslave it. Accordingly they engaged with the enemy, who were come from the north to give battle, and obtained the victory; which, being known at home in their own country, as also the fertility of the country, and the cowardice of the Britons, a more considerable fleet was quickly sent over, bringing a still greater number of men, which, being added to the former, made up an invincible army. The newcomers received of the Britons a place to inhabit, upon condition that they should wage war against their enemies for the peace and security of the country, whilst the Britons agreed to furnish them with pay. Those who came over were of the three most powerful nations of Germany—Saxons, Angles, and Jutes. From the Jutes are descended the people of Kent, and of the Isle of Wight, and those also in the province of the West Saxons who are to this day called Jutes, seated opposite to the Isle of Wight. From the Saxons, that is, the country which is now called Old Saxony, came the East Saxons, the South Saxons, and the West Saxons. From the Angles, that is, the country which is called Anglia, and which is said, from that time, to remain desert to this day, between the provinces of the Jutes and the Saxons, are descended the East Angles, the Midland Angles, Mercians, all the race of the Northumbrians, that is, of those nations that dwell on the north side of the river Humber, and the other nations of the English. The two first commanders are said to have been Hengist and Horsa. Of whom Horsa, being afterwards slain in battle by the Britons, was buried in the eastern parts of Kent, where a monument, bearing his name, is still in existence. They were the sons of Victgilsus, whose father was Vitta, son of Vecta, son of Woden; from whose stock the royal race of many provinces deduce their original. In a short time, swarms of the aforesaid nations came over into the island, and they began to increase so much, that they became terrible to the natives themselves who had invited them. Then, having on a sudden entered into league with the Picts, whom they had by this time repelled by the force of their arms, they began to turn their weapons against their confederates. At first, they obliged them to furnish a greater quantity of provisions; and, seeking an occasion to quarrel, protested, that unless more plentiful supplies were brought them, they would break the confederacy, and ravage all the island; nor were they backward in putting their threats in execution. For the barbarous conquerors plundered all the neighbouring cities and country, spread the conflagration from the eastern to the western sea, without any opposition, and covered almost every part of the devoted island. Public as well as private structures were overturned; the priests were everywhere slain before the altars; the prelates and the people, without any respect of persons, were destroyed with fire and sword; nor was there any to bury those who had been thus cruelly slaughtered. Some of the miserable remainder, being taken in the mountains, were butchered in heaps. Others, spent with hunger, came forth and submitted themselves to the enemy for food, being destined to undergo perpetual servitude, if they were not killed even upon the spot. Some, with sorrowful hearts, fled beyond the seas. Others, continuing in their own country, led a miserable life among the woods, rocks, and mountains, with scarcely enough food to support life, and expecting every moment to be their last.

When the victorious army, having destroyed and dispersed the natives, had returned home to their own settlements, the Britons began by degrees to take heart, and gather strength, sallying out of the lurking places where they had concealed themselves, and unanimously imploring the Divine assistance, that they might not utterly be destroyed. They had at that time for their leader, Ambrosius Aurelianus, a modest man, who alone, by chance, of the Roman nation had survived the storm, in which his parents, who were of the royal race, had perished. Under him the Britons revived, and offering battle to the victors, by the help of God, came off victorious. From that day, sometimes the natives, and sometimes their enemies, prevailed, till the year of the siege of Bath-hill, when they made no small slaughter of those invaders, about forty-four years after their arrival in England.

(b) *The Wessex Account.*

**Source.**—*Anglo-Saxon Chronicle*. Compiled probably in Alfred's reign. Translated by J. A. Giles. Bohn's Library.

ANNO 449.—This year Martianus and Valentinus succeeded to the empire and reigned seven years. And in their days Hengist and Horsa, invited by Vortigern, King of the Britons, landed in Britain in three keels on the shore which is called Heopwines-fleet [Ebbsfleet]; at first in aid of the Britons, but afterwards they fought against them. King Vortigern gave them land in the south-east of this country, on condition that they should fight against the Picts. Then they fought against the Picts, and had the victory wheresoever they came. They then sent to the Angles; desired larger forces to be sent, and caused them to be told the worthlessness of the Britons, and the excellencies of the land. Then they soon sent thither a larger force in aid of the others. At that time there came men from three tribes in Germany; from the Old Saxons, from the Angles, from the Jutes. From the Jutes came the Kentishmen and the Wightwarians, that is, the tribe which now dwells in Wight, and that race among the West Saxons which is still called the race of Jutes. From the Old Saxons came the men of Essex and Sussex and Wessex. From Anglia, which has ever since remained waste betwixt the Jutes and Saxons, came the men of East Anglia, Middle Anglia, Mercia, and all Northumbria. Their leaders were two brothers, Hengist and Horsa: they were the sons of Wihthgils, the son of Witta, the son of Wecta, the son of Woden: from this Woden sprang all our royal families, and those of the Southumbrians also.

ANNO 455.—This year Hengist and Horsa fought against King Vortigern at the place which is called Ægelesthrep [Aylesford], and his brother Horsa was there slain, and after that Hengist obtained the kingdom, and Æsc his son.



ANNO 456.—This year Hengist and Æsc slew four troops of Britons with the edge of the sword, in the place which is called Crecganford [Crayford].

ANNO 477.—This year Ælle and his three sons, Cymen, and Wlencing, and Cissa, came to the land of Britain with three ships, at a place which is named Cymenesora, and there slew many Welsh, and some they drove in flight into the wood that is named Andredesleag.

ANNO 491.—This year Ælle and Cissa besieged Andredesceaster, and slew all that dwelt therein, so that not a single Briton was there left.

ANNO 495.—This year two ealdormen came to Britain, Cerdic and Cynric, his son, with five ships, at the place which is called Cerdicesora.

ANNO 514.—This year the West Saxons came to Britain with three ships, at the place which is called Cerdicesora, and Stuf and Whitgar fought against the Britons, and routed them.

ANNO 519.—This year Cerdic and Cynric obtained the kingdom of the West Saxons; and the same year they fought against the Britons where it is now named Cerdicesford [Charford].

ANNO 530.—This year Cerdic and Cynric conquered the Island of Wight, and slew many men at Wihtgaræsbyrig [Carisbrooke].

ANNO 552.—This year Cynric fought against the Britons at the place which is called Searobyrig [Old Sarum], and he put the Britons to flight.

ANNO 556.—This year Cynric and Ceawlin fought against the Britons at Beranbyrig [Barbury].

ANNO 571.—This year Cuthulf fought against the Britons at Bedcanford [Bedford], and took four towns, Lygeanbirg [Lenbury], and Ægelesbirg [Aylesbury], and Bænesington [Benson], and Egonsham [Eynsham]; and the same year he died.

ANNO 577.—This year Cuthwine and Ceawlin fought against the Britons, and they slew three kings, Coinmail, and Condidan, and Farinmail, at the place which is called Deorham, and took three cities from them, Gloucester, and Cirencester, and Bath.

ANNO 584.—This year Ceawlin and Cutha fought against the Britons at the place which is called Fethanlea, and there was Cutha slain; and Ceawlin took many towns, and spoils innumerable; and wrathful he thence returned to his own.

**Source.**—Bede, *Eccl. Hist.*, i. 25, 26. A.D. 731. Translated by J. A. Giles. Bohn's Library.

Augustine, thus strengthened by the confirmation of the blessed Father Gregory, returned to the work of the word of God, with the servants of Christ, and arrived in Britain. The powerful Ethelbert was at that time king of Kent; he had extended his dominions as far as the great river Humber, by which the Southern Saxons are divided from the Northern. On the east of Kent is the large Isle of Thanet, containing, according to the English way of reckoning, 600 families, divided from the other land by the river Wantsum, which is about three furlongs over, and fordable only in two places, for both ends of it run into the sea. In this island landed the servant of our Lord, Augustine, and his companions, being, as is reported, nearly forty men. They had, by order of the blessed Pope Gregory, taken interpreters of the nation of the Franks, and sending to Ethelbert, signified that they were come from Rome, and brought a joyful message, which most undoubtedly assured to all that took advantage of it everlasting joys in heaven, and a kingdom that would never end, with the living and true God. The king having heard this, ordered them to stay in that island where they had landed, and that they should be furnished with all necessaries, till he should consider what to do with them. For he had before heard of the Christian religion, having a Christian wife of the royal family of the Franks, called Bertha; whom he had received from her parents, upon condition that she should be permitted to practise her religion with the Bishop Luidhard, who was sent with her to preserve her faith. Some days after, the king came into the island, and sitting in the open air, ordered Augustine and his companions to be brought into his presence. For he had taken precaution that they should not come to him in any house, lest, according to an ancient superstition, if they practised any magical arts, they might impose upon him, and so get the better of him. But they came furnished with Divine, not with magic virtue, bearing a silver cross for their banner, and the image of our Lord and Saviour painted on a board; and singing the litany, they offered up their prayers to the Lord for the eternal salvation both of themselves and of those to whom they were come. When he had sat down, pursuant to the king's commands, and preached to him and his attendants there present, the word of life, the king answered thus:—"Your words and promises are very fair, but as they are new to us, and of uncertain import, I cannot approve of them so far as to forsake that which I have so long followed with the whole English nation. But because you are come from far into my kingdom, and, as I conceive, are desirous to impart to us those things which you believe to be true, and most beneficial, we will not molest you, but give you favourable entertainment, and take care to supply you with your necessary sustenance; nor do we forbid you to preach and gain as many as you can to your religion." Accordingly he permitted them to reside in the city of Canterbury, which was the metropolis of all his dominions, and, pursuant to his promise, besides allowing them sustenance, did not refuse them liberty to preach. It is reported that, as they drew near to the city, after their manner, with the holy cross, and the image of our sovereign Lord and King, Jesus Christ, they, in concert, sung this litany: "We beseech Thee, O Lord, in all Thy mercy, that Thy anger and wrath be turned away from this city, and from the holy house, because we have sinned. Hallelujah."

As soon as they entered the dwelling-place assigned them, they began to imitate the course of life practised in the primitive church; applying themselves to frequent prayer, watching and fasting; preaching the word of life to as many as they could; despising all worldly things, as not belonging to them; receiving only their necessary food from those they taught; living themselves in all respects conformably to what they prescribed to others, and being always disposed to suffer any adversity, and even to die for that truth which they preached. In short, several believed and were baptised, admiring the simplicity of their innocent life, and the sweetness of their heavenly doctrine. There was on the east side of the city a church dedicated to the honour of St. Martin, built whilst the Romans were still in the island, wherein the queen, who, as has been said before, was a Christian, used to pray. In this they first began to meet, to sing, to pray, to say mass, to preach, and to baptise, till the king, being converted to the faith, allowed them to preach openly, and build or repair churches in all places.

When he, among the rest, induced by the unspotted life of these holy men, and their delightful promises, which, by many miracles, they proved to be most certain, believed and was baptised, greater numbers began daily to flock together to hear the word, and, forsaking their heathen rites, to associate themselves, by believing, to the unity of the church of Christ. Their conversion the king so far encouraged, as that he compelled none to embrace Christianity, but only showed more affection to the believers, as to his fellow-citizens in the heavenly kingdom. For he had learned from his instructors and leaders to salvation, that the service of Christ ought to be voluntary, not by compulsion. Nor was it long before he gave his teachers a settled residence in his metropolis of Canterbury, with such possessions of different kinds as were necessary for their subsistence.

**Source.**—Thorpe, *Ancient Laws and Institutes of England*.

These are the dooms which Ethelbert the King gave forth in Augustine's days:

1. The property of God and of the church, twelve-fold; a bishop's property, eleven-fold; a priest's property, nine-fold; a deacon's property, six-fold; a clerk's property, three-fold; right of sanctuary, two-fold.

2. If the king call his people to him, and any one there do them evil, a two-fold amends, and 50 shillings to the king.

5. If a man slay another in the king's "tun," let him make amends with 50 shillings.

6. If any one slay a freeman, 50 shillings to the king as a fine.

8. The king's fine for a breach of the peace, 50 shillings.

9. If a freeman steal from a freeman, let him make three-fold amends, and let the king have the fine and all the chattels.

13. If a man slay another in an eorl's tun, let him make amends with 12 shillings.

15. A ceorl's fine for a breach of the peace, 6 shillings.

17. If any one be the first to break into a man's tun, let him make amends with 6 shillings; let him who follows, with 3 shillings; afterward, each man a shilling.

19. If highway robbery be done, let the amends be 6 shillings.

20. If a man then slay a man, let him make amends with 20 shillings.

28. If any man take indoor-property, let him make a three-fold amends.

33. If there be seizing of the hair, let there be 50 sceatts for amends.

34. If there be an exposure of the bone, let amends be made with 3 shillings.

35. If there be a bite into the bone, let amends be made with 4 shillings.

38. If a shoulder be lamed, let amends be made with 30 shillings.

39. If an ear be struck off, let amends be made with 12 shillings.

43. If an eye be out, let amends be made with 50 shillings.

45. If the nose be pierced, let amends be made with 9 shillings.

50. Let him who breaks the jaw-bone pay for it with 20 shillings.

51. For each of the four front teeth, 6 shillings, for the tooth which stands next to them, 4 shillings; for that which stands next to that, 3 shillings; and then afterwards, for each, a shilling.

52. If the speech be injured, 12 shillings.

53. Let him who stabs through an arm make amends with 6 shillings. If an arm be broken, let him make amends with 6 shillings.

54. If a thumb be struck off, 20 shillings. If a thumb-nail be off, let amends be made with 3 shillings. If the shooting-finger [fore-finger] be struck off, let amends be made with 8 shillings. If the middle finger be struck off, let amends be made with 4 shillings. If the gold-finger [ring-finger] be struck off, let amends be made with 6 shillings. If the little finger be struck off, let amends be made with 11 shillings.

55. For every nail, a shilling.

57. If any one strike another with his fist on the nose, 3 shillings.

69. If a foot be cut off, let 50 shillings be paid.

75. For the "mund" [money paid by a bridegroom to the bride's father] of a widow of the best class, of an eorl's degree, let the fine be 50 shillings; of the second, 20 shillings; of the third, 12 shillings; of the fourth, 6 shillings.

86. If one esne slay another unoffending, let him pay for him at his full worth.

87. If an esne's eye and foot be struck out or off, let him be paid for at his full worth.

89. Let the highway robbery of a slave be 3 shillings.

90. If a slave steal, let him make twofold amends.

## POPE GREGORY'S LETTER TO AUGUSTINE ON THE ORGANISATION OF THE CHURCH (601).

**Source.**—Bede, *Eccl. Hist.*, i. 29. A.D. 731. Translated by J. A. Giles. Bohn's Library.

*"To his most reverend and holy brother and fellow bishop, Augustine; Gregory, the servant of the servants of God.* Though it be certain that the unspeakable rewards of the eternal kingdom are reserved for those who labour for Almighty God, yet it is requisite that we bestow on them the advantage of honours, to the end that they may by this recompense be enabled the more vigorously to apply themselves to the care of their spiritual work. And in regard that the new church of the English is, through the goodness of the Lord, and your labours, brought to the grace of God, we grant you the use of the pall in the same, only for the performing of the solemn service of the mass; so that you in several places ordain twelve bishops, who shall be subject to your jurisdiction, so that the bishop of London shall, for the future, be always consecrated by his own synod, and that he receive the honour of the pall from this holy and apostolical see, which I, by the grace of God, now serve. But we will have you send to the city of York such a bishop as you shall think fit to ordain; yet so, that if that city, with the places adjoining, shall receive the word of God, that bishop shall also ordain twelve bishops, and enjoy the honour of a metropolitan; for we design, if we live, by the help of God, to bestow on him also the pall; and yet we will have him to be subservient to your authority; but after your decease, he shall so preside over the bishops he shall ordain, as to be in no way subject to the jurisdiction of the bishop of London. But for the future let this distinction be between the bishops of the cities of London and York, that he may have the precedence who shall be first ordained. But let them unanimously dispose, by common advice and uniform conduct, whatsoever is to be done for the zeal of Christ; let them judge rightly, and perform what they judge convenient in a uniform manner.

"But to you, my brother, shall, by the authority of our God, and Lord Jesus Christ, be subject not only those bishops you shall ordain, and those that shall be ordained by the bishop of York, but also all the priests in Britain; to the end that from the mouth and life of your holiness they may learn the rule of believing rightly, and living well, and fulfilling their office in faith and good manners, they may, when it shall please the Lord, attain the heavenly kingdom. God preserve you in safety, most reverend brother.

"Dated the 22nd of June, in the nineteenth year of the reign of our most pious lord and emperor, Mauritius Tiberius, the eighteenth year after the consulship of our said lord. The fourth indiction."

**Source.**—Bede, *Eccl. Hist.*, ii. 2. A.D. 731. Translated by J. A. Giles. Bohn's Library.

Augustine, with the assistance of King Ethelbert, drew together to a conference the bishops, or doctors, of the next province of the Britons, at a place which is to this day called Augustine's Ac, that is, Augustine's Oak, on the borders of the Wiccii and West Saxons; and began by brotherly admonitions to persuade them, that preserving Catholic unity with him, they should undertake the common labour of preaching the Gospel to the Gentiles. For they did not keep Easter Sunday at the proper time, but from the fourteenth to the twentieth moon; which computation is contained in a revolution of eighty-four years. Besides, they did several other things which were against the unity of the church. When, after a long disputation, they did not comply with the entreaties, exhortations, or rebukes of Augustine and his companions, but preferred their own traditions before all the churches in the world, which in Christ agree among themselves, the holy father, Augustine, put an end to this troublesome and tedious contention, saying: "Let us beg of God, who causes those who are of one mind to live in his Father's house, that He will vouchsafe, by his heavenly tokens, to declare to us, which tradition is to be followed; and by what means we are to find our way to his heavenly kingdom. Let some infirm person be brought, and let the faith and practice of those, by whose prayers he shall be healed, be looked upon as acceptable to God, and be adopted by all." The adverse party unwillingly consenting, a blind man of the English race was brought, who having been presented to the priests of the Britons, found no benefit or cure from their ministry; at length, Augustine, compelled by real necessity, bowed his knees to the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, praying that the lost sight might be restored to the blind man, and by the corporeal enlightening of one man, the light of spiritual grace might be kindled in the hearts of many of the faithful. Immediately the blind man received sight, and Augustine was by all declared the preacher of the Divine truth. The Britons then confessed, that it was the true way of righteousness which Augustine taught; but that they could not depart from their ancient customs without the consent and leave of their people. They therefore desired that a second synod might be appointed, at which more of their number would be present.

18

This being decreed, there came (as is asserted) seven bishops of the Britons, and many most learned men, particularly from their most noble monastery, which, in the English tongue, is called Bancornaburg [Bangor-is-Coed], over which the Abbot Dinoot is said to have presided at that time. They that were to go to the aforesaid council, repaired first to a certain holy and discreet man, who was wont to lead an eremitical life among them, advising with him, whether they ought, at the preaching of Augustine, to forsake their traditions. He answered, "If he is a man of God, follow him."—"How shall we know that?" said they. He replied, "Our Lord saith, Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me, for I am meek and lowly in heart; if therefore, Augustine is meek and lowly of heart, it is to be believed that he has taken upon him the yoke of Christ, and offers the same to you to take upon you. But, if he is stern and haughty, it appears that he is not of God, nor are we to regard his words." They insisted again, "And how shall we discern even this?"—"Do you contrive," said the anchorite, "that he may first arrive with his company at the place where the synod is to be held; and if at your approach he shall rise up to you, hear him submissively, being assured that he is the servant of Christ; but if he shall despise you, and not rise up to you, whereas you are more in number, let him also be despised by you."

They did as he directed; and it happened that when they came, Augustine was sitting on a chair, which they observing, were in a passion, and charging him with pride, endeavoured to contradict all he said. He said to them, "You act in many particulars contrary to our custom, or rather the custom of the universal church, and yet, if you will comply with me in these three points, viz. to keep Easter at the due time; to administer baptism, by which we are again born to God, according to the custom of the holy Roman Apostolic Church; and jointly with us to preach the word of God to the English nation, we will readily tolerate all the other things you do, though contrary to our customs." They answered they would do none of those things, nor receive him as their archbishop; for they alleged among themselves, that "if he would not now rise up to us, how much more will he contemn us, as of no worth, if we shall begin to be under his subjection?" To whom the man of God, Augustine, is said, in a threatening manner, to have foretold, that in case they would not join in unity with their brethren, they should be warred upon by their enemies; and, if they would not preach the way of life to the English nation, they should at their hands undergo the vengeance of death. All which, through the dispensation of the Divine judgment, fell out exactly as he had predicted.

19

**Source.**—Bede, *Eccl. Hist.*, ii. 9. Translated by J. A. Giles. Bohn's Library.

The occasion of this [the Northumbrian] nation's embracing the faith was their aforesaid king, being allied to the kings of Kent, having taken to wife Ethelberga, otherwise called Tate, daughter to King Ethelbert. He having by his ambassadors asked her in marriage of her brother Eadbald, who then reigned in Kent, was answered, "That it was not lawful to marry a Christian virgin to a pagan husband, lest the faith and the mysteries of the heavenly King should be profaned by her living with a king that was altogether a stranger to the worship of the true God." This answer being brought to Edwin by his messengers, he promised in no manner to act in opposition to the Christian faith, which the virgin professed; but would give leave to her, and all that went with her, men or women, priests or ministers, to follow their faith and worship after the custom of the Christians. Nor did he deny, but that he would embrace the same religion, if, being examined by wise persons, it should be found more holy and more worthy of God. 20

Hereupon the virgin was promised, and sent to Edwin, and pursuant to what had been agreed on, Paulinus, a man beloved of God, was ordained bishop, to go with her, and by daily exhortations, and celebrating the heavenly mysteries, to confirm her and her company, lest they should be corrupted by the company of the pagans. Paulinus was ordained bishop by the Archbishop Justus, on the 21st day of July, in the year of our Lord, 625, and so he came to King Edwin with the aforesaid virgin. But his mind was wholly bent upon reducing the nation to which he was sent to the knowledge of truth.... Being come into that province, he laboured much, not only to retain those that went with him, by the help of God, that they should not revolt from the faith, but, if he could, to convert some of the pagans to a state of grace by his preaching. But, as the apostle says, though he laboured long in the word, "The god of this world blinded the minds of them that believed not, lest the light of the glorious Gospel of Christ should shine unto them."

The next year there came into the province a certain assassin, called Eumer, sent by the king of the West Saxons, whose name was Cuichelm, in hopes at once to deprive King Edwin of his kingdom and his life. He had a two-edged dagger, dipped in poison, to the end, that if the wound were not sufficient to kill the king, it might be performed by the venom. He came to the king on the first day of Easter, at the river Derwent, where then stood the regal city, and being admitted as if to deliver a message from his master, whilst he was in an artful manner delivering his pretended embassy, he started on a sudden, and drawing the dagger from under his garment, assaulted the king; which Lilla, the king's beloved thegn, observing, having no buckler at hand to secure the king from death, interposed his own body to receive the stroke; but the wretch struck so home, that he wounded the king through the thegn's body. Being then attacked on all sides with swords, he in that confusion also slew another soldier, whose name was Forthhere. 21

On that same holy night of Easter Sunday, the queen had brought forth to the king a daughter, called Eanfled. The king, in the presence of Bishop Paulinus, gave thanks to his gods for the birth of his daughter; and the bishop, on the other hand, returned thanks to Christ.... The king, delighted with his words, promised, that in case God would grant him life and victory over the king by whom the assassin had been sent, he would cast off his idols, and serve Christ; and as a pledge that he would perform his promise, he delivered up that same daughter to Paulinus, to be consecrated to Christ. She was the first baptised of the nation of the Northumbrians, on Whitsunday, with twelve others of her family. At that time, the king, being recovered of the wound which he had received, marched with his army against the nation of the West Saxons; and having begun the war, either slew or subdued all those that he had been informed had conspired to murder him. Returning thus victorious unto his own country, he would not immediately and unadvisedly embrace the mysteries of the Christian faith, though he no longer worshipped idols, ever since he made the promise that he would serve Christ; but thought fit first at leisure to be instructed, by the venerable Paulinus, in the knowledge of the faith, and to confer with such as he knew to be the wisest of his chief men, to advise what they thought was fittest to be done in that case. And being a man of extraordinary sagacity, he often sat alone by himself a long time, silent as to his tongue, but deliberating in his heart how he should proceed, and which religion he should adhere to.

**Source.**—Bede, *Eccl. Hist.*, ii. 13. A.D. 731. Translated by J. A. Giles. Bohn's Library.

The king, hearing the words of Paulinus, answered, that he was both willing and bound to receive the faith which he taught; but that he would confer about it with his principal friends and counsellors, to the end that if they also were of his opinion, they might all together be cleansed in Christ the Fountain of Life. Paulinus consenting, the king did as he said; for, holding a council with the wise men, he asked of every one in particular what he thought of the new doctrine, and the new worship that was preached? To which the chief of his own priests, Coifi, immediately answered, "O king, consider what this is which is now preached to us; for I verily declare to you, that the religion which we have hitherto professed has, as far as I can learn, no virtue in it. For none of your people has applied himself more diligently to the worship of our gods than I; and yet there are many who receive greater favours from you, and are more preferred than I, and are more prosperous in all their undertakings. Now if the gods were good for any thing, they would rather forward me, who have been more careful to serve them. It remains, therefore, that if upon examination you find those new doctrines, which are now preached to us, better and more efficacious, we immediately receive them without any delay."

Another of the king's chief men, approving of his words and exhortations, presently added: "The present life of man, O king, seems to me, in comparison of that time which is unknown to us, like to the swift flight of a sparrow through the room wherein you sit at supper in winter, with your commanders and ministers, and a good fire in the midst, whilst the storms of rain and snow prevail abroad; the sparrow, I say, flying in at one door, and immediately out at another, whilst he is within, is safe from the wintry storm; but after a short space of fair weather, he immediately vanishes out of your sight, into the dark winter from which he had emerged. So this life of man appears for a short space, but of what went before, or what is to follow, we are utterly ignorant. If, therefore, this new doctrine contains something more certain, it seems justly to deserve to be followed." The other elders and king's counsellors, by Divine inspiration, spoke to the same effect.

But Coifi added, that he wished more attentively to hear Paulinus discourse concerning the God whom he preached; which he having by the king's command performed, Coifi, hearing his words, cried out, "I have long since been sensible that there was nothing in that which we worshipped; because the more diligently I sought after truth in that worship, the less I found it. But now I freely confess, that such truth evidently appears in this preaching as can confer on us the gifts of life, of salvation, and of eternal happiness. For which reason I advise, O king, that we instantly abjure and set fire to those temples and altars which we have consecrated without reaping any benefit from them." In short, the king publicly gave his licence to Paulinus to preach the Gospel, and renouncing idolatry, declared that he received the faith of Christ; and when he inquired of the high priest who should first profane the altars and temples of their idols, with the enclosures that were about them, he answered, "I; for who can more properly than myself destroy those things which I worshipped through ignorance, for an example to all others, through the wisdom which has been given me by the true God?" Then immediately, in contempt of his former superstitions, he desired the king to furnish him with arms and a stallion; and mounting the same, he set out to destroy the idols; for it was not lawful before for the high priest either to carry arms, or to ride on any but a mare. Having, therefore, girt a sword about him, with a spear in his hand, he mounted the king's stallion, and proceeded to the idols. The multitude, beholding it, concluded he was distracted; but he lost no time, for as soon as he drew near the temple he profaned the same, casting into it the spear which he held; and rejoicing in the knowledge of the worship of the true God, he commanded his companions to destroy the temple, with all its enclosures, by fire. This place where the idols were is still shown, not far from York, to the eastward, beyond the river Derwent, and is now called Godmundingham, where the high priest, by the inspiration of the true God, profaned and destroyed the altars which he had himself consecrated.

## THE CHARACTER OF BISHOP AIDAN (635).

**Source.**—Bede, *Eccl. Hist.*, iii. 5. A.D. 731. Translated by J. A. Giles. Bohn's Library.

From the aforesaid island, and college of monks, was Aidan sent to instruct the English nation in Christ, having received the dignity of a bishop at the time when Segeni, abbot and priest, presided over that monastery; whence, among other instructions for life, he left the clergy a most salutary example of abstinence or continence; it was the highest commendation of his doctrine, with all men, that he taught no otherwise than he and his followers had lived; for he neither sought nor loved any thing of this world, but delighted in distributing immediately among the poor whatsoever was given him by the kings or rich men of the world. He was wont to traverse both town and country on foot, never on horseback, unless compelled by some urgent necessity; and wherever in his way he saw any, either rich or poor, he invited them, if infidels, to embrace the mystery of the faith; or if they were believers, strove to strengthen them in the faith, and to stir them up by words and actions to alms and good works.

His course of life was so different from the slothfulness of our times, that all those who bore him company, whether they were shorn monks or laymen, were employed in meditation, that is, either in reading the Scriptures, or learning psalms. This was the daily employment of himself and all that were with him, wheresoever they went; and if it happened, which was but seldom, that he was invited to eat with the king, he went with one or two clerks, and having taken a small repast, made haste to be gone with them, either to read or write. At that time, many religious men and women, stirred up by his example, adopted the custom of fasting on Wednesdays and Fridays, till the ninth hour, throughout the year, except during the fifty days after Easter. He never gave money to the powerful men of the world, but only meat, if he happened to entertain them; and, on the contrary, whatsoever gifts of money he received from the rich, he either distributed them, as has been said, to the use of the poor, or bestowed them in ransoming such as had been wrongfully sold for slaves. Moreover, he afterwards made many of those he had ransomed his disciples, and after having taught and instructed them, advanced them to the order of priesthood.



**Source.**—Bede, *Eccl. Hist.*, iii. 14. Translated by J. A. Giles. Bohn's Library.

King Oswin was of a graceful aspect, and tall of stature, affable in discourse, and courteous in behaviour; and most bountiful, as well to the ignoble as the noble; so that he was beloved by all men for his qualities of body and mind, and persons of the first rank came from almost all provinces to serve him. Among other virtues and rare endowments, if I may so express it, humility is said to have been the greatest, which it will suffice to prove by one example.

He had given an extraordinarily fine horse to Bishop Aidan, which he might either use in crossing rivers, or in performing a journey upon any urgent necessity, though he was wont to travel ordinarily on foot. Some short time after, a poor man meeting him, and asking alms, he immediately dismounted, and ordered the horse, with all his royal furniture, to be given to the beggar; for he was very compassionate, a great friend to the poor, and, as it were, the father of the wretched. This being told to the king, when they were going in to dinner, he said to the bishop, "Why would you, my lord bishop, give the poor man that royal horse, which was necessary for your use? Had not we many other horses of less value, and of other sorts, which would have been good enough to give to the poor, and not to give that horse, which I had particularly chosen for yourself?" To whom the bishop instantly answered, "What is it you say, O king? Is that foal of a mare more dear to you than a child of God?" Upon this they went in to dinner, and the bishop sat in his place; but the king, who was come from hunting, stood warming himself, with his attendants, at the fire. Then, on a sudden, whilst he was warming himself, calling to mind what the bishop had said to him, he ungirt his sword, and gave it to a servant, and in a hasty manner fell down at the bishop's feet, beseeching him to forgive him; "For from this time forward," said he, "I will never speak any more of this, nor will I judge of what, or how much of our money you shall give to the children of God." The bishop was much moved at this sight, and starting up, raised him, saying, "He was entirely reconciled to him, if he would sit down to his meat, and lay aside all sorrow." The king, at the bishop's command and request, beginning to be merry, the bishop, on the other hand, grew so melancholy as to shed tears. His priest then asking him, in the language of his country, which the king and his servants did not understand, why he wept, "I know," said he, "that the king will not live long; for I never before saw so humble a king; whence I conclude that he will soon be snatched out of this life, because this nation is not worthy of such a ruler." Not long after, the bishop's prediction was fulfilled by the king's death, as has been said above. But Bishop Aidan himself was also taken out of this world, twelve days after the king he loved, on the 31st of August, to receive the eternal reward of his labours from our Lord.

**Source.**—Bede, *Eccl. Hist.*, iii. 25. A.D. 731. Translated by J. A. Giles. Bohn's Library.

Agilbert, bishop of the West Saxons, above-mentioned, a friend to King Alfrid and to Abbot Wilfrid, had at that time come into the province of the Northumbrians, and was making some stay among them; and at the request of Alfrid, made Wilfrid a priest in his monastery. He had in his company a priest, whose name was Agatho. The controversy being there started, concerning Easter, or the tonsure, or other ecclesiastical affairs, it was agreed, that a synod should be held in the monastery of Streaneshalch, which signifies the Bay of the Lighthouse, where the Abbess Hilda, a woman devoted to God, then presided, and that there this controversy should be decided. The kings, both father and son, came thither, Bishop Colman with his Scottish clerks, and Agilbert with the priests Agatho and Wilfrid; James and Romanus were on their side. But the Abbess Hilda and her followers were for the Scots, as was also the venerable Bishop Cedd, long before ordained by the Scots, as has been said above; and he was in that council a most careful interpreter for both parties.

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When Wilfrid had spoken, the king said, "Is it true, Colman, that these words were spoken to Peter by our Lord?" He answered, "It is true, O king!" Then says he, "Can you show any such power given to your Columba?" Colman answered, "None." Then added the king, "Do you both agree that these words were principally directed to Peter, and that the keys of heaven were given to him by our Lord?" They both answered, "We do." Then the king concluded: "And I also say unto you, that he is the door-keeper, whom I will not contradict, but will, as far as I know and am able, in all things obey his decrees, lest, when I come to the gates of the kingdom of heaven, there should be none to open them, he being my adversary who is proved to have the keys." The king having said this, all present, both great and small, gave their assent, and renouncing the more imperfect institution, resolved to conform to that which they found to be better.

**Source.**—Bede, *Lives of the Holy Abbots of Wearmouth and Jarrow*.

At that time, Egbert, king of Kent, had sent out of Britain a man who had been elected to the office of bishop, Wighard by name, who had been adequately taught by the Roman disciples of the blessed Pope Gregory in Kent on every topic of Church discipline; but the king wished him to be ordained bishop at Rome, in order that, having him for bishop of his own nation and language, he might himself, as well as his people, be the more thoroughly master of the words and mysteries of the holy faith, as he would then have these administered, not through an interpreter, but from the hands and by the tongue of a kinsman and fellow-countryman. But Wighard, on coming to Rome, died of a disease, with all his attendants, before he had received the dignity of bishop. Now the Apostolic Father, that the embassy of the faithful might not fail through the death of their ambassadors, called a council, and appointed one of his Church to send as archbishop into Britain. This was Theodore, a man deep in all secular and ecclesiastical learning, whether Greek or Latin; and to him was given, as a colleague and counsellor, a man equally strenuous and prudent, the abbot Hadrian. Perceiving also that the reverend Benedict would become a man of wisdom, industry, piety, and nobility of mind, he committed to him the newly ordained bishop, with his followers, enjoining him to abandon the travel which he had undertaken for Christ's sake; and with a higher good in view, to return home to his country, and bring into it that teacher of wisdom whom it had so earnestly wished for, and to be to him an interpreter and guide, both on the journey thither, and afterwards, upon his arrival, when he should begin to preach. Benedict did as he was commanded; they came to Kent, and were joyfully received there; Theodore ascended his episcopal throne, and Benedict took upon himself to rule the monastery of the blessed Apostle Peter, of which, afterwards, Hadrian became abbot.

29

He ruled the monastery for two years; and then successfully, as before, accomplished a third voyage from Britain to Rome, and brought back a large number of books on sacred literature, which he had either bought at a price or received as gifts from his friends. On his return he arrived at Vienne, where he took possession of such as he had entrusted his friends to purchase for him. When he had come home, he determined to go to the court of Conwalh, king of the West Saxons, whose friendship and services he had already more than once experienced. But Conwalh died suddenly about this time, and he therefore directed his course to his native province. He came to the court of Egfrid, king of Northumberland, and gave an account of all that he had done since in youth he had left his country. He made no secret of his zeal for religion, and showed what ecclesiastical or monastic instructions he had received at Rome and elsewhere. He displayed the holy volumes and relics of Christ's blessed Apostles and martyrs, which he had brought, and found such favour in the eyes of the king, that he forthwith gave him seventy hides of lands out of his own estates, and ordered a monastery to be built thereon for the first pastor of his church. This was done, as I said before, at the mouth of the river Wear, on the left bank, in the 674th year of our Lord's incarnation, in the second indiction, and in the fourth year of King Egfrid's reign.

After the interval of a year, Benedict crossed the sea into Gaul, and no sooner asked than he obtained and carried back with him some masons to build him a church in the Roman style, which he had always admired. So much zeal did he show from his love to Saint Peter, in whose honour he was building it, that within a year from the time of laying the foundation, you might have seen the roof on and the solemnity of the mass celebrated therein. When the work was drawing to completion, he sent messengers to Gaul to fetch makers of glass, (more properly artificers,) who were at this time unknown in Britain, that they might glaze the windows of his church, with the cloisters and dining-rooms. This was done, and they came, and not only finished the work required, but taught the English nation their handicraft, which was well adapted for enclosing the lanterns of the church, and for the vessels required for various uses. All other things necessary for the service of the church and the altar, the sacred vessels, and the vestments, because they could not be procured in England, he took especial care to buy and bring home from foreign parts.

30

Some decorations and muniments there were which could not be procured even in Gaul, and these the pious founder determined to fetch from Rome; for which purpose, after he had formed the rule for his monastery, he made his fourth voyage to Rome, and returned loaded with more abundant spiritual merchandise than before. In the first place, he brought back a large quantity of books of all kinds; secondly, a great number of relics of Christ's Apostles and martyrs, all likely to bring a blessing on many an English church; thirdly, he introduced the Roman mode of chanting, singing, and ministering in the church, by obtaining permission from Pope Agatho to take back with him John, the archchanter of the church of St. Peter, and abbot of the monastery of St. Martin, to teach the English. This John, when he arrived in England, not only communicated instruction by teaching personally, but left behind him numerous writings, which are still preserved in the library of the same monastery. In the fourth place, Benedict brought with him a thing by no means to be despised, namely, a letter of privilege from Pope Agatho, which he had procured, not only with the consent, but by the request and exhortation, of King Egfrid, and by which the monastery was rendered safe and secure for ever from foreign invasion. Fifthly, he brought with him pictures of sacred representations, to adorn the church of St. Peter, which he had built; namely, a likeness of the Virgin Mary and of the twelve Apostles, with which he intended to adorn the central nave, on boarding placed from one wall to the other; also some figures from ecclesiastical history for the south wall, and others from the Revelation of St. John for the north wall; so that every one who entered the church, even if they could not read, wherever they turned their eyes, might have before them the lovable countenances of Christ and his saints, though it were but in a picture, and with

31

watchful minds might revolve on the benefits of our Lord's Incarnation, and having before their eyes the perils of the last judgment, might examine their hearts the more strictly on that account.

**Source.**—Bede, *Eccl. Hist.*, iv. 5. A.D. 731. Translated by J. A. Giles. Bohn's Library.

Theodore assembled a synod of bishops, and many other teachers of the church, who loved and were acquainted with the canonical statutes of the fathers. When they were met together, he began, as became a prelate, to enjoin the observance of such things as were agreeable to the unity and the peace of the church. The purport of which synodical proceedings is as follows—

“In the name of our Lord God and Saviour Jesus Christ, who reigns for ever and for ever, and governs his church, it was thought meet that we should assemble, according to the custom of the venerable canons, to treat about the necessary affairs of the church. We met on the 24th day of September, the first indiction, at a place called Hertford, myself, Theodore, the unworthy bishop of the see of Canterbury, appointed by the Apostolic See, our fellow priest and most reverend brother, Bisi, bishop of the East Angles; also by his proxies, our brother and fellow priest, Wilfrid, bishop of the nation of the Northumbrians, as also our brothers and fellow priests, Putta, bishop of the Kentish castle, called Rochester; Eleutherius, bishop of the West Saxons, and Winfrid, bishop of the province of the Mercians. When we were all met together, and were sat down in order, I said: ‘I beseech you, most dear brothers, for the love and fear of our Redeemer, that we may all treat in common for our faith; to the end that whatsoever has been decreed and defined by the holy and reverend fathers, may be inviolably observed by all.’ This and much more I spoke tending to the preservation of the charity and unity of the church; and when I had ended my discourse, I asked every one of them in order, whether they consented to observe the things that had been formerly canonically decreed by the fathers? To which all our fellow priests answered, ‘It so pleases us, and we will all most willingly observe with a cheerful mind whatever is laid down in the canons of the holy fathers.’ I then produced the said book of canons, and publicly showed them ten chapters in the same, which I had marked in several places, because I knew them to be of the most importance to us, and entreated that they might be most particularly received by them all.

“Chapter I. That we all in common keep the holy day of Easter on the Sunday after the fourteenth moon of the first month.

“II. That no bishop intrude into the diocese of another, but be satisfied with the government of the people committed to him.

“III. That it shall not be lawful for any bishop to trouble monasteries dedicated to God, or to take anything forcibly from them.

“IV. That monks do not remove from one place to another, that is, from monastery to monastery, unless with the consent of their own abbot; but that they continue in the obedience which they promised at the time of their conversion.

“V. That no clergyman, forsaking his own bishop, shall wander about, or be anywhere entertained without letters of recommendation from his own prelate. But if he shall be once received, and will not return when invited, both the receiver, and the person received, be under excommunication.

“VI. That bishops and clergymen, when travelling, shall be content with the hospitality that is afforded them; and that it be not lawful for them to exercise any priestly function without leave of the bishop in whose diocese they are.

“VII. That a synod be assembled twice a year; but in regard that several causes obstruct the same, it was approved by all, that we should meet on the 1st of August once a year, at the place called Clofeshoch.

“VIII. That no bishop, through ambition, shall set himself before another; but that they shall all observe the time and order of their consecration.

“IX. It was generally set forth, that more bishops should be made, as the number of believers increased; but this matter for the present was passed over.

“These chapters being thus treated of and defined by all, to the end, that for the future, no scandal of contention might arise from any of us, or that things be falsely set forth, it was thought fit that every one of us should, by subscribing his hand, confirm all the particulars so laid down. Which definitive judgment of ours, I dictated to be written by Titillus our notary. Done in the month and indiction aforesaid. Whosoever, therefore, shall presume in any way to oppose or infringe this decision, confirmed by our consent, and by the subscription of our hands, according to the decree of the canons, must take notice, that he is excluded from all sacerdotal functions, and from our society. May the Divine Grace preserve us in safety, living in the unity of his holy church.”

**Source.**—*Life of Wilfrid*, by Eddius Stephanus, written soon after 710. Raine, *Historians of the Church of York*, p. 34. Translated by W.

For King Ecfriþ's queen, Iurmenburg, was then at the devil's instigation moved with jealousy ... and like wicked Jezebel, killing God's prophets and persecuting Elijah, she shot poisoned arrows from her poisonous quiver into the heart of the king with words, eloquently telling over to him all the worldly glory of S. Wilfrid, his riches, the multitude of his abbeys, the magnitude of his buildings, and the innumerable army of his companions, decked with royal garments and arms. By such darts the king's heart was wounded: both craftily sought how to bring into contempt the holy head of the church so as to ruin him, and boldly to take away from him the gifts made by kings to God; and to aid their madness they invited, contrary to God's will, Archbishop Theodore, by means of gifts, which blind the eyes of even wise men, as Balak blinded Balaam.

When the archbishop came to them they disclosed to him the measures they intended against Wilfrid, and he consented, alas! wickedly to condemn him without their incurring any guilt for the crime. For he alone, contrary to precedent, and irregularly, ordained three bishops whom he brought from elsewhere [Bosa, Eata, Eadhaed], who were not of those subject to his jurisdiction, to the proper positions of Wilfrid's bishopric in his absence.

On hearing this, our holy bishop approached the king and the archbishop, asking what might be the cause why without his having committed any crime they defrauded him, like robbers, of the substance which kings had given for God. They replied to our bishop before all the people in these memorable words, "We do not ascribe to thee any fault of having injured any man, but for all that we will not change the doom which we have uttered concerning thee." But our bishop, not contented with such a deceitful doom, chose rather, with the advice of his fellow bishops, the decision of the Apostolic See, as the Apostle Paul, unjustly condemned by the Jews, appealed to Cæsar. Then our holy bishop turned from the royal judgment-seat and said to the courtiers who were laughing gaily, "On the anniversary of this day ye, who now laugh at my condemnation, which is caused by envy, shall weep bitterly at your own confusion." And so, according to the prophecy of the saint, it fell out. For on the anniversary of that day the body of King Ælfwin, who had been slain, was brought to York, and all the people, weeping bitterly, tore their garments and their hair; and his surviving brother reigned till his death without gaining a single victory.

**Source.**—Bede, *Eccl. Hist.*, iv. 24. A.D. 731. Translated by J. A. Giles. Bohn's Library.

There was in this abbess's monastery [of Whitby] a certain brother, particularly remarkable for the grace of God, who was wont to make pious and religious verses, so that whatever was interpreted to him out of Scripture, he soon after put the same into poetical expressions of much sweetness and humility, in English, which was his native language. By his verses the minds of many were often excited to despise the world, and to aspire to heaven. Others after him attempted, in the English nation, to compose religious poems, but none could ever compare with him, for he did not learn the art of poetry from men, but from God; for which reason he never could compose any trivial or vain poem, but only those which relate to religion suited his religious tongue; for having lived in a secular habit till he was well advanced in years, he had never learned anything of versifying; for which reason being sometimes at entertainments, when it was agreed for the sake of mirth that all present should sing in their turns, when he saw the instrument come towards him, he rose up from table and returned home.

Having done so at a certain time, and gone out of the house where the entertainment was, to the stable, where he had to take care of the horses that night, he there composed himself to rest at the proper time; a person appeared to him in his sleep, and saluting him by his name, said, "Cædmon, sing some song to me." He answered, "I cannot sing; for that was the reason why I left the entertainment, and retired to this place, because I could not sing." The other who talked to him, replied, "However, you shall sing."—"What shall I sing?" rejoined he. "Sing the beginning of created beings," said the other. Hereupon he presently began to sing verses to the praise of God, which he had never heard, the purport whereof was thus:—We are now to praise the Maker of the heavenly kingdom, the power of the Creator and his counsel, the deeds of the Father of glory. How He, being the eternal God, became the author of all miracles, who first, as almighty preserver of the human race, created heaven for the sons of men as the roof of the house, and next the earth. This is the sense, but not the words in order as he sang them in his sleep; for verses, though never so well composed, cannot be literally translated out of one language into another, without losing much of their beauty and loftiness. Awaking from his sleep, he remembered all that he had sung in his dream, and soon added much more to the same effect in verse worthy of the Deity.

In the morning he came to the steward, his superior, and having acquainted him with the gift he had received, was conducted to the abbess, by whom he was ordered, in the presence of many learned men, to tell his dream, and repeat the verses, that they might all give their judgment what it was, and whence his verse proceeded. They all concluded, that heavenly grace had been conferred on him by our Lord. They expounded to him a passage in holy writ, either historical, or doctrinal, ordering him, if he could, to put the same into verse. Having undertaken it, he went away, and returning the next morning, gave it to them composed in most excellent verse; whereupon the abbess, embracing the grace of God in the man, instructed him to quit the secular habit, and take upon him the monastic life; which being accordingly done, she associated him to the rest of the brethren in her monastery, and ordered that he should be taught the whole series of sacred history. Thus Cædmon, keeping in mind all he heard, and as it were chewing the cud, converted the same into most harmonious verse; and sweetly repeating the same, made his masters in their turn his hearers. He sang the creation of the world, the origin of man, and all the history of Genesis: and made many verses on the departure of the children of Israel out of Egypt, and their entering into the land of promise, with many other histories from holy writ.

**Source.**—Bede, *Eccl. Hist.*, iv. 13. A.D. 731. Translated by J. A. Giles. Bohn's Library.

Being expelled from his bishopric, and having travelled in several parts, Wilfrid went to Rome. He afterwards returned to Britain; and though he could not, by reason of the enmity of the aforesaid king, be received into his own country or diocese, yet he could not be restrained from preaching the Gospel; for, taking his way into the province of the South Saxons, which extends from Kent on the west and south, as far as the West Saxons, and contains land of 7,000 families, who at that time were still pagans, he administered to them the word of faith, and the baptism of salvation. Ethelwalch, king of that nation, had been, not long before, baptised in the province of the Mercians, by the persuasion of King Wulfhere, who was present, and was also his godfather, and as such gave him two provinces, viz., the Isle of Wight, and the province of Meanwara, in the nation of the West Saxons. The bishop, therefore, with the king's consent, or rather to his great satisfaction, baptised the principal generals and soldiers of that country; and the priests, Eappa, and Padda, and Burghelm, and Eadda, either then, or afterwards, baptised the rest of the people. The queen, whose name was Ebba, had been christened in her own island, the province of the Wiccii. She was the daughter of Eanfrid, the brother of Eanher, who were both Christians, as were their people; but all the province of the South Saxons were strangers to the name and faith of God. There was among them a certain monk of the Scottish nation, whose name was Dicul, who had a very small monastery, at the place called Bosanham, encompassed with the sea and woods, and in it five or six brothers, who served our Lord in poverty and humility; but none of the natives cared either to follow their course of life, or hear their preaching.

But Bishop Wilfrid, by preaching to them, not only delivered them from the misery of perpetual damnation, but also from an inexhaustible calamity of temporal death, for no rain had fallen in that province in three years before his arrival, whereupon a dreadful famine ensued, which cruelly destroyed the people. In short, it is reported, that very often, forty or fifty men, being spent with want, would go together to some precipice, or to the sea-shore, and there, hand in hand, perish by the fall, or be swallowed up by the waves. But on the very day on which the nation received the baptism of faith, there fell a soft but plentiful rain; the earth revived again, and the verdure being restored to the fields, the season was pleasant and fruitful.... For the bishop, when he came into the province, and found so great misery from famine, taught them to get their food by fishing; for their sea and rivers abounded in fish, but the people had no skill to take them, except eels alone. The bishop's men having gathered eel-nets everywhere, cast them into the sea, and by the blessing of God took three hundred fishes of several sorts, which, being divided into three parts, they gave a hundred to the poor, a hundred to those of whom they had the nets, and kept a hundred for their own use. By this benefit the bishop gained the affections of them all, and they began more readily at his preaching to hope for heavenly goods, seeing that by his help they had received those which are temporal.

At this time, King Ethelwalch gave to the most reverend prelate, Wilfrid, land of eighty-seven families, to maintain his company who were in banishment, which place is called Selsey, that is, the Island of the Sea-Calf.



**Source.**—Bede, *Life and Miracles of St. Cuthbert*. Translated by J. A. Giles.

1. After the death of Boisil, Cuthbert took upon himself the duties of the office before mentioned; and for many years discharged them with the most pious zeal, as became a saint: for he not only furnished both precept and example to his brethren of the monastery, but sought to lead the minds of the neighbouring people to the love of heavenly things. Many of them, indeed, disgraced the faith which they professed, by unholy deeds; and some of them, in the time of mortality, neglecting the sacrament of their creed, had recourse to idolatrous remedies, as if by charms or amulets, or any other mysteries of the magical art, they were able to avert a stroke inflicted upon them by the Lord. To correct these errors, he often went out from the monastery, sometimes on horseback, sometimes on foot, and preached the way of truth to the neighbouring villages, as Boisil, his predecessor, had done before him. It was at this time customary for the English people to flock together when a clerk or priest entered a village, and listen to what he said, that so they might learn something from him, and amend their lives. Now Cuthbert was so skilful in teaching, and so zealous in what he undertook, that none dared to conceal from him their thoughts, but all acknowledged what they had done amiss; for they supposed that it was impossible to escape his notice, and they hoped to merit forgiveness by an honest confession. He was mostly accustomed to travel to those villages which lay in out of the way places among the mountains, which by their poverty and natural horrors deterred other visitors. Yet even here did his devoted mind find exercise for his powers of teaching, insomuch that he often remained a week, sometimes two or three, nay, even a whole month, without returning home; but dwelling among the mountains, taught the poor people, both by the words of his preaching, and also by his own holy conduct.

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2. The building is almost of a round form, from wall to wall about four to five poles in extent: the wall on the outside is higher than a man, but within, by excavating the rock, he made it much deeper, to prevent the eyes and the thoughts from wandering, that the mind might be wholly bent on heavenly things, and the pious inhabitant might behold nothing from his residence but the heavens above him. The wall was constructed, not of hewn stones or of brick and mortar, but of rough stones and turf, which had been taken out from the ground within. Some of them were so large that four men could hardly have lifted them, but Cuthbert himself, with angels helping him, had raised them up and placed them on the wall. There were two chambers in the house, one an oratory, the other for domestic purposes. He finished the walls of them by digging round and cutting away the natural soil within and without, and formed the roof out of rough poles and straw. Moreover, at the landing-place of the island he built a large house, in which the brethren who visited him might be received and rest themselves, and not far from it there was a fountain of water for their use.

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Now when Cuthbert had, with the assistance of the brethren, made for himself this dwelling with its chambers, he began to live in a more secluded manner. At first, indeed, when the brethren came to visit him, he would leave his cell and minister to them. He used to wash their feet devoutly with warm water, and was sometimes compelled by them to take off his shoes, that they might wash his feet also. For he had so far withdrawn his mind from attending to the care of his person, and fixed it upon the concerns of his soul, that he would often spend whole months without taking off his leathern gaiters. Sometimes, too, he would keep his shoes on from one Easter to another, only taking them off on account of the washing of feet, which then takes place at the Lord's Supper. Wherefore, in consequence of his frequent prayers and genuflexions, which he made with his shoes on, he was discovered to have contracted a callosity on the junction of his feet and legs. At length, as his zeal after perfection grew, he shut himself up in his cell away from the sight of men, and spent his time alone in fasting, watching, and prayer, rarely having communication with anyone without, and that through the window, which at first was left open, that he might see and be seen; but, after a time, he shut that also, and opened it only to give his blessing, or for any other purpose of absolute necessity.

**Source.**—Thorpe, *Ancient Laws and Institutes of England*.

I, Ine, by God's grace, King of the West Saxons, with the counsel and with the teaching of Cenred my father, and of Hedde my bishop [of Winchester], and of Erceuwold my bishop [of London], and of all my ealdormen, and the oldest witan of my people, and also of a great assembly of the servants of God, have been considering concerning the health of our soul, and concerning the stability of our realm; so that right law and right kingly dooms might be settled and established throughout our folk. And let no ealdorman nor any of our subjects after this seek to turn aside any of these our dooms.

3. If a slave work on Sunday by his lord's command, let him be free; and let the lord pay 30 shillings as fine. But if the slave work without his knowledge, let him suffer in his hide or by a fine to save his skin. But if a freeman work on that day without his lord's command, let him forfeit his freedom or 60 shillings; and let a priest be doubly liable.

5. If any one be guilty of death, and he flee to a church, let him have his life, and make amends as the law may direct him. If any one put his skin in peril, and flee to a church, let the scourging be forgiven him.

6. ... If any one fight in an ealdorman's house, or in any other distinguished counsellor's, let him make amends with 60 shillings, and pay a second 60 shillings as fine....

8. If any one demand justice before a sheriff or other judge and cannot obtain it, and a man will not give him security, let him make amends with 30 shillings, and within seven days do him justice.

11. If any one sell his own countryman, slave or free, though he be guilty, over sea, let him pay for him according to his value.

12. If a thief be seized, let him perish by death, or let his life be redeemed according to his value.

14. He who is accused of brigandage, let him clear himself with 120 hides, or make amends accordingly.

19. A king's retainer, if his value is 1,200 shillings, may swear for 60 hides if he be a communicant.

20. If a far-coming man, or a stranger, journey through a wood out of the highway, and neither shout nor blow his horn, he is to be taken for a thief, either to be slain or held to ransom.

21. If a man demand the value of the slain, he must declare that he slew him for a thief; not the associates of the slain, nor his lord. But if he conceal it, and after a time it become known, then he gives opportunity for the oath for the dead man, that his kindred may exculpate him.

23. If a foreigner be slain, the king has two parts of the value, a third part his son or kinsmen. But if he be kinless, half the king, half the gesith. If, however, it be an abbot or an abbess, let them divide in the same wise with the king. A Welsh tenant, 120 shillings; his son, 100 shillings; a slave, 60 shillings; some with 50 shillings; a Welshman's hide with 12 shillings.

24. If a convicted slave, an Englishman, steal himself away, let him be hanged, and nothing paid to his lord. If any one slay him, let nothing be paid to his kindred, if they have not redeemed him within twelve months.

A Welshman, if he have five hides, he shall be as a 600-shilling man.

25. If a chapman chaffer up among the folk, let him do it before witnesses. If stolen goods be seized with a chapman, and he have not bought them before good witnesses, let him prove, according to the fine, that he was neither witting nor the thief; or let him pay 36 shillings as fine.

32. If a Welshman have a hide of land, his value shall be 120 shillings; but if he have half a hide, 80 shillings; if he have none, 60 shillings.

36. Let him who takes a thief, or to whom one taken is given, and he then lets him go, or conceals the theft, pay for the thief according to his value. If he be an ealdorman, let him forfeit his shire, unless the king is willing to be merciful to him.

39. If any one go from his lord without leave, or steal himself away into another shire, and he be discovered, let him go where he was before, and pay his lord 60 shillings.

40. A ceorl's homestead ought to be fenced in, winter and summer. If he be unfenced, and his neighbour's beast rush in by the opening which he has left, he shall receive nothing on account of that beast [*i.e.*, for the damage it did], but must drive it out and bear the loss.

42. If ceorls have a common meadow or other divided land to fence, and some have fenced their portion, others not, and [stray cattle] eat their common acres or pasture, then those who are responsible for the opening shall pay the others who have fenced their portion for the injury that is done, and take such compensation as is due from [the owners of] the cattle.

43. When any one burns a tree in a wood, and it be found out who did it, let him pay the full fine; let him give 60 shillings, since fire is a thief. If any one fell in a wood a good many trees, and it be afterwards discovered, let him pay for 3 trees, for each with 30 shillings. He need not pay for more of them, were there as many of them as might be; for the axe is a tell-tale, not a thief.

44. But if any one cut down a tree under which 30 swine may stand, and it be discovered, let him pay 60 shillings.

45. Amends shall be made for the king's 'burg-bryce' [house-breaking], and a bishop's, where his jurisdiction is, with 120 shillings; for an ealdorman's, with 80 shillings; for a king's thegn's, with 60 shillings; for a land-holding gesith's, with 35 shillings; and according to this make the legal denial.

51. If a retainer, owning land, neglect the national army, let him pay 120 shillings and forfeit his

land; one not owning land 60 shillings; a ceorlish man 30 shillings as army-fine.

64. He [the gesith] who has 20 hides shall show 12 hides of cultivated land, when he wishes to go away.

67. If a man agree for a yard of land or more, at a fixed rent, and plough it; if the lord desire to raise the land to him to labour and to rent, he need not take it upon him, if the lord do not give him a dwelling; and let him not forfeit his fields.

70. With the payment for a two-hundred-shilling man shall be given, as a fine for slaying him, 30 shillings; with the payment for a six-hundred-shilling man, 80 shillings; with the payment for a twelve-hundred-shilling man, 120 shillings. From 10 hides, as sustenance, [the lord is entitled to] 10 vessels of honey, 300 loaves, 12 ambers of Welsh ale, 30 of clear, 2 full-grown oxen or 10 wethers, 10 geese, 20 hens, 10 cheeses, an amber full of butter, 5 salmon, 20 pounds weight of fodder and 100 eels.

74. If a Welsh slave slay an Englishman, then shall he who owns him deliver him up to the lord and the kindred, or give 60 shillings for his life. But if he will not give that sum for him, then must the lord free him; afterwards let his kindred pay the value, if he have a free kindred; if he have not, let his foes take heed to him. The free need not pay kindred-amends with the slave, unless he be desirous to buy off from himself the vengeance; nor the slave with the free.

**Source.**—Bede, *Lives of the Holy Abbots*. Translated by J. A. Giles.

Ceolfrid was a man of great perseverance, of acute intellect, bold in action, experienced in judgment, and zealous in religion. He first of all, as we have mentioned, with the advice and assistance of Benedict, founded, completed, and ruled the monastery of St. Paul's seven years; and, afterwards, ably governed, during twenty-eight years, both these monasteries; or, to speak more correctly, the single monastery of St. Peter and St. Paul, in its two separate localities; and, whatever works of merit his predecessor had begun, he, with no less zeal, took pains to finish. For, among other arrangements which he found it necessary to make, during his long government of the monastery, he built several oratories; increased the number of vessels of the church and altar, and the vestments of every kind; and the library of both monasteries, which Abbot Benedict had so actively begun, under his equally zealous care became doubled in extent. For he added three Pandects of a new translation to that of the old translation which he had brought from Rome; one of them, returning to Rome in his old age, he took with him as a gift; the other two he left to the two monasteries. Moreover, for a beautiful volume of the Geographers which Benedict had bought at Rome, he received from King Alfrid, who was well skilled in Holy Scripture, in exchange, a grant of land of eight hides, near the river Fresca, for the monastery of St. Paul's. Benedict had arranged this purchase with the same King Alfrid, before his death, but died before he could complete it. Instead of this land, Ceolfrid, in the reign of Osred, paid an additional price, and received a territory of twenty hides, in the village called by the natives Sambuce, and situated much nearer to the monastery. In the time of Pope Sergius, of blessed memory, some monks were sent to Rome, who procured from him a privilege for the protection of their monastery, similar to that which Pope Agatho had given to Benedict. This was brought back to Britain, and, being exhibited before a synod, was confirmed by the signatures of the bishops who were present, and their munificent King Alfrid, just as the former privilege was confirmed publicly by the king and bishops of the time. Zealous for the welfare of St. Peter's monastery, at that time under the government of the reverend and religious servant of Christ, Witmer, whose acquaintance with every kind of learning, both sacred and profane, was equally extensive, he made a gift to it for ever of a portion of land of ten hides, which he had received from King Alfrid, in the village called Daldun.

But Ceolfrid having now practised a long course of regular discipline, which the prudent father Benedict had laid down for himself, and his brethren on the authority of the elders; and having shown the most incomparable skill both in praying and chanting, in which he daily exercised himself, together with the most wonderful energy in punishing the wicked, and modesty in consoling the weak; having also observed such abstinence in meat and drink, and such humility in dress, as are uncommon among rulers; saw himself now old and full of days, and unfit any longer, from his extreme age, to prescribe to his brethren the proper forms of spiritual exercise by his life and doctrine. Having, therefore, deliberated long within himself, he judged it expedient, having first impressed on the brethren the observance of the rules which St. Benedict had given them, and thereby to choose for themselves a more efficient abbot out of their own number, to depart, himself, to Rome, where he had been in his youth with the holy Benedict; that not only he might for a time be free from all worldly cares before his death, and so have leisure and quiet for reflection, but that they also, having chosen a younger abbot, might naturally, in consequence thereof, observe more accurately the rules of monastic discipline.

At first all opposed, and entreated him on their knees and with many tears, but their solicitations were to no purpose. Such was his eagerness to depart, that on the third day after he had disclosed his design to the brethren, he set out upon his journey. For he feared, what actually came to pass, that he might die before he reached Rome; and he was also anxious that neither his friends nor the nobility, who all honoured him, should delay his departure, or give him money which he would not have time to repay; for with him it was an invariable rule, if any one made him a present, to show equal grace by returning it, either at once or within a suitable space of time. Early in the morning, therefore, of Wednesday, the 4th of May, the mass was sung in the church of the Mother of God, the immaculate Virgin Mary, and in the church of the Apostle Peter; and those who were present communicating with him, he prepared for his departure. All of them assembled in St. Peter's church; and when he had lighted the frankincense, and addressed a prayer at the altar, he gave his blessing to all, standing on the steps and holding the censer in his hand. Amid the prayers of the Litany, the cry of sorrow resounded from all as they went out of the church; they entered the oratory of St. Laurence the Martyr, which was in the dormitory of the brethren over against them. Whilst giving them his last farewell, he admonished them to preserve love towards one another, and to correct, according to the Gospel rule, those who did amiss; he forgave all of them whatever wrong they might have done him; and entreated them all to pray for him, and to be reconciled to him, if he had ever reprimanded them too harshly. They went down to the shore, and there, amid tears and lamentations, he gave them the kiss of peace, as they knelt upon their knees; and when he had offered up a prayer he went on board the vessel with his companions. The deacons of the Church went on board with him, carrying lighted tapers and a golden crucifix. Having crossed the river, he kissed the cross, mounted his horse, and departed, leaving in both his monasteries about six hundred brethren....

But Christ's servant Ceolfrid, as has been said, died on his way to the threshold of the holy Apostles, of old age and weakness. For he reached the Lingones about nine o'clock, where he died

seven hours after, and was honourably buried the next day in the church of the three twin martyrs, much to the sorrow, not only of the English who were in his train, to the number of eighty, but also of the neighbouring inhabitants, who were dissolved in tears at the loss of the reverend father. For it was almost impossible to avoid weeping to see part of his company continuing their journey without the holy father, whilst others, abandoning their first intentions, returned home to relate his death and burial; and others, again, lingered in sorrow at the tomb of the deceased among strangers speaking an unknown tongue.

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Ceolfrid was seventy-four years old when he died: forty-seven years he had been in priest's orders, during thirty-five of which he had been abbot; or, to speak more correctly, forty-three,—for, from the time when Benedict began to build his monastery in honour of the holiest of the Apostles, Ceolfrid had been his only companion, coadjutor, and teacher of the monastic rules. He never relaxed the rigour of ancient discipline from any occasions of old age, illness, or travel; for, from the day of his departure till the day of his death, i.e., from the 4th of June till the 25th of September, a space of one hundred and fourteen days, besides the canonical hours of prayer, he never omitted to go twice daily through the Psalter in order; and even when he became so weak that he could not ride on horseback, and was obliged to be carried in a horse-litter, the holy ceremony of the mass was offered up every day, except one which he passed at sea, and the three days immediately before his death.

A RIDDLE OF CYNEWULF (BORN BETWEEN 720 AND 730).

**Source.**—Ten Brink's *English Literature*, vol. i., p. 52. Bohn's Library.

I was an armed warrior; now a proud one,  
A young hero, decks me with gold and silver,  
And with crooked wire-bows. Men sometimes kiss me;  
Sometimes I call to battle the willing comrades;  
Now a steed doth bear me over the boundaries.  
Now a sea-courser carries me, bright with jewels,  
Over the floods. And now there fills my bosom  
A maiden adorned with rings; or I may be robbed  
Of my gems, and hard and headless lie; or hang  
Prettily on the wall where warriors drink,  
Trimmed with trappings. Sometimes as an ornament brave  
Folk-warriors wear me on horseback; wind  
From the bosom of a man must I, in gold-hues bright,  
Swallow then. Sometimes to the wine  
I invite with my voice the valiant men;  
Or it rescues the stolen from the robbers' grasp,  
Drives away enemies. Ask what my name is.

*Answer:* The horn of a bull.

**Source.**—*Monumenta Germaniæ Historica*, Epist. iii. Ed. Dümmler, 1892. No. 17, p. 266. Translated by W.

GREGORY THE BISHOP, THE SERVANT OF GOD'S SERVANTS, TO ALL HIS MOST REVEREND AND MOST HOLY BROTHERN,  
FELLOW-BISHOPS, RELIGIOUS PRIESTS AND DEACONS, GLORIOUS DUKES, NOBLE PREFECTS, COUNTS, AND ALL  
CHRISTIANS THAT FEAR GOD.

Having solicitude beyond measure for the overseership entrusted to us—since certain peoples in parts of Germany or on the eastern shore of the river Rhine, persuaded by the ancient foe, wander “in the shadow of death”: since we know that under pretext of Christianity they serve and worship idols; and others there are who have not yet the knowledge of God nor have been washed in the water of holy baptism, but as pagans, like the brutes, know not their creator—we have been careful, for the needful enlightenment of both, to send the bearer of these, Boniface, our most reverend brother, as bishop in those parts, to preach the word of the right faith, that, by preaching the word of salvation he may provide for them eternal life, and that, should he see that any have in any district departed from the path of the right faith, or should he find them persuaded to error by the cunning of the devil, he may correct them, and by his teaching may bring them back to the haven of salvation, and instruct them in the doctrine of this apostolic see, and may induce them to remain steadfast in the catholic faith.

For the love of the Lord Jesus Christ and the reverence due to his Apostles we beg that you will assist him in everything to the utmost of your power, and receive him in the name of Jesus Christ: as it is written of his disciples: “Whoso receiveth you, receiveth me”; providing the necessaries for his journey, giving him escort, and food and drink, or whatever he may need, that, by the labour and friendly good-will of all, the work of piety and business of salvation committed to him may be with God's assistance accomplished, and that ye may be worthy to receive the recompense of toil, and that the reward for the conversion of those in error may be ascribed to you in heaven. If any one therefore, at the prayer of the chiefs of the Apostles, give his assent or concurrence to this servant of God set apart by the apostolic and catholic church of God for the illumination of the peoples, may he be worthy to join the martyrs of Jesus Christ. But if any, which we do not desire, attempt to hinder him by opposition, or show himself hostile to the ministry committed to him and of his successors entering upon the same work, may he be by divine judgment cast down with the bond of the anathema, and lie in eternal condemnation.

FARE YE WELL.

Given on the Kalends of December, the most pious and august lord Leo, crowned great emperor by God, reigning in the seventh year, after his consulate in the seventh year, and in the fourth year of his son Constantine the great emperor, the sixth indiction.

**Source.**—Bede, *Eccl. Hist.*, v. 23. A.D. 731. Translated by J. A. Giles. Bohn's Library.

Thus at present, the bishops Tatwine and Aldwulf preside in the churches of Kent; Ingwald in the province of the East Saxons. In the province of the East Angles, Aldbert and Hadulac are bishops; in the province of the West Saxons, Daniel and Forthere are bishops; in the province of the Mercians, Aldwin. Among those people who live beyond the river Severn to the westward, Walstod is bishop; in the province of the Wiccians, Wilfrid; in the province of the Lindisfarnes, Cynebert presides: the bishopric of the Isle of Wight belongs to Daniel, bishop of Winchester. The province of the South Saxons, having now continued some years without a bishop, receives the episcopal ministry from the prelate of the West Saxons. All these provinces, and the others southward to the bank of the river Humber, with their kings, are subject to King Ethelbald.

But in the province of the Northumbrians, where King Ceolwulf reigns, four bishops now preside: Wilfrid in the church of York, Ethelwald in that of Lindisfarne, Acca in that of Hagulstad, Pechthelm in that which is called the White House, which, from the increased number of believers, has lately become an episcopal see, and has him for its first prelate. The Picts also at this time are at peace with the English nation, and rejoice in being united in peace and truth with the whole Catholic Church. The Scots that inhabit Britain, satisfied with their own territories, meditate no hostilities against the nation of the English. The Britons, though they, for the most part, through innate hatred, are adverse to the English nation, and wrongfully, and from wicked custom, oppose the appointed Easter of the whole Catholic Church; yet, from both the Divine and human power withstanding them, can in no way prevail as they desire; for though in part they are their own masters, yet elsewhere they are also brought under subjection to the English. Such being the peaceable and calm disposition of the times, many of the Northumbrians, as well of the nobility as private persons, laying aside their weapons, rather incline to dedicate both themselves and their children to the tonsure and monastic vows, than to study martial discipline. What will be the end hereof, the next age will show.



BEDE'S ACCOUNT OF HIMSELF, HIS HISTORICAL AUTHORITIES AND  
METHODS (731).

**Source.**—*Eccl. Hist.*, v. 24; i. I. Translated by J. A. Giles. Bohn's Library.

## A.

Thus much of the Ecclesiastical History of Britain, and more especially of the English nation, as far as I could learn either from the writings of the ancients, or the tradition of our ancestors, or of my own knowledge, has, with the help of God, been digested by me, Bede, the servant of God, and priest of the monastery of the blessed Apostles, Peter and Paul, which is at Wearmouth and Jarrow; who being born in the territory of that same monastery, was given, at seven years of age, to be educated by the most reverend Abbot Benedict, and afterwards by Ceolfrid; and spending all the remaining time of my life in that monastery, I wholly applied myself to the study of Scripture, and amidst the observance of regular discipline, and the daily care of singing in the church, I always took delight in learning, teaching, and writing. In the nineteenth year of my age, I received deacon's orders; in the thirtieth, those of the priesthood, both of them by the ministry of the most reverend Bishop John, and by the order of the Abbot Ceolfrid. From which time, till the fifty-ninth year of my age, I have made it my business, for the use of me and mine, to compile out of the works of the venerable Fathers, and to interpret and explain according to their meaning these following pieces.

[Here follow the titles of thirty-seven works.]

My principal authority and aid in this work was the learned and reverend Abbot Albinus; who, educated in the Church of Canterbury by those venerable and learned men, Archbishop Theodore of blessed memory, and the Abbot Adrian, transmitted to me by Nothelm, the pious priest of the Church of London, either in writing, or by word of mouth of the same Nothelm, all that he thought worthy of memory, that had been done in the province of Kent, or the adjacent parts, by the disciples of the blessed Pope Gregory, as he had learned the same either from written records, or the traditions of his ancestors. The same Nothelm, afterwards going to Rome, having, with leave of the present Pope Gregory, searched into the archives of the holy Roman Church, found there some epistles of the blessed Pope Gregory, and other popes; and returning home, by the advice of the aforesaid most reverend father Albinus, brought them to me, to be inserted in my history. Thus, from the beginning of this volume to the time when the English nation received the faith of Christ, have we collected the writings of our predecessors, and from them gathered matter for our history; but from that time till the present, what was transacted in the Church of Canterbury, by the disciples of St. Gregory or their successors, and under what kings the same happened, has been conveyed to us by Nothelm through the industry of the aforesaid Abbot Albinus. They also partly informed me by what bishops and under what kings the provinces of the East and West Saxons, as also of the East Angles, and of the Northumbrians, received the faith of Christ. In short I was chiefly encouraged to undertake this work by the persuasions of the same Albinus. In like manner, Daniel, the most reverend Bishop of the West Saxons, who is still living, communicated to me in writing some things relating to the Ecclesiastical History of that province, and the next adjoining to it of the South Saxons, as also of the Isle of Wight. But how, by the pious ministry of Cedd and Ceadda, the province of the Mercians was brought to the faith of Christ, which they knew not before, and how that of the East Saxons recovered the same, after having expelled it, and how those fathers lived and died, we learned from the brethren of the monastery, which was built by them, and is called Lastingham. What ecclesiastical transactions took place in the province of the East Angles, was partly made known to us from the writings and tradition of our ancestors, and partly by relation of the most reverend Abbot Esius. What was done towards promoting the faith, and what was the sacerdotal succession in the province of Lindsey, we had either from the letters of the most reverend prelate Cunebert, or by word of mouth from other persons of good credit. But what was done in the Church throughout the province of the Northumbrians, from the time when they received the faith of Christ till this present, I received not from any particular author, but by the faithful testimony of innumerable witnesses, who might know or remember the same; besides what I had of my own knowledge. Wherein it is to be observed, that what I have written concerning our most holy father, Bishop Cuthbert, either in this volume, or in my treatise on his life and actions, I partly took, and faithfully copied from what I found written of him by the brethren of the Church of Lindisfarne; but at the same time took care to add such things as I could myself have knowledge of by the faithful testimony of such as knew him. And I humbly entreat the reader, that if he shall in this that we have written find anything not delivered according to the truth, he will not impute the same to me, who, as the true rule of history requires, have laboured sincerely to commit to writing such things as I could gather from common report, for the instruction of posterity.

**Source.**—*Anglo-Saxon Chronicle*. Translated by J. A. Giles. Bohn's Library.

ANNO 755.—This year Cynewulf and the West Saxon Witan deprived his kinsman Sigebert of his kingdom, except Hampshire, for his unjust doings; and that he held until he slew the ealdorman who longest abode by him. And then Cynewulf drove him into Andred, and he abode there until a swineherd stabbed him at Privets-flood, and avenged the ealdorman Cumbra. And Cynewulf fought very many battles against the Welsh; and after he had held the kingdom about one and thirty years, he purposed to expel an etheling, who was named Cyneheard: and Cyneheard was Sigebert's brother. And he then learned that the king with a small band was gone to Merton to visit a lady; and he there beset him and surrounded the building on every side, before the men who were with the king discovered him. And when the king perceived this, he went to the door, and there manfully defended himself, until he beheld the etheling, and then he rushed out upon him and sorely wounded him; and they all continued fighting against the king until they had slain him. And upon this, the king's thegns having discovered the affray by the lady's cries, each as he was ready, and with his utmost speed, ran to the spot. And the etheling offered money and life to each of them, and not one of them would accept it; but they continued fighting till they all fell, except one, a British hostage, and he was already sorely wounded. Then upon the morrow the king's thegns whom he had left behind him heard that the king was slain: then rode they thither, and Osric his ealdorman, and Wiferth his thegn, and the men whom he had previously left behind. And at the town wherein the king lay slain they found the etheling, and those within had closed the gates against them; but they then went onward. And he then offered them their own choice of land and money if they would grant him the kingdom, and showed them that their kinsmen were with him, men who would not desert him. And they then said that no kinsman was dearer to them than their lord, and that they never would follow his murderer. And they then bade their kinsmen that they should go away from him in safety; but they said that the same had been bidden their companions who before had been with the king; then they said that they no more minded it "than your companions who were slain with the king." And then they continued fighting around the gates until they made their way in, and slew the etheling, and all the men who were with him, except one who was the ealdorman's godson; and he escaped with his life, though he was wounded in several places.

**Source.**—*Anglo-Saxon Chronicle*. Translated by J. A. Giles. Bohn's Library.

ANNO 787.—This year King Bertric took to wife Eadburga, King Offa's daughter; and in his days first came three ships of Northmen. And then the reeve rode to the place and would have driven them to the king's town [? Dorchester] because he knew not who they were: and they there slew him. These were the first ships of Danish men which sought the land of the English nation.

ANNO 794.—The heathens ravaged among the Northumbrians, and plundered Egfert's monastery at the mouth of the Wear; and there one of their leaders was slain, and also some of their ships were wrecked by a tempest; and many of them were there drowned, and some came on shore alive, and they were soon slain at the river's mouth.

ANNO 835.—This year the heathen men ravaged Sheppey.

ANNO 836.—This year King Egbert fought against the men of thirty-five ships at Charmouth, and there was great slaughter made, and the Danish men maintained possession of the field.

ANNO 838.—This year a great hostile fleet came to the West Welsh [Cornwall], and they united together, and made war upon Egbert, king of the West Saxons. As soon as he heard of it, he went thither with an army, and fought against them at Hengestdune, and there he put to flight both the Welsh and the Danish men.

ANNO 840.—This year Wulfherd the ealdorman fought at Hamtun [Southampton], against the forces of thirty-five ships, and there made great slaughter, and got the victory. And the same year Ethelhelm the ealdorman fought against the Danish army at Portland isle, with the men of Dorset, and for a good while he put the enemy to flight; but the Danish men had possession of the field, and slew the ealdorman.

ANNO 841.—This year Herebert the ealdorman was slain by the heathen men, and many with him among the Marshmen [Romney Marsh]; and afterwards, the same year, in Lindsey, and in East Anglia, and in Kent, many men were slain by the enemy.

ANNO 842.—This year there was great slaughter at London, and at Canterbury, and at Rochester.

ANNO 843.—This year King Ethelwulf fought at Charmouth against the crews of thirty-five ships, and the Danish men maintained possession of the field.

ANNO 848.—This year Eanwulf the ealdorman, with the men of Somerset, and Bishop Ealstan, and Osric the ealdorman, with the men of Dorset, fought at the mouth of the Parret, against the Danish army, and there made great slaughter, and got the victory.

ANNO 851.—This year Ceorl the ealdorman, with the men of Devonshire, fought against the heathen men at Wembury [near Plymouth], and there made great slaughter and got the victory. And the same year Athelstan and Elchere the ealdorman fought on shipboard, and slew a great number of the enemy at Sandwich in Kent, and took nine ships, and put the others to flight; and the heathen men, for the first time, remained over winter in Thanet. And the same year came three hundred and fifty ships to the mouth of the Thames, and the crews landed and took Canterbury and London by storm, and put to flight Berthwulf, King of the Mercians, with his army, and then went south over the Thames into Surrey; and there King Ethelwulf and his son Ethelbald, with the fyrd of the West Saxons, fought against them at Ockley, and there made the greatest slaughter among the heathen army that we have heard reported to the present day, and there got the victory.

ANNO 853.—This year Ealhere, with the men of Kent, and Huda, with the men of Surrey, fought in Thanet, against the heathen army; and at first they were victorious; and many there were slain, and drowned on either hand, and both the ealdormen were killed.

ANNO 855.—This year the heathen men, for the first time, remained over winter in Sheppey.

ANNO 860.—This year Ethelbert succeeded to all the realm of his brother. And in his days a large fleet came to land, and the crews stormed Winchester. And Osric the ealdorman, with the men of Hampshire, and Ethelwulf the ealdorman, with the men of Berkshire, fought against the army, and put them to flight, and had possession of the place of carnage.

ANNO 865.—This year 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; and during the peace and the promise of money the army stole away by night, and ravaged all Kent to the eastward.

ANNO 866.—This year a great heathen army came to the land of the English nation, and took up their winter quarters among the East Angles, and there they were horsed; and the East Angles made peace with them.

ANNO 867.—This year the army went from East Anglia over the mouth of the Humber to York in Northumbria. And there was much dissension among that people, and they had cast out their King Osbert, and had taken to themselves a king, Ælle, not of royal blood; but late in the year they resolved that they would fight against the army; and therefore they gathered a large force, and sought the army at the town of York, and stormed the town, and some of them got within, and there was an excessive slaughter made of the Northumbrians, some within, some without, and the kings were both slain: and the remainder made peace with the army.

ANNO 868.—This year the same army went into Mercia to Nottingham, and there took up their winter quarters. And Burhred, King of the Mercians, and his witan begged of Ethelred, King of the West Saxons, and of Alfred his brother, that they would help them, that they might fight against the army. And then they went with the West Saxon fyrd into Mercia as far as Nottingham, and there met with the army within the fortress; and besieged them therein: but there was no great battle; and the Mercians made peace with the army.

ANNO 869.—This year the army again went to York, and sat there one year.

ANNO 870.—This year the army rode across Mercia into East Anglia, and took up their winter quarters at Thetford: and the same winter King Edmund fought against them, and the Danes got the victory, and slew the king, and subdued all the land, and destroyed all the minsters which they came to. The names of their chiefs who slew the king were Inguar and Ubba.

## A LETTER FROM CHARLES THE GREAT TO OFFA (796).

**Source.**—*Monumenta Germaniæ Historica*, Epist. iv. Ed. Dümmler, 1895. No. 100. Translated by W.

CHARLES BY THE GRACE OF GOD KING OF THE FRANKS AND LOMBARDS AND PATRICIAN OF THE ROMANS TO HIS VENERABLE AND DEAREST BROTHER OFFA, KING OF THE MERCIANS, GREETING OF PRESENT PROSPERITY AND ETERNAL BLESSEDNESS IN CHRIST.

The hearty preservation of the laws of friendship and of the concord of holy charity in leagued unanimity of peace between kings and highly-placed potentates is of the greatest advantage. And if we are ordered by our Lord's precept to dissolve the knots of enmity, how much more must we endeavour to draw tight the bonds of love! Wherefore, dearest brother, mindful of our ancient agreement, we have directed this letter to your reverence, that a treaty rooted in faith, may flower and fruit in love.

Reading over the letters, brother, which at various times were delivered to us by the hands of your messengers, and busying ourselves to reply adequately to your reverence's different suggestions, we first thank Almighty God for the purity of the Catholic Faith which we find praiseworthy set down in your pages; knowing that you are not only the bravest protector of your earthly country, but also the most devoted defender of the holy Faith. 60

Now concerning the pilgrims, who for the love of God and the salvation of their souls wish to visit the abode of the blessed apostles, we have granted, as of old time, that they may go on their journey in peace without any molestation, carrying necessaries with them. But we have proved that some fraudulently go along with them for purposes of trade, pursuing gain, not serving religion. If such are found amongst them, at the proper places they must pay the decreed customs-duties. The others shall be free to go in peace.

Concerning traders also you wrote to us. We wish that by our command they may lawfully enjoy protection and patronage in our kingdom according to the ancient custom of trading. And if they be unjustly oppressed anywhere, let them appeal to us or to our judges and we will afterwards order holy justice to be done. Likewise concerning ours: if they suffer any injustice in your realm, let them appeal to your equitable judgment: that no quarrel may anywhere arise between our subjects.

Concerning Odberht the priest who returned from Rome wishing (as he often avers) to make a pilgrimage for the love of God, and not coming to accuse you, know that we sent him with other exiles, who in fear of death had fled beneath our protecting wings, to Rome, that in the presence of the pope [Leo III.] and your illustrious archbishop [Æthilhard]—whither, as your letter noted, they had bound themselves by a vow—their cause might be heard and judged, that a righteous judgement might perform what pious intercession had not helped. How could we act more carefully than to allow the pope's judgement to decide a cause in which the opinions of others were discordant?

Now as to the black stones which your reverence desired to be sent to you, let a messenger come to find out the sort you wish for. And wherever they are found, we shall give orders that they be given to you and that assistance be freely rendered in the carriage of them.

But as you have intimated your desire with regard to the length of the stones, so also our subjects make request concerning the size of the cloaks: that you will have them made of the same pattern as used to come to us in old times. 61

Know also that we have sent a sacred article from amongst our dalmatics or palls to each episcopal see of your kingdom or Æthelred's, as an alms for the apostolic lord Adrian, our father and your well-wisher; beseeching that you will order diligent intercession to be made for his soul, not because we doubt that his blessed soul is at rest, but to show our faith and affection towards our dearest friend: as S. Augustine lays down that the church should make holy intercession for all, declaring that intercession for a good man is of benefit to him that makes it.

Further, of the worldly treasure which the Lord Jesus hath freely granted us, we have sent something through the metropolitan cities. And to you, too, for your pleasure, and as thanksgiving to Almighty God, we have sent a belt, and a Hunnish sword, and two silk cloaks; that everywhere in Christendom the divine clemency be preached and the name of our Lord Jesus Christ be for ever glorified.

We beseech you cause to be made constant supplications for us and our faithful subjects, and indeed for all Christian folk, that the gentle goodness of the heavenly king may protect, exalt, and extend the kingdom of the holy church.

May Almighty God preserve in safety and long prosperity your highness' excellency as a defence of his holy church, my dearest brother.

## THE BRETWALDAS (827).

**Source.**—*Anglo-Saxon Chronicle*. Translated by J. A. Giles. Bohn's Library.

ANNO 827.—This year the moon was eclipsed on the mass-night of midwinter,<sup>[1]</sup> and the same year King Egbert conquered the kingdom of the Mercians, and all that was south of the Humber; and he was the eighth king who was Bretwalda. Ælle, King of the South Saxons, was the first who had thus much dominion; the second was Ceawlin, King of the West Saxons; the third was Ethelbert, King of the Kentishmen; the fourth was Redwald, King of the East Angles; the fifth was Edwin, King of the Northumbrians; the sixth was Oswald who reigned after him; the seventh was Oswy, Oswald's brother; the eighth was Egbert, King of the West Saxons. And Egbert led an army to Dore against the Northumbrians, and they there offered him obedience and allegiance, and with that they separated.



**Source.**—*Anglo-Saxon Chronicle*. Translated by J. A. Giles. Bohn's Library.

ANNO 871.—This year the army came to Reading in Wessex; and three days after this, two of their earls rode forth. Then Ethelwulf the ealdorman met them at Englefield, and there fought against them, and got the victory: and there one of them, whose name was Sidroc, was slain. About three days after this, King Ethelred and Alfred his brother led a large force to Reading, and fought against the army, and there was great slaughter made on either hand. And Ethelwulf the ealdorman was slain, and the Danish men had possession of the place of carnage. And about four days after this, King Ethelred and Alfred his brother fought against the whole army at Æscesdune [Ashdown Hills]; and they were in two bodies: in the one were Bageseg and Halfdene the heathen kings, and in the other were the earls. And then King Ethelred fought against the division under the kings, and there King Bageseg was slain; and Alfred his brother against the division under the earls, and there earl Sidroc the elder was slain, earl Sidroc the younger, and earl Osbern, and earl Frene, and earl Harold; and both divisions of the army were put to flight, and many thousands slain: and they continued fighting until night. And about fourteen days after this, King Ethelred and Alfred his brother fought against the army at Basing, and there the Danes obtained the victory. And about two months after this, King Ethelred and Alfred his brother fought against the army at Marden; and they were in two bodies, and they were both put to flight, and during a great part of the day were victorious; and there was great slaughter on either hand; but the Danes had possession of the place of carnage: and there bishop Heahmund was slain, and many good men: and after this battle there came a great army in the summer to Reading. And after this, over Easter, King Ethelred died.

Then Alfred, the son of Ethelwulf, his brother, succeeded to the kingdom of the West Saxons. And about one month after this, King Alfred with a small band fought against the whole army at Wilton, and put them to flight for a good part of the day; but the Danes had possession of the place of carnage. And this year nine general battles were fought against the army in the kingdom south of the Thames, besides which, Alfred, the king's brother, and single ealdormen, and king's thegns, oftentimes made incursions on them, which were not counted: and within the year nine earls and one king were slain. And that year the West Saxons made peace with the army.

ANNO 872.—This year the army went from Reading to London, and there took up their winter quarters: and then the Mercians made peace with the army.

ANNO 873.—This year the army went into Northumbria, and took up their winter quarters at Torksey in Lindsey: and then the Mercians made peace with the army.

ANNO 874.—This year the army went from Lindsey to Repton, and there took up their winter quarters, and drove King Burhred over sea about twenty-two years after he had obtained the kingdom; and subdued the whole country: and Burhred went to Rome, and there remained; and his body lies in St. Mary's church at the Saxon school. And that same year they committed the kingdom of the Mercians to the keeping of Ceolwulf, an unwise king's thegn; and he swore oaths to them, and delivered hostages that it should be ready for them on whatever day they would have it, and that he would be ready both in his own person and with all who would follow him, for the behoof of the army.

ANNO 875.—This year the army went from Repton: and Halfdene went with some of the army into Northumbria, and took up winter quarters by the river Tyne. And the army subdued the land, and oft-times spoiled the Picts, and the Strathclyde Britons. And the three kings Guthrum, and Oskytel, and Anwind, went with a large army from Repton to Cambridge, and sat down there one year. And that summer King Alfred went out to sea with a fleet, and fought against the forces of seven ships, and one of them he took, and put the rest to flight.

ANNO 876.—This year the army stole away to Wareham, a fortress of the West Saxons. And afterwards the king made peace with the army; and they delivered to the king hostages from among the most distinguished men of the army; and then they swore oaths to him on the holy armlet, which they never before would do to any nation, that they would speedily depart from his kingdom. And notwithstanding this, that part of the army which was horsed stole away by night from the fortress to Exeter. And that year Halfdene apportioned the lands of Northumbria: and they thenceforth continued ploughing and tilling them.

ANNO 877.—This year the army came to Exeter from Wareham; and the fleet sailed round westwards: and then a great storm overtook them at sea, and there one hundred and twenty ships were wrecked at Swanwich. And King Alfred with his forces rode after the army which was mounted, as far as Exeter; and they were unable to overtake them before they were within the fortress, where they could not be come at. And they there delivered to him hostages, as many as he would have, and swore many oaths: and then they observed the peace well. And afterwards, during harvest, the army went into Mercia, and some part of it they apportioned, and some they delivered to Ceolwulf.

ANNO 878.—This year, during midwinter, after Twelfth Night, the army stole away to Chippenham, and overran the land of the West Saxons, and sat down there; and many of the people they drove beyond sea, and of the remainder the greater part they subdued and forced to obey them, except King Alfred: and he, with a small band, with difficulty retreated to the woods and to the fastnesses of the moors. And the same winter the brother of Inguar and of Halfdene came with twenty-three ships to Devonshire in Wessex; and he was there slain, and with him 840 men of his army: and there was taken the war-flag which they called the Raven. After this, at Easter, King Alfred with a small band constructed a fortress at Athelney; and from this fortress, with that part of the men of Somerset which was nearest to it, from time to time they fought against the army. Then in the seventh week after Easter he rode to Brixton, on the east side of Selwood; and there came to meet

him all the men of Somerset, and the men of Wiltshire, and that portion of the men of Hampshire which was on this side of the sea; and they were joyful at his presence. On the following day he went from that station to Iglea, and on the day after this to Ethandune [Edington], and there fought against the whole army, put them to flight, and pursued them as far as their fortress: and there he sat down fourteen days. And then the army delivered to him hostages, with many oaths, that they would leave his kingdom, and also promised him that their king should receive baptism: and this they accordingly fulfilled. And about three weeks after this King Guthrum came to him, with some thirty men who were of the most distinguished in the army, at Aller, which is near Athelney: and the king was his godfather at baptism; and his chrism-loosing was at Wedmore: and he was twelve days with the king; and he greatly honoured him and his companions with gifts.

**Source.**—Thorpe, *Ancient Laws and Institutes of England*.

This is the peace that King Alfred and King Guthrum and the witan of all the English people, and all the people that are in East Angle-land have spoken and confirmed with oaths, for themselves and for their descendants, for born and for unborn, who reckon of God's mercy or of ours.

1. First about our land boundaries: up on Thames, and then up on Lea, and along Lea to its source, then straight to Bedford, then up on Ouse to Watling Street.

2. Then is this: if a man be slain we reckon all equally dear, English and Danish, at 8 half marks of pure gold, except the ceorl who lives on rent-land and their [*i.e.*, the Danes'] liesings: they are also equally dear, either at 200 shillings.

3. And if a king's thegn be accused of murder and he dare to clear himself, let him do it with 12 king's thegns. If a man accuse a man of less degree than the king's thegn, let him clear himself with 11 of his equals and with one king's thegn. And similarly in every suit that is for more than 4 mancuses. And if he dare not, let him pay it three-fold as it may be valued.

4. And that every man know his guarantor for men and for horses and for oxen.

5. And we all declared on the day that the oaths were sworn that neither slave nor free might go to the army without leave, and their men none the more to us. But if it happen that for need any of them will have traffic with us, or we with them, with cattle and with goods, that is to be allowed on this wise: that hostages be furnished as security for peace and as evidence whereby one may know that the man has a clean back.

**Source.**—Thorpe, *Ancient Laws and Institutes of England*.

These are the dooms which Alfred the king chose, in order that no man should deem them otherwise than according to his will.

... "That which ye will that other men do not unto you, do ye not that to other men." On this one doom let a man think that he judge every one righteously: he need heed no other doom-book. Let him remember that he adjudge to no man that which he would not that he should adjudge to him, if he sought judgment against him.

After this, then it happened that many nations received the faith of Christ; then were many synods assembled throughout all the earth, and also among the English race, after they had received the faith of Christ, synods of holy bishops, and also of other distinguished witan. They then ordained, for that mildness of heart which Christ had taught, that secular lords, with their leave, might without sin, take for almost every misdeed, for the first offence, the money-amends which they then ordained; except in cases of treason against a lord, to which they dared not assign any mildness of heart, because God Almighty adjudged none to them who despised him, nor did Christ the Son of God adjudge any to him who sold Him to death; and he commanded that a lord should be loved as one's self. They then in many synods ordained amends for many human misdeeds: and in many synod-books they wrote, at one place one doom, at another another.

I, then, King Alfred, gathered these laws together and caused them to be written down, selecting many which pleased me from among those ordained by my predecessors. And many of those which I liked not I abrogated by the counsel of my witan, ordaining some different way for the future. For I did not dare to set down in writing many of my own suggestions, not knowing how they would be liked by those who should come after. But whenever I found in the laws passed in the days of my kinsman Ine, or of Offa, King of Mercia, or of Ethelbert, the first English convert to Christianity, anything that seemed to me to be most justly decided, such laws I gathered in and the others I left out.

I, then, Alfred, King of the West Saxons, showed these to all my witan, and they then said that it seemed good to them all to be holden.

12. If a man burn or hew another's wood without leave, let him pay for every great tree with 5 shillings, and afterwards for each, let there be as many of them as may be, with 5 pence; and 30 shillings as fine.

20. If a man entrust property to another man's monk, without leave of the monk's lord, and it be lost from him, let him forfeit it who before owned it.

34. It is also directed to chapmen, that they bring the men whom they take up with them before the king's reeve at the folk-moot, and let it be stated how many of them there are; and let them take such men with them as they may be able afterwards to present for justice at the folk-moot.

37. If a man from one hall-register wish to seek a lord in another hall-register, let him do it with the knowledge of the ealdorman whom he before followed in his shire. If he do it without his knowledge, let him who entertains him as his man pay 120 shillings as fine: let him, however, give half to the king in the shire where he before followed, half in that into which he comes.

38. If any man fight before the king's ealdorman in the gemot, he shall pay his value and his fine as the law ordains for any assault that he may have committed, and in addition shall pay a fine of 120 shillings to the ealdorman.

40. For breaking into the king's dwelling, 120 shillings; the archbishop's, 90 shillings; any other bishop's, and an ealdorman's, 60 shillings; a twelve-hundred man's, 30 shillings; a six-hundred man's, 15 shillings. For breaking into a ceorl's house, 5 shillings. If aught of this happen when the national army is out, or in Lent-fast, let the amends be twofold.

41. The man who has book-land, which his kindred left him, then ordain we that he must not give it from his kindred, if there be writing or witness that it was forbidden that he should do so by those men who at first acquired it, and by those who gave it to him; and then let that be declared in the presence of the king and of the bishop, before his kinsmen.

42. We also command that the man who knows his foe to be dwelling at home fight not before he demand right of him. If he have such power that he can beset his foe, and besiege him within, let him keep him within for 7 days, and attack him not, if he will remain within. And then, after 7 days, if he will surrender, and deliver up his weapons, let him be kept safe for 30 days, and let notice of him be given to his kinsmen and his friends. If, however, he flee to a church, then let it be according to the sanctity of the church; as we have before said above. But if he have not sufficient power to besiege him within, let him ride to the ealdorman, and beg aid of him. If he will not aid him, let him ride to the king before he fights. In like manner also, if a man come upon his foe, and he did not before know him to be settled in a house; if he be willing to deliver up his weapons, let him be kept for 30 days, and let notice of him be given to his friends; if he will not deliver up his weapons, then he may attack him. If he be willing to surrender, and to deliver up his weapons, and any one after that attack him, let him pay value and wound, such as he may cause, and fine, and let him have his power destroyed. We also declare that, with his lord a man may fight without incurring penalty, if any one attack the lord: thus may the lord fight for his man. After the same wise a man may fight with his born kinsman, if a man attack him wrongfully, except against his lord; that we do not allow.

43. To all free men let these days be given, but not to slaves and servile labourers, 12 days at Yule, and the day on which Christ overcame the devil, and the commemoration day of S. Gregory, and 7 days before Easter and 7 days after, and one day at S. Peter's tide and S. Paul's, and at harvest the whole week before S. Mary's mass, and one day at the celebration of All Hallows, and

the 4 Wednesdays in the 4 Ember weeks. To all slaves be given, to those to whom it may be most desirable to give, whatever any man shall give them in God's name, or they at any of their moments may deserve.

49-60. [The wound-tariff.] Front tooth, 8 shillings; canine tooth, 4 shillings; grinder, 15 shillings; cleft chin-bone, 12 shillings. Thumb struck off, 30 shillings; thumb-nail, 5 shillings. Shooting-finger, 15 shillings; its nail, 4 shillings. Middlemost finger, 12 shillings; its nail, 2 shillings. Gold-finger, 17 shillings; its nail, 4 shillings. Little finger, 9 shillings; its nail, 1 shilling. [Note that 1 Kentish shilling equals 4 Wessex shillings.]

**Source.**—King Alfred's translation of *Orosius*, i. 1. Translated by B. Thorpe. Pauli's *Alfred the Great*. Bohn's Library.

Ohthere told his lord King Alfred, that he dwelt northmost of all the Northmen. He said that he dwelt in the land to the northward, along the West Sea; he said, however, that that land is very long north from thence, but it is all waste, except in a few places, where the Fins here and there dwell, for hunting in the winter, and in the summer for fishing in that sea. He said that he was desirous to try, once on a time, how far that country extended due north, or whether anyone lived to the north of the waste. He then went due north along the country, leaving all the way the waste land on the right, and the wide sea on the left, for three days: he was as far north as the whale-hunters go at the farthest. Then he proceeded in his course due north, as far as he could sail within another three days; then the land there inclined due east [the North Cape] or the sea into the land, he knew not which, but he knew that he there waited for a west wind, or a little north, and sailed thence eastward along that land as far as he could sail in four days; then he had to wait for a due north wind, because the land there inclined due south [the White Sea], or the sea in on that land, he knew not which; he then sailed thence along the coast due south, as far as he could sail in five days. There lay a great river [Dwina] up in that land; they then turned up in that river, because they durst not sail on by that river, on account of hostility, because all that country was inhabited on the other side of that river; he had not before met with any land that was inhabited since he came from his own home; but all the way he had waste land on his right, except fishermen, fowlers, and hunters, all of whom were Fins, and he had constantly a wide sea to the left. The Beormas had well cultivated their country, but they did not dare to enter it; and the Terfinna land was all waste, except where hunters, fishers, or fowlers had taken up their quarters.

The Beormas told him many particulars both of their own land, and of the other lands lying around them; but he knew not what was true, because he did not see it himself; it seemed to him that the Fins and the Beormas spoke nearly one language. He went thither chiefly, in addition to seeing the country, on account of the walruses, because they have very noble bones in their teeth; some of these teeth they brought to the king: and their hides are good for ship-ropes. This whale is much less than other whales, it being not longer than seven ells; but in his own country is the best whale-hunting, there they are eight-and-forty ells long, and most of them fifty ells long; of these he said that he and five others had killed sixty in two days. He was a very wealthy man in those possessions in which their wealth consists, that is in wild deer. He had, at the time he came to the king, six hundred unsold tame deer. These deer they call reindeer, of which there were six decoy reindeer, which are very valuable amongst the Fins, because they catch the wild reindeer with them.

He was one of the first men in that country, yet he had not more than twenty horned cattle, and twenty sheep, and twenty swine, and the little that he ploughed he ploughed with horses. But their wealth consists for the most part in the rent paid them by the Fins. That rent is in skins of animals, and birds' feathers, and whalebone, and in ship-ropes made of whales' hides, and of seals. Everyone pays according to his birth; the best-born, it is said, pay the skins of fifteen martens, and five reindeers', and one bear's-skin, ten ambers of feathers, a bear's or otter's skin kirtle, and two ship-ropes, each sixty ells long, made either of whale-hide or of seal's.

He said that the Northmen's land was very long and very narrow; all that his man could either pasture or plough lies by the sea, though that is in some parts very rocky; and to the east are wild mountains, parallel to the cultivated land. The Fins inhabit these mountains, and the cultivated land is broadest to the eastward, and continually narrower the more north. To the east it may be sixty miles broad, or a little broader, and towards the middle thirty, or broader; and northward, he said, where it is narrowest, that it might be three miles broad to the mountain, and the mountain then is in some parts so broad that a man may pass over in two weeks, and in some parts so broad that a man may pass over in six days. Then along this land southwards, on the other side of the mountain, is Sweden, to that land northwards; and along that land northwards, Cwenland. The Cwenas sometimes make depredations on the Northmen over the mountains, and sometimes the Northmen on them; there are very large fresh meres amongst the mountains, and the Cwenas carry their ships over land into the meres, and thence make depredations on the Northmen; they have very little ships, and very light.

Ohthere said that the shire in which he dwelt is called Halgoland. He said that no one dwelt to the north of him; there is likewise a port to the south of that land, which is called Sciringes-heal; thither, he said, no one could sail in a month, if he landed at night, and every day had a fair wind; and all the while he would sail along the land, and on the starboard will first be Ireland, and then the islands which are between Ireland and this land. Then it is this land until he comes to Sciringes-heal, and all the way on the larboard, Norway. To the south of Sciringes-heal, a very great sea runs up into the land, which is broader than any one can see over; and Gotland is opposite on the other side, and then Seeland. This sea lies many miles up in that land. And from Sciringes-heal, he said that he sailed in five days, to that port which is called Æt-Hæthum [Sleswig], which is between the Wends, and Saxons, and Angles, and belongs to Denmark.

When he had sailed thitherward from Sciringes-heal, Denmark was on his left, and on his right a wide sea for three days, and two days before he came to Hæthum, he had on the right Gotland, Seeland, and many islands. In these lands the Angles dwelt before they came hither to this land. And then for two days he had on his left the islands which belong to Denmark.

**Source.**—*Anglo-Saxon Chronicle*. Translated by J. A. Giles. Bohn's Library.

ANNO 907.—This year Chester was repaired.

ANNO 909.—This year Ethelfled built the fortress at Bromesberrow.

ANNO 912.—This year King Edward took possession of London and of Oxford, and of all the lands which owed obedience thereto. This year Ethelfled, lady of the Mercians, came to Scaergate on the holy eve, "Invention of the Cross," and there built the fortress, and the same year, that at Bridgenorth.

ANNO 913.—In this year, about Martinmas, King Edward commanded the northern fortress to be built at Hertford, between the Memer, the Benewic, and the Lea. And then after that, during the summer, between Rogation days and midsummer, King Edward went with some of his forces to Maldon in Essex, and there encamped, whilst the fortress at Witham was wrought and built; and a good part of the people who were before under the dominion of the Danish men submitted to him; and in the meanwhile some part of his force constructed the fortress at Hertford, on the south side of the Lea. This year, by the help of God, Ethelfled, lady of the Mercians, went with all the Mercians to Tamworth, and there built the fortress early in the summer; and after this, before Lammas, that at Stafford.

ANNO 914.—Then after this, in the next year, that at Eddesbury, early in the summer; and afterwards, in the same year, late in harvest, that at Warwick. Then after this, in the next year, after Midwinter, that at Chirk, and that at Warburton; and that same year, before Midwinter, that at Runcorn.

ANNO 917.—This year, before Lammas, Ethelfled, lady of the Mercians, God helping her, got possession of the fortress which is called Derby, with all that owed obedience thereto.

ANNO 918.—This year, in the early part of the year, by God's help, she got into her power, by treaty, the fortress at Leicester, and the greater part of the army which owed obedience thereto became subject to her; and the people of York had also covenanted with her, some having given a pledge, and some having bound themselves by an oath, that they would be at her command. But very shortly after they had become so (twelve nights before midsummer), she died at Tamworth, in the eighth year of her having rule and right lordship over the Mercians.... And then after that, in the same year, before Martinmas, King Edward went with his forces to Buckingham, and there sat down four weeks; and, ere he went thence, he erected both the forts on either side of the river. And Thurkytel the earl sought to him to be his lord, and all the captains, and almost all the chief men who owed obedience to Bedford, and also many of those who owed obedience to Northampton.

ANNO 919.—This year, before Martinmas, King Edward went with his forces to Bedford, and gained the town; and almost all the townsmen who formerly dwelt there submitted to him; and he sat down there four weeks, and commanded the town to be built on the south side of the river.

ANNO 920.—This year, before Midsummer, King Edward went to Maldon, and built the town, and fortified it.

ANNO 921.—This year, before Easter, King Edward gave orders to take possession of the town at Towcester, and to fortify it. And again, after that, in the same year, during Rogation days, he commanded the town at Wigmore to be built.... Then, shortly after, during the harvest, King Edward went with the forces of the West Saxons to Passoham, and sat down there while they encompassed the town at Towcester with a stone wall. And Thurferth the earl, and the captains, and all the army which owed obedience to Northampton, as far north as the Welland, submitted to him, and sought to him to be their lord and protector. And when one division of the forces went home, then another went out, and took possession of the town of Huntingdon, and repaired and rebuilt it, where it had been before demolished; and all who were left of the inhabitants of that country submitted to King Edward, and sought his peace and protection. And after this, still in the same year, before Martinmas, King Edward went with the forces of the West Saxons to Colchester, and repaired the town, and rebuilt it where it had been before broken down; and much people submitted to him, as well among the East Angles as among the East Saxons, who before were under the dominion of the Danes. And all the army among the East Angles swore union with him, that they would all that he would, and would observe peace towards all to whom the king should grant his peace, both by sea and by land. And the army which owed obedience to Cambridge chose him specially to be their lord and protector; and confirmed it with oaths, even as he then decreed it. This year King Edward built the town at the mouth of the Cleddau [in Pembrokeshire].

ANNO 922.—In this year, between Rogation days and Midsummer, King Edward went with his forces to Stamford, and commanded the town to be built upon the south side of the river: and all the people who owed obedience to the northern town submitted to him, and sought to him to be their lord.... And all the people of the land of Mercia, who before were subject to Ethelfled, submitted to him; and the kings of the North Welsh, Howel, and Cleauc, and Jothwel, and all the North Welsh race, sought to him to be their lord. Then went he thence [*i.e.*, from Tamworth] to Nottingham, and took possession of the town, and commanded it to be repaired and occupied as well by English as by Danes. And all the people who were settled in Mercia, as well Danish as English, submitted to him.

ANNO 923.—In this year, after harvest, King Edward went with his forces to Thelwall, and commanded the town to be built, and occupied, and manned; and commanded another force also of Mercians, the while that he sat there, to take possession of Manchester in Northumbria, and repair and man it. This year King Raegnald won York.

ANNO 924.—In this year before Midsummer, King Edward went with his forces to Nottingham, and commanded the town to be built on the south side of the river, over against the other, and the

bridge over the Trent, between the two towns: and then he went thence into Peakland, to Bakewell, and commanded a town to be built nigh thereunto, and manned. And then chose him for father and for lord, the King of the Scots [Constantine II.] and the whole nation of the Scots, and Raegnald and the son of Eadulf and all those who dwell in Northumbria, as well English as Danes, and Northmen and others, and also the king of the Strathclyde Britons and all the Strathclyde Britons.

ANNO 925.—This year King Edward died, and Athelstan his son succeeded to the kingdom.

[NOTE.—The events of 921, 922, 923, 924 probably occurred three years earlier—*i.e.*, in 918, 919, 920, 921.]



## ATHELSTAN'S DOOM CONCERNING HOT IRON AND WATER (925-940).

**Source.**—Thorpe, *Ancient Laws and Institutes of England*.

And concerning the ordeal we enjoin by command of God, and of the archbishop, and of all the bishops, that no man come within the church after the fire is borne in with which the ordeal shall be heated, except the mass-priest, and him who shall go thereto: and let there be measured nine feet from the stake to the mark, by the man's feet who goes thereto. And if it be water, let it be heated till it sings towards boiling. And let the vessel be iron or brass or lead or earthen. And if it be a single accusation, let the hand dive after the stone up to the wrist; and if it be threefold, up to the elbow. And when the ordeal is ready, then let two men of either side go in, and let them be agreed that it is as hot as we have said before. And let an equal number of men of either side go in, and let them stand on both sides of the ordeal, along the church; and let them all be fasting; ... and let the mass-priest sprinkle holy water over them all, and let them each taste of the holy water, and give them all the kiss-book [the Gospels or Pax] and the sign of the cross: and let no man mend the fire any longer when the consecration is begun, but let the iron lie upon the embers until the last collect: after that, let it be laid upon the stake, and let there be no other speaking within, except that they pray earnestly to God Almighty that he make manifest what is most true. And let him go thereto; and let his hand be sealed up: and let it be postponed till after the third day, whether it be foul or clean within the seal. And he who breaks this law, let the ordeal be void for him, and let him pay to the king 120 shillings as a fine.

## THE BATTLE OF BRUNANBURH (937).

Source.—*Anglo-Saxon Chronicle*. Translated by W.

[Note that the lines are to be read across the page.]

<p>Here the King Athelstan,  of heroes the ring-giver,  Edmund the Atheling,  won in the battle  near to Brunanburh:  they hewed the war-lindens  the heirs of Eadweard;  from their forebears,  against every foeman  hoard and homesteads.  the Scottish people  fated to death, fell:  with blood of fighters,  at morning tide,  over lands glided,  the eternal Lord's,  sank to her seat.  with spears done to death,  over their shield shot,  weary, of war sad.  the live-long day  footprints followed  hewed they the runaways  with swords milled to sharpness.  the hardest of handplay  of those who with Anlaf  in the ship's bosom  fated to fighting.  on the battle-field  by swords laid to sleep,  of the earls of Anlaf,  seamen and Scottish.  of Northmen the chief,  to his ship's stem-piece  the ship pressed afloat;  on the yellow flood,  So there eke the sage one  north to his kindred,  hoary fighter;  in mingling of swords:  deprived of his friends  cut off in the contest,  on place of fighting  young in the warfare.  grizzly-haired hero,  old wrong-doer,  with their leavings of armies;  that they in battle-work  on the battle-field,  in meeting of spears,  in weapon's contest,  with Eadweard's  Failed him the Northmen  dreary those left by spears,  over deep water,  and again Ireland  Likewise the brethren</p>	<p>of earls the ruler,  and eke his brother,  long-lasting glory  with edges of swords  the shield-wall they clove,  with leavings of hammers,  as was befitting them  that they in battle oft  the land defended,  The foeman cringed,  and the seamen,  the field grew wet  since the sun up  glorious star,  God's shining candle,  till the excellent creature  There lay many men  heroes of Northmen  as eke the Scottish,  Wessex men onwards  in their companies  of loathed peoples;  behind terribly  Mercians refused not  to one of the heroes  over the wave-mingler  sought for the land  Five there lay  kings all-youthful  as also seven  countless of the army  There was put to flight  by need compelled  with small company:  the king away went  his life he rescued.  came by fleeing  Constantinus,  he could not exult  he was reft of his kinsmen,  on battle-field,  and he his son forsook  foredone with wounds,  He could not boast him,  of clash of swords,  nor Anlaf the more,  they could not laugh  better men were  in banner's conflict,  in moot of heroes,  that they on the death-place  children contended.  with their nailed ships;  on dashing ocean,  Dublin they seek  in shameful wise.  the two together,</p>
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the king and Atheling,  
West Saxons' land,  
Left they behind them  
to old dusky-coat,  
with horny nib,  
the eagle white-tailed,  
to the greedy war-hawk,  
the wolf in the weald.  
in this island  
of folk cut down  
by swords' edges  
and ancient wise men,  
Angles and Saxons  
over broad oceans,  
proud smiths of war  
earls eager for fame

sought their kindred,  
in war exulting.  
corpses to share  
to the swart raven,  
and to the grey-coat,  
the prey to enjoy,  
and the grey beast,  
Was not more slaughter  
ever till now  
before this time  
as the books tell us,  
since from east hitherwards  
up to land came,  
Britain they sought,  
the Welsh overcame,  
they won this country.

**Source.**—*Cott. Aug.*, ii. 62. Earle, *Land-Charters, and other Saxon Documents*, Oxford, 1888, p. 175. Translated by W.

✠ Our Lord Jesus Christ reigning for ever! Since by the providence of our Creator every creature was made altogether good in the beginning and was beautifully created and splendidly fashioned, above the heavens and below, as well in the case of angels as men and the manifold and diverse kinds of beasts of burden and fishes and birds: And since from the beginning of the world until the end they rightly keep the laws ordained by their Creator except man alone, who was formed in his image and set above every creature, who for his transgression is rushing headlong to death: Therefore I EADMUND, king of the Angles, burning for the heavenly country, have granted and given to a certain lady of a religious order, named Æthelswith, x hides in the place commonly known in the ancient tongue as AT OSWALDING TOWN: That she may enjoy it well and ever possess it so long as the spirit of life unharmed pursue the course of this declining age and dwell in flesh corruptible: and that she may leave it to whatever heir she will for ever after herself, as we said above, as an everlasting inheritance.

And let the aforesaid land with all things thereto rightly pertaining, fields, pastures, meadows, woods, and woodland groves be free from every worldly hindrance except these three, the fyrd, and bridge-work, and fortress-work. But if anyone shall try (what we do not desire) to infringe this our grant, entering thereupon through self-exaltation, may he endure the cold blasts of ice and the Pennine<sup>[2]</sup> troop of evil spirits unless he first make amends with the tearful sighs of repentance and by pure reform. These are the boundaries by which the aforesaid land is surrounded. These are the land boundaries at oswalding tun: first ælfgyth's boundary on the east up to teting ford; then from there west up to done; then from there up to eadgifu's boundary; then from there to the bishop's boundary at cirring; from cirring north thence to emecing mere; to oswalding tun pertain holly hurst, and byrhttring den, and eoreding den, and liccing den, and hereferth's lea, and dynning den, and cyrthring hurst, and trip hurst and insnadis into oswalding tun; and the meadow at brunes ford and the meadow at bee brook pertain to oswalding tun.

This aforesaid donation was completed in the year from the Incarnation of our Lord Jesus Christ DCCCCXL, Indiction XIII.

✠ I Eadmund king of the Angles have confirmed the aforesaid donation with the sign of the holy cross.

✠ I Wulfhelm archbishop of the church of Canterbury have signed the donation of the king with the mark of the holy cross.

✠ I Eadred the king's brother have signed.

✠ I Theodred bishop of the church of London have signed.

✠ I Ælfheah bishop of the church of Winchester have made the triumphant mark of the holy cross.

✠ I Cenwald bishop have assented to the aforesaid gift.

✠ I Oda bishop have confirmed.

✠ I Ælfric bishop have signed.

✠ I Wulfhun bishop have assented.

✠ I Wulfhelm bishop have signed.

✠ I Burgric bishop have assented.

✠ I Æthelgar bishop have corroborated.

✠ Ælfhere earl.

✠ Wulfgar earl.

✠ Æthelstan earl.

✠ Uhtred earl.

✠ Orda thegn.

✠ Ælfric thegn.

✠ Eadmund thegn.

✠ Wulfsige thegn.

✠ Wullaf thegn.

✠ Ordeah thegn.

✠ Eadric thegn.

✠ Ealhelm thegn.

✠ Ælfsige thegn.

✠ Æthered thegn.

✠ Athelmund thegn.

✠ Wulfhelm thegn.

✠ Wulfheah thegn.

✠ Wulfsige thegn.

✠ Wihtgar thegn.

✠ Æthelwold thegn.

✠ Ælfred thegn.

✠ Wulfgar thegn.

✠ Ælfsige thegn.

✠ Wulfnoth thegn.

✠ Æthelstan thegn.

✠ Æthelsige thegn.

✠ Eanulf thegn.

*On the back:* ✠ This is Oswalding tun's boc which Eadmund the king booked to Æthelswith as a perpetual heritage.

## DUNSTAN IS MADE ABBOT OF GLASTONBURY BY KING EDMUND (946).

**Source.**—*Life of St. Dunstan*, by B., a Saxon priest, written between 995 and 1006, §§ 13, 14. Stubbs' *Memorials of St. Dunstan* (Rolls Series). Translated by W.

At length they [Dunstan's opponents] bound around him the rope of their iniquity, destined therein to entangle themselves rather than him, that they might poison the heart of the king, infected by their wickedness, and make him credulous by their lies. The latter, as he had before been led on by evil men, moved with great anger, immediately ordered him to be deprived of every dignity and office, and to seek his sureties where he willed, without him or his. There were then dwelling with the king at Cheddar, where these events occurred, venerable ambassadors of the eastern kingdom, whom Dunstan, as if already condemned to exile, and unwitting of any other plan for himself, approached, begging that they would not desert one abandoned by the king, but would conduct him home with themselves although but for a sojourn. Taking compassion on his sorrow they promised him whatever advantages their kingdom afforded if he would accompany them.

So the next day the king went where he might enjoy himself in hunting with his followers according to his custom. And as they go to the wood a-hunting, they take in rivalry diverse tracks of the shady paths. And lo! with the uproar of the horns and the barking of the hounds many stags took to flight. The king by himself with his pack of hounds chose one to hunt, and wearied it for a long while through various by-paths by the swiftness of his horse and the eagerness of his hounds. Now there is close to Cheddar, among many other features of the steep mountain, a certain precipice which reaches down to a marvellous and unfathomable depth. At this the stag arrived in its flight, I know not how, unless by the hidden will of God, and threw itself headlong down to the depths of that precipice, together with the hounds that followed, and, dashed in pieces, they rushed upon death together. So too the king, following stag and hounds, came up with his horse at the gallop, and the moment he saw the precipice attempted with all his might to stay the course of his hurrying steed. But such was the strength and stiffness of its mouth and neck that he could not. What then? He gave up all hope of life and commended his soul into the hands of God, saying in his heart, "I thank thee, O most High, that I do not remember ever, to have injured anyone, save Dunstan alone, and this I will amend, reconciling myself to him with ready willingness if my life is spared." As he spoke, by the merits of the saint, his horse stopped on the turf at the very edge of the cliff (I shudder to tell it), when its forefeet were almost about to dash into the depths of the abyss. Then the king with heart and voice alike gave thanks and praises to God for that his life was saved, plainly perceiving, and very often considering in the secrecy of his heart, that he had been almost doomed to a near death for his attack on such a man.

When he arrived home, without delay he ordered the blessed Dunstan to be called to him in great haste. And when he was come the king said to him, "Get thee a horse ready as swiftly as may be, that thou mayest be able to go with me whither I am about to go with but small retinue." And immediately they mounted and went straight along the road to Glastonbury. Arrived there, they entered the church of God, as was meet, to pray. And as soon as their prayers were ended, and the streaming tears wiped from their eyes, the king again called to him Dunstan the servant of God, and taking his right hand, for forgiveness, or perhaps to honour him, kissed it, and leading him to the abbot's seat, and placing him therein, said: "Be thou ruler of this seat, and a mighty occupant, and most faithful abbot of this church; and whatsoever thou lackest of thine own substance for the increase of Divine worship or to supplement the sacred rule, that will I gladly supply of the royal munificence." And so thereafter Dunstan the servant of God undertook the above-mentioned office at the king's command, to rule it, and in the aforesaid manner, following the healthful rule of St. Benedict, shone forth as the foremost abbot of the English nation.

**Source.**—*Anonymous Life of St. Oswald*, written between 995 and 1005. Raine, *Historians of the Church of York* (Rolls Series), p. 436. Translated by W.

Then began the holy season in which according to custom there came the archbishops and all other pre-eminent ecclesiastics and famous abbots and religious abbesses and all dukes, rulers and judges.... They came ... that the most reverend bishops might bless, anoint, and hallow him, with Christ's blessing.... Then commenced the splendour of great festivity, and the feast of the Holy Ghost. While this was being solemnised all came to hallow the glorious king whose sceptre-bearing glory then more brightly shone, whose golden diadem glittered so that its beauty could not be compared to gold. They led the king, crowned and elected, with glory and honour to the church, where all his counsellors were assembled, and where all the people awaited him. With him went and returned good men and noble abbots, clothed in snowy vestments and in purple. This noble company was followed by the abbesses, matrons of exalted virtue with glorious daughters. These were followed by a multitude of priests, whom our ancestors called elders, with ranks of clerks. Then two bishops took the king's hands and led him into the church, all singing in a deep and modulated tone this antiphon; "Thou hast a mighty arm: strong is thy hand, and high is thy right hand. Righteousness and equity are the habitation of thy seat: mercy and truth shall go before thy face." This antiphon finished, they added thereto, "Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Ghost." And when they had entered the church and the king had prostrated himself before the altar, first putting off from his head his diadem, Dunstan, the chief bishop, began with a loud voice the hymn of glory, "We praise thee as God, we acknowledge thee to be the Lord." But he could not refrain himself from tears for joy and for the humility of the king, because he knew that the nation had not deserved a king so humble and so wise. When the hymn was concluded the bishops raised the king from the ground. Three oaths, at the archbishop's question, did he promise that he would observe: "First I promise that the church of God and all the Christian people shall always keep true peace in our dominion. Secondly I promise that I will forbid outrage and all wickedness in all ranks. Thirdly that I will command justice and mercy in all dooms, that the merciful and pitiful God may dispense his mercy to me and to you." The promises made, the archbishop stood and prayed for him the prayers that were written in their books. Then Oswald, the minister of Christ, said the second Mass with great grace, as the Archbishop arranged, to whose commands all were obedient. When the hallowing was completed, they anointed him and sang nobly together the antiphon, "Sadoc the priest and Nathan the prophet anointed Salomon king over Sion," and added, "May the king live for ever!" After anointing the king the bishop gave him the ring, then girded him with the sword, and after this gave him the crown upon his head and the blessing. He gave him the sceptre and the staff. The aforesaid bishop completed all these things, and finished Mass, and they declared a solemn feast-day. The sound of the trumpet was not heard there, nor the horn of the jester, but all things, after the manner of wisest Salomon were honourably accomplished, where each drank according to his age and his ability. The most eminent bishops, the venerable Dunstan and the reverend Oswald, were seated on a raised throne with the king, who was so graceful and comely in word and deed that nothing could be seen or heard except the honour and praise shown to him by pious dukes, and famous soldiers and chief men. The king, as we have said, crowned with laurel and adorned with roses, was with the bishops: with him glittered in glorious wise dukes and all the dignitaries of the English, rejoicing in the heavenly King, who had granted to them to have such a king "in whose mind were mercy and truth." The queen had a banquet with the abbots and abbesses. She was clothed in a garment of linen, girt about with variety of jewels and pearls, raised higher than the other matrons as became her royal dignity, since after the death of the honoured duke, she had been honoured by marriage with the king. When the royal nuptials were completed, all returned to their own homes, blessing the king and queen, and wishing them the tranquillity of peace which ancient kings obtained.

## THE MURDER OF KING EDWARD AT CORFE (MARCH 18, 978).

**Source.**—*Anonymous Life of St. Oswald*, written between 995 and 1005. Raine, *Historians of the Church of York* (Rolls Series), p. 448. Translated by W.

When the glory of leaders and emperor of all Albion [Edgar] was snatched away from the storm of this changing world and rescued from the salt shipwreck of the fluctuating sea, there arose everywhere, after the times of gladness which peacefully endured in his reign, dissension and tribulation which neither the bishops nor leaders of church and state could pacify.... For some of the leaders of this country wished to elect Edward, the elder son, as king, others of the chief men desired the younger, Ethelred, since he seemed to all in word and deed more gentle. For the elder filled all with fear and terror, for he scourged them with words, nay, more, with terrible stripes, especially those about his person. Meanwhile the ninth ... month had passed, and the tenth light was shining upon mortals after the election of Edward, against whom some thegns, zealous in his brother's cause, formed a conspiracy, when he should come to talk with his beloved brother.... One day at evening, as we have said, the noble and elected king came to the house where dwelt his dearly-loved brother with the queen, desiring the consolation of a brother's love. There came out to meet him, as was fitting, the chiefs and leaders who were staying with the queen his mother. They formed a wicked plot among themselves, who had such evil minds and so dark and devilish a gloom that they did not fear to lay hands on the Lord's Anointed. He was surrounded on all sides by armed men, amongst them the butler ready to serve in his lowly office. Now the revered king had with him very few thegns, because he feared no man, trusting in the Lord and in the might of His goodness. He had been instructed in the divine law by bishop Sideman, and was strong and hardy in body. So when the conspirators surrounded him ... he remained fearlessly sitting on his horse. Madness was in them, and with it insanity. Then the worst wickedness and the bold madness of Beelzebub the enemy burst out in the minds of the treacherous thegns.... The thegns therefore held him, and one drew him to the right to himself, as though he wished to kiss him, while another roughly seized his left hand and wounded him. The king called out as loudly as he could, "What are you doing, breaking my right hand?" and suddenly fell from his horse, which also died. God's martyr was taken away by the thegns to the house of a poor man. No Gregorian chant was heard, no dirge: but the famous king of all the land lay covered with a common garment, awaiting the light of day.... When twice six months of days of the solar and the lunar year were past, there came the glorious Duke Ælfhere with a multitude of people, who ordered his body to be raised from the ground. When this had been done, and the body exposed, they found and saw it free from all spot and decay, as it had been in life. When they saw this, all were astonished, with dances rejoicing in the Lord, who alone worketh marvels. Then the thegns washed the body of the revered king, and when they had clothed it with new garments they placed it in a coffin or tomb, put it on their shoulders, and conveyed it on a bier to the place where they buried him with honour, where Masses and holy oblations were celebrated for the redemption of his soul, at the command of the duke.



**Source.**—*Anglo-Saxon Chronicle*. Translated by J. A. Giles. Bohn's Library.

ANNO 980.—In this year ... was Southampton ravaged by a ship-force, and the most part of the townsmen slain and led captive. And that same year was Thanet-land ravaged by a ship-force, and most part of the townsmen slain and led captive. And that same year was Legecester-shire [Cheshire] ravaged by a northern ship-force.

ANNO 981.—In this year St. Petroc's-stowe [Padstow] was ravaged; and that same year was much harm done everywhere by the sea-coast, as well among the men of Devon as among the Welsh.

ANNO 982.—In this year landed among the men of Dorset three ships of pirates; and they ravaged in Portland.

ANNO 988.—This year was Watchet ravaged, and Goda, the Devonshire thegn, slain, and with him much slaughter made.

ANNO 991.—This year was Ipswich ravaged; and after that, very shortly, was Brihtnoth the ealdorman slain at Maldon. And in that year it was decreed that tribute, for the first time, should be given to the Danish men, on account of the great terror which they caused by the sea-coast. That was at first ten thousand pounds. This counsel was first given by Archbishop Siric. 89

ANNO 992.—Then decreed the king and all his witan that all the ships which were worth anything should be gathered together at London. And the king then committed the forces to the leading of Ælfric the ealdorman, and of Thorod the earl, and of Bishop Ælfstan [of London], and of Bishop Æscwy [of Dorchester]; and they were to try if they could anywhere betrap the army about. Then sent the ealdorman and directed the army to be warned; and then during the night of which they should have joined battle by day, then fled he by night from the forces, to his great disgrace: and the army then escaped, except one ship, whose crew was there slain. And then the ships from East Anglia and from London met the army, and there they made great slaughter of them; and took the ship, all armed and equipped, in which the ealdorman was.

ANNO 993.—In this year was Bamburgh entered by storm, and much booty there taken. And after that the army came to the mouth of the Humber, and there wrought much evil, as well in Lindsey as in Northumbria. Then a very large force was gathered together; and as they should have joined battle, then the leaders, first of all, began the flight; that was Frene, and Godwin, and Frithgist.

ANNO 994.—In this year came Olave and Sweyn to London, on the nativity of S. Mary, with ninety-four ships; and they then continued fighting stoutly against the city, and would also have set fire to it. But they there sustained more harm and evil than they ever supposed that any citizens would be able to do unto them. But the holy mother of God, on that day, showed her mercy to the citizens and delivered them from their foes. And they then went thence, and wrought the utmost evil that ever any army could do, by burning, and plundering, and man-slaying, both by the sea-coast, and among the East Saxons, and in the land of Kent, and in Sussex, and in Hampshire. And at last they took to themselves horses, and rode as far as they would, and continued doing unspeakable evil. Then the king and his witan decreed that they should be sent to, and promised tribute and food, on condition that they should cease from their plundering: which terms they accepted. And then all the army came to Southampton, and there took up their winter quarters: and there they were victualled from all the realm of the West Saxons, and they were paid sixteen thousand pounds of money. Then the king sent Bishop Ælphege [of Winchester] and Æthelweard the ealdorman after King Olave, and, the while, hostages were delivered to the ships; and they then led Olave with much worship to the king at Andover. And King Ethelred received him at the bishop's hands, and royally gifted him. And then Olave made a covenant with him, even as he also fulfilled, that he never again would come in hostile wise to the English nation. 90

ANNO 997.—In this year the army went about Devonshire in Severn-mouth, and there ravaged, as well among the Cornishmen as among the North Welsh, and among the men of Devon; and then landed at Watchet, and there wrought much evil by burning and man-slaying. And after that they went again about Penwithstert, on the south side, and went then into the mouth of the Tamar, and then went up until they came to Liddyford, and burned and destroyed everything which they met with; and they burned Ordulf's minster at Tavistock, and brought unspeakable booty with them to their ships.

ANNO 998.—This year the army went again eastward into Frome-mouth, and everywhere there they went up as far as they would into Dorset. And forces were often gathered against them; but, as soon as they should have joined battle, then was there ever, through some cause, flight begun; and in the end they ever had the victory. And then at another time they sat down in the Isle of Wight, and got their food the while from Hampshire and from Sussex.

ANNO 999.—This year the army again came about into the Thames, and went then up along the Medway, and to Rochester. And then the Kentish forces came there to meet them, and they there stoutly joined battle: but alas! that they too quickly yielded and fled; for they had not the support which they should have had. And the Danish men had possession of the place of carnage. And then they took horse and rode wheresoever they themselves would, and full nigh all the West Kentish men they ruined and plundered. Then the king, with his witan, decreed that with a ship force and also with a land force they should be attacked. But when the ships were ready, then the miserable crew delayed from day to day, and distressed the poor people who lay in the ships: and ever as it should have been forwarder, so was it later, from one time to another; and ever they let their enemies' forces increase, and ever the people retired from the sea, and they ever went forth after them. And then in the end, these expeditions both by sea and land effected nothing, except the people's distress and waste of money, and the emboldening of their foes. 91

ANNO 1000.—In this year the king went into Cumberland, and ravaged it well nigh all. And his ships went out about Chester, and should have come to meet him, but they were not able: then ravaged they Anglesey. And the hostile fleet went this summer to Richard's dominions [Normandy].

ANNO 1001.—In this year was much hostility in the land of the English through the ship force, and well nigh everywhere they ravaged and burned, so that they advanced in one course until they came to the town of Alton; and then there came against them the men of Hampshire, and fought against them.... And they went thence west until they came to Devon; and there Paley came to meet them, with the ships which he could gather, because he had fled from King Ethelred, contrary to all the plighted troth that he had given him; and the king had also well gifted him with houses, and with gold and with silver. And they burned Teignton, and also many other good towns which we are unable to name; and there, afterwards, peace was made with them. And they then went thence to Exmouth, so that they proceeded upwards in one course until they came to Pen: and there Cole, the king's high reeve, and Edsy, the king's reeve, went against them with the forces which they were able to gather together; and they there were put to flight, and there were many slain: and the Danish men had possession of the place of carnage. And the morning after, they burned the village of Pen and at Clifton, and also many goodly towns which we are unable to name, and then went again east until they came to the Isle of Wight; and on the morning after, they burned the town at Waltham, and many other small towns, and soon after a treaty was entered into with them, and they made peace.

ANNO 1002.—In this year the king decreed, and his witan, that tribute should be paid to the fleet, and peace made with them, on condition that they should cease from their evil-doings. Then sent the king to the fleet Leofsy the ealdorman; and he then settled a truce with them by the king's word, and his witan's, and that they should receive food and tribute. And that they then accepted: and then were they paid twenty-four thousand pounds. Then during this, Leofsy the ealdorman slew Eafy the king's high steward; and the king then banished him the land.... And in that year the king ordered all the Danish men who were in England to be slain. This was done on St. Brice's mass day; because it was made known to the king that they would treacherously bereave him of his life, and afterwards all his witan; and after that have his kingdom without any gainsaying.

## THE BATTLE OF MALDON (991).

**Source.**—*Anglo-Saxon Poem*, lines 481-637. Translated by E. A. Freeman.

[Note that the lines are to be read across the page.]

<p>Leofsuna spake out, his board to guard him; "I this promise flee a footstep, to wreak in the fight Nor by Stourmere with words need twit me homeward should go, but me shall weapons meet Full of ire he waded, on flight he thought not. his dart he made quake, over all he cleped; Brihtnoth should wreak; who to wreak thinketh nor for his life mourn." for life they recked not. hardly to fight, and to God they prayed their lord and comrade, a fall might work. gladly to help; of a hard kin, Æscferth was his name. in the war-play, arrows enough; one while a warrior teased, some wounds, still might wield. Eadward the Long, bold words spake he a footstep of land, while his better lay. and with the warriors fought, on the seamen ere he in slaughter lay. noble comrade, fought he earnestly, and so many other keen they were, and the hauberk sang There in the fight slew till he on earth fell, the ground sought; Offa down hewn, that he his lord had pledged, with his ring-giver to the borough ride or in the host cringe of their wounds die. his lord hard by. seamen waded on,</p>	<p>and his linden heaved, he to the warrior quoth, thence that I nill but will further go, my lord and comrade. any steadfast hero that I lordless and wend from the fight; point and iron." fought he steadfastly, Dunnere then quoth, the valiant churl, he bade that warriors each "Nought may he fear his lord among the folk, Then they forth went, Began then the house-men fiercely spears bearing, that they might wreak and on their foes Then there a hostage gan he was in Northumberland Ecglaf's bairn, Nought then feared he and he poured forth one while he on board shot, ever and anon he sold the while he weapons Then yet in rank stood ready and yearnful; that he would not flee overback to bow, He broke the board-wall till he his gift-giver worthily wreaked, So did Ætheric, eager forth to go, Sibriht's brother, clave the keeled board, burst they the boards, a grisly lay. Offa the seamen, and Gadda's kinsman rath was in battle yet had he furthered as he ere agreed that they should both hale to home, on the slaughter-place, He lay thegnlike Then were boards broken, in the fight wrathful.</p>
<p>The spear oft waded through Forth then went Wistan with the warmen fought he, banesman of three of them,</p>	<p>the fey man's life-house. Thurstan's son, he was in the throng, ere him Wigeline's bairn</p>

in slaughter low laid.  
stood they fast  
fighting they cringed,  
slaughter fell on earth.  
all the while,  
the warriors trimmed;  
with words they bade,  
them should bear up,  
their weapons use.  
his board heaving;  
his ash he made quake;  
the warriors learned;  
heart shall the keener be,  
as our main lessens.  
all down hewn,  
ever may he groan  
of wending thinketh.  
hence stir will I not,  
of my lord,  
to lie am thinking."  
then all cheered on,  
Oft he the dart let go,

There was stern meeting;  
fighters in battle;  
with their wounds weary;  
Oswold and Ealdwold  
both brethren,  
their fellow-kinsmen  
that they there at need  
and unweakly  
Brihtwold then spake,  
he was an old comrade;  
he full boldly  
"Mind shall the harder be,  
mood shall the more be,  
Here lies our Elder,  
a good man in the dust;  
who now from this war-play  
I am old of life;  
and I by the half  
by such a loved man  
So Æthelgar's bairn  
Godric to battle:  
the death spear wound he  
on the wikings.

A MASTER IN A MONASTERY SCHOOL QUESTIONS HIS PUPIL'S COMPANIONS AND HIS PUPIL.

**Source.**—*Ælfric's Colloquy*. Thorpe's *Analecta Anglo-Saxonica*. Translated by W.

## THE PLOUGHMAN.

*Master.*—Well, ploughman, how do you do your work?

*Ploughman.*—O sir, I work very hard. I go out in the dawning, driving the oxen to the field, and I yoke them to the plough. Be the winter never so stark, I dare not stay at home, for fear of my lord; but, every day I must plough a full acre or more, after having yoked the oxen, and fastened the share and the coulter to the plough.

*Master.*—Have you any mate?

*Ploughman.*—I have a boy, who drives the oxen with a goad, who is now however hoarse from cold and shouting.

*Master.*—What more do you do in the day?

*Ploughman.*—Truly I do more. I must fill the mangers of the oxen with hay, and water them, and carry out the dung.

*Master.*—Well, well, it is very hard work!

*Ploughman.*—Yes, indeed, it is very hard work, because I am not free.

## THE SHEPHERD.

*Master.*—How say you, shepherd? Have you any work to do?

*Shepherd.*—Yes, indeed I have. Very early in the morning I drive my sheep to the lea, and stand over them in heat and in cold with my dogs, lest the wolves eat them up. And I drive them back to their folds, and milk them twice a day. And besides this, I move their folds, and I make cheese and butter, and I am true to my lord.

## THE OXHERD.

*Master.*—And what is your work, oxherd?

*Oxherd.*—O, my lord, I work hard. When the ploughman unyokes the oxen, I lead them to the lea, and all the night I stand over them watching for thieves, and again, very early in the morning, I hand them over to the ploughman, well fed and watered.



## THE HUNTSMAN.

*Master.*—How do you set about your craft?

*Huntsman.*—I make me nets, and set them in a likely place, and drive on my hounds to chase the wild beasts until they come to the nets unawares, and so they are ensnared and I slay them in the nets.... Yes, I can hunt without nets. I follow the wild beasts with swift hounds.... I take hart, and boars, and does, and roes, and sometimes hares....

*Master.*—What do you do with the spoils of your hunting?

*Huntsman.*—What I take I give to the king, because I am his huntsman.

*Master.*—What does he give you?

*Huntsman.*—He clothes me well and feeds me, and sometimes gives me a horse or a bracelet, that I may the more joyfully set about my craft.

*Master.*—What do you get by your craft?

*Fisherman.*—Food, and clothing, and money.

*Master.*—How do you catch fish?

*Fisherman.*—I get into my boat, and place my nets in the river, and I cast a hook and baskets, and I take whatever they hold.

*Master.*—What if they are unclean fishes?

*Fisherman.*—The unclean I cast out, and take the clean for food.

*Master.*—Where do you sell your fish?

*Fisherman.*—In the town.... The townsmen buy them. I cannot catch as many as I can sell.

*Master.*—What sorts of fish do you catch?

*Fisherman.*—Eels, and pike, minnows, eelpout, trout, and lamprey, and such sprats as swim in a river.

*Master.*—Why don't you fish in the sea?

*Fisherman.*—Sometimes I do, but seldom, for it is a long row for me to the sea.

*Master.*—What do you catch in the sea?

*Fisherman.*—Herrings, and salmon, porpoises, and sturgeon, oysters and crabs, mussels, periwinkles, cockles, plaice, and soles, and lobsters, and many such things.

*Master.*—Do you wish to catch a whale?

*Fisherman.*—No.

*Master.*—Why?

*Fisherman.*—Because it is a dangerous thing to catch a whale. It is safer for me to go to the river with my boat than to go with many boats on a whale-hunt.

*Master.*—Why so?

*Fisherman.*—Because I would sooner catch a fish that I can slay than one who can sink or kill not me only but also my mates with one blow.

*Master.*—But, still, many catch whales, and escape the dangers, and obtain a great price therefor.

*Fisherman.*—That's true, but I dare not, on account of the cowardliness of my mind.

## THE FOWLER.

*Master.*—What do you say, fowler? How do you snare birds?

*Fowler.*—I snare them in many ways: sometimes with nets, sometimes with nooses, sometimes with lime, sometimes by whistling, sometimes with a hawk, sometimes with traps....

*Master.*—How do you feed your hawks?

*Fowler.*—In winter they feed themselves and me; in Lent I let them fly away to the wood; and in autumn I catch young birds and tame them.

*Master.*—And why do you let those that you have tamed fly away from you?

*Fowler.*—Because I do not wish to feed them in the summer, as they eat too much.

*Master.*—But many men do feed tame hawks through the summer, so that they may have them ready again.

*Fowler.*—Yes, so they do; but I do not wish to be so bothered with them, because I know how to catch many more.

## THE TRADER.

*Master.*—What do you say, trader?

*Trader.*—I say that I am needful to the king, and ealdormen, and wealthy men, and to all the folk.

*Master.*—How?

*Trader.*—I get into my boat with my load, and I row over the waters and sell my things, and I buy things of great price which this land does not bring forth, and I bring them hither to you, with great danger, over the sea, and sometimes I suffer shipwreck, with the loss of all my things, barely escaping with my life.

*Master.*—What sorts of things do you bring to us?

*Trader.*—Cloaks, and silk, stones of great price, and gold, wonderful garments, and perfumes, wine and oil, ivory, and brass, copper and tin, sulphur and glass, and many things like them.

*Master.*—Will you sell your things here, for as much as you bought them there?

*Trader.*—I will not. For then what gain is there in my toil? But I will sell them here dearer than I bought them there, that I may get me some profit to feed me and my wife and my children.

## THE SHOEMAKER.

*Master.*—Shoemaker, what useful work do you do for us?...

*Shoemaker.*—I buy hides and fells, and by my craft I prepare them, and from them I make shoes of several kinds, slippers, and shoes, leather hose, and bottles, bridle-thongs, and trappings, and flasks, flagons, and purses, spur-leathers, and halters, bags, and sacks; and not one of you wishes to pass a winter without my craft.

THE REST.

*Master.*—Whom have we here?

*Pupil.*—I have smiths, iron-smiths, a goldsmith, a silversmith, a coppersmith, a carpenter, and many other craftsmen.

*Master.*—Have you a learned counsellor?

*Pupil.*—Truly I have. How can our fellowship be ruled without a man of wisdom?

*Master.*—Well, boy, what have you done to-day?

*Pupil.*—I have done many things. Last night, when I heard the tolling, I arose from my bed, and went to the church, and sang nocturns with the brethren, and morning lauds ... after that prime, and the seven psalms, with litanies, and chapter-mass, then terce and the mass of the day; after this we sang sext, and ate, and drank, and slept, and again we arose, and sang nones, and now here we are before you, ready to hear what you say to us.

*Master.*—When will you sing vespers or compline?

*Pupil.*—When it is time.

*Master.*—Were you threshed to-day?

*Pupil.*—Not I, for I behaved myself warily.

*Master.*—And how about your school-fellows?

*Pupil.*—Why do you ask me about that? I daren't tell you our secrets. Each one knows whether he was threshed or not.

*Master.*—What do you eat every day?

*Pupil.*—I still eat flesh-meat, because I am a child living under the rod.

*Master.*—What more do you eat?

*Pupil.*—Vegetables, and eggs, fish, and cheese, butter, and beans, and all clean things I eat, with great thankfulness.

*Master.*—Surely you are gluttonous, since you eat everything that is put before you.

*Pupil.*—I am not so greedy as to be able to eat all kinds of food at one meal.

*Master.*—How then?

*Pupil.*—Sometimes I eat some kinds of food, sometimes others, in moderation, as a monk should do, without greediness, because I am not a glutton.

*Master.*—And what do you drink?

*Pupil.*—Ale, if I have it, or water, if I have no ale.

*Master.*—Don't you drink wine?

*Pupil.*—I am not rich enough to be able to buy wine for myself: and wine is no drink for children or the foolish, but for those who are older and wiser.

*Master.*—Where do you sleep?

*Pupil.*—In the dormitory with the brethren.

*Master.*—Who wakes you for nocturns?

*Pupil.*—Sometimes I hear the tolling and arise, sometimes my master awakes me sternly with the rod.

*Master.*—My good children and agreeable pupils, your master bids you obey the divine teaching and that you behave yourselves well in every place. Go obediently when you hear the church bells into the church, and humbly bow before the holy altars, and stand reverently, and sing in time and tune, and pray for your sins, and go out thoughtfully to the cloister or the school.

**Source.**—*Anglo-Saxon Chronicle*. Translated by J. A. Giles. Bohn's Library.

ANNO 1016.—... Then befell it that King Ethelred died, before the ships [of the Danes] arrived. He ended his days on St. George's mass day, and he held his kingdom with great toil and under great difficulties, the while that his life lasted. And then, after his end, all the nobles who were in London, and the citizens, chose Edmund to be king: and he strenuously defended his kingdom the while that his time lasted. Then came the ships to Greenwich at Rogation days. And within a little space they went to London, and then dug a great ditch on the south side, and dragged their ships to the west side of the bridge; and then afterwards they ditched the city around, so that no one could go either in or out: and they repeatedly fought against the city; but the citizens strenuously withstood them. Then had the King Edmund, before that, gone out; and then he overran Wessex, and all the people submitted to him. And soon after that he fought against the army at Pen, near Gillingham. And a second battle he fought, after midsummer, at Sherston; and there much slaughter was made on either side, and the armies of themselves separated. In that battle was Edric the ealdorman, and Ælmer Darling, helping the army against King Edmund. And then gathered he his forces for the third time, and went to London, all north of Thames, and so out through Clayhanger; and relieved the citizens, and drove the army in flight to their ships. And then, two days after, the king went over to Brentford, and there fought against the army, and put them to flight: and there were many of the English drowned, from their own carelessness; they who went before the forces, and would take booty. And after that the king went into Wessex, and collected his forces. Then went the army, soon, to London, and beset the city around, and strongly fought against it, as well by water as by land. But the Almighty God delivered it.

101

The enemy went then, after that, from London, with their ships, into the Orwell, and there went up, and proceeded into Mercia, and destroyed and burnt whatsoever they overran, as is their wont, and provided themselves with food; and they conducted as well their ships as their droves into the Medway. Then King Edmund assembled, for the fourth time, all his forces, and went over the Thames at Brentford, and went into Kent; and the army fled before him, with their horses, into Sheppey: and the king slew as many of them as he could overtake. And Edric the ealdorman went then to meet the king at Aylesford: than which no measure could be more ill-advised.

The army then went again up into Essex, and passed into Mercia, and destroyed whatever it overran.

When the king learned that the army was upward, then assembled he, for the fifth time, all the English nation, and followed after them, and overtook them in Essex at the down which is called Assingdon; and there they strenuously joined battle. Then did Edric the ealdorman, as he had oft before, begin the flight first with the Maisevethians, and so betrayed his royal lord and the whole people of the English race. There Canute had the victory; and all the English nation fought against him. There was slain Bishop Ednoth [of Dorchester], and Abbot Wulsy, and Elfric the ealdorman, and Godwin the ealdorman of Lindsey, and Ulfkytel of East Anglia, and Ethelward, son of Ethelwine the ealdorman; and all the nobility of the English race was there destroyed.

102

Then, after this battle, went King Canute up with his army into Gloucestershire, where he learned that King Edmund was.

Then advised Edric the ealdorman, and the counsellors who were there, that the kings should be mutually reconciled. And they delivered hostages mutually; and the kings came together at Olney near Deerhurst, and then confirmed their friendship as well by pledge as by oath, and settled the tribute for the army. And they then separated with this reconciliation: and Edmund obtained Wessex, and Canute Mercia and the northern district. The army then went to their ships with the things they had taken. And the men of London made a truce with the army, and bought themselves peace: and the army brought their ships to London, and took up their winter quarters therein. Then, at St. Andrew's mass, died King Edmund; and his body lies at Glastonbury, with his grandfather Edgar....

ANNO 1017.—In this year King Canute obtained the whole realm of the English race, and divided it into four parts: Wessex to himself, and East Anglia to Thurkill, and Mercia to Edric, and Northumbria to Eric. And in this year was Edric the ealdorman slain in London, very justly, and Norman, son of Leofwin the ealdorman, and Ethelward, son of Ethelmar the Great, and Britric, son of Elphege, in Devonshire. And King Canute banished Edwy the Etheling, and afterwards commanded him to be slain, and Edwy, king of the Ceorls. And then, before the Kalends of August, the king commanded the widow of King Ethelred, Richard's daughter, to be fetched for his wife; that was Elfgive in English, Emma in French.



**Source.**—*Anglo-Saxon Rectitudines Singularum Personarum*. Thorpe, *Ancient Laws and Institutes of England*. Translated by W.

THEGN'S law is that he be worthy of his book-right: and that he do three things for his estate, fyrd-expedition, repair of fortress walls, and bridge-work. Also on many estates more land-duty arises at the king's behest; such is deer-hedge for royal demesne, and equipment for a war-ship, and seaward, and head-ward, and fyrd-ward, alms fee, and church-scot, and many other manifold things.

GENEAT'S duty is manifold according to the custom of the estate. On some he must furnish rent and a grass-swine every year, and must ride and carry, and lead loads, labour, and entertain his lord, and reap and mow, trim the deer-hedge, and keep it firm, build and hedge the burh, bring strange comers to the tun, pay church-scot and alms fee, keep watch by his lord, and horse-ward, go errands far or near, wherever he is ordered.

COTSETLA'S duty, according to the custom of the estate. On some he must every Monday of the year work for his lord, and 3 days every week at harvest, nor ought he to pay rent. It pertains to him to occupy 5 acres; more, if it be the custom on the estate; and it is too little, if it were any less in amount, since his work must be frequent. Let him pay his hearth-penny on Holy Thursday, as pertains to every freeman. And let him represent his lord's demesne if he is ordered, in seaward, and at the king's deer-hedge, and at such things as his position requires. And let him pay his church-scot at Martinmas.

GEBUR'S duties are manifold, in some places they are heavy, and in some places moderate. On some estates he must work at weekwork two days such work as is ordered for him every week of the year, and at harvest three days at week-work, and from Candlemas to Easter three. If he is carrying, he need not work while his horse is abroad. He must pay on Michaelmas day 10 rent-pennies, and on Martinmas day 24d., a sester of barley, and 2 hen-fowls; at Easter a young sheep or two pennies. And he must lie from Martinmas to Easter at the lord's fold, as often as it falls to his share. And from the time of the first ploughing until Martinmas he must every week plough 1 acre, and himself get the seed from the lord's barn. In addition to them 3 acres as a boon and 2 acres in return for hay; if he needs more hay, he must earn it by ploughing as he is allowed. He ploughs 3 acres as his rent-ploughing, and sows of his own barn, and pays his hearth-penny. Two and two feed one deerhound. And every gebur pays 6 loaves to the swineherd of the demesne when he drives his herd to mast-pasture. On the estate where this plan exists it pertains to the gebur that he is given for the stocking of his land 2 oxen and 1 cow and 6 sheep and 7 acres of sown land on his yard-land. And so after that year let him do all the duties that pertain to him, and let him be given tools for his work and utensils for his house. When he dies what he leaves pertains to the care of his lord.

This land-law exists on some estates. In some places it is, as I said before, heavier, and in some places lighter, since all land-customs are not alike. On some estates the gebur must pay honey-rent, on some food-rent, on some ale-rent. Let him who holds the office of steward take heed that he aye know what are the old land-customs and what the custom of the people.

To the BEE-KEEPER it pertains, if he hold a swarm by duty of rent, that he pay therefor according to the custom of the estate. With us the custom is that he pay 5 sesters of honey as rent; on some estates more rent is due. Sometimes also he must be ready for many labours at the lord's will, besides boon-ploughing, and boon-harvesting, and meadow-mowing, and if he be well landed he must be horsed, that he may supply it for the lord's horse-duty, or lead it himself, whichever he is ordered. And many things a man in such condition must do, all of which I cannot now enumerate. When he dies what he leaves pertains to his lord's care, except what may be free.

To the SWINEHERD paying pig-rent it pertains that he furnish his slaughter-beasts according to the custom of the estate. On many estates the custom is that he furnish every year 15 swine for sticking, 10 old and 5 young; let him have himself what more he rears. On many estates the swineherd's duty is heavier. And let the swineherd take care that after sticking them he prepare and singe well his slaughter-swine: then he is entitled to receive his due. And he must be, as I said above of the bee-keeper, always available for work between-times, and horsed for his lord's need. The swineherd who is a slave, and the bee-keeper who is a slave, after their death are worthy of the same law.

To the SWINEHERD who is a chattel, who keeps the demesne herd, pertains the sty-pig, and the pluck is his when he has prepared the fat bacon, besides the rights which pertain to slaves.

To a SLAVE-LABOURER pertain for food 12 pounds of good corn and 2 sheep's carcasses and one good cow for killing: rights of wood according to the custom of the estate.

To a SLAVE-WOMAN 8 pounds of corn for food, 1 sheep or 3 pennies for winter-food: 1 sester of beans for fast-food: in summer whey or 1 penny.

To all SLAVES pertain a Midwinter's feast, and an Easter feast, an acre for ploughing, and daily in harvest a handful of corn, besides their dues.

To a FOLLOWER it pertains that in 12 months he have 2 acres, one sown, the other unsown (let him sow it himself); and his food and shoes and gloves pertain to him: if he may earn more it is to his advantage.

To the SOWER pertains that he have of every kind of seed one basketful, when he has first sown all the seed well for a year.

The OXHERD may pasture 2 oxen or more with the lord's herd in the common leas, with the knowledge of his overseer. Let him have for his work shoes and gloves for himself; and his cow for killing may go with the lord's oxen.

To the COWHERD pertains that he have the milk of a grown cow for 7 nights after her calving, and

the beestings of a young cow 14 nights, and let his cow for killing go with the lord's cows.

The SHEPHERD'S due is that he have 12 nights' manure at Midwinter, and 1 lamb of a year's youth, and 1 bell-wether's fleece, and the milk of his herd for 7 nights after autumnal equinox, and a bowlful of whey or buttermilk all the summer.

To the GOATHERD pertains the milk of his herd after Martinmas Day, and before then his share of whey and 1 kid of a year's youth, if he care for his herd well.

To the CHEESEMAKER pertain a hundred cheeses and that she make butter for the lord's board of milk that has dropped from the cheese-press, and have for herself all the whey except the shepherd's share.

To the BARN-MAN pertains the fallen corn at the barn-door in harvest, if his overseer grant it him and he have earned it faithfully.

To the BEADLE it pertains that for his office he be freer of labour than other men, for he must be often available: and some piece of land pertains to him for his work.

To the WOODWARD pertains every tree felled by the wind.

To the HAYWARD it pertains that his work's reward be acknowledged along the boundary which lies by the meadow-lea, for he may expect, if he does not guard this, that men will blame him for the damage: also if he is given a piece of land, it shall by folk-right lie next the meadow, because if he slothfully neglect his lord's, his own is not well protected, if it be thus situate. But if he protect all well that he should guard, he is right well worth his pay. [This means that his land is to be the first to suffer by an incursion of the cattle due to his careless upkeep of the hedges.]

Estate-laws are manifold, as I said before, nor do we lay down as the rights over all places those which we before spoke of, but we proclaim what the custom is where it is known to us. If we learn better, we will gladly approve and hold by the folk-customs of the place where we then live: for a man must learn laws among the people gladly, if he does not want to lose honour among the people. Many are the rights of the folk. On some estates there pertain to the people winter-feast, Easter-feast, boon-feast for harvest, drinking-feast for ploughing, mowing-pay, rick-treat, at wood-carrying one tree from each cart, at corn-carrying rick-top-feast, and many things that I cannot enumerate. This is, however, the memorandum for a man's food, as well as all that I before this set forth.

## CANUTE'S LETTER FROM ROME (1027).

**Source.**—From William of Malmesbury's *Gesta Regum*, book ii., c. xi. Translated by J. A. Giles. Bohn's Library.

Canute, King of all England, Denmark, Norway, and parts of the Swedes, to Ethelnoth, Metropolitan, and Elfric, Archbishop of York, and to all bishops, nobles, and to the whole nation of the English high and low, health. I notify to you that I have lately been to Rome, to pray for the forgiveness of my sins; for the safety of my dominions, and of the people under my government. I had long since vowed such a journey to God, but, hitherto hindered by the affairs of my kingdom, and other causes preventing, I was unable to accomplish it sooner. I now return thanks most humbly to my Almighty God, for suffering me, in my lifetime, to approach the holy apostles Peter and Paul, and all the holy saints within and without the city of Rome, wherever I could discover them, and there present, to worship and adore according to my desire. I have been the more diligent in the performance of this, because I have learned from the wise that St. Peter the Apostle has received from God great power in binding and in loosing: that he carries the key of the kingdom of heaven; and consequently I have judged it a matter of special importance to seek his influence with God. Be it known to you that at the solemnity of Easter, a great assembly of nobles was present with Pope John and the Emperor Conrad, that is to say, all the princes of the nations from Mount Garganus<sup>[3]</sup> to the neighbouring sea.<sup>[4]</sup> All these received me with honour and presented me with magnificent gifts. But more especially was I honoured by the Emperor with various gifts and offerings in gold and silver vessels and mantles and costly garments. Moreover, I spoke with the Emperor himself and the sovereign Pope and the nobles who were there, concerning the wants of all my people, English as well as Danes; observing that there ought to be granted to them more equitable regulations, and greater security on their passage to Rome; that they should not be impeded by so many barriers on the road, nor harassed with unjust exactions. The Emperor assented to my request, as did Rodolph the King,<sup>[5]</sup> who has the chief dominion over those passes; and all the princes confirmed by an edict that my subjects, traders as well as those who went on a religious account, should peaceably go and return from Rome without any molestation from warders of passes or tax-gatherers. Again I complained before the Pope and expressed my high displeasure that my archbishops were oppressed by the immense sum of money which is demanded from them when seeking, according to custom, the apostolical see to receive the pall: and it was determined that it should be so no longer. Moreover, all things which I requested for the advantage of my kingdom from the sovereign Pope and the Emperor and King Rodolph and the other princes through whose territory our road to Rome runs, they have freely granted and confirmed by oath under the attestation of four archbishops and twenty bishops and an innumerable multitude of dukes and nobles who were present. Wherefore I give most hearty thanks to God Almighty for having successfully completed all that I had wished in the manner I had designed, and fully satisfied my intentions. Be it known, then, that since I have vowed to God himself henceforward to reform my life in all things, and justly and piously to govern the kingdoms and the people subject to me, and to maintain equal justice in all things; and have determined through God's assistance to rectify anything hitherto unjustly done, either through the intemperance of my youth or through negligence; therefore I call to witness and command my counsellors to whom I have entrusted the counsels of the kingdom that they by no means either through fear of myself or favour to any powerful person suffer henceforth any injustice, or cause such to be done in all my kingdom. Moreover I command all sheriffs or bailiffs throughout my whole kingdom, as they value my affection or their own safety not to commit injustice towards any man, rich or poor, but to allow all, noble and ignoble alike, to enjoy impartial law, from which they are never to deviate, either on account of royal favour, the person of any powerful man, or for the sake of amassing money for myself: for I have no need that money be accumulated for me by unjust exactions. Be it known to you therefore, that, returning by the same way that I went, I am now going to Denmark, through the advice of all the Danes, to make peace and firm treaty with those nations who were desirous, had it been possible, to deprive me both of life and of sovereignty: this, however, they were not able to perform, God, who by His kindness preserves me in my kingdom and in my honour and destroys the power of all my adversaries, bringing their strength to nought. Moreover, when I have established peace with the surrounding nations, and put all our sovereignty here in the East in tranquil order, so that there shall be no fear of war or enmity on any side, I intend coming to England, as early in the summer as I shall be able to get my fleet prepared. I have sent this letter before me in order that my people may rejoice at my prosperity; because, as you yourselves know, I have never spared, nor will I spare, either myself or my pains for the needful service of my whole people. I now therefore adjure all my bishops and governors throughout my kingdom by the fidelity they owe to God and me, to take care that before I come to England all dues owing by ancient custom [to the Church] be discharged; that is to say, the penny for every carucate ploughed, the tithe of the increase of your flocks and herds, the penny for St. Peter at Rome, whether from cities or villages, the tithe of corn in the middle of August, and the church-scot at the feast of St. Martin. If all these dues are not regularly paid, I shall on my return to England execute un pitying justice on the defaulter.

**Source.**—Translated in Elizabeth's reign by William Lambarde, *Perambulation of Kent*, p. 500, quoted by Hakluyt, *Principal Voyages*. For original, see Thorpe, *Ancient Laws and Institutes of England*.

It was some time in English laws, that the people and the laws were in reputation; and then were the wisest of the people worship-worthy, every one after his degree: Earle, and Churle, Thein, and under-Thein. And if a churle thrived so, that he had fully five hides of his owne land, a Church and a Kitchin, a Belhouse, and a gate, a seate, and a severall office in the kings hall, then was he thenceforth the Theins right worthy. And if a Thein so thrived, that he served the king, and on his message rid in his household, if he then had a Thein that followed him, the which to the kings journey five hides had, and in the kings seate his Lord served, and thrise with his errand had gone to the king, he might afterward with his foreoth his lords part play at any great neede. And if a Thein did thrive so, that he became an Earle; then was he afterward an Earles right worthie. And if a Marchant so thrived, that he passed thrise over the wide seas, of his owne craft, he was thenceforth a Theins right worthie. And if a scholar so prospered thorow learning that he degree had and served Christ, he was then afterward of dignitie and peace so much worthie, as thereunto belonged: unlesse he forfeited so, that he the use of his degree use ne might.

**Source.**—*Anglo-Saxon Chronicle*. Translated by J. A. Giles. Bohn's Library.

ANNO 1048 [really 1051].—In this year King Edward appointed Robert, of London, archbishop of Canterbury, during Lent. And in the same Lent he went to Rome after his pall: and the King gave the bishopric of London to Sparhafoc, Abbot of Abingdon; and the King gave the abbacy of Abingdon to bishop Rodulf, his kinsman. Then came the archbishop from Rome one day before St. Peter's mass-eve, and entered on his archiepiscopal see at Christ's Church on St. Peter's mass-day; and soon after went to the king. Then came abbot Sparhafoc to him with the king's writ and seal, in order that he should consecrate him bishop of London. Then the archbishop refused, and said that the pope had forbidden it him. Then went the abbot to the archbishop again for that purpose, and there desired episcopal ordination; and the archbishop constantly refused him, and said that the pope had forbidden it him. Then went the abbot to London and occupied the bishopric which the king before had granted him, with his full leave, all the summer and the harvest. And then came Eustace [Earl of Boulogne] from beyond the sea soon after the bishop, and went to the king, and spoke with him that which he then would, and went then homeward. When he came to Canterbury, east, then took he refreshment there, and his men, and went to Dover. When he was some mile or more on this side of Dover, then he put on his breast-plate, and so did all his companions, and went to Dover. When they came thither, then would they lodge themselves where they chose. Then came one of his men, and would abide in the house of an householder against his will, and wounded the householder; and the householder slew the other. Then Eustace got upon his horse, and his companions upon theirs; and they went to the householder, and slew him within his own dwelling; and they went up towards the town, and slew, as well within as without, more than twenty men. And the townsmen slew nineteen men on the other side, and wounded they knew not how many. And Eustace escaped with a few men, and went again to the king, and made known to him, in part, how they had fared. And the king became very wroth with the townsmen. And the king sent off Godwin, the earl, and bade him go into Kent in a hostile manner to Dover: for Eustace had made it appear to the King, that it had been more the fault of the townsmen than his: but it was not so. And the earl would not consent to the inroad, because he was loath to injure his own people. Then the king sent after all his council, and bade them come to Gloucester, nigh the aftermass of St. Mary. Then had the Frenchmen erected a castle in Herefordshire among the people of Sweyn the earl, and wrought every kind of harm and disgrace to the king's men thereabout which they could. Then came Godwin the earl, and Sweyn the earl, together at Beverstone, and many men with them, in order that they might go to their royal lord, and to all the peers who were assembled with him, in order that they might have the advice of the king and his aid, and of all this council, how they might avenge the king's disgrace, and the whole nation's. Then were the Frenchmen with the king beforehand, and accused the earls, so that they might not come within his eyes' sight; because they said that they were coming thither in order to betray the king. Thither had come Siward the earl [of Northumbria], and Leofric the earl [of Mercia], and much people with them, from the north, to the king; and it was made known to the earl Godwin and his sons, that the king and the men who were with him were taking counsel concerning them: and they arrayed themselves on the other hand resolutely, though it were loathful to them that they should stand against their royal lord. Then the peers on either side decreed that every kind of evil should cease: and the king gave the peace of God and his full friendship to either side. Then the king and his peers decreed that a council of all the nobles should be held for the second time in London at the harvest equinox; and the king directed the army to be called out, as well south of the Thames as north, all that was in any way most eminent. Then declared they Sweyn the earl an outlaw, and summoned Godwin the earl and Harold the earl, to the council, as quickly as they could effect it. When they had come thither, then were they summoned into the council. Then required he safe conduct and hostages, so that he might come, unbetraysed, into the council and out of the council. Then the king demanded all the thegns whom the earls before had; and they granted them all into his hands. Then the king sent again to them, and commanded them that they should come with twelve men to the king's council. Then the earl again required safe conduct and hostages, that he might defend himself against each of those things that were laid to him. Then were the hostages refused him; and he was allowed a safe conduct for five nights to go out of the land. And then Godwin the earl and Sweyn the earl went to Bosham, and shoved out their ships, and betook themselves beyond sea, and sought the protection of Baldwin [earl of Flanders], and abode there all the winter. And Harold the earl went west to Ireland, and was there all the winter with the king's protection. And soon after this happened, then put away the king the lady [Editha, Godwin's daughter] who had been consecrated his queen, and caused to be taken from her all which she possessed, in land, and in gold, and in silver, and in all things, and delivered her to his sister at Wherwell. And abbot Sparhafoc was then driven out of the bishopric of London, and William, the king's priest, was ordained thereto. And then Odda was appointed earl over Devonshire, and over Somerset, and over Dorset, and over the Welsh [Cornish]. And Algar, the son of Leofric the earl, was appointed to the earldom which Harold before held.

## CHARACTERISTICS OF THE ENGLISH BEFORE THE CONQUEST.

**Source.**—William of Malmesbury (died about 1142), *Gesta Regum*, book iii. Translated by J. A. Giles. Bohn's Library.

England had long since adopted the manners of the Angles which had been very various according to the times: for in the first years of their arrival, they were barbarians in their look and manners, warlike in their usages, heathens in their rites; but after embracing the faith of Christ, by degrees and in process of time, from the peace they enjoyed, regarding arms only in a secondary light, they gave their whole attention to religion. I say nothing of the poor, the meanness of whose fortune often restrains them from overstepping the bounds of justice: I omit men of ecclesiastical rank, whom sometimes respect to their profession, and sometimes the fear of shame, suffer not to deviate from the truth: I speak of princes, who from the greatness of their power might have full liberty to indulge in pleasure; some of whom in their own country, and others at Rome, changing their habit, obtained a heavenly kingdom and a saintly intercourse. Many during their whole lives in outward appearance only embraced the present world, in order that they might exhaust their treasures on the poor or divide them amongst monasteries. What shall I say of the multitudes of bishops, hermits, and abbots? Does not the whole island blaze with such numerous relics of its natives that you can scarcely pass a village of any consequence but you hear the name of some new saint, besides the numbers of whom all notices have perished through the want of records? Nevertheless, in process of time, the desire after literature and religion had decayed for several years before the arrival of the Normans. The clergy, contented with a very slight degree of learning, could scarcely stammer out the words of the Sacraments; and a person who understood grammar was an object of wonder and astonishment. The monks mocked the rule of their order by fine clothing, and the use of every kind of food. The nobility, given up to luxury and wantonness, went not to church in the morning after the manner of Christians, but merely in a careless manner heard mattins and masses from a hurrying priest in their chambers.... The commonalty, left unprotected, became a prey to the most powerful, who amassed fortunes by either seizing on their property or by selling their persons into foreign countries; although it be an innate quality of this people to be more inclined to revelling than to the accumulation of wealth.... Drinking in particular was a universal practice, in which occupation they passed entire nights as well as days. They consumed their whole substance in mean and despicable houses, unlike the Normans and French, who in noble and splendid mansions lived in frugality. The vices attendant on drunkenness, which enervate the human mind, followed; hence it arose that, engaging William more with rashness and precipitate fury than military skill, they doomed themselves and their country to slavery by one and that an easy victory. In fine, the English at that time wore short garments reaching to the mid-knee; they had their hair cropped, their beards shaven, their arms laden with golden bracelets, their skin adorned with punctured designs. They were accustomed to eat till they became surfeited, and to drink till they were sick. These latter qualities they imparted to their conquerors; as to the rest they adopted their manners. I would not, however, have these bad propensities universally ascribed to the English. I know that many of the clergy at that day trod the path of sanctity by a blameless life; I know that many of the laity of all ranks and conditions in this nation were pleasing to God. Be injustice far from this account; the accusation does not involve the whole indiscriminately.

## A NORMAN ACCOUNT OF THE BATTLE OF HASTINGS (1066).

**Source.**—William of Malmesbury (died about 1142), *Gesta Regum*, book iii. Translated by J. A. Giles. Bohn's Library.

The courageous leaders mutually prepared for battle, each according to his national custom. The English, as we have heard, passed the night without sleep, in drinking and singing, and, in the morning, proceeded without delay towards the enemy; all were on foot, armed with battle-axes, and covering themselves in front by the junction of their shields, they formed an impenetrable body, which would have secured their safety that day, had not the Normans, by a feigned flight, induced them to open their ranks, which till that time, according to their custom, were closely compacted. The king himself on foot, stood, with his brother, near the standard, in order that, while all shared equal danger, none might think of retreating. This standard William sent after the victory to the Pope; it was sumptuously embroidered, with gold and precious stones, in the form of a man fighting. On the other side, the Normans passed the whole night in confessing their sins, and received the Sacrament in the morning. Their infantry, with bows and arrows, formed the vanguard, while their cavalry divided into wings, were thrown back. The earl, with serene countenance, declaring aloud that God would favour his, as being the righteous side, called for his arms; and presently when, through the hurry of his attendants, he had put on his hauberk the hind part before, he corrected the mistake with a laugh, saying: "My dukedom shall be turned into a kingdom." Then beginning the song of Roland, that the warlike example of that man might stimulate the soldiers, and calling on God for assistance, the battle commenced on both sides. They fought with ardour, neither giving ground, for great part of the day. Finding this, William gave a signal to his party, that, by a feigned flight, they should retreat. Through this device the close body of the English, opening for the purpose of cutting down the straggling enemy, brought upon itself swift destruction; for the Normans, facing about, attacked them thus disordered, and compelled them to fly. In this manner, deceived by a stratagem, they met an honourable death in avenging their country; nor indeed were they at all wanting to their own revenge, as, by frequently making a stand, they slaughtered their pursuers in heaps: for, getting possession of an eminence, they drove down the Normans, when roused with indignation and anxiously striving to gain the higher ground, into the valley beneath, where easily hurling their javelins and rolling down stones on them as they stood below, they destroyed them to a man. Besides, by a short passage with which they were acquainted, avoiding a deep ditch, they trod underfoot such a multitude of their enemies in that place, that they made the hollow level with the plain by the heaps of carcasses. This vicissitude of first one party conquering, and then the other, prevailed as long as the life of Harold continued; but when he fell, his brain pierced by an arrow, the flight of the English ceased not until night. The valour of both leaders was here eminently conspicuous. Harold, not merely content with the duty of a general in exhorting others, diligently entered into every soldier-like office; often would he strike the enemy when coming to close quarters, so that none could approach him with impunity; for immediately the same blow levelled both horse and rider. Wherefore, as I have related, receiving the fatal arrow from a distance, he yielded to death. One of the soldiers with a sword gashed his thigh as he lay prostrate; for which shameful and cowardly action, he was branded with ignominy by William, and dismissed the service. William, too, was equally ready to encourage by his voice and by his presence; to be the first to rush forward; to attack the thickest of the foe. Thus everywhere raging, everywhere furious, he lost three choice horses, which were that day pierced under him. The dauntless spirit and vigour of the intrepid general, however, still persisted, though often called back by the kind remonstrance of his bodyguard; he still persisted, I say, till approaching night crowned him with complete victory. And no doubt the hand of God so protected him that the enemy should draw no blood from his person, though they aimed so many javelins at him. This was a fatal day to England, a melancholy havoc of our dear country, through its change of masters.

**Source.**—*Anglo-Saxon Chronicle*. Translated by J. A. Giles. Bohn's Library.

ANNO 1066.—In this year King Harold came from York to Westminster, at that Easter which was after the midwinter in which the king died.... Then was over all England such a token seen in the heavens as no man ever before saw. Some men said that it was Cometa the star, which some men call the haired star; and it appeared first on the eve Litania Major, the 8th before the Kalends of May, and so shone all the seven nights. And soon after came in Tostig the earl from beyond the sea into the Isle of Wight, with so great a fleet as he might procure; and there they yielded him as well money as food. And King Harold, his brother, gathered so great a ship force, and also a land force, as no king here in the land had before done; because it was made known to him that William the bastard would come hither and win this land; all as it afterwards happened. And the while, came Tostig the earl into Humber with sixty ships; and Edwin the earl came with a land force and drove him out. And the boatmen forsook him; and he went to Scotland with twelve vessels. And there met him Harold King of Norway with three hundred ships; and Tostig submitted to him and became his man. And they then went both into Humber until they came to York; and there fought against them Edwin the earl and Morcar the earl, his brother: but the Northmen had the victory. Then was it made known to Harold King of the Angles that this had thus happened: and this battle was on the vigil of St. Matthew. Then came Harold our king unawares on the Northmen, and met with them beyond York at Stamford Bridge with a great army of English people: and there during the day was a very severe fight on both sides. There was slain Harold the Fair-haired and Tostig the earl; and the Northmen who were there remaining were put to flight; and the English from behind hotly smote them, until they came, some, to their ships, some were drowned, and some also burnt; and thus in divers ways they perished, so that there were few left: and the English had possession of the place of carnage. The king then gave his protection to Olave, son of the king of the Norwegians, and to their bishop, and to the earl of Orkney, and to all those who were left in the ships: and they then went up to our king and swore oaths that they ever would observe peace and friendship towards this land; and the king let them go home with twenty-four ships. These two general battles were fought within five days. Then came William earl of Normandy into Pevensey, on the eve of St. Michael's mass [28 September]: and as soon as his men were fit, they constructed a castle at Hastings-port. This was then made known to King Harold, and he then gathered a great force, and came to meet him at the estuary of Appledore; and William came against him unawares, before his people were assembled. But the king nevertheless strenuously fought against him with those men who would follow him; and there was great slaughter made on either hand. There was slain King Harold, and Leofwine the earl, his brother, and Gyrrh the earl, his brother, and many good men; and the Frenchmen had possession of the place of carnage, all as God granted them for the people's sins. Archbishop Aldred and the townsmen of London would then have child Edgar for king, all as was his true natural right: and Edwin and Morcar vowed to him that they would fight together with him. But in that degree that it ought ever to have been forwarder, so was it from day to day later and worse; so that at the end all passed away. This fight was done on the day of Calixtus the pope. And William the earl went afterwards again to Hastings, and there awaited to see whether the people would submit to him. But when he understood that they would not come to him, he went upwards with all his army which was left to him, and that which afterwards had come to him from oversea; and he plundered all that part which he overran, until he came to Berkhamsted. And there came to meet him Archbishop Aldred [of York], and child Edgar, and Edwin the earl, and Morcar the earl, and all the chief men of London; and then submitted for need, when the most harm had been done: and it was very unwise that they had not done so before; since God would not better it, for our sins. And they delivered hostages and swore oaths to him; and he vowed to them that he would be a loving lord to them: and nevertheless, during this, they plundered all that they overran. Then on midwinter's day, Archbishop Aldred consecrated him king at Westminster; and he gave him a pledge upon Christ's book, and also swore, before he would set the crown upon his head, that he would govern this nation as well as any king before him had at the best done, if they would be faithful to him.



- I. "449."  
 1. CONTEMPORARY:—  
     Chronica Gallica, written up to 511.  
     Constantius: Life of St. Germanus, written about 480.  
 2. LATER:—  
     i. *British*: Gildas: Liber Querulus,<sup>[A]</sup> written between 540 and 560.  
         Nennius: Historia Brittonum,<sup>[A]</sup> written about 796.  
     ii. *English*: Bede: Historia Ecclesiastica,<sup>[A]</sup> finished 731.  
         The Anglo-Saxon Chronicle,<sup>[A]</sup> begun probably in Alfred's reign.
- II. 597-731.  
     Bede: Historia Ecclesiastica,<sup>[A]</sup> Life and Miracles of St. Cuthbert, Lives of the Holy Abbots of Wearmouth and Jarrow.  
     Eddius Stephanus: Life of Wilfrid, written soon after 710.  
     The Anglo-Saxon Chronicle.<sup>[A]</sup>  
     Laws, Land-bocs, etc.
- III. 731-1066. 120  
 1. CONTEMPORARY:—  
     The Anglo-Saxon Chronicle.<sup>[A]</sup>  
     Letters of Boniface and Alcuin.  
     Asser: Life of King Alfred.<sup>[A]</sup>  
     B., a Saxon priest: Life of Dunstan, written between 995 and 1006.  
     Anonymous: Life of Oswald, written between 995 and 1005.  
     Ethelweard: Chronicle,<sup>[A]</sup> written at the end of the tenth century.  
     Encomium Emmae, written about 1036.  
     Anonymous: Life of Edward the Confessor, nearly contemporary.  
     Laws, Land-bocs, etc.  
     The Bayeux Tapestry.  
 2. LATER:—  
     William of Malmesbury: Gesta Regum<sup>[A]</sup> and Gesta Pontificum, finished about 1142.  
     Florence of Worcester: Chronicle, written up to 1117.  
     Symeon of Durham: History of the Church of Durham, written soon after 1104, and History of the Kings, written later.  
     Henry of Huntingdon: History of the English,<sup>[A]</sup> written between 1130 and 1154.  
     Geoffrey Gaimar: Estorie des Engles, written before 1147.  
     Heimskringla Saga: Icelandic, put into shape at the end of the eleventh century.  
     Roger de Hoveden: Annals,<sup>[A]</sup> written about 1200.

These are all written in Latin, except the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle, Laws and some Land-bocs in Anglo-Saxon, Gaimar in French, Heimskringla in Icelandic.

BILLING AND SONS, LTD., PRINTERS, GUILDFORD

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- [1.](#) The eclipse happened December 25, 828.
- [2.](#) Meaning either feathered, or, belonging to the Great St. Bernard Pass in the Pennine Alps, over which the writer had probably passed on a journey to Rome.
- [3.](#) In Apulia.
- [4.](#) The Tyrrhene Sea.
- [5.](#) Of Burgundy.
- [A.](#) Translations of these works are published in Bohn's Library (Messrs. G. Bell and Sons).

Printed	Corrected	Page	
499	449	<a href="#">vii</a>	"499."
unlucky,	unlucky.	<a href="#">3</a>	nothing was ever so unlucky.
‘I	“I	<a href="#">83</a>	“I thank thee, O most High

A number of spelling irregularities have been retained as-is from the printed version.

\*\*\* END OF THE PROJECT GUTENBERG EBOOK THE WELDING OF THE RACE ("449"-1066) \*\*\*

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