to touch any thing, all these figures appeared to rush forward and repel such presumption. Alarmed at this, Gerbert repressed his inclination: but not so the servant. He endeavoured to snatch off from a table, a knife of admirable workmanship; supposing that in a booty of such magnitude, so small a theft could hardly be discovered. In an instant, the figures all starting up with loud clamour, the boy let fly his arrow at the carbuncle, and in a moment all was in darkness; and if the servant had not, by the advice of his master, made the utmost despatch in throwing back the knife, they would have both suffered severely. In this manner, their boundless avarice unsatiated, they departed, the lantern directing their steps. That he performed such things by unlawful devices is the generally received opinion. Yet, however, if any one diligently investigate the truth, he will see that even Solomon, to whom God himself had given wisdom, was not ignorant of these arts: for, as Josephus relates,* he, in conjunction with his father, buried vast treasures in coffers, which were hidden, as he says, in a kind of necromantic manner, under ground: neither was Hyrcanus, celebrated for his skill in prophecy and his valour; who, to ward off the distress of a siege, dug up, by the same art, three thousand talents of gold from the sepulchre of David, and gave part of them to the besiegers; with the remainder building an hospital for the reception of strangers. But Herod, who would make an attempt of the same kind, with more presumption than knowledge, lost in consequence many of his attendants, by an eruption of internal fire. Besides, when I hear the Lord Jesus saying, "My father worketh hitherto, and I work;" I believe, that He, who gave to Solomon power over demons to such a degree, as the same historian declares, that he relates there were men, even in his time, who could eject them from persons possessed, by applying to the nostrils of the patient a ring having the impression pointed out by Solomon: I believe, I say, that he could give, also, the same science to this man: but I do not affirm that he did give it.

But leaving these matters to my readers, I shall relate what I recollect having heard, when I was a boy, from a certain monk of our house, a native of Aquitaine, a man in

* Josephus Antiq. Jud. i. vii. c. 15. viii. 2.
years, and a physician by profession. "When I was seven years old," said he, "despising the mean circumstances of my father, a poor citizen of Barcelona, I surmounted the snowy Alps, and went into Italy. There, as was to be expected in a boy of that age, having to seek my daily bread in great distress, I paid more attention to the food of my mind than of my body. As I grew up I eagerly viewed many of the wonders of that country and impressed them on my memory. Among others I saw a perforated mountain, beyond which the inhabitants supposed the treasures of Octavian were hidden. Many persons were reported to have entered into these caverns for the purpose of exploring them, and to have there perished, being bewildered by the intricacy of the ways. But, as hardly any apprehension can restrain avaricious minds from their intent, I, with my companions, about twelve in number, meditated an expedition of this nature, either for the sake of plunder, or through curiosity. Imitating therefore the ingenuity of Daedalus, who brought Theseus out of the labyrinth by a conducting clue, we, also carrying a large ball of thread, fixed a small post at the entrance. Tying the end of the thread to it, and lighting lanterns, lest darkness, as well as intricacy, should obstruct us, we unrolled the clue; and fixing a post at every mile, we proceeded on our journey along the caverns of the mountain, in the best manner we were able. Every thing was dark, and full of horrors; the bats, flitting from holes, assailed our eyes and faces: the path was narrow, and made dreadful on the left-hand by a precipice, with a river flowing beneath it. We saw the way strewn with bare bones: we wept over the carcasses of men yet in a state of putrefaction, who, induced by hopes similar to our own, had in vain attempted, after their entrance, to return. After some time, however, and many alarms, arriving at the farther outlet, we beheld a lake of softly murmuring waters, where the wave came gently rolling to the shores. A bridge of brass united the opposite banks. Beyond the bridge were seen golden horses of great size, mounted by golden riders, and all those other things which are related of Gerbert. The mid-day beams of Phoebus darting upon them, with redoubled splendour, dazzled the eyes of the beholders. Seeing these things at a distance, we should have been delighted with a nearer view,
meaning, if fate would permit, to carry off some portion of the precious metal. Animating each other in turn, we prepared to pass over the lake. All our efforts, however, were vain: for as soon as one of the company, more forward than the rest, had put his foot on the hither edge of the bridge, immediately, wonderful to hear, it became depressed, and the farther edge was elevated, bringing forward a rustic of brass with a brazen club, with which, dashing the waters, he so clouded the air, as completely to obscure both the day and the heavens. The moment the foot was withdrawn, peace was restored. The same was tried by many of us, with exactly the same result. Despairing, then, of getting over, we stood there some little time; and, as long as we could, at least glutted our eyes with the gold. Soon after returning by the guidance of the thread, we found a silver dish, which being cut in pieces and distributed in morsels only irritated the thirst of our avidity without allaying it. Consulting together the next day, we went to a professor, of that time, who was said to know the unutterable name of God. When questioned, he did not deny his knowledge, adding, that, so great was the power of that name, that no magic, no witchcraft could resist it. Hiring him at a great price, fasting and confessed, he led us, prepared in the same manner, to a fountain. Taking up some water from it in a silver vessel, he silently traced the letters with his fingers, until we understood by our eyes, what was unutterable with our tongues. We then went confidently to the mountain, but we found the farther outlet beset, as I believe, with devils, hating, forsooth, the name of God because it was able to destroy their inventions. In the morning a Jew-necromancer came to me, excited by the report of our attempt; and, having inquired into the matter, when he heard of our want of enterprise, "You shall see," said he, venting his spleen with loud laughter, "how far the power of my art can prevail." And immediately entering the mountain, he soon after came out again, bringing, as a proof of his having passed the lake, many things which I had noted beyond it: indeed some of that most precious dust, which turned every thing that it touched into gold: not that it was really so, but only retained this appearance until washed with water; for nothing effected by necromancy can, when put into water, deceive the sight.
of the beholders. The truth of my assertion is confirmed by a circumstance which happened about the same time.

"There were in a public street leading to Rome, two old women, the most drunken and filthy beings that can be conceived; both living in the same hut, and both practising witchcraft. If any lone stranger happened to come in their way, they used to make him appear either a horse, or a sow, or some other animal; expose him for sale to dealers, and glutonize with the money. By chance, on a certain night, taking in a lad to lodge who got his livelihood by stage-dancing, they turned him into an ass: and so possessed a creature extremely advantageous to their interests, who caught the eyes of such as passed by the strangeness of his postures. In whatever mode the old woman commanded, the ass began to dance, for he retained his understanding, though he had lost the power of speech. In this manner the women had accumulated much money; for there was, daily, a large concourse of people, from all parts, to see the tricks of the ass. The report of this induced a rich neighbour to purchase the quadruped for a considerable sum; and he was warned, that, if he would have him as a constant dancer, he must keep him from water. The person who had charge of him rigidly fulfilled his orders. A long time elapsed; the ass sometimes gratified his master by his reeling motions, and sometimes entertained his friends with his tricks. But, however, as in time all things surfeit, he began at length to be less cautiously observed. In consequence of this negligence, breaking his halter, he got loose, plunged into a pool hard by, and rolling for a long time in the water, recovered his human form. The keeper, inquiring of all he met, and pursuing him by the track of his feet, asked him if he had seen an ass; he replied that himself had been an ass, but was now a man: and related the whole transaction. The servant astonished told it to his master, and the master to pope Leo, the holiest man in our times. The old women were convicted, and confessed the fact. The pope doubting this, was assured by Peter Damian, a learned man, that it was not wonderful that such things should be done: he produced the example of Simon Magus," who caused Faustini-

* In the Fabulous Itinerary of St. Peter, falsely attributed to Clemens Romanus, Simon is represented as causing Faustinius to assume his
anus to assume the figure of Simon, and to become an object
of terror to his sons, and thus rendered his holiness better
skilled in such matters for the future."

I have inserted this narrative of the Aquitanian to the in-
tent that what is reported of Gerbert should not seem
wonderful to any person; which is, that he cast, for his own
purposes, the head of a statue, by a certain inspection of the
stars when all the planets were about to begin their courses,
which spake not unless spoken to, but then pronounced the
truth, either in the affirmative or negative. For instance,
when Gerbert would say, "Shall I be pope?" the statute
would reply, "Yes." "Am I to die, ere I sing mass at
Jerusalem?" "No." They relate, that he was so much
deceived by this ambiguity, that he thought nothing of
repentance: for when would he think of going to Jerusalem,
to accelerate his own death? Nor did he foresee that at Rome
there is a church called Jerusalem, that is, "the vision of
peace," because whoever flies thither finds safety, whatsoever
crime he may be guilty of. We have heard, that this was
called an asylum in the very infancy of the city, because
Romulus, to increase the number of his subjects, had ap-
pointed it to be a refuge for the guilty of every description.
The pope sings mass there on three Sundays, which are
called "The station at Jerusalem." Wherefore upon one of
those days Gerbert, preparing himself for mass, was suddenly
struck with sickness; which increased so that he took to his
bed: and consulting his statue, he became convinced of his
delusion and of his approaching death. Calling, therefore,
the cardinals together, he lamented his crimes for a long
space of time. They, being struck with sudden fear were
unable to make any reply, whereupon he began to rave, and
losing his reason through excess of pain, commanded him-
self to be maimed, and cast forth piecemeal, saying, "Let
him have the service of my limbs, who before sought their
homage; for my mind never consented to that abominable
oath."

And since I have wandered from my subject, I think it
may not be unpleasant to relate what took place in Saxony
countenance, by rubbing his face with a medicated unguent, to the great
alarm of his sons, who mistook him for Simon, and fled until recalled by
St. Peter.
in the time of this king, in the year of our Lord 1012, and is not so generally known. It is better to dilate on such matters than to dwell on Ethelred's indolence and calamities: and it will be more pleasing certainly, and nearer the truth, if I subjoin it in the original language of the person who was a sufferer, than if I had clothed it in my own words. Besides, I think it ornamental to a work, that the style should be occasionally varied.

"I Ethelbert, a sinner, even were I desirous of concealing the divine judgment which overtook me, yet the tremor of my limbs would betray me; wherefore I shall relate circumstantially how this happened, that all may know the heavy punishment due to disobedience. We were, on the eve of our Lord's nativity, in a certain town of Saxony, in which was the church of Magnus the martyr, and a priest named Robert had begun the first mass. I was in the churchyard with eighteen companions, fifteen men and three women, dancing, and singing profane songs to such a degree that I interrupted the priest, and our voices resounded amid the sacred solemnity of the mass. Wherefore, having commanded us to be silent, and not being attended to, he cursed us in the following words, 'May it please God and St. Magnus, that you may remain singing in that manner for a whole year.' His words had their effect. The son of John the priest seized his sister who was singing with us, by the arm, and immediately tore it from her body; but not a drop of blood flowed out. She also remained a whole year with us, dancing and singing. The rain fell not upon us; nor did cold, nor heat, nor hunger, nor thirst, nor fatigue assail us: we neither wore our clothes nor shoes, but we kept on singing as though we had been insane. First we sank into the ground up to our knees: next to our thighs; a covering was at length, by the permission of God, built over us to keep off the rain. When a year had elapsed, Herbert, bishop of the city of Cologne, released us from the tie wherewith our hands were bound, and reconciled us before the altar of St. Magnus. The daughter of the priest, with the other two women, died immediately; the rest of us slept three whole days and nights: some died afterwards, and are famed for miracles: the remainder betray their punishment by the trembling of

* Other MSS. read Ohtert.
their limbs. This narrative was given to us by the lord Peregrine, the successor of Herbert, in the year of our Lord 1013."

In that city, which formerly was called Agrippina, from Agrippa the son-in-law of Augustus, but afterwards named Colonia by the emperor Trajan, because being there created emperor he founded in it a colony of Roman citizens; in this city, I repeat, there was a certain bishop, famed for piety, though to a degree hideous in his person; of whom I shall relate one miracle, which he predicted when dying, after having first recorded what a singular chance elevated him to such an eminent station. The emperor of that country going to hunt on Quinquagesima Sunday, came alone, for his companions were dispersed, to the edge of a wood, where this rural priest, deformed and almost a monster, had a church. The emperor, feigning himself a soldier, humbly begs a mass, which the priest immediately begins. The other in the meantime was revolving in his mind why God, from whom all beautiful things proceed, should suffer so deformed a man to administer his sacraments. Presently, when that verse in the tract occurred, "Know ye that the Lord himself is God," the priest looked behind him, to chide the inattention of an assistant, and said with a louder voice, as if in reply to the emperor's thoughts, "He made us; and not we ourselves." Struck with this expression, the emperor esteeming him a prophet, exalted him, though unwilling and reluctant, to the archbishopric of Cologne, which, when he had once assumed, he dignified by his exemplary conduct; kindly encouraging those who did well, and branding with the stigma of excommunication such as did otherwise, without respect of persons. The inhabitants of that place proclaim a multitude of his impartial acts; one of which the reader will peruse in that abbreviated form which my work requires. In a monastery of nuns in that city, there was a certain virgin who had there grown up, more by the kindness of her parents than through any innate wish for a holy life: this girl, by the attraction of her beauty and her affable language to all, allured many lovers; but while others, through fear of God or the censure of the world, restrained their desires, there was one who, excited to wantonness by the extent of his wealth and the nobility of his descent,
broke through the bounds of law and of justice, and de-
spoiled her of her virginity; and carrying her off kept her
as his lawful wife. Much time elapsed while the abbess en-
treated, and his friends admonished him not to persevere in
so dreadful a crime. Turning a deaf ear, however, to his
advisers, he continued as immovable as a rock. By chance
at this time the prelate was absent, occupied in business at
Rome; but on his return the circumstance was related to
him. He commands the sheep to be returned to the fold
directly; and after much altercation the woman was restored
to the monastery. Not long after, watching an opportunity
when the bishop was absent, she was again carried away.
Excommunication was then denounced against the delinquent,
so that no person could speak to, or associate with him.
This, however, he held in contempt, and retired to one of his
estates afar off, not to put the command in force, but to elude
its power: and there, a turbulent and powerful man, he lived
in company with his excommunicated paramour. But when it
pleased God to take the bishop to himself, and he was lying
in extreme bodily pain upon his bed, the neighbours flocked
around him that they might partake the final benediction of
this holy man. The offender alone not daring to appear,
prevailed on some persons to speak for him. The moment
the bishop heard his name he groaned, and then, I add his
very words, spoke to the following effect, "If that wretched
man shall desert that accursed woman, he shall be absolved;
but if he persist, let him be ready to give account before
God, the following year, at the very day and hour on which
I shall depart: moreover, you will see me expire when the
bell shall proclaim the sixth hour." Nor were his words
vain; for he departed at the time which he had predicted;
and the other, together with his mistress, at the expiration
of the year, on the same day, and at the same hour, was
killed by a stroke of lightning.

But king Ethelred, after the martyrdom of Elphege, as we
have related, gave his see to a bishop named Living.* Moreover, Turkill, the Dane, who had been the chief cause of the
archbishop's murder, had settled in England, and held the
East Angles in subjection. For the other Danes, exacting

* "Living, formerly called Elftan, was translated from Wells to
Canterbury in the year 1013; he died, 12th June, 1030."—Hardy.
from the English a tribute of eight thousand pounds, had distributed themselves, as best suited their convenience, in the towns, or in the country; and fifteen of their ships, with the crews, had entered into the king's service. In the meantime Thurkill sent messengers to Sweyn, king of Denmark, inviting him to come to England; telling him that the land was rich and fertile, but the king a driveller; and that, wholly given up to wine and women, his last thoughts were those of war: that in consequence he was hateful to his own people and contemptible to foreigners: that the commanders were jealous of each other, the people weak, and that they would fly the field, the moment the onset was sounded.

Sweyn* was naturally cruel, nor did he require much persuasion; preparing his ships, therefore, he hastened his voyage. Sandwich was the port he made, principally designating to avenge his sister Gunhilda. This woman, who possessed considerable beauty, had come over to England with her husband Palling, a powerful nobleman, and by embracing Christianity, had made herself a pledge of the Danish peace. In his ill-fated fury, Edric had commanded her, though proclaiming that the shedding her blood would bring great evil on the whole kingdom, to be beheaded with the other Danes. She bore her death with fortitude; and she neither turned pale at the moment, nor, when dead, and her blood exhausted, did she lose her beauty; her husband was murdered before her face, and her son, a youth of amiable disposition, was transfixed with four spears. Sweyn then proceeding through East Anglia against the Northumbrians, received their submission without resistance: not indeed, that the native ardour of their minds, which brooked no master, had grown cool, but because Utred, their prince, was the first to give example of desertion. On their submission all the other people who inhabit England on the north, gave him tribute and hostages. Coming southward, he compelled those of Oxford and Winchester, to obey his commands; the Londoners alone, protecting their lawful sovereign within their walls, shut their

* Malmesbury seems to have fallen into some confusion here. The murder of the Danes took place on St. Brice's day, A.D. 1002, and accordingly we find Sweyn infesting England in 1003, and the following year (see Saxon Chronicle): but this his second arrival took place, A.D. 1013: so that the avenging the murder of his sister Gunhilda could hardly be the object of his present attack.
gates against him. The Danes, on the other hand, assailing with greater ferocity, nurtured their fortitude with the hope of fame; the townsmen were ready to rush on death for freedom, thinking they ought never to be forgiven, should they desert their king, who had committed his life to their charge. While the conflict was raging fiercely on either side, victory befriended the juster cause; for the citizens made wonderful exertions, every one esteeming it glorious to show his unwearied alacrity to his prince, or even to die for him. Part of the enemy were destroyed, and part drowned in the river Thames, because in their headlong fury, they had not sought a bridge. With his shattered army Swelyn retreated to Bath, where Ethelmer, governor of the western district, with his followers, submitted to him. And, although all England was already bending to his dominion, yet not even now would the Londoners have yielded, had not Ethelred withdrawn his presence from among them. For being a man given up to indulgence, and, through consciousness of his own misdeeds, supposing none could be faithful to him, and at the same time wishing to escape the difficulties of a battle and a siege, he by his departure left them to their own exertions. However, they applied the best remedy they could to their exigencies, and surrendered after the example of their countrymen. They were men laudable in the extreme, and such as Mars himself would not have disdained to encounter, had they possessed a competent leader. Even while they were supported by the mere shadow of one, they risked every chance of battle, nay even a siege of several months' continuance. He in the meantime giving fresh instance of his constitutional indolence, fled from the city, and by secret journeys came to Southampton, whence he passed over to the Isle of Wight. Here he addressed those abbots and bishops who, even in such difficulties, could not bring themselves to desert their master, to the following effect: "That they must perceive in what dreadful state his affairs, and those of his family were; that he was banished from his paternal throne by the treachery of his generals, and that he, in whose hands their safety was formerly vested, now required the assistance of others; that though lately a monarch and a potentate, he was now an outcast and a fugitive; a melancholy change for him, because it certainly is more toler-
able never to have had power, than to have lost it when possessed; and more especially disgraceful to the English, as this instance of deserting their prince would be noised throughout the world; that through mere regard to him they had exposed their houses and property to plunderers, and, unprovided, taken to a voluntary flight; food was matter of difficulty to all; many had not even clothing; he commended their fidelity indeed, but still could find no security from it; the country was now so completely subdued, the coast so narrowly watched, that there was no escape unattended with danger: that they should, therefore, confer together, what was to be done: were they to remain, greater peril was to be apprehended from their countrymen, than from their enemies, for perhaps they might purchase the favour of their new master by joining to distress them; and certainly to be killed by an enemy was to be ascribed to fortune, to be betrayed by a fellow citizen was to be attributed to want of exertion; were they to fly to distant nations, it would be with the loss of honour; if to those who knew them, the dread would be, lest their dispositions should take a tinge from their reverse of fortune; for many great and illustrious men had been killed on similar occasions; but, however, he must make the experiment, and sound the inclinations of Richard, duke of Normandy, who, if he should kindly receive his sister and nephews, might probably not unwillingly afford him his protection. His favour shown to my wife and children,” continued he, “will be the pledge of my own security. Should he oppose me, I am confident, nay fully confident, I shall not want spirit to die here with honour, in preference to living there with ignominy. Wherefore this very month of August, while milder gales are soothing the ocean, let Emma make a voyage to her brother, and take our children, our common pledges, to be deposited with him. Let their companions be the bishop of Durham and the abbat of Peterborough; I myself will remain here till Christmas, and should he send back a favourable answer, I will follow directly.”

On the breaking up of the conference, all obeyed; they set sail for Normandy, while he remained anxiously expecting a favourable report. Shortly after he learned from abroad, that Richard had received his sister with great affection, and
that he invited the king also to condescend to become his inmate. Ethelred, therefore, going into Normandy, in the month of January, felt his distresses soothed by the attentions of his host. This Richard was son of Richard the first, and equalled his father in good fortune and good qualities; though he certainly surpassed him in heavenly concerns. He completed the monastery at Feschamp, which his father had begun. He was more intent on prayer and temperance, than you would require in any monk, or hermit. He was humble to excess, in order that he might subdue by his patience, the petulance of those who attacked him. Moreover it is reported, that at night, secretly escaping the observation of his servants, he was accustomed to go unattended to the matins* of the monks, and to continue in prayer till day-light. Intent on this practice, one night in particular, at Feschamp, he was earlier than customary; and finding the door shut, he forced it open with unusual violence, and disturbed the sleep of the sacristan. He, astonished at the noise of a person knocking in the dead of night, got up, that he might see the author of so bold a deed; and finding only a countryman in appearance, clothed in rustic garb, he could not refrain from laying hands on him; and, moved with vehement indignation, he caught hold of his hair, and gave this illustrious man a number of severe blows, which he bore with incredible patience, and without uttering a syllable. The next day, Richard laid his complaint before the chapter,† and with counterfeited anger, summoned the monk to meet him at the town of Argens, threatening that, "he would take such vengeance for the injury, so that all France should talk of it." On the day appointed, while the monk stood by, almost dead with fear, he detailed the matter to the nobility, largely exaggerating the enormity of the transaction, and keeping the culprit in suspense, by crafty objections to what he urged in mitigation. Finally, after he had been mercifully judged by the nobility, he pardoned him; and to make his forgiveness more acceptable, he annexed all that town, with its appurtenances, reported to be abundant in the best wine, to the office of this sacristan: saying, "That he was an admirable monk, who

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* Matins were sometimes performed shortly after midnight.
† It was customary to hold a chapter immediately after primes.
properly observed his appointed charge, and did not break silence, though roused with anger. In the twenty-eighth year of his dukedom, he died, having ordered his body to be buried at the door of the church, where it would be subjected to the feet of such as passed by, and to the spouts of water which streamed from above. In our time, however, William, third abbat of that place, regarding this as disgraceful, removed the long-continued reproach, and taking up the body, placed it before the high altar. He had a brother, Robert, whom he made archbishop of Rouen, though by this he tarnished his reputation. For he, cruelly abusing this honour, at first, committed many crimes and many atrocious acts; but growing in years, he certainly wiped off some of them by his very liberal almsgiving. After Richard, his son of the same name obtained the principality, but lived scarcely a year. A vague opinion indeed has prevailed, that, by the connivance of his brother Robert, whom Richard the second begat on Judith, daughter of Conan, earl of Brittany, a certain woman, skilled in poisons, took the young man off. In atonement for his privity to this transaction he departed for Jerusalem, after the seventh year of his earldom; venturing on an undertaking very meritorious at that time, by commencing, with few followers, a journey, exposed to incursions of barbarians, and strange, by reason of the customs of the Saracens. He persevered nevertheless, and did not stop, but safely completed the whole distance, and purchasing admission at a high price, with bare feet, and full of tears, he worshipped at that glory of the Christians, the sepulchre of our Lord. Conciliating the favour of God, as we believe, by this labour, on his return homewards he ended his days at Nice, a city of Bithynia; cut off, as it is said, by poison. This was administered by his servant Ralph, surnamed Mowin, who had wrought himself up to the commission of this crime, from a hope of obtaining the dukedom. But on his return to Normandy, the matter becoming known to all, he was detested as a monster, and retired to perpetual exile. To Robert succeeded William, his son, then a child, of whom as I shall have to speak hereafter, I shall now return to my narrative.

In the meantime Sweyn, as I have before related, oppressed England with rapine and with slaughter: the in-
habitants were first plundered of their property, and then proscribed. In every city it was matter of doubt what should be done: if revolt was determined on, they had none to take the lead; if submission was made choice of, they would have a harsh ruler to deal with. Thus their public and private property, together with their hostages, was carried to the fleet; as he was not a lawful sovereign, but a most cruel tyrant. The Deity, however, was too kind to permit England to fluctuate long in such keen distress, for the invader died shortly after, on the purification of St. Mary,* though it is uncertain by what death. It is reported, that while devastating the possessions of St. Edmund,† king and martyr, he appeared to him in a vision, and gently addressed him on the misery of his people; that on Sweyn’s replying insolently, he struck him on the head; and that, in consequence of the blow, he died, as has been said, immediately after. The Danes then elected Canute, the son of Sweyn, king; while the Angles, declaring that their natural sovereign was dearer to them, if he could conduct himself more royally than he had hitherto done, sent for king Ethelred out of Normandy. He despatched Edward, his son, first, to sound the fidelity of the higher orders and the inclination of the people, on the spot; who, when he saw the wishes of all tending in his favour, went back in full confidence for his father. The king returned, and, being flattered by the joyful plaudits of the Angles, that he might appear to have shaken off his constitutional indolence, he hastened to collect an army against Canute, who was at that time in Lindsey, where his father had left him with the ships and hostages, and was levying fresh troops and horses, that, mustering a sufficient force, he might make a vigorous attack upon his enemies unprepared: vowing most severe vengeance, as he used to say, on the deserters. But, circumvented by a contrivance similar to his own, he retreated. Escaping at that time with much difficulty, and putting to sea with his remaining forces, he coasted the British ocean from east to south, and landed at Sandwich. Here, setting all divine and human laws at defiance, he mutilated his hostages, who were young men of great nobility and elegance, by depriving them

* Sweyn died Feb. 3, a.d. 1014.
† The monastery of St. Edmundbury.
of their ears, and nostrils, and some even of their manhood. Thus tyrannizing over the innocent, and boasting of the feat, he returned to his own country. In the same year the sea-flood, which the Greeks call Euripus, and we Leda,* rose to so wonderful a height, that none like it was recollected in the memory of man, for it overflowed the villages, and destroyed their inhabitants, for many miles.

The year following a grand council of Danes and English was assembled at Oxford, where the king commanded two of the noblest Danes, Sigefurth, and Morcar, accused of treachery to him by the impeachment of the traitor Edric, to be put to death. He had lured them, by his soothing expressions, into a chamber, and deprived them, when drunk to excess, of their lives, by his attendants who had been prepared for that purpose. The cause of their murder was said to be, his unjustifiable desire for their property. Their dependants, attempting to revenge the death of their lords by arms, were worsted, and driven into the tower of St. Frideswide's church at Oxford, where, as they could not be dislodged, they were consumed by fire; however, shortly after, the foul stain was wiped out by the king's penitence, and the sacred place repaired. I have read the history of this transaction, which is deposited in the archives of that church. The wife of Sigefurth, a woman remarkable for her rank and beauty, was carried prisoner to Malmesbury; on which account, Edmund, the king's son, dissembling his intention, took a journey into those parts. Seeing her, he became enamoured; and becoming enamoured, he made her his wife; cautiously keeping their union secret from his father, who was as much an object of contempt to his family as to strangers. This Edmund was not born of Emma, but of some other person, whom fame has left in obscurity. With that exception, he was a young man in every respect of noble disposition; of great strength both of mind and person, and, on this account, by the English, called "Ironside:" he would have shrouded the indolence of his father, and the meanness of his mother, by his own conspicuous virtue, could the fates have spared him. Soon after, at the instigation of his wife, he asked of his father the

* He here considers Leda to imply the spring tide; but others say it means the neap, and express the former by Malina. See Du Cange.
possessions of Sigesferth, which were of large extent among the Northumbrians, but could not obtain them; by his own exertions, however, he procured them at last, the inhabitants of that province willingly submitting to his power.

The same summer Canute, having settled his affairs in Denmark, and entered into alliance with the neighbouring kings, came to England, determined to subdue it or perish in the attempt. Proceeding from Sandwich into Kent, and thence into West Saxony, he laid every thing waste with fire and slaughter, while the king was lying sick at Cosham.* Edmund indeed attempted to oppose him, but being thwarted by Edric, he placed his forces in a secure situation. Edric, however, thinking it unnecessary longer to dissemble, but that he might, now, openly throw off the mask, revolted to Canute with forty ships, and all West Saxony following his example, delivered hostages, and gave up their arms. Yet the Mercians repeatedly assembling stood forward to resist: and if the king would but come, and command whither they were to march, and bring with him the leading men of London, they were ready to shed their blood for their country. But he, accustomed to commit his safety to fortifications, and not to attack the enemy, remained in London; never venturing out, for fear, as he said, of traitors. On the contrary, Canute was gaining towns and villages over to his party; and was never unemployed; for he held consultations by night, and fought battles by day. Edmund, after long deliberation, esteeming it best, in such an emergency, to recover, if possible, the revolted cities by arms, brought over Utric, an earl, on the other side of the Humber, to the same sentiments. They imagined too, that such cities as were yet doubtful which side to take, would determine at once, if they would only inflict signal vengeance on those which had revolted. But Canute, possessed of equal penetration, circumvented them by a similiar contrivance. Giving over the West Saxons and that part of Mercia which he had subdued, to the custody of his generals, he proceeded himself against the Northumbrians; and, by depopulating the country, compelled Utric to retire, to defend his own possessions; and notwithstanding he surrendered himself, yet with inhuman levity he ordered him to

* Cosham, in Wiltshire!
be put to death. His earldom was given to Eric, whom Canute afterwards expelled England, because he pretended to equal power with himself. Thus all being subdued, he ceased not pursuing Edmund, who was gradually retreating, till he heard that he was at London with his father. Canute then remained quiet till after Easter, that he might attack the city with all his forces. But the death of Ethelred preceded the attempt: for in the beginning of Lent, on St. Gregory's day,* he breathed out a life destined only to labours and misery: he lies buried at St. Paul's in London. The citizens immediately proclaimed Edmund king, who, mustering an army, routed the Danes at Penn,† near Gillingham, about Rogation-day. After the festival of St. John, engaging them again at Sceorstan,‡ he retired from a drawn-battle. The English had begun to give way, at the instance of Edric; who being on the adversaries' side, and holding in his hand a sword stained with the blood of a fellow whom he had dexterously slain, exclaimed, "Fly, wretches! fly! behold, your king was slain by this sword!" The Angles would have fled immediately, had not the king, apprised of this circumstance, proceeded to an eminence, and taking off his helmet, shown his face to his comrades. Then brandishing a dart with all his forces, he launched it at Edric; but being seen, and avoided, it missed him, and struck a soldier standing near; and so great was its violence, that it even transfixed a second. Night put a stop to the battle, the hostile armies retreating as if by mutual consent, though the English had well-nigh obtained the victory.

After this the sentiments of the West Saxons changed, and they acknowledged their lawful sovereign. Edmund proceeded to London, that he might liberate those deserving citizens whom a party of the enemy had blocked up immediately after his departure; moreover they had surrounded the whole city, on the parts not washed by the river Thames, with a trench; and many men lost their lives on both sides in the skirmishes. Hearing of the king's approach, they

* March 12th, but the Saxon Chronicle says St. George's day, 23d April.
† In Somersetshire!
‡ Sceorstan is conjectured to be near Chipping Norton.—Sharp. Supposed to be a stone which divided the four counties of Oxford, Gloucester, Worcester and Warwick.—Hardy.
precipitately took to flight; while he pursuing directly, and passing the ford called Brentford, routed them with great slaughter. The remaining multitude which were with Canute, while Edmund was relaxing a little and getting his affairs in order, again laid siege to London both on the land and river side; but being nobly repulsed by the citizens, they wreaked their anger on the neighbouring province of Mercia, laying waste the towns and villages, with plunder, fire, and slaughter. The best of the spoil was conveyed to their ships assembled in the Medway; which river flowing by the city of Rochester, washes its fair walls with a strong and rapid current. They were attacked and driven hence also by the king in person; who suddenly seizing the ford, which I have before mentioned at Brentford, dispersed them with signal loss.

While Edmund was preparing to pursue, and utterly destroy the last remains of these plunderers, he was prevented by the crafty and abandoned Edric, who had again insinuated himself into his good graces; for he had come over to Edmund, at the instigation of Canute, that he might betray his designs. Had the king only persevered, this would have been the last day for the Danes; but misled by the insinuations of a traitor, who affirmed that the enemy would make no farther attempt, he brought swift destruction upon himself, and the whole of England. Being thus allowed to escape, they again assembled; attacked the East Angles, and, at Assandun, compelled the king himself, who came to their assistance, to retreat. Here again, the person I am ashamed to mention so frequently, designedly gave the first example of flight. A small number, who, mindful of their former fame, and encouraging each other, had formed a compact body, were cut off to a man. On this field of battle Canute gained the kingdom; the glory of the Angles fell; and the whole flower of the country withered. Amongst these was Ulfkytel, earl of East Anglia, who had gained immortal honour in the time of Sweyn, when first attacking the pirates, he showed that they might be overcome: here

* He passed the Thames at Brentford, followed them into Kent, and defeated them at Aylesford. Saxon Chron.
† Thought to be either Amingdon, Ashdown in Essex, or Aston in Berkshire.
fell, too, the chief men of the day, both bishops and abbats. Edmund flying hence almost alone, came to Gloucester, in order that he might there re-assemble his forces, and attack the enemy, indolent, as he supposed, from their recent victory. Nor was Canute wanting in courage to pursue the fugitive. When everything was ready for battle, Edmund demanded a single combat; that two individuals might not, for the lust of dominion, be stained with the blood of so many subjects, when they might try their fortune without the destruction of their faithful adherents: and observing, that it must redound greatly to the credit of either to have obtained so vast a dominion at his own personal peril. But Canute refused this proposition altogether; affirming that his courage was surpassing, but that he was apprehensive of trusting his diminutive person against so bulky an antagonist: wherefore, as both had equal pretensions to the kingdom, since the father of either of them had possessed it, it was consistent with prudence that they should lay aside their animosity, and divide England.* This proposition was adopted by either army, and confirmed with much applause, both for its equity and its beneficent regard to the repose of the people who were worn out with continual suffering. In consequence, Edmund, overcome by the general clamour, made peace, and entered into treaty with Canute, retaining West Saxony himself and giving Mercia to the other. He died soon after on the festival of St. Andrew,† though by what mischance is not known, and was buried at Glastonbury near his grandfather Edgar. Fame asperses Edric, as having, through regard for Canute, compassed his death by means of his servants: reporting that there were two attendants on the king to whom he had committed the entire care of his person, and, that Edric seducing them by promises, at length made them his accomplices, though at first they were struck with horror at the enormity of the crime; and that, at his suggestion, they drove an iron hook into his posteriors, as he was sitting down for a necessary

* Henry Huntington says they actually engaged, and that Canute finding himself likely to be worsted, proposed the division.—H. Hunt. l. 6.
† “Florence of Worcester and the Saxon Chronicle place his death on the 30th of November, 1016. Florence, however, adds the year of the indiction, which corresponds with A.D. 1017.”—Hardy.
purpose. Edwin, his brother on the mother's side, a youth of amiable disposition, was driven from England by Edric, at the command of Canute, and suffering extremely for a considerable time, "both by sea and land," his body, as is often the case, became affected by the anxiety of his mind, and he died in England, where he lay concealed after a clandestine return, and lies buried at Tavistock. His sons, Edwy and Edward, were sent to the king of Sweden to be put to death; but being preserved by his mercy, they went to the king of Hungary, where, after being kindly treated for a time, the elder died; and the younger married Agatha, the sister of the queen. His brothers by Emma, Alfred and Edward, lay securely concealed in Normandy for the whole time that Canute lived.

I find that their uncle Richard took no steps to restore them to their country; on the contrary, he married his sister Emma to the enemy and invader; and it may be difficult to say, whether to the greater ignominy of him who bestowed her, or of the woman who consented to share the nuptial couch of that man who had so cruelly molested her husband, and had driven her children into exile. Robert, however, whom we have so frequently before mentioned as having gone to Jerusalem, assembling a fleet and embarking soldiers, made ready an expedition, boasting that he would set the crown on the heads of his grand-nephews; and doubtless he would have made good his assertion, had not, as we have heard from our ancestors, an adverse wind constantly opposed him: but assuredly this was by the hidden counsel of God, in whose disposal are the powers of all kingdoms. The remains of the vessels, decayed through length of time, were still to be seen at Rouen in our days.

CHAP. XI

Of king Canute. [A.D. 1017—1031.]

Canute began to reign in the year of our Lord 1017, and reigned twenty years. Though he obtained the sovereignty unjustly, yet he conducted himself with great affability and firmness. At his entrance on the government, dividing the kingdom into four parts, himself took the West Saxons, Edric the Mercians, Thurkill the East Angles, and Eric the North-
umbrians. His first care was to punish the murderers of Edmund, who had, under expectation of great recompense, acknowledged the whole circumstances: he concealed them for a time, and then brought them forward in a large assembly of the people, where they confessed the mode of their attack upon him, and were immediately ordered to execution. The same year, Edric, whom words are wanting to stigmatize as he deserved, being, by the king’s command, entrapped in the same snare which he had so frequently laid for others, breathed out his abominable spirit to hell. For a quarrel arising, while they were angrily discoursing, Edric, relying on the credit of his services, and amicably, as it were, reproaching the king, said, “I first deserted Edmund for your sake, and afterwards even despatched him in consequence of my engagements to you.” At this expression the countenance of Canute changed with indignation, and he instantly pronounced this sentence: “Thou shalt die,” said he, “and justly; since thou art guilty of treason both to God and me, by having killed thy own sovereign, and my sworn brother; thy blood be upon thy head, because thy mouth hath spoken against thee, and thou hast lifted thy hand against the Lord’s anointed:” and immediately, that no tumult might be excited, the traitor was strangled in the chamber where they sat, and thrown out of the window into the river Thames: thus meeting the just reward of his perfidy. In process of time, as opportunities occurred, Thurkill and Eric were driven out of the kingdom, and sought their native land. The first, who had been the instigator of the murder of St. Elphege, was killed by the chiefs the moment he touched the Danish shore.* When all England, by these means, became subject to Canute alone, he began to conciliate the Angles with unceasing diligence; allowing them equal rights with the Danes, in their assemblies, councils, and armies: on which account, as I have before observed, he sent for the wife of the late king out of Normandy, that, while they were paying obedience to their accustomed sovereign, they should the less repine at the dominion of the Danes. Another design he had in view by this, was, to acquire favour with Richard; who would think

* The Danish chiefs were apprehensive that he would excite commotions in their country; in consequence of which he was ultimately despatched.—Ang. Sac. ii. 144.
little of his nephews, so long as he supposed he might have others by Canute. He repaired, throughout England, the monasteries, which had been partly injured, and partly destroyed by the military incursions of himself, or of his father; he built churches in all the places where he had fought, and more particularly at Assingdon, and appointed ministers to them, who, through the succeeding revolutions of ages, might pray to God for the souls of the persons there slain. At the consecration of this edifice, himself was present, and the English and Danish nobility made their offerings: it is now, according to report, an ordinary church, under the care of a parish priest. Over the body of the most holy Edmund, whom the Danes of former times had killed, he built a church with princely magnificence, appointed to it an abbat, and monks: and conferred on it many large estates. The greatness of his donation, yet entire, stands proudly eminent at the present day; for that place surpasses almost all the monasteries of England. He took up, with his own hands, the body of St. Elphege, which had been buried at St. Paul's in London, and sending it to Canterbury, honoured it with due regard. Thus anxious to atone for the offences of himself or of his predecessors, perhaps he wiped away the foul stain of his former crimes with God: certainly he did so with man. At Winchester, he displayed all the magnificence of his liberality: here he gave so largely, that the quantity of precious metals astonished the minds of strangers; and the glittering of jewels dazzled the eyes of the beholders: this was at Emma's suggestion, who with pious prodigality exhausted his treasures in works of this kind, while he was meditating fierce attacks on foreign lands. For his valour, incapable of rest, and not contented with Denmark, which he held from his father, and England, which he possessed by right of war, transferred its rage against the Swedes. These people are contiguous to the Danes, and had excited the displeasure of Canute by their ceaseless hostility. At first he fell into an ambush, and lost many of his people, but afterwards recruiting his strength, he routed his opponents, and brought the kings of that nation, Ulf and Egilaf, to terms of peace. The English, at the instance of earl Godwin, behaved nobly in this conflict. He exhorted them, not to forget their ancient fame, but clearly to display their valour to their new lord:
telling them, that it must be imputed to fortune, that they had formerly been conquered by him, but it would be ascribed to their courage, if they overcame those who had overcome him. In consequence, the English put forth all their strength, and gaining the victory, obtained an earldom for their commander, and honour for themselves. Thence, on his return home, he entirely subdued the kingdom of Norway, putting Olave, its king, to flight; who, the year following, returning with a small party into his kingdom, to try the inclinations of the inhabitants, found them faithless, and was slain with his adherents.

In the fifteenth year of his reign, Canute went to Rome, and after remaining there some time, and atoning for his crimes by giving alms to the several churches, he sailed back to England.* Soon after, with little difficulty, he subdued Scotland, then in a state of rebellion, and Malcolm her king, by leading an army thither. I trust it will not appear useless, if I subjoin the epistle, which he transmitted to the English, on his departure from Rome, by the hands of Living, abbot of Tavistock, and afterwards bishop of Crediton, to exemplify his reformation of life, and his princely magnificence.

"Canute, king of all England, Denmark, Norway, and part 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

* He returned by the way of Denmark. Florence of Worcester.
it 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* to the neighbouring sea. 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 palls 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, who has the chief dominion over those barriers; 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 barriers, 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 residence 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 territories our road to Rome is situated, 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,

* St. Angelo in Calabria.
† The several princes, through whose territories their passage lay, exacted large sums for permission to pass; apparently in the defiles of the Alps.
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 any thing 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 governors throughout my whole kingdom, as they tender 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 to accumulate money by unjust exaction. 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 epistle before me, in order that my people may rejoice at my prosperity; because, as 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 be discharged: that is to say, plough-alms,* the tenth of animals born in the

* A penny for every plough, that is, for as much land as a plough could
current year,* and the pence owing to Rome for St. Peter, whether from cities or villages: and in the middle of August, the tenth of the produce of the earth: and on the festival of St. Martin, the first fruits of seeds, to the church of the parish where each one resides, which is called in English 'Circset.'† If these and such like things are not paid before I come to England, all who shall have offended will incur the penalty of a royal mulct,‡ to be exacted without remission, according to law." Nor was this declaration without effect; for he commanded all the laws which had been enacted by ancient kings, and chiefly by his predecessor Ethelred, to be observed for ever, under the penalty of a royal mulct: in the observance of which,§ the custom even at the present day, in the time of good kings, is to swear by the name of king Edward, not that he indeed appointed, but that he observed them.

At that time there were in England very great and learned men, the principal of whom was Ethelnoth, archbishop after Living. He was appointed primate from being dean,‖ and performed many works truly worthy to be recorded: encouraging even the king himself in his good actions by the authority of his sanctity, and restraining him in his excesses: he first exalted the archiepiscopal cathedral by the presence of the body of St. Elphege, and afterwards personally at Rome, restored it to its pristine dignity.¶ Returning home, he transmitted to Coventry the arm of St. Augustine** the teacher, which he had purchased at Pavia, for an hundred talents of silver, and a talent of gold. Moreover, Canute took a journey to the church of Glastonbury, that he might visit the remains of his brother Edmund, as he used to call till, to be distributed to the poor: it was payable in fifteen days from Easter. * Payable at Whitsuntide.
† A certain quantity of corn. Though it also implies, occasionally, other kinds of offerings.
‡ A forfeiture to the king, but varying according to the nature of the offence.
§ This seems to be the meaning: he has probably in view the practice of the early princes of the Norman line, who swore to observe the laws of king Edward.
‖ Dean of Canterbury.
¶ This appears merely intended to express that he received the pall from the pope. The two transactions are inverted; he went to Rome A.D. 1021, and translated Elphege's body A.D. 1023.
** Augustine, bishop of Hippo.
him; and praying over his tomb, he presented a pall, interwoven, as it appeared, with party-coloured figures of peacocks. Near the king stood the before-named Ethelnoth, who was the seventh monk of Glastonbury that had become archbishop of Canterbury: first Berthwald: second Athelwold, first bishop of Wells: third his nephew Dunstan: fourth Ethelgar, first abbot of the New-minster at Winchester, and then bishop of Chichester:* fifth Siric, who, when he was made archbishop, gave to this his nursing-mother seven palls, with which, upon his anniversary, the whole ancient church is ornamented: sixth Elphege, who from prior of Glastonbury was, first, made abbot of Bath, and then bishop of Winchester: seventh Ethelnoth, who upon showing to the king the immunities of predecessors, asked, and obtained from the king's own hand a confirmation of them, which was to the following effect.

"The Lord reigning for evermore, who disposes and governs all things by his unspeakable power, who wonderfully determines the changes of times and of men, and justly brings them to an uncertain end, according to his pleasure; and who from the secret mysteries of nature mercifully teaches us, how lasting, instead of fleeting and transitory, kingdoms are to be obtained by the assistance of God: wherefore I Canute king of England, and governor and ruler of the adjacent nations, by the counsel and decree of our archbishop Ethelnoth, and of all the priests of God, and by the advice of our nobility, do, for the love of heaven, and the pardon of my sins, and the remission of the transgressions of my brother, king Edmund, grant to the church of the holy mother of God, Mary, at Glastonbury, its rights and customs throughout my kingdom, and all forfeitures throughout its possessions, and that its lands shall be free from all claim and vexation as my own are. Moreover, I inhibit more especially, by the authority of the Almighty Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, and the curse of the eternal Virgin, and so command it to be observed by the judges and primates of my kingdom as they tender their safety, every person, be they of what order or dignity they may, from entering, on

* He was bishop of Selsey, which see was afterwards removed to Chichester.
any account, that island;* but all causes, ecclesiastical as well as secular, shall await the sole judgment of the abbat and convent, in like manner as my predecessors have ratified and confirmed by charters; that is to say, Kentwin, Ina, Cuthred, Alfed, Edward, Ethelred, Athelstan, the most glorious Edmund, and the equally glorious Edgar. And should any one hereafter endeavour, on any occasion, to break in upon, or make void the enactment of this grant, let him be driven from the communion of the righteous by the fan of the last judgment; but should any person endeavour diligently, with benevolent intention, to perform these things, to approve, and defend them, may God increase his portion in the land of the living, through the intercession of the most holy mother of God, Mary, and the rest of the saints. The grant of this immunity was written and published in the Wooden Church, in the presence of king Canute, in the year of our Lord 1032, the second indiction.

By the advice of the said archbishop also, the king, sending money to foreign churches, very much enriched Chartres, where at that time flourished bishop Fulbert, most renowned for sanctity and learning. Who, among other demonstrations of his diligence, very magnificently completed the church of our lady St. Mary, the foundations of which he had laid: and which moreover, in his zeal to do every thing he could for its honour, he rendered celebrated by many musical modulations. The man who has heard his chants, breathing only celestial vows, is best able to conceive the love he manifested in honour of the Virgin. Among his other works, a volume of epistles is extant; in one of which,† he thanks that most magnificent king Canute, for pouring out the bowels of his generosity in donations to the church of Chartres.

In the fifteenth year of Canute's reign, Robert king of France, of whom we have before briefly spoken, departed this life: a man so much given to alms, that when, on festival days, he was either dressing, or putting off the royal robes, if he had nothing else at hand, he would give even

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* The whole country round Glastonbury is flat and marshy, bearing evident marks of having formerly been covered by water.

these to the poor, if his attendants did not purposely drive away the needy who were importuning him. He had two sons, Odo, and Henry: the elder, Odo,* was dull: the other crafty and impetuous. Each parent had severally divided their affections on their children: the father loved the first-born, often saying that he should succeed him: the mother regarded the younger, to whom the sovereignty was justly due, if not for his age, yet certainly for his ability. It happened, as women are persevering in their designs, that she did not cease until, by means of presents, and large promises, she had gotten to her side all the chief nobility who are subject to the power of France. In consequence, Henry, chiefly through the assistance of Robert the Norman, was crowned ere his father had well breathed his last. Mindful of this kindness, when, as I before related, Robert went to Jerusalem, Henry most strenuously espoused the cause of William, his son, then a youth, against those who attempted to throw off his yoke. In the meantime Canute, finishing his earthly career, died at Shaftesbury, and was buried at Winchester.

CHAP. XII.

Of king Harold and Hardecanute. [A.D. 1036—1042.]

In the year of our Lord's incarnation 1036,† Harold, whom fame‡ reported to be the son of Canute, by the daughter of earl Elsfelm, succeeded, and reigned four years and as many months. He was elected by the Danes and the citizens of London, who, from long intercourse with these barbarians, had almost entirely adopted their customs. The English resisted for a long time, rather wishing to have one of the sons of Ethelred, who were then in Normandy, or else Hardecanute, the son of Canute by Emma, at that time in Den-

* Though several French chronicles give nearly the same account of Odo being the elder brother, the learned editors of the Recueil des Historiens de France insist that the assertion is false.

† "After the death of Canute, the kingdom was at first divided: the northern part fell to the share of Harold, and Hardecanute obtained the southern division. In the year 1037, Harold was chosen to reign over all England, (Flor. Wigorn.)"—Hardy.

‡ This he notices, because there was a suspicion that she had imposed the children of a priest and of a cobbler on Canute as her own. V. Flor. Wigorn.
mark, for their king. The greatest stickler for justice, at this juncture, was earl Godwin; who professing himself the defender of the fatherless, and having queen Emma and the royal treasures in his custody, for some time restrained his opponents by the power of his name: but at last, overcome by numbers and by violence, he was obliged to give way. Harold, secure in his sovereignty, drove his mother-in-law into exile. Not thinking she should be safe in Normandy, where, her brother and nephews being dead, disgust at the rule of a deserted orphan created great disorders, she passed over into Flanders, to earl Baldwin, a man of tried integrity: who afterwards, when king Henry died leaving a young son, Philip, for some years nobly governed the kingdom of France, and faithfully restored it to him, for he had married his aunt, when he came of age. Emma passed three years securely under the protection of this man, at the expiration of which, Harold dying at Oxford, in the month of April,* was buried at Westminster. The Danes and the English then uniting in one common sentiment of sending for Hardecanute, he came, by way of Normandy, into England in the month of August. For Ethelred's sons were held in contempt nearly by all, more from the recollection of their father's indolence, than the power of the Danes. Hardecanute, reigning two years except ten days, lost his life amid his cups at Lambeth nigh London, and was buried near his father at Winchester: a young man who evinced great affection towards his brother and sister. For his brother, Edward, wearied with continual wandering, revisiting his native land in the hope of fraternal kindness, was received by him with open arms, and entertained most affectionately. He was rash, however, in other respects, and at the instigation of Elfric, archbishop of York, and of others whom I am loath to name, he ordered the dead body of Harold to be dug up, the head to be cut off, and thrown into the Thames, a pitiable spectacle to men! but it was dragged up again in a fisherman's net, and buried in the cemetery of the Danes at London. He imposed a rigid, and intolerable tribute upon England, in order that he might pay, according to his promise, twenty marks to the soldiers

* The Saxon Chronicle says March 17: it also makes Hardecanute arrive on the 18th of June.
of each of his vessels. While this was harshly levied throughout the kingdom, two of the collectors, discharging their office rather too rigorously, were killed by the citizens of Worcester; upon which, burning and depopulating the city by means of his commanders, and plundering the property of the citizens, he cast a blemish on his fame and diminished the love of his subjects. But here I will not pass over in silence, what tattlers report of Alfred the first-born of Ethelred. Doubtful what to do between Harold's death and the arrival of Hardecanute, he came into the kingdom, and was deprived of his eyes by the treachery of his countrymen, and chiefly of Godwin, at Gillingham: from thence being sent to the monastery of Ely, he supported, for a little time, a wretched subsistence upon homely food; all his companions, with the exception of the tenth, being beheaded: for by lot every tenth man was saved.* I have mentioned these circumstances, because such is the report; but as the Chronicles are silent, I do not assert them for fact. For this reason, Hardecanute, enraged against Living, bishop of Crediton, whom public opinion pointed out as author of the transaction, expelled him from his see: but, soothed with money, he restored him within the year. Looking angrily too upon Godwin, he obliged him to clear himself by oath; but he, to recover his favour entirely, added to his plighted oath a present of the most rich and beautiful kind; it was a ship beaked with gold, having eighty soldiers on board, who had two bracelets on either arm, each weighing sixteen ounces of gold; on their heads were gilt helmets; on their left shoulder they carried a Danish axe, with an iron spear in their right hand; and, not to enumerate everything, they were equipped with such arms, as that splendour vying with terror, might conceal the steel beneath the gold. But farther, as I had begun to relate, his sister Gunhilda, the daughter of Canute by Emma, a young woman of exquisite beauty, who was sighed for, but not obtained, by many lovers in her father's time, was by Hardecanute given in marriage to Henry, emperor of the

* The printed Saxon Chronicle has no mention of this transaction, but there are two manuscripts which relate it. The story appears true in the main, but it is told with so much variety of time, place, &c., that it is difficult to ascertain its real circumstances. See MSS. Cott. Tib. b. i. and iv.
Germans. The splendour of the nuptial pageant was very striking, and is even in our times frequently sung in ballads about the streets: where while this renowned lady was being conducted to the ship, all the nobility of England were crowding around and contributing to her charges whatever was contained in the general purse, or royal treasury. Proceeding in this manner to her husband, she cherished for a long time the conjugal tie; at length being accused of adultery, she opposed in single combat to her accuser, a man of gigantic size, a young lad of her brother's* establishment, whom she had brought from England, while her other attendants held back in cowardly apprehension. When, therefore, they engaged, the impeacher, through the miraculous interposition of God, was worsted, by being ham-strung. Gunhilda, exulting at her unexpected success, renounced the marriage contract with her husband; nor could she be induced either by threats or by endearments again to share his bed: but taking the veil of a nun, she calmly grew old in the service of God.

This emperor possessed many and great virtues; and nearly surpassed in military skill all his predecessors: so much so, that he subdued the Vindelici and the Leutici,† and the other nations bordering on the Suevi, who alone, even to the present day, lust after pagan superstitions: for the Saracens and Turks worship God the Creator, looking upon Mahomet not as God, but as his prophet. But the Vindelici worship fortune, and putting her idol in the most eminent situation, they place a horn in her right hand, filled with that beverage, made of honey and water, which by a Greek term we call “hydromel.” St. Jerome proves, in his eighteenth book on Isaiah, that the Egyptians and almost all the eastern nations do the same. Wherefore on the last day of November, sitting round in a circle, they all taste it; and if they find the horn full, they applaud with loud clamours: because in the ensuing year, plenty with her

* It seems to mean a page, or personal attendant: some MSS. read “alumnus sturni;” apparently the keeper of her starling. There appears to have been a sort of romance on this subject. The youth is said to have been a dwarf, and therefore named Mimicon: his gigantic adversary was Roddingar. V. Matt. West. and Joh. Brompton.
† These people inhabited the country on and near the southern coast of the Baltic.
brimming horn will fulfil their wishes in everything: but if it be otherwise, they lament. Henry made these nations in such wise tributary to him, that upon every solemnity on which he wore his crown, four of their kings were obliged to carry a cauldron in which flesh was boiled, upon their shoulders, to the kitchen, by means of levers passed through rings.

Frequently, when disengaged from the turmoils of his empire, Henry gave himself up to good fellowship and merriment, and was replete with humour; this may be sufficiently proved by two instances. He was so extremely fond of his sister, who was a nun, that he never suffered her to be from his side, and her chamber was always next his own. As he was on a certain time, in consequence of a winter remarkable for severe frost and snow, detained for a long while in the same place, a certain clerk* about the court, became too familiar with the girl, and often passed the greatest part of the night in her chamber. And although he attempted to conceal his crime by numberless subterfuges, yet some one perceived it, for it is difficult not to betray guilt either by look or action, and the affair becoming notorious, the emperor was the only person in ignorance, and who still believed his sister to be chaste. On one particular night, however, as they were enjoying their fond embraces, and continuing their pleasures longer than usual, the morning dawned upon them, and behold snow had completely covered the ground. The clerk fearing that he should be discovered by his track in the snow, persuades his mistress to extricate him from his difficulty by carrying him on her back. She, regardless of modesty so that she might escape exposure, took her paramour on her back, and carried him out of the palace. It happened at that moment, that the emperor had risen for a necessary purpose, and looking through the window of his chamber, beheld the clerk mounted. He was stupefied at the first sight, but observing still more narrowly, he became mute with shame and indignation. While he was hesitating whether he should pass over the crime unpunished,

* Clerk was a general term including every degree of orders, from the bishop downwards to the chanter. A story near similar has been told of the celebrated Eginhard and the daughter of Charlemagne. V. Du Chesne, Script. Franc. T. ii.
or openly reprehend the delinquents, there happened an opportunity for him to give a vacant bishopric to the clerk, which he did; but at the same time whispered in his ear, "Take the bishopric, but be careful you do not let women carry you any more." At the same time he gave his sister the rule over a company of nuns, "Be an abbess," said he, "but carry clerks no longer." Both of them were confused, and feeling themselves grievously stricken by so grave an injunction, they desisted from a crime which they thought revealed by God.

He had also a clergyman about his palace, who abused the depth of his learning and the melody of his voice by the vicious propensities of the flesh, being extremely attached to a girl of bad character, in the town; with whom having passed one festival night, he stood next morning before the emperor at mass, with countenance unabashed. The emperor concealing his knowledge of the transaction, commanded him to prepare himself to read the gospel, that he might be gratified with the melody of his voice: for he was a deacon. Conscious of his crime, he made use of a multitude of subterfuges, while the emperor, to try his constancy, still pressed him with messages. Refusing, however, to the very last, the emperor said, "Since you will not obey me in so easy a command, I banish you from the whole of my territories." The deacon, yielding to the sentence, departed directly. Servants were sent to follow him, and in case he should persist in going, to bring him back after he had left the city. Gathering, therefore, immediately all his effects together, and packing them up, he had already gone a considerable distance, when he was brought back, not without extreme violence, and placed in the presence of Henry, who smiled and said: "You have done well, and I applaud your integrity for valuing the fear of God more than your country, and regarding the displeasure of heaven more than my threats. Accept, therefore, the first bishopric, which shall be vacant in my empire; only renounce your dishonourable amour."

As nothing however is lasting in human enjoyments, I shall not pass over in silence a certain dreadful portent which happened in his time. The monastery of Fulda, in Saxony, is celebrated for containing the body of St. Gall,
and is enriched with very ample territories. The abbat of this place furnishes the emperor with sixty thousand warriors against his enemies; and possesses from ancient times the privilege of sitting at his right hand on the most distinguished festivals. This Henry we are speaking of was celebrating Pentecost at Mentz. A little before mass, while the seats were preparing in the church, a quarrel arose between the attendants of the abbat, and those of the archbishop, which of their masters should sit next the sovereign: one party alleging the dignity of the prelate, the other ancient usage. When words made but little for peace, as the Germans and Teutonians possess untractable spirits, they came to blows. Some snatched up staves, others threw stones, while the rest unsheathed their swords: finally each used the weapon that his anger first supplied. Thus furiously contending in the church, the pavement soon streamed with blood: but the bishops hastening forward, peace was restored amid the remains of the contending parties. The church was cleansed, and mass performed with joyful sound. But now comes the wonder: when the sequence was chanted, and the choir paused at that verse, “Thou hast made this day glorious:” a voice in the air replied aloud, “I have made this day contentious.” All the others were motionless with horror, but the emperor the more diligently attended to his occupation, and perceiving the satisfaction of the enemy: “You,” said he, “the inventor and also the instigator of all wickedness, have made this day contentious and sorrowful to the proud; but we, by the grace of God, who made it glorious, will make it gracious to the poor.” Beginning the sequence afresh, they implored the grace of the Holy Spirit by solemn lamentation. You might suppose he had come upon them, for some were singing, others weeping, and all beating their breasts. When mass was over, assembling the poor by means of his officers, he gave them the whole of the entertainment which had been prepared for himself and his courtiers: the emperor placing the dishes before them, standing at a distance according to the custom of servants, and clearing away the fragments.

In the time of his father, Conrad, he had received a silver pipe, such as boys in sport spirt water with, from a certain clerk, covenanting to give him a bishopric, when he should
become emperor. This, when he was of man's estate, on his application he readily gave to him. Soon after he was confined to his bed with severe sickness: his malady increasing, he lay for three days insensible and speechless, while the vital breath only palpitated in his breast: nor was there any other sign of life, than the perception of a small degree of breathing, on applying the hand to his nostrils. The bishops being present, enjoined a fast for three days, and entreated heaven with tears and vows, for the life of the king. Recovering by these remedies, as it is right to think, he sent for the bishop whom he had so improperly appointed, and deposed him by the judgment of a council: confessing, that for three whole days he saw malignant demons blowing fire upon him through a pipe; fire so furious that ours in comparison would be deemed a jest, and have no heat: that afterwards there came a young man half scorched, bearing a golden cup of immense size, full of water; and that being soothed by the sight of him, and bathed by the water, the flame was extinguished, and he recovered his health: that this young man was St. Laurence, the roof of whose church he had restored when gone to decay; and, among other presents, had honoured it with a golden chalice.

Here many extraordinary things occur, which are reported of this man; for instance, of a stag, which took him on its back, when flying from his enemies, and carried him over an unfordable river: and some others which I pass by because I am unwilling to go beyond the reader's belief. He died when he had completed the eighteenth year of his empire, and was buried at Spires, which he re-built, and called by that name, on the site of the very ancient and ruined Nemetum: his epitaph is as follows:

Caesar, as was the world once great,
Lies here, confin'd in compass straight.
Hence let each mortal learn his doom;
No glory can escape the tomb.
The flower of empire, erst so gay,
Falls with its Caesar to decay,
And all the odours which it gave
Sink prematurely to the grave.
The laws which sapient fathers made,
A listless race had dared evade,
But thou reforming by the school
Of Rome, restor'dst the ancient rule.
Nations and regions, wide and far,
Whom none could subjugate by war,
Quell'd by thy sword's resistless strife,
Turn'd to the arts of civil life.
What grief severe must Rome engross,
Widow'd at first by Leo's loss,
And next by Cæsar's mournful night,
Reft of her other shining light;
Living, what region did not dread,
What country not lament thee, dead?
So kind to nations once subdued,
So fierce to the barbarians rude,
That, those who fear'd not, must bewail,
And such as griev'd not, fears assail.
Rome, thy departed glory moan,
And weep thy luminaries gone.

This Leo, of whom the epitaph speaks, had been Roman pontiff, called to that eminence from being Bruno bishop of Spires. He was a man of great and admirable sanctity; and the Romans celebrate many of his miracles. He died before Henry, when he had been five years pope.

CHAP. XIII.

Of St. Edward, son of king Ethelred. [A.D. 1042—1066.]

In the year of our Lord's incarnation 1042, St. Edward, the son of Ethelred, assumed the sovereignty, and held it not quite twenty-four years; he was a man from the simplicity of his manners little calculated to govern; but devoted to God, and in consequence directed by him. For while he continued to reign, there arose no popular commotions, which were not immediately quelled; no foreign war; all was calm and peaceable both at home and abroad; which is the more an object of wonder, because he conducted himself so mildly, that he would not even utter a word of reproach to the meanest person. For when he had once gone out to hunt, and a countryman had overturned the standings by which the deer are driven into the toils, struck with noble indignation he exclaimed, "By God and his mother, I will serve you just such a turn, if ever it come in my way." Here was a noble mind, who forgot that he was a king, under such circumstances, and could not think himself allowed to injure a man even of the lowest condition. In the meantime, the regard
his subjects entertained for him was extreme, as was also the fear of foreigners; for God assisted his simplicity, that he might be feared, for he knew not how to be angry. But however indolent or unassuming himself might be esteemed, he had nobles capable of elevating him to the highest pitch: for instance, Siward, earl of the Northumbrians; who, at his command, engaging with Macbeth, the Scottish king, deprived him both of life and of his kingdom, and placed on the throne Malcolm, who was the son of the king of Cumbria:* again, Leofric, of Hereford; he, with liberal regard, defended him against the enmity of Godwin, who trusting to the consciousness of his own merits, paid little reverence to the king. Leofric and his wife Godiva, generous in their deeds towards God, built many monasteries, as, Coventry, St. Mary’s at Stow, Wenlock, Leon, and some others; to the rest he gave ornaments and estates; to Coventry he consigned his body, with a very large donation of gold and silver. Harold too, of the West Saxons, the son of Godwin; who by his abilities destroyed two brothers, kings of the Welsh, Rees and Griffin; and reduced all that barbarous country to the state of a province under fealty to the king. Nevertheless, there were some things which obscured the glory of Edward’s times: the monasteries were deprived of their monks; false sentences were passed by depraved men; his mother’s property, at his command, was almost entirely taken from her. But the injustice of these transactions was extenuated by his favourers in the following manner: the ruin of the monasteries, and the iniquity of the judges, are said to have taken place without his knowledge, through the insolence of Godwin and his sons, who used to laugh at the easiness of the king: but afterwards, on being apprised of this, he severely avenged it by their banishment: his mother had for a long time mocked at the needy state of her son, nor ever assisted him; transferring her hereditary hatred of the father to the child; for she had both loved Canute more when living, and more commended him when dead: besides, accumulating money by every method, she had hoarded it, regardless of the poor, to whom she would give nothing, for fear of diminishing her hесп. Wherefore that which had

* This brief allusion to Macbeth rather disproves the historical accuracy of Shakespeare. See the Saxon Chronicle.
been so unjustly gathered together, was not improperly taken away, that it might be of service to the poor, and replenish the king's exchequer. Though much credit is to be attached to those who relate these circumstances, yet I find her to have been a religiously-disposed woman, and to have expended her property on ornaments for the church of Winchester, and probably upon others.* But to return: Edward receiving the mournful intelligence of the death of Hardecanute, was lost in uncertainty what to do, or whither to betake himself. While he was revolving many things in his mind, it occurred as the better plan to submit his situation to the opinion of Godwin. To Godwin therefore he sent messengers, requesting, that he might in security have a conference with him. Godwin, though for a long time hesitating and reflecting, at length assented, and when Edward came to him and endeavoured to fall at his feet, he raised him up; and when relating the death of Hardecanute, and begging his assistance to effect his return to Normandy, Godwin made him the greatest promises. He said, it was better for him to live with credit in power, than to die ingloriously in exile: that he was the son of Ethelred, the grandson of Edgar: that the kingdom was his due: that he was come to mature age, disciplined by difficulties, conversant in the art of well-governing from his years, and knowing, from his former poverty, how to feel for the miseries of the people: if he thought fit to rely on him, there could be no obstacle; for his authority so preponderated in England, that wherever he inclined, there fortune was sure to favour: if he assisted him, none would dare to murmur; and just so was the contrary side of the question: let him then only covenant a firm friendship with himself; undiminished honours for his sons, and a marriage with his daughter, and he who was now shipwrecked almost of life and hope, and imploring the assistance of another, should shortly see himself a king.

There was nothing which Edward would not promise, from the exigency of the moment: so, pledging fidelity on both sides, he confirmed by oath every thing which was demanded. Soon after convening an assembly at Gillingham, Godwin,

* This seems the foundation of the fable of Emma and the Ploughshares: as the first apparent promulgator of it was a constant reader and amplifier of Malmesbury. See Ric. Divisiensis, MS. C. C. C. Cant. No. 339.
unfolding his reasons, caused him to be received as king, and homage was paid to him by all. He was a man of ready wit, and spoke fluently in the vernacular tongue; powerful in speech, powerful in bringing over the people to whatever he desired. Some yielded to his authority; some were influenced by presents; others admitted the right of Edward; and the few who resisted in defiance of justice and equity, were carefully marked, and afterwards driven out of England.

Edward was crowned with great pomp at Winchester, on Easter-day, and was instructed by Eadsine,* the archbishop, in the sacred duties of governing. This, at the time, he treasured up with readiness in his memory, and afterwards displayed in the holiness of his conduct. The above-mentioned Eadsine, in the following year, falling into an incurable disease, appointed as his successor Siward, abbat of Abingdon; communicating his design only to the king and the earl, lest any improper person should aspire to so great an eminence, either by solicitation or by purchase. Shortly after the king took Edgitha, the daughter of Godwin, to wife; a woman whose bosom was the school of every liberal art, though little skilled in earthly matters: on seeing her, if you were amazed at her erudition, you must absolutely languish for the purity of her mind, and the beauty of her person. Both in her husband’s life-time, and afterwards, she was not entirely free from suspicion of dishonour; but when dying, in the time of king William, she voluntarily satisfied the by-standers of her unimpaired chastity, by an oath. When she became his wife, the king acted towards her so delicately, that he neither removed her from his bed, nor knew her after the manner of men. I have not been able to discover, whether he acted thus from dislike to her family, which he prudently dissembled from the exigency of the times, or out of pure regard to chastity: yet it is most notoriously affirmed, that he never violated his purity by connexion with any woman.

But since I have gotten thus far, I wish to admonish my reader, that the track of my history is here but dubious,

* “Eadsine was translated from Winchester to Canterbury in 1038. The Saxon Chronicle (p. 416) states, that he consecrated Edward, at Winchester, on Easter day, and before all people well admonished him.”—Hardy.
because the truth of the facts hangs in suspense. It is to be observed, that the king had sent for several Normans, who had formerly slightly ministered to his wants when in exile. Among these was Robert, whom, from being a monk of Jumièges, he had appointed bishop of London, and afterwards archbishop of Canterbury. The English of our times vilify this person, together with the rest, as being the impeacher of Godwin and his sons; the sower of discord; the purchaser of the archbishopric: they say too, that Godwin and his sons were men of liberal mind, the stedfast promoters and defenders of the government of Edward; and that it was not to be wondered at, if they were hurt at seeing men of yesterday, and strangers, preferred to themselves: still, that they never uttered even a harsh word against the king, whom they had formerly exalted to the throne. On the opposite hand the Normans thus defended themselves: they allege, that both himself and his sons acted with the greatest want of respect, as well as fidelity, to the king and his party; aiming at equal sovereignty with him; often ridiculing his simplicity; often hurling the shafts of their wit against him: that the Normans could not endure this, but endeavoured to weaken their power as much as possible; and that God manifested, at last, with what kind of purity Godwin had served him. For, after his piratical ravages, of which we shall speak hereafter, when he had been reinstated in his original favour, and was sitting with the king at table, the conversation turning on Alfred, the king's brother, "I perceive," said he, "O king, that on every recollection of your brother, you regard me with angry countenance; but God forbid that I should swallow this morsel, if I am conscious of any thing which might tend, either to his danger or your disadvantage." On saying this, he was choked with the piece he had put into his mouth, and closed his eyes in death: being dragged from under the table by Harold his son, who stood near the king, he was buried in the cathedral of Winchester.

On account of these feuds, as I have observed, my narrative labours under difficulties, for I cannot precisely ascertain the truth, by reason either of the natural dislike of these nations for each other, or because the English disdainfully bear with a superior, and the Normans cannot endure an
equal. In the following book, however, when the opportunity occurs for relating the arrival of the Normans in England, I shall proceed to speak of their habits; at present I shall glance, with all possible truth, at the grudge of the king against Godwin and his sons.

Eustace, * earl of Boulogne, the father of Godfrey and Baldwin, who, in our times, were kings of Jerusalem, had married the king’s sister, Goda, who had borne a son, named Ralph, to her former husband, Walter of Mantes. This son, at that time earl of Hereford, was both indolent and cowardly; he had been beaten in battle by the Welsh, and left his county and the city, together with the bishop, to be consumed with fire by the enemy; the disgrace of which transaction was wiped off by the valour of Harold, who arrived opportunely. Eustace, therefore, crossing the channel, from Whitsand to Dover, went to king Edward on some unknown business. When the conference was over, and he had obtained his request, he was returning through Canterbury,† where one of his harbingers, dealing too fiercely with a citizen, and demanding quarters with blows, rather than entreaty or remuneration, irritated him to such a degree, that he put him to death. Eustace, on being informed of the fact, proceeded with all his retinue to revenge the murder of his servant, and killed the perpetrator of the crime, together with eighteen others: but the citizens flying to arms, he lost twenty-one of his people, and had multitudes wounded; himself and one more with difficulty making their escape during the confusion. Thence returning to court and procuring a secret audience, he made the most of his own story, and excited the anger of the king against the English. Godwin, being summoned by messengers, arrived at the palace.

* Eustace II, surnamed Aus Grenensis. He succeeded his father, Eustace I, in 1049; and married, in 1050, Goda, daughter of king Ethelbert, and widow of Gauthier comte de Mantes, by whom he had no issue; but by his wife Ida he left three sons; Eustace, who succeeded him, Godefroi, created, in 1076, marquis d’Anvers by the emperor Henry IV, and afterwards duc de Bouillon, was elected king of Jerusalem in 1099, (23rd July); and, dying 16th July, 1100, was succeeded by his brother Baudouin, comte d’Edesse.—Hardy.

† He means Dover; according to the Saxon Chronicle, from which he borrows the account. Eustace stopped at Canterbury to refresh himself, and his people, and afterwards set out for Dover.—Sax. Chron. page 421:
When the business was related, and the king was dwelling more particularly on the insolence of the citizens of Canterbury, this intelligent man perceived that sentence ought not to be pronounced, since the allegations had only been heard on one side of the question. In consequence, though the king ordered him directly to proceed with an army into Kent, to take signal vengeance on the people of Canterbury, still he refused: both because he saw with displeasure, that all foreigners were gaining fast upon the favour of the king; and because he was desirous of evincing his regard to his countrymen. Besides, his opinion was more accordant, as it should seem, with equity, which was, that the principal people of that town should be mildly summoned to the king's court, on account of the tumult; if they could exculpate themselves, they should depart unhurt; but if they could not, they must make atonement, either by money, or by corporal punishment, to the king, whose peace they had broken, and to the earl, whom they had injured: moreover, that it appeared unjust to pass sentence on those people unheard, who had a more especial right to protection. After this the conference broke up; Godwin paying little attention to the indignation of the king, as merely momentary. In consequence of this, the nobility of the whole kingdom were commanded to meet at Gloucester, that the business might there be canvassed in full assembly. Thither came those, at that time, most renowned Northumbrian earls, Siward and Leofric, and all the nobility of England. Godwin and his sons alone, who knew that they were suspected, not deeming it prudent to be present unarmed, halted with a strong force at Beverstone, giving out that they had assembled an army to restrain the Welsh, who, meditating independence on the king, had fortified a town in the county of Hereford, where Sweyn, one of the sons of Godwin, was at that time in command. The Welsh, however, who had come beforehand to the conference, had accused them of a conspiracy, and rendered them odious to the whole court; so that a rumour prevailed, that the king's army would attack them in that very place. Godwin, hearing this, sounded the alarm to his party; told them that they should not purposefully withstand their sovereign lord; but if it came to hostilities, they should not retreat without avenging themselves. And, if better
counsels had not intervened, a dreadful scene of misery, and a worse than civil war, would have ensued. Some small share of tranquillity, however, being restored, it was ordered that the council should be again assembled at London; and that Sweyn, the son of Godwin, should appease the king's anger by withdrawing himself: that Godwin and Harold should come as speedily as possible to the council, with this condition: that they should be unarmed, bring with them only twelve men, and deliver up to the king the command of the troops which they had throughout England. This on the other hand they refused; observing, that they could not go to a party-meeting without sureties and pledges; that they would obey their lord in the surrender of the soldiers, as well as in every thing else, except risking their lives and reputation: should they come unarmed, the loss of life might be apprehended; if attended with few followers, it would detract from their glory. The king had made up his mind too firmly, to listen to the entreaties of those who interceded with him; wherefore an edict was published, that they should depart from England within five days. Godwin and Sweyn retired to Flanders, and Harold to Ireland. His earldom was given to Elgar, the son of Leofric, a man of active habits; who, receiving, governed it with ability, and readily restored it to him on his return; and afterwards, on the death of Godwin, when Harold had obtained the dukedom of his father, he boldly reclaimed it, though, by the accusation of his enemies, he was banished for a time. All the property of the queen was seized, and herself delivered into the custody of the king's sister at Wherwell, lest she alone should be void of care, whilst all her relations were sighing for their country.

The following year, the exiles, each emerging from his station, were now cruising the British sea, infesting the coast with piracy, and carrying off rich booty from the substance of their countrymen. Against these, on the king's part, more than sixty sail lay at anchor. Earls Odo and Ralph, relations of the king, were commanders of the fleet. Nor did this emergency find Edward himself inactive; since he would pass the night on ship-board, and watch the sallies of the plunderers; diligently compensating, by the wisdom of his counsel, for that personal service which age and in-
firmity denied. But when they had approached each other, and the conflict was on the eve of commencing, a very thick mist arose, which in a moment obscured the sight of the opponents, and repressed the pitiable audacity of men. At last Godwin and his companions were driven, by the impetuosity of the wind, to the port they had left; and not long after returning to their own country with pacific dispositions, they found the king at London, and were received by him on soliciting pardon. The old man, skilled in leading the minds of his audience by his reputation and his eloquence, dexterously exculpated himself from every thing laid to his charge; and in a short time prevailed so far, as to recover his honours, undiminished, for himself and for his children; to drive all the Normans, branded with ignominy, from England; and to get sentence passed on Robert, the archbishop, and his accomplices, for disturbing the order of the kingdom and stimulating the royal mind against his subjects. But he, not waiting for violent measures, had fled of his own accord while the peace was in agitation, and proceeding to Rome, and appealing to the apostolical see on his case, as he was returning through Jumièges, he died there, and was buried in the church of St. Mary, which he chiefly had built at vast expense. While he was yet living, Stigand, who was bishop of Winchester, forthwith invaded the archbishopric of Canterbury: a prelate of notorious ambition, who sought after honours too keenly, and who, through desire of a higher dignity, deserting the bishopric of the South Saxons, had occupied Winchester, which he held with the archbishopric. For this reason he was never honoured with the pall by the papal see, except that one Benedict, the usurper, as it were, of the papacy, sent him one; either corrupted by money to grant a thing of this kind, or else because bad people are pleased to gratify others of the same description. But he, through the zeal of the faithful, being expelled by Nicholas, who legally assumed the papacy from being bishop of Florence, laid aside the title he so little deserved. Stigand, moreover, in the time of king William, degraded by the Roman cardinals and condemned to perpetual imprisonment, could not fill up the measure of his insatiable avidity even in death. For on his decease, a small key was discovered among his secret recesses, which on being applied to
the lock of a chamber-cabinet, gave evidence of papers, describing immense treasures, and in which were noted both the quality and the quantity of the precious metals which this greedy pilferer had hidden on all his estates: but of this hereafter: I shall now complete the history of Godwin which I had begun.

When he was a young man he had Canute's sister to wife, by whom he had a son, who in his early youth, while proudly curveting on a horse which his grandfather had given him, was carried into the Thames, and perished in the stream: his mother, too, paid the penalty of her cruelty; being killed by a stroke of lightning. For it is reported, that she was in the habit of purchasing companies of slaves in England, and sending them into Denmark; more especially girls, whose beauty and age rendered them more valuable, that she might accumulate money by this horrid traffic. After her death, he married another wife, whose descent I have not been able to trace; by her he had Harold, Sweyn, Wulnod, Tosty, Girth, and Leofwine. Harold became king for a few months after Edward; and being overcome by William at Hastings, there lost his life and kingdom, together with his two younger brothers. Wulnod, given by his father as a hostage, was sent over to Normandy by king Edward, where he remained all that king's time in inextricable captivity; and being sent back into England during William's reign, grew old in confinement at Salisbury: Sweyn being of an obstinate disposition, and faithless to the king, frequently revolted from his father, and his brother Harold, and turning pirate, tarnished the virtues of his forefathers, by his deprivations on the coast: at last struck with remorse for the murder of Bruno, a relation, or as some say, his brother, he went to Jerusalem, and returning thence was surprised by the Saracens, and put to death: Tosty, after the death of Siward, was preferred to the earldom of Northumbria by king Ed-

* Earl Godwin's second wife's name was Gytha. (Saxon Chron. and Flor. Wigorn.)—Hardy.

† Sweyn had debauched an abbess, and being enraged that he was not allowed to retain her as his wife, he fled to Flanders. Shortly after he returned, and intreated Bruno or Beorn to accompany him to the king, and to intercede for his pardon: but it should seem this was a mere pretence; as he forced him on ship-board, and then put him to death. V. Flor. Wigorn, a.d. 1049. Chron. Sax. a.d. 1046, p. 419.
ward, and presided over that province for nearly ten years; at the end of which he impelled the Northumbrians to rebel, by the asperity of his manners. For finding him unattended, they drove him from the district; not deeming it proper to kill him, from respect to his dignity: but they put to death his attendants both English and Danes, appropriating to their own use, his horses, his arms, and his effects. As soon as this rumour, and the distracted state of the country reached the king, Harold set forward to avenge the outrage. The Northumbrians, though not inferior in point of numbers, yet preferring peace, excused themselves to him for the transaction; averring, that they were a people free-born, and freely educated, and unable to put up with the cruelty of any prince; that they had been taught by their ancestors either to be free, or to die; did the king wish them to be obedient, he should appoint Morcar, the son of Elgar, to preside over them, who would experience how cheerfully they could obey, provided they were treated with gentleness. On hearing this, Harold, who regarded the quiet of the country more than the advantage of his brother, recalled his army, and, after waiting on the king, settled the earldom on Morcar. Tosty, enraged against every one, retired with his wife and children to Flanders, and continued there till the death of Edward: but this I shall delay mentioning, while I record what, as I have learned from ancient men, happened in his time at Rome.

Pope Gregory the Sixth,* first called Gratian, was a man of equal piety and strictness. He found the power of the Roman pontificate so reduced by the negligence of his predecessors, that, with the exception of a few neighbouring towns, and the offerings of the faithful, he had scarcely anything whereto to subsist. The cities and possessions at a distance, which were the property of the church, were forcibly seized by plunderers; the public roads and highways throughout all Italy were thronged with robbers to such a degree, that no pilgrim could pass in safety unless strongly

* "Pagi places the commencement of Gregory's papacy in May 1044, but Ubaldii cites a charter in which the month of August, 1045, is stated to be in the first year of his pontificate. He was deposed at a council held at Sutri, on Christmas-day, A.D. 1046, for having obtained the holy see by simony. Mr. Sharpe remarks that Malmesbury's character of this pope is considered an apocryphal. Compare Rodul Glaber, lib. v. c. 5."—Hardy.
guarded. Swarms of thieves beset every path, nor could the traveller devise any method of escaping them. Their rage was equally bent against the poor and the rich; entreaty or resistance were alike unavailing. The journey to Rome was discontinued by every nation, as each had much rather contribute his money to the churches in his own country, than feed a set of plunderers with the produce of his labours. And what was the state of that city which of old was the only dwelling-place of holiness? Why there an abandoned set of knaves and assassins thronged the very forum. If any one by stratagem eluded the people who lay in wait upon the road, from a desire even at the peril of destruction to see the church of the apostle; yet then, encountering these robbers, he was never able to return home without the loss either of property or of life. Even over the very bodies of the holy apostles and martyrs, even on the sacred altars were swords unsheathed, and the offerings of pilgrims, ere well laid out of their hands, were snatched away and consumed in drunkenness and fornication. By such evils was the papacy of Gregory beset. At first he began to deal gently with his subjects; and, as became a pontiff, rather by love than by terror; he repressed the delinquents more by words than by blows; he entreated the townsmen to abstain from the molestation of pilgrims, and the plunder of sacred offerings. The one, he said, was contrary to nature, that the man who breathed the common air could not enjoy the common peace; that Christians surely ought to have liberty of proceeding whither they pleased among Christians, since they were all of the same household, all united by the tie of the same blood, redeemed by the same price: the other, he said, was contrary to the command of God, who had ordained, that “they who served at the altar, should live by the altar;” moreover, that “the house of God ought to be the house of prayer, not a den of thieves,” nor an assembly of gladiators; that they should allow the offerings to go to the use of the priests, or the support of the poor; that he would provide for those persons whom want had compelled to plunder, by giving them some honest employment to procure their subsistence; that such as were instigated by avaricious desire, should desist immediately for the love of God and the credit of the world. He invited, by mandates
and epistles, those who had invaded the patrimony of the church, to restore what did not belong to them, or else to prove in the Roman senate, that they held it justly; if they would do neither, they must be told that they were no longer members of the church, since they opposed St. Peter, the head of the church, and his vicar. Perpetually haranguing to this effect, and little or nothing profiting by it, he endeavoured to cure the inveterate disorder by having recourse to harsher remedies. He then separated from the body of the church, by the brand of excommunication, all who were guilty of such practices, and even those who associated or conversed with the delinquents. Though he acted strictly according to his duty, yet his diligence in this business had well nigh proved his destruction; for as one says, “He who accuses a mocker, makes himself an enemy,” so the abandoned crew began to kick against this gentle admonition; to utter their threats aloud; to clash their arms around the walls of the city, so as nearly even to kill the pope. Finding it now absolutely necessary to cut short the evil, he procured arms and horses from every side, and equipped troops of horse and foot. Taking possession, in the first place, of the church of St. Peter, he either killed or put to flight the plunderers of the oblations. As fortune appeared to favour his designs, he proceeded farther; and despatching all who dared resist, restored to their original jurisdiction all the estates and towns which had been for a considerable time lost. In this manner, peace, which had been long driven into banishment by the negligence of many, was restored to the country by the exertions of an individual. Pilgrims now began securely to travel on the public ways, which had been deserted; they feasted their eyes with pleasure on the ancient wonders within the city; and, having made their offerings, they returned home with songs of joy. In the meantime the common people of Rome, who had been accustomed to live by theft, began to call him sanguinary, and not worthy to offer sacrifice to God, since he was stained by so many murders; and, as it generally happens that the contagion of slander spreads universally, even the cardinals themselves joined in the sentiments of the people; so that, when this holy man was confined by the sickness which proved his death, they, after consulting among
themselves, with matchless insolence recommended him not to think of ordering himself to be buried in the church of St. Peter with the rest of the popes, since he had polluted his office by being accessory to the death of so many men. Resuming spirit, however, and sternly regarding them, he addressed them in the following manner:

"If you possessed either a single spark of human reason, or of the knowledge of divine truth, you would hardly have approached your pontiff with so inconsiderate an address; for, throughout my whole life, I have dissipated my own patrimony for your advantage, and at last have sacrificed the applause of the world for your rescue. If any other persons were to allege what you urge in defamation of me, it would become you to silence them by explaining away the false opinions of fools. For whom, I pray you, have I laid up treasure? For myself perhaps? and yet I already possessed the treasures of my predecessors, which were enough for any man's covetousness. To whom have I restored safety and liberty? You will reply, to myself perhaps? And yet I was adored by the people, and did, without restraint, whatever I pleased; entire orations teemed with my praises; every day resounded my applause. These praises and these applauses have been lost to me, through my concern for your poverty. Towards you I turned my thoughts; and found that I must adopt severer measures. A sacrilegious robber fattened on the produce of your property, while your subsistence was only from day to day. He, from the offerings belonging to you, was clad in costly silk; while you, in mean and tattered clothing, absolutely grieved my sight. In consequence, when I could endure this no longer, I acted with hostility to others, that I might get credit for the clergy, though at the loss of the citizens. However, I now find I have lavished my favours on the ungrateful; for you publicly proclaim what others mutter only in secret. I approve, indeed, your freedom, but I look in vain for your affection. A dying parent is persecuted by his sons concerning his burial. Will you deny me the house common to all living? The harlot, the usurer, the robber, are not forbidden an entrance to the church, and do you refuse it to the pope? What signifies it whether the dead or the living enter the sanctuary, except it be, that the living is subject to many temptations,
so that he cannot be free from spot even in the church; often finding matter of sin in the very place where he had come to wash it away; whereas the dead knows not how, nay, he who wants only his last sad office, has not the power to sin. What savage barbarity then is it to exclude from the house of God him in whom both the inclination and the power of sinning have ceased! Repent, then, my sons, of your precipitate boldness, if perchance God may forgive you this crime, for you have spoken both foolishly and bitterly even to this present hour. But that you may not suppose me to rest merely on my own authority, listen to reason. Every act of man ought to be considered according to the intention of his heart, that the examination of the deed may proceed to that point whence the design originated; I am deceived if the Truth does not say the same; 'If thine eye be simple thy whole body shall be full of light; if evil, all thy body shall be dark.' A wretched pauper hath often come to me to relieve his distress. As I knew not what was about to happen, I have presented him with divers pieces of money, and dismissed him. On his departure he has met with a thief on the public road, has incautiously fallen into conversation with him, proclaimed the kindness of the apostolical see, and, to prove the truth of his words, produced the purse. On their journey the way has been beguiled with various discourse, until the dissembler, loitering somewhat behind, has felled the stranger with a club, and immediately despatched him; and, after carrying off his money, has boasted of a murder which his thirst for plunder had excited. Can you, therefore, justly accuse me for giving that to a stranger which was the cause of his death? for even the most cruel person would not murder a man unless he hoped to fill his pockets with the money. What shall I say of civil and ecclesiastical laws? By these is not the selfsame fact both punished and approved under different circumstances? The thief is punished for murdering a man in secret, whereas the soldier is applauded who destroys his enemy in battle; the homicide, then, is ignominious in one and laudable in the other, as the latter committed it for the safety of his country, the former for the gratification of his desire for plunder. My predecessor Adrian the First, of renowned memory, was applauded for giving up the investiture of the churches to
Charles the Great; so that no person elected could be consecrated by the bishop till the king had first dignified him with the ring and staff: on the other hand the pontiffs of our time have got credit for taking away these appointments from the princes. What at that time, then, might reasonably be granted, may at the present be reasonably taken away. But why so? Because the mind of Charles the Great was not assailable by avarice, nor could any person easily find access unless he entered by the door. Besides, at so vast a distance, it could not be required of the papal see to grant its consent to each person elected, so long as there was a king at hand who disposed of nothing through avarice, but always appointed religious persons to the churches, according to the sacred ordinances of the canons. At the present time luxury and ambition have beset every king's palace; wherefore the spouse of Christ deservedly asserts her liberty, lest a tyrant should prostitute to an ambitious usurper. Thus, on either side, may my cause be denied or affirmed; it is not the office of a bishop either himself to fight, or to command others to do so; but it belongs to a bishop's function, if he see innocence made shipwreck of, to oppose both hand and tongue. Ezekiel accuses the priests for not strongly opposing and holding forth a shield for the house of Israel in the day of the Lord. Now there are two persons in the church of God, appointed for the purpose of repressing crimes; one who can rebuke sharply; the other, who can wield the sword. I, as you can witness for me, have not neglected my part; as far as I saw it could profit, I did rebuke sharply. I sent a message to him whose business it was to bear the sword; he wrote me word back, that he was occupied in his war with the Vandals, entreat ing me not to spare my labour nor his expense in breaking up the meetings of the plunderers. If I had refused, what excuse could I offer to God after the emperor had delegated his office to me? Could I see the murder of the townspeople, the robbery of the pilgrims, and slumber on? But he who spares a thief, kills the innocent. Yet it will be objected that it is not the part of a priest to defile himself with the blood of any one: I grant it. But he does not defile himself, who frees the innocent by the destruction of the guilty. Blessed, truly blessed, are they who always keep judgment
and do justice. Phineas and Mattathias were priests most renowned in fame, both crowned with the sacred mitre, and both habited in sacerdotal garb; and yet they both punished the wicked with their own hands. The one transfixed the guilty couple with a javelin: the other mingled the blood of the sacrificer with the sacrifice. If then those persons, regarding, as it were, the thick darkness of the law, were, through divine zeal, transported for mysteries, the shadows only of those which were to be; shall we, who see the truth with perfect clearness, suffer our sacred things to be profaned? Azarias the priest drove away king Ozias, when offering incense, and no doubt would have killed him, had he not quickly departed; the divine vengeance, however, anticipated the hand of the priest, for a leprosy preyed on the body of the man whose mind had coveted unlawful things; the devotion of a king was disturbed, and shall not the desires of a thief be so? It is not enough to excuse, I even applaud this my conduct; indeed I have conferred a benefit on the very persons I seem to have destroyed. I have diminished their punishment in accelerating their deaths. The longer a wicked man lives the more he will sin, unless he be such as God hath graciously reserved for a singular example. Death in general is good for all; for by it the just man finds repose in heaven,—the unjust ceases from his crimes,—the bad man puts an end to his guilt,—the good proceeds to his reward,—the saint approaches to the palm,—the sinner looks forward to pardon, because death has fixed a boundary to his transgressions. They then surely ought to thank me, who through my conduct have been exempted from so many sufferings. I have urged these matters in my own defence, and to invalidate your assertions: however, since both your reasoning and mine may be fallacious, let us commit all to the decision of God. Place my body, when laid out in the manner of my predecessors, before the gates of the church; and let them be secured with locks and bars. If God be willing that I should enter, you will hail a miracle; if not, do with my dead body according to your inclination."

Struck by this address, when he had breathed his last, they carried out the remains of the departed prelate before the doors, which were strongly fastened; and presently a
whirlwind, sent by God, broke every opposing bolt, and drove the very doors, with the utmost violence, against the walls. The surrounding people applaud with joy, and the body of the pontiff was interred, with all due respect, by the side of the other popes.

At the same time something similar occurred in England, not by divine miracle, but by infernal craft; which when I shall have related, the credit of the narrative will not be shaken, though the minds of the hearers should be incredulous; for I have heard it from a man of such character, who swore he had seen it, that I should blush to disbelieve. There resided at Berkeley a woman addicted to witchcraft, as it afterwards appeared, and skilled in ancient augury: she was excessively gluttonous, perfectly lascivious, setting no bounds to her debaucheries, as she was not old, though fast declining in life. On a certain day, as she was regaling, a jack-daw, which was a very great favourite, chattered a little more loudly than usual. On hearing which the woman's knife fell from her hand, her countenance grew pale, and deeply groaning, "This day," said she, "my plough has completed its last furrow; to-day I shall hear of, and suffer, some dreadful calamity." While yet speaking, the messenger of her misfortunes arrived; and being asked, why he approached with so distressed an air? "I bring news," said he, "from that village," naming the place, "of the death of your son, and of the whole family, by a sudden accident." At this intelligence, the woman, sorely afflicted, immediately took to her bed, and perceiving the disorder rapidly approaching the vitals, she summoned her surviving children, a monk, and a nun, by hasty letters; and, when they arrived, with faltering voice, addressed them thus: "Formerly, my children, I constantly administered to my wretched circumstances by demoniacal arts: I have been the sink of every vice, the teacher of every allurement: yet, while practising these crimes, I was accustomed to soothe my hapless soul with the hope of your piety. Despairing of myself, I rested my expectations on you; I advanced you as my defenders against evil spirits, my safeguards against my strongest foes. Now, since I have approached the end of my life, and shall have those eager to punish, who lured me to sin, I entreat you by your mother's breasts, if you have any regard, any
affection, at least to endeavour to alleviate my torments; and, although you cannot revoke the sentence already passed upon my soul, yet you may, perhaps, rescue my body, by these means: sew up my corpse in the skin of a stag; lay it on its back in a stone coffin; fasten down the lid with lead and iron; on this lay a stone, bound round with three iron chains of enormous weight; let there be psalms sung for fifty nights, and masses said for an equal number of days, to allay the ferocious attacks of my adversaries. If I lie thus secure for three nights, on the fourth day bury your mother in the ground; although I fear, lest the earth, which has been so often burdened with my crimes, should refuse to receive and cherish me in her bosom." They did their utmost to comply with her injunctions: but alas! vain were pious tears, vows, or entreaties; so great was the woman's guilt, so great the devil's violence. For on the first two nights, while the choir of priests was singing psalms around the body, the devils, one by one, with the utmost ease bursting open the door of the church, though closed with an immense bolt, broke asunder the two outer chains; the middle one being more laboriously wrought, remained entire. On the third night, about cock-crow, the whole monastery seemed to be overthrown from its very foundation, by the clamour of the approaching enemy. One devil, more terrible in appearance than the rest, and of loftier stature, broke the gates to shivers by the violence of his attack. The priests grew motionless with fear,* their hair stood on end, and they became speechless. He proceeded, as it appeared, with haughty step towards the coffin, and calling on the woman by name, commanded her to rise. She replying that she could not on account of the chains: "You shall be loosed," said he, "and to your cost:" and directly he broke the chain, which had mocked the ferocity of the others, with as little exertion as though it had been made of flax. He also beat down the cover of the coffin with his foot, and taking her by the hand, before them all, he dragged her out of the church. At the doors appeared a black horse, proudly neighing, with iron hooks projecting over his whole back; on which the wretched creature was placed, and, immediately, with the whole party, vanished from the eyes of the

* "Steteruntque coma, et vox faucibus hesit."—Virgil, Æneid iii. 48.
beholders; her pitiable cries, however, for assistance, were heard for nearly the space of four miles. No person will deem this incredible, who has read St. Gregory’s Dialogues;* who tells, in his fourth book, of a wicked man that had been buried in a church, and was cast out of doors again by devils. Among the French also, what I am about to relate is frequently mentioned. Charles Martel, a man of renowned valour, who obliged the Saracens, when they had invaded France, to retire to Spain, was, at his death, buried in the church of St. Denys; but as he had seized much of the property of almost all the monasteries in France for the purpose of paying his soldiers, he was visibly taken away from his tomb by evil spirits, and has nowhere been seen to his day. At length this was revealed to the bishop of Orleans, and by him publicly made known.

But to return to Rome: there was a citizen of this place, youthful, rich, and of senatorial rank, who had recently married; and, who calling together his companions, had made a plentiful entertainment. After the repast, when by moderate drinking they had excited hilarity, they went out into the field to promote digestion, either by leaping, or hurling, or some other exercise. The master of the banquet, who was leader of the game, called for a ball to play with, and in the meantime placed the wedding ring on the outstretched finger of a brazen statue which stood close at hand. But when almost all the others had attacked him alone, tired with the violence of the exercise, he left off playing first, and going to resume his ring, he saw the finger of the statue clenched fast in the palm. Finding, after many attempts, that he was unable either to force it off, or to break the finger, he retired in silence; concealing the matter from his companions, lest they should laugh at him at the moment, or deprive him of the ring when he was gone. Returning thither with some servants in the dead of night, he was surprised to find the finger again extended, and the ring taken away. Dissembling his loss, he was soothed by the blandishments of his bride. When the hour of rest arrived, and he had placed himself by the side of his spouse, he was conscious of something dense, and cloud-like, rolling between them, which might be felt, though not seen,

* There are various stories of this kind in Gregory’s Dialogues.
and by this means was impeded in his embraces: he heard a
voice too, saying, "Embrace me, since you wedded me to-
day; I am Venus, on whose finger you put the ring; I have
it, nor will I restore it." Terrified at such a prodigy, he
had neither courage, nor ability to reply, and passed a sleep-
less night in silent reflection upon the matter. A consid-
erable space of time elapsed in this way: as often as he was
desirous of the embraces of his wife, the same circumstance
ever occurred; though in other respects, he was perfectly
equal to any avocation, civil or military. 'At length, urged
by the complaints of his consort, he detailed the matter to
her parents; who, after deliberating for a time, disclosed it
to one Palumbus, a suburban priest. This man was skilled
in necromancy, could raise up magical figures, terrify devils,
and impel them to do anything he chose. 'Making an agree-
ment, that he should fill his purse most plentifully, provided
he succeeded in rendering the lovers happy, he called up all
the powers of his art, and gave the young man a letter
which he had prepared; saying, "Go, at such an hour of
the night, into the high road, where it divides into four
several ways, and stand there in silent expectation. There
will pass by human figures of either sex, of every age, rank,
and condition; some on horseback, some on foot; some with
countenances dejected, others elated with full-swollen inso-
ience; in short, you will perceive in their looks and gestures,
every symptom both of joy and of grief: though these should
address you, enter into conversation with none of them.
This company will be followed by a person taller, and more
corpulent than the rest, sitting in a chariot; to him you will,
in silence, give the letter to read, and immediately your wish
will be accomplished, provided you act with resolution."
The young man took the road he was commanded; and, at
night, standing in the open air, experienced the truth of the
priest's assertion by everything which he saw; there was
nothing but what was completed to a tittle. Among other
passing figures, he beheld a woman, in meretricious garb,
riding on a mule; her hair, which was bound above in a
golden fillet, floated unconfined on her shoulders; in her
hand was a golden wand, with which she directed the pro-
gress of her beast; she was so thinly clad, as to be almost
naked, and her gestures were wonderfully indecent. But
what need of more? At last came the chief, in appearance, who, from his chariot adorned with emeralds and pearls, fixing his eyes most sternly on the young man, demanded the cause of his presence. He made no reply, but stretching out his hand, gave him the letter. The demon, not daring to despise the well-known seal, read the epistle, and immediately, lifting up his hands to heaven, "Almighty God," said he, "in whose sight every transgression is as a noisome smell, how long wilt thou endure the crimes of the priest Palumbus?" The devil then directly sent some of those about him to take the ring by force from Venus, who restored it at last, though with great reluctance. The young man thus obtaining his object, became possessed of his long desired pleasures without farther obstacle; but Palumbus, on hearing of the devil's complaint to God concerning him, understood that the close of his days was predicted. In consequence, making a pitiable atonement by voluntarily cutting off all his limbs, he confessed unheard-of crimes to the pope in the presence of the Roman people.

At that time the body of Pallas, the son of Evander, of whom Virgil speaks, was found entire at Rome, to the great astonishment of all, for having escaped corruption so many ages. Such, however, is the nature of bodies embalmed, that, when the flesh decays, the skin preserves the nerves, and the nerves the bones. The gash which Turnus had made in the middle of his breast measured four feet and a half. His epitaph was found to this effect,

Pallas, Evander's son, lies buried here
In order due, transfixed by Turnus' spear.

Which epitaph I should not think made at the time, though Carmentia the mother of Evander is reported to have discovered the Roman letters, but that it was composed by Ennius, or some other ancient poet.* There was a burning lamp at his head, constructed by magical art; so that no

* The original is as follows:

Filius Evandri Pallas, quem lanceae Turni
Militis occidit, more suo jacet hic.

I am unable to say who was the author of this epigram, but it is not too hazardous to assert that it was not composed either by Ennius or by any other ancient poet.
violent blast, no dripping of water could extinguish it. While many were lost in admiration at this, one person, as there are always some people expert in mischief, made an aperture beneath the flame with an iron style, which introducing the air, the light vanished. The body, when set up against the wall, surpassed it in height, but some days afterwards, being drenched with the drip of the eyes, it acknowledged the corruption common to mortals; the skin and the nerves dissolving.

At that time too, on the confines of Brittany and Normandy, a prodigy was seen in one, or more properly speaking, in two women: there were two heads, four arms, and every other part two-fold to the navel; beneath, were two legs, two feet, and all other parts single. While one was laughing, eating, or speaking, the other would cry, fast, or remain silent; though both mouths ate, yet the excrement was discharged by only one passage. At last, one dying, the other survived, and the living carried about the dead, for the space of three years, till she died also, through the fatigue of the weight, and the stench of the dead carcass,* Many were of opinion, and some even have written, that these women represented England and Normandy, which, though separated by position, are yet united under one master. Whatever wealth these countries greedily absorb, flows into one common receptacle, which is either the covetousness of princes, or the ferocity of surrounding nations. England, yet vigorous, supports with her wealth Normandy now dead and almost decayed, until she herself perhaps shall fall through the violence of spoilers. Happy, if she shall ever again breathe that liberty, the mere shadow of which she has long pursued! She now mourns, borne down with calamity, and oppressed with exactions; the causes of which misery I shall relate, after I have despatched some things pertaining to my subject. For since I have hitherto recorded the civil and military transactions of the kings of England, I

* There seems no reason to doubt the truth of this circumstance, since the exhibition of the Siamese twins, the most extraordinary _lurus naturae_ that has occurred in the nineteenth century. Medical science, aided by comparative anatomy, has ascertained that the bodies of both man and the brute creation are susceptible of combinations—not usually occurring in the course of nature,—which in former times were thought impossible, and as such were universally disbelieved.
may be allowed to expatiate somewhat on the sanctity of cer-
tain of them; and at the same time to contemplate what
splendour of divine love beamed on this people, from the first
dawning of their faith: since I believe you can no where
find the bodies of so many saints entire after death, typifying
the state of final incorruption. I imagine this to have taken
place by God's agency, in order that a nation, situated, as it
were, almost out of the world, should more confidently em-
brace the hope of a resurrection from the contemplation of
the incorruption of the saints. There are, altogether, five
which I have known of, though the residents in many places
boast of more; Saint Etheldrida,* and Werburga, virgins;
king Edmund; archbishop Elphege;† Cuthbert the ancient
father: who with skin and flesh unwasted, and their joints
flexile, appear to have a certain vital warmth about them,
and to be merely sleeping. Who can enumerate all the other
saints, of different ranks and professions? whose names and
lives, singly to describe, I have neither intention nor leisure:
yet oh that I might hereafter have leisure! But I will be
silent, lest I should seem to promise more than I can per-
form. In consequence, it is not necessary to mention any of
the commonalty, but merely, not to go out of the path of my
subject history, the male and female scions of the royal stock,
most of them innocently murdered; and who have been con-
secrated martyrs, not by human conjecture, but by divine
acknowledgment. Hence may be known how little indulg-
ence they gave to the lust of pleasure, who inherited etern-
al glory by means of so easy a death.

In the former book, my history dwelt for some time on the
praises of the most holy Oswald, king and martyr; among
whose other marks of sanctity, was this, which, according to
some copies, is related in the History of the Angles.‡ In
the monastery at Selsey, which Wilfrid of holy memory had

* Sometimes called St. Audry. She was abbess of Ely monastery. St.
Werburga was patroness of Chester monastery.
† Archbishop of Canterbury, from A.D. 1006 to 1012. See Sax. Chroni-
cle, pp. 402, 403.
‡ Bede, book iv. chap. 14. There are some MSS. which want this
chapter. The former editor of Bede accounts for it very satisfactorily;
stating that a very ancient MS. in the Cotton Collection has a note mark-
ing that a leaf was here wanting; and that those which want the chapter
were transcripts of this imperfect MS.
filled with Northumbrian monks, a dreadful malady broke out, and destroyed numbers; the remainder endeavoured to avert the pestilence by a fast of three days. On the second day of the fast, the blessed apostles Peter and Paul, appearing to a youth who was sick with the disorder, animated him by observing: "That he should not fear approaching death, as it would be a termination of his present illness, and an entrance into eternal life; that no other person of that monastery would die of this disorder, because God had granted this to the merits of the noble king Oswald, who was that very day supplicating for his countrymen: for it was on this day that the king, murdered by the faithless, had in a moment ascended to the heavenly tribunal: that they should search, therefore, in the scroll, in which the names of the dead were written, and if they found it so, they should put an end to the fast, give loose to security and joy, and sing solemn masses to God, and to the holy king." This vision being quickly followed by the death of the boy, and the anniversary of the martyr being found in the martyrology, and at the same time the cessation of the disorder being attested by the whole province, the name of Oswald was from that period inserted among the martyrs, which before, on account of his recent death, had only been admitted into the list of the faithful. Deservedly, I say, then, deservedly is he to be celebrated, whose glory the divine approbation so signally manifested, as to order him to be dignified with masses, in a manner, as I think, not usual among men. The undoubted veracity of the historian precludes the possibility of supposing this matter to be false; as does also the blessed bishop Acca,* who was the friend of the author.

Egbert, king of Kent, the son of Erconbert, whom I have mentioned before, had some very near relations, descended from the royal line; their names were Ethelred† and Ethelbert, the sons of Ermenred his uncle. Apprehensive that they might grow up with notions of succeeding to the kingdom, and fearful for his safety, he kept them about him for some time, with very homely entertainment: and, at last, grudging them his regards, he removed them from his court.

* Acca, bishop of Hexham, A.D. 710, and a great friend of venerable Bede, who inscribed to him many of his works.
† Or Elbert. See b. i. c. i. p. 18.
Soon after, when they had been secretly despatched by one of his servants named Thunre, which signifies Thunder, he buried them under heaps of rubbish, thinking that a murder perpetrated in privacy would escape detection. The eye of God however, which no secrets of the heart can deceive, brought the innocents to light, vouchsafing many cures upon the spot; until the neighbours, being roused, dug up the unsightly heaps of turf and rubbish cast upon their bodies, and forming a trench after the manner of a sepulchre, they erected a small church over it. There they remained till the time of king Edgar, when they were taken up by St. Oswald, archbishop* of Worcester, and conveyed to the monastery of Ramsey; from which period, granting the petitions of the suppliant, they have manifested themselves by many miracles.

Offa king of the Mercians murdered many persons of consequence for the security, as he supposed, of his kingdom, without any distinction of friend or foe; among these was king Ethelbert;† thereby being guilty of an atrocious outrage against the suitor of his daughter. His unmerited death, however, is thought to have been amply avenged by the short reign of Offa's son. Indeed God signalised his sanctity by such evident tokens, that at this very day the episcopal church of Hereford is consecrated to his name. Nor should any thing appear idle or irrelevant, which our pious and religious ancestors have either tolerated by their silence, or confirmed by their authority.

What shall my pen here trace worthy of St. Kenelm, a youth of tender age? Kenulf, king of the Mercians, his father, had consigned him, when seven years old, to his sister Quendrida, for the purpose of education. But she, falsely entertaining hopes of the kingdom for herself, gave her little brother in charge to a servant of her household, with an order to despatch him. Taking out the innocent, under pretence of hunting for his amusement or recreation, he murdered and hid him in a thicket. But strange to tell, the crime which had been so secretly committed in England, gained publicity in Rome, by God's agency: for a dove, from heaven, bore a parchment scroll to the altar of St. Peter, containing an exact account both of his death and

* He was at the same time bishop of Worcester, and archbishop of York. See b. i. c. 4, p. 78.
place of burial. As this was written in the English language it was vainly attempted to be read by the Romans and men of other nations who were present. Fortunately, however, and opportunehly, an Englishman was at hand, who translated the writing to the Roman people, into Latin, and gave occasion to the pope to write a letter to the kings of England, acquainting them with the martyrdom of their countryman. In consequence of this the body of the innocent was taken up in presence of a numerous assembly, and removed to Winchcomb. The murderous woman was so indignant at the vocal chant of the priests and loud applause of the laity, that she thrust out her head from the window of the chamber where she was standing, and, by chance, having in her hands a psalter, she came in course of reading to the psalm "O God my praise," which, for I know not what charm, reading backwards, she endeavoured to drown the joy of the choristers. At that moment, her eyes; torn by divine vengeance from their hollow sockets, scattered blood upon the verse which runs, "This is the work of them who defame me to the Lord, and who speak evil against my soul." The marks of her blood are still extant, proving the cruelty of the woman, and the vengeance of God. The body of the little saint is very generally adored, and there is hardly any place in England more venerated, or where greater numbers of persons attend at the festival; and this arising from the long-continued belief of his sanctity, and the constant exhibition of miracles.

Nor shall my history be wanting in thy praise, Wistan,* blessed youth, son of Wimund, son of Withlaf king of the Mercians, and of Elfleda, daughter of Ceolwulf, who was the uncle of Kenelm; I will not, I say, pass thee over in silence, whom Berfert thy relation so atrociously murdered. And let posterity know, if they deem this history worthy of perusal, that there was nothing earthly more praiseworthy than your disposition; at which a deadly assassin becoming irritated, despatched you: nor was there anything more innocent than your purity towards God; invited by which, the secret Judge deemed it fitting to honour you: for a pillar of light, sent down from heaven, piercing the sable robe of night.

* "Concerning St. Wistan, consult MSS. Harl. 2255. De Martyrio S. Wistani."—Hardy.
revealed the wickedness of the deep cavern, and brought to
view the crime of the murderer. In consequence, Wistan's
venerable remains were taken up, and by the care of his rela-
tions conveyed to Rependun;* at that time a famous monas-
tery, now a villa belonging to the earl of Chester, and its
glory grown obsolete with age; but at present thou dwellest
at Evesham, kindly favouring the petitions of such as regard
thea.

Bede has related many anecdotes of the sanctity of the
kings of the East Saxons, and East Angles, whose genealogy
I have in the first book of this work traced briefly; because
I could no where find a complete history of the kings. I
shall however, dilate somewhat on St. Edmund, who held
domination in East Anglia, and to whom the time of Bede did
not extend. This province, on the south and east, is sur-
rrounded by the ocean; on the north, by deep lakes, and
stagnant pools, which, stretching out a vast distance in
length, with a breadth of two or three miles, afford abun-
dance of fish for the use of the inhabitants; on the west it
is continuous with the rest of the island, but defended by
the earth's being thrown up in the form of a rampart.† The
soil is admirable for pasture, and for hunting; it is full of
monasteries, and large bodies of monks are settled on the
islands of these stagnant waters; the people are a merry,
pleasant, jovial race, though apt to carry their jokes to ex-
cess. Here, then, reigned Edmund; a man devoted to God,
ennobled by his descent from ancient kings, and though he
presided over the province in peace for several years, yet
never through the effeminacy of the times did he relax his
virtue. Hingwar and Hubba, two leaders of the Danes, came
ever to depopulate the provinces of the Northumbrians and
East Angles. The former of these seized the unresisting
king, who had cast away his arms and was lying on the
ground in prayer, and, after the infliction of torture,‡ be-
headed him. On the death of this saintly man, the purity of
his past life was evidenced by unheard-of miracles. The
Danes had cast away the head, when severed from the body

* Bapton.
† Thought to be the Devil's Dyke, on Newmarket
Heath.
‡ He was tied to a tree, and shot to death with arrows. Abbo Floris-
censis.
by the cruelty of the executioners, and it had been hidden in a thicket. While his subjects, who had tracked the footsteps of the enemy as they departed, were seeking it, intending to solemnize with due honour the funeral rites of their king, they were struck with the pleasing intervention of God; for the lifeless head uttered a voice, inviting all who were in search of it to approach. A wolf, a beast accustomed to prey upon dead carcasses, was holding it in its paws, and guarding it untouched; which animal also, after the manner of a tame creature, gently followed the bearers to the tomb, and neither did nor received any injury. The sacred body was then, for a time, committed to the earth; turf was placed over it, and a wooden chapel, of tripping cost, erected. The negligent natives, however, were soon made sensible of the virtue of the martyr, which excited their listless minds to reverence him, by the miracles which he performed. And though perhaps the first proof of his power may appear weak and trivial, yet nevertheless I shall subjoin it. He bound, with invisible bands; some thieves who had endeavoured to break into the church by night; this was done in the very attempt; a pleasant spectacle enough, to see the plunder hold fast the thief, so that he could neither desist from the enterprise, nor complete the design. In consequence, Theodred bishop of London, who lies at St. Paul’s, removed the lasting disgrace of so mean a structure, by building a nobler edifice over those sacred limbs, which evidenced the glory of his unspotted soul, by surprising soundness, and a kind of milky whiteness. The head, which was formerly divided from the neck, is again united to the rest of the body showing only the sign of martyrdom by a purple seam. One circumstance indeed surpasses human miracles, which is, that the hair and nails of the dead man continue to grow: these, Oswen, a holy woman, used yearly to clip and cut, that they might be objects of veneration to posterity. Truly this was a holy temperly, for a woman to contemplate and handle limbs superior to the whole of this world. Not so Leedston, a youth of bold and untamed insolence, who, with many impertinent threats, commanded the body of the martyr to be shown to him; for he was desirous, as he said, of settling the uncertainty of report, by the testimony of his own eyesight. He paid dearly, however, for his audacious expect-
ment; for he became insane, and shortly after, died, swarming with vermin. He felt indeed that Edmund was now capable of doing, what he before used to do; that is,

“To spare the suppliant, but confound the proud,”

by which means he so completely engaged the inhabitants of all Britain to him, that every person looked upon himself as particularly happy, in contributing either money or gifts to St. Edmund’s monastery: even kings themselves, who rule others, used to boast of being his servants, and sent him their royal crown; redeeming it, if they wished to use it, at a great price. The exactors of taxes also, who, in other places, gave loose to injustice, were there suppliant, and ceased their cavilling at St. Edmund’s boundary,* admonished thereto by the punishment of others who had presumed to overpass it.

My commendations shall also glance at the names of some maidens of the royal race, though I must claim indulgence for being brief upon the subject, not through fastidiousness, but because I am unsquainted with their miracles. Anna king of the East Angles had three daughters, Etheldrida, Ethelberga, and Sexberga. Etheldrida, though married to two husbands, yet by means of saintly continence, as Bede relates, without any diminution of modesty, without a single lustful inclination, triumphantly displayed to heaven the palm of perpetual virginity. Ethelberga, first a nun, and afterwards abbess, in a monastery in France called Brigia,† was celebrated for unblemished chastity; and it is well worthy of remark, that as both sisters had subdued the lusts of the flesh while living, so, when dead, their bodies remained uncorrupt, the one in England, and the other in France; insomuch, that their sanctity, which is abundantly resplendent, may suffice

“To cast its radiance over both the poles.”

Sexberga was married to Erconbert king of Kent, and, after his death, took the veil in the same monastery where her sister Etheldrida was proclaimed a saint. She had two daughters by king Erconbert, Earcongota and Ermenhilda.

* This boundary is said to have been formed by Cnut, in consequence of his father Sweyn having been killed by St. Edmund in a vision for attempting to plunder his territory. See Malm. de Gest. Pontif. lib. ii. f. 136, b. edit. Lond.  † Faremoutier in Brie.
Of Ercongastos, such as wish for information will find it in Bede;* Ermenhilda married Wulfhere, king of the Mercians, and had a daughter, Werburga, a most holy virgin. Both are saints: the mother, that is to say, St. Ermenhilda, rests at Ely, where she was abess after her mother, Sexberga; and the daughter lies at Chester, in the monastery of that city, which Hugo earl of Chester, ejecting a few canons who resided there in a mean and irregular manner, has recently erected. The praises and miracles of both these women, and particularly of the younger, are there extolled and held in veneration; and though they are favourable to all petitions without delay, yet are they more especially kind and assistant to the supplications of women and youths.

Merewald the brother of Wulfhere, by Ermenburga, the daughter of Ermengred brother of Erconbert king of Kent, had two daughters: Mildritha and Milburga. Mildritha, dedicating herself to celibacy, ended her days in the Isle of Thanet in Kent, which king Egbert had given to her mother, to atone for the murder of her brothers, Ethelred and Ethelbert.† In after times, being transferred to St. Augustine's monastery at Canterbury, she is there honoured by the marked attention of the monks, and celebrated equally for her kindness and affability to all, as her name‡ implies. And although almost every corner of that monastery is filled with the bodies of saints of great name and merit, any one of which would be of itself sufficient to irradiate all England, yet no one is there more revered, more loved, or more gratefully remembered; and she, turning a deaf ear to none who love her, is present to them in the salvation of their souls.

Milburga reposes at Wenlock.§ Formerly well known to the neighbouring inhabitants; but for some time after the arrival of the Normans, through ignorance of the place of her burial, she was neglected. Lately, however, a convent of

* Hist. Eccl. b. iii. c. 8, p. 122.
† In b. i. c. 1, p. 15, it is said the compensation for their murder was made to their mother; but here she is called their sister, which is the general account. When it was left to her to estimate this compensation (i.e. their weragild), she asked as much land as her stag should compass, at one course, in the Isle of Thanet; where she founded the monastery of Minster. Vide W. Thorn. col. 1910, and Natale S. Mildrythas (Saxonice), M.S. Cott. Calig. A. xiv. 4. ‡ "Mild" gentle. § In Shropshire.
Clunyiac monks being established there, while a new church was erecting, a certain boy running violently along the pavement, broke into the hollow of the vault, and discovered the body of the virgin; when a balsamic odour pervading the whole church, she was taken up, and performed so many miracles, that the people flocked thither in great multitudes. Large spreading plains could hardly contain the troops of pilgrims, while rich and poor came side by side, one common faith impelling all. Nor did the event deceive their expectations: for no one departed, without either a perfect cure, or considerable abatement of his malady, and some were even healed of the king's evil, by the merits of this virgin, when medical assistance was unavailing.

Edward the Elder, of whom I have before spoken at large, had by his wife Edgiva, several daughters. Among these was Eadburga, who, when she was scarcely three years old, gave a singular indication of her future sanctity. Her father was inclined to try whether the little girl was inclined to God, or to the world, and had placed in a chamber the symbols of different professions; on one side a chalice, and the gospels; on the other, bracelets and necklaces. Hither the child was brought in the arms of her indulgent attendant, and, sitting on her father's knee, was desired to choose which she pleased. Rejecting the earthly ornaments with stern regard, she instantly fell prostrate before the chalice and the gospels, and worshipped them with infant adoration. The company present exclaimed aloud, and fondly hailed the prospect of the child's future sanctity; her father embraced the infant in a manner still more endearing. "Go," said he, "whither the Divinity calls thee; follow with prosperous steps the spouse whom thou hast chosen, and truly blessed shall my wife and myself be, if we are surpassed in holiness by our daughter." When clothed in the garb of a nun, she gained the affection of all her female companions in the city of Winchester, by the marked attention she paid them. Nor did the greatness of her birth elevate her; as she esteemed it noble to stoop to the service of Christ. Her sanctity increased with her years, her humility kept pace with her growth; so that she used secretly to steal away the sacks of the several nuns at night, and, carefully washing and anointing them, lay them again upon their beds. Wherefore,
though God signalized her, while living, by many miracles, yet I more particularly bring forward this circumstance, to show that charity began all her works, and humility completed them: and finally, many miracles in her life-time, and since her death, confirm the devotion of her heart and the incorruptness of her body, which the attendants at her churches at Winchester and Pershore relate to such as are unacquainted with them.

St. Editha, the daughter of king Edgar, ennobles, with her relics, the monastery of Wilton, where she was buried, and cherishes that place with her regard, where, trained from her infancy in the school of the Lord, she gained his favour by unsullied virginity, and constant watchings: repressing the pride of her high birth by her humility. I have heard one circumstance of her, from persons of elder days, which greatly staggered the opinions of men: for she led them into false conclusions from the splendour of her costly dress; being always habited in richer garb than the sanctity of her profession seemed to require. On this account, being openly rebuked by St. Ethelwold, she is reported to have answered with equal point and wit, that the judgment of God was true and irrefragable, while that of man, alone, was fallible; for pride might exist even under the garb of wretchedness: wherefore, “I think,” said she, “that a mind may be as pure beneath these vestments, as under your tattered furs.” The bishop was deeply struck by this speech; admitting its truth by his silence, and blushing with pleasure that he had been chastised by the sparkling repartee of the lady, he held his peace. St. Dunstan had observed her, at the consecration of the church of St. Denys, which she had built out of affection to that martyr, frequently stretching out her right thumb, and making the sign of the cross upon her forehead; and being extremely delighted at it, “May this finger,” he exclaimed, “never see corruption;” and immediately, while celebrating mass, he burst into such a flood of tears, that he alarmed with his faltering voice an assistant standing near him; who inquiring the reason of it, “Soon,” said he, “shall this blooming rose wither; soon shall this beloved bird take its flight to God, after the expiration of six weeks from this time.” The truth of the prelate’s prophecy was very shortly fulfilled; for on the appointed day, this noble, firmly-minded
lady, expired in her prime, at the age of twenty-three years. Soon after, the same saint saw, in a dream, St. Denys kindly taking the virgin by the hand, and strictly enjoining, by divine command, that she should be honoured by her servants on earth, in the same manner as she was venerated by her spouse and master in heaven. Miracles multiplying at her tomb, it was ordered, that her virgin body should be taken up, and exalted in a shrine; when the whole of it was found resolved into dust, except the finger, with the abdomen and parts adjacent. In consequence of which, some debate arising, the virgin herself appeared, in a dream, to one of those who had seen her remains, saying, "It was no wonder, if the other parts of the body had decayed, since it was customary for dead bodies to moulder to their native dust, and she, perhaps, as a girl, had sinned with those members; but it was highly just, that the abdomen should see no corruption which had never felt the sting of lust; as she had been entirely free from gluttony or carnal copulation."

Truly both these virgins support their respective monasteries by their merits; each of them being filled with large assemblies of nuns, who answer obediently to the call of their mistresses and patronesses, inviting them to virtue. Happy the man, who becomes partaker of those virgin orisons which the Lord Jesus favours with kind regard. For, as I have remarked of the nuns of Shaftesbury, all virtues have long since quitted the earth, and retired to heaven; or, if any where, (but this I must say with the permission of holy men,) are to be found only in the hearts of nuns; and surely those women are highly to be praised, who, regardless of the weakness of their sex, vie with each other in the preservation of their continence, and by such means ascend, triumphant, to heaven.

I think it of importance to have been acquainted with many of the royal family of either sex; as it may be gathered from thence that king Edward, concerning whom I was speaking before I digressed, by no means degenerated from the virtues of his ancestors. In fact he was famed both for miracles, and for the spirit of prophecy, as I shall hereafter relate. In the exaction of taxes he was sparing, and he abominated the insolence of collectors: in eating and drinking he was free from the voluptuousness which his
state allowed: on the more solemn festivals, though dressed in robes interwoven with gold, which the queen had most splendidly embroidered, yet still he had such forbearance, as to be sufficiently majestic, without being haughty; considering in such matters, rather the bounty of God, than the pomp of the world. There was one earthly enjoyment in which he chiefly delighted; which was, hunting with fleet hounds, whose opening in the woods he used with pleasure to encourage: and again, with the pouncing of birds, whose nature it is to prey on their kindred species. In these exercises, after hearing divine service in the morning, he employed himself whole days. In other respects he was a man by choice devoted to God, and lived the life of an angel in the administration of his kingdom. To the poor and to the stranger, more especially foreigners and men of religious orders, he was kind in invitation, munificent in his presents, and constantly exciting the monks of his own country to imitate their holiness. He was of a becoming stature; his beard and hair milk-white; his countenance florid; fair throughout his whole person; and his form of admirable proportion.

The happiness of his times had been revealed in a dream to Brithwin bishop of Wilton, who had made it public. For in the time of Canute, when, at Glastonbury, he was once intent on heavenly watchings, and the thought of the near extinction of the royal race of the Angles, which frequently distressed him, came into his mind, sleep stole upon him thus meditating; when behold! he was rapt on high, and saw Peter, the chief of the apostles, consecrating Edward, who at that time was an exile in Normandy, king; his chaste life too was pointed out, and the exact period of his reign, twenty-four years, determined; and, when inquiring about his posterity, it was answered, “The kingdom of the English belongs to God; after you he will provide a king according to his pleasure.”

But now to speak of his miracles. A young woman had married a husband of her own age, but having no issue by the union, the humours collecting abundantly about her neck, she had contracted a sore disorder; the glands swelling in a dreadful manner. Admonished in a dream to have the part affected washed by the king, she entered the palace, and
the king himself fulfilled this labour of love, by rubbing the
woman's neck with his fingers dipped in water. Joyous
health followed his healing hand: the lurid skin opened, so
that worms flowed out with the purulent matter, and the
tumour subsided. But as the orifice of the ulcers was large
and unsightly, he commanded her to be supported at the
royal expense till she should be perfectly cured. However,
before a week was expired, a fair, new skin returned, and
hid the scars so completely, that nothing of the original
wound could be discovered: and within a year becoming the
mother of twins, she increased the admiration of Edward's
holiness. Those who knew him more intimately, affirm that
he often cured this complaint in Normandy: whence appears
how false is their notion, who in our times assert, that the
cure of this disease does not proceed from personal sanctity,
but from hereditary virtue in the royal line.

A certain man, blind from some unknown mischance, had
persisted in asserting about the palace, that he should be
cured, if he could touch his eyes with the water in which
the king's hands had been washed. This was frequently
related to Edward, who derided it, and looked angrily on the
persons who mentioned it; confessing himself a sinner, and
that the works of holy men did not belong to him. But the
servants, thinking this a matter not to be neglected, tried the
experiment when he was ignorant of it, and was praying in
church. The instant the blind man was washed with the
water, the long-enduring darkness fled from his eyes, and
they were filled with joyful light; and the king, inquiring
the cause of the grateful clamour of the by-standers, was
informed of the fact. Presently afterwards, when, by
thrusting his fingers towards the eyes of the man he had
cured, and perceiving him draw back his head to avoid
them, he had made proof of his sight, he, with uplifted hands,
returned thanks to God. In the same way he cured a blind
man at Lincoln, who survived him many years, a proof of
the royal miracle.

That you may know the perfect virtue of this prince, in
the power of healing more especially, I shall add something
which will excite your wonder. Wulwin, surnamed Spillevorvs,
the son of Wulmar of Nutgarshale, was one day
cutting timber in the wood of Bruelle, and indulging in a
long sleep after his labour, he lost his sight for seventeen
years, from the blood, as I imagine, stagnating about his
eyes: at the end of this time, he was admonished in a
dream to go round to eighty-seven churches, and earnestly
entreat a cure of his blindness from the saints. At last he
came to the king's court, where he remained for a long time,
in vain, in opposition to the attendants, at the vestibule of
his chamber. He still continued importunate, however,
without being deterred, till at last, after much difficulty, he
was admitted by order of the king. When he had heard the
dream, he mildly answered, "By my lady St. Mary, I shall
be truly grateful, if God, through my means, shall choose to
take pity upon a wretched creature." In consequence,
though he had no confidence in himself, with respect to
miracles, yet, at the instigation of his servants, he placed his
hand, dipped in water, on the blind man. In a moment the
blood dripped plentifully from his eyes, and the man, restored
to sight, exclaimed with rapture, "I see you, O king! I see
you, O king!" In this recovered state, he had charge of
the royal palace at Windsor, for there the cure had been
performed, for a long time; surviving his restorer several
years. On the same day, from the same water, three blind
men, and a man with one eye, who were supported on the
royal arms, received a cure; the servants administering the
healing water with perfect confidence.

On Easter-day, he was sitting at table at Westminster,
with the crown on his head, and surrounded by a crowd of
nobles. While the rest were greedily eating, and making up
for the long fast of Lent by the newly provided viands, he,
with mind abstracted from earthly things, was absorbed in
the contemplation of some divine matter, when presently he
excited the attention of the guests by bursting into profuse
laughter: and as none presumed to inquire into the cause of his
joy, he remained silent as before, till satiety had put an end
to the banquet. After the tables were removed, and as he
was unrobing in his chamber, three persons of rank followed
him; of these earl Harold was one, the second was an abbat,
and the third a bishop, who presuming on their intimacy
asked the cause of his laughter, observing, that it seemed just
matter of astonishment to see him, in such perfect tranquility
both of time and occupation, burst into a vulgar laugh, while
all others were silent. "I saw something wonderful," said he, "and therefore I did not laugh without a cause." At
this, as is the custom of mankind, they began to inquire and
search into the matter more earnestly, entreating that he
would condescend to disclose it to them. After much reluct-
ance, he yielded to their persevering solicitations, and re-
lated the following wonderful circumstance, saying, that the
Seven Sleepers in mount Cælius had now lain for two hun-
dred years on their right side, but that, at the very hour of
his laughter, they turned upon their left; that they would
continue to lie in this manner for seventy-four years, which
would be a dreadful omen to wretched mortals. For every
thing would come to pass, in these seventy-four years, which
the Lord had foretold to his disciples concerning the end of
the world; nation would rise against nation, and kingdom
against kingdom; earthquakes would be in divers places;
pestilence and famine, terrors from heaven and great signs;
changes in kingdoms; wars of the gentiles against the Chris-
tians, and also victories of the Christians over the pagans.
Relating these matters to his wondering audience, he de-
scented on the passion of these sleepers, and the make of
their bodies, though totally unnoticed in history, as readily
as though he had lived in daily intercourse with them. On
hearing this the earl sent a knight; the bishop a clergymen;
and the abbot a monk, to Maniches the Constantinopolitan
emperor, to investigate the truth of his declaration; adding
letters and presents from the king. After being kindly
entertained, Maniches sent them to the bishop of Epheus,
giving them at the same time what is called a holy letter,
that the martyr-relics of the Seven Sleepers should be shown
to the delegates of the king of England.* It fell out that

* The Seven Sleepers were inhabitants of Ephesus; six were persons of
some consequence, the seventh their servant. During the Decian persecu-
tion they retired to a cave, whence they despatched their attendant occasional-
ly to purchase food for them. Decius, hearing this, ordered the mouth of the
cave to be stopped up while the fugitives were sleeping. After a lapse of some
hundred years, a part of the masonry at the mouth of the cave falling, the
light flowing in awakened them. Thinking they had enjoyed a good night's
rest, they despatched their servant to buy provision. He finds all appear
strange in Ephesus, and a whimsical dialogue takes place, the citizens
accusing him of having found hidden treasure, he persisting that he offered
the current coin of the empire. At length the attention of the emperor
the presage of king Edward was proved by all the Greeks, who could swear they had heard from their fathers that the men were lying on their right side; but after the entrance of the English into the vault, they published the truth of the foreign prophecy to their countrymen. Nor was it long before the predicted evils came to pass; for the Hagarens, and Arabs, and Turks, nations averse to Christ, making havoc of the Christians, overran Syria, and Lycia, and Asia Minor altogether, devastating many cities too of Asia Major, among which was Ephesus, and even Jerusalem itself. At the same time, on the death of Maniches emperor of Constantinople, Diogenes, and Michaelius, and Bucinacius, and Alexius, in turn hurled each other headlong from the throne; the last of whom, continuing till our time, left for heir his son John more noted for cunning and deceit than worth. He contrived many hurtful plots against the pilgrims on their sacred journey; but venerating the fidelity of the English, he showed them every civility, and transmitted his regard for them to his son.* In the next seven years were three popes, Victor, Stephen, Nicholas,† who diminished the vigour of the papacy by their successive deaths. Almost immediately afterwards too died Henry, the pious emperor of the Romans, and had for successor Henry his son, who brought many calamities on the city of Rome by his folly and his wickedness. The same year Henry, king of France, a good and active warrior, died by poison. Soon after a comet, a star denoting, as they say, change in kingdoms, appeared trailing its extended and fiery train along the sky. Wherefore a certain monk of our monastery,‡ by name Elmer, bowing down with terror at the sight of the brilliant star, wisely exclaimed, “Thou art come! a matter of lamentation to many a mother art thou come; I have seen

is excited, and he goes in company with the bishop to visit them. They relate their story and shortly after expire. In consequence of the miracle they were considered as martyrs. See Capgrave, Legenda Nova.

* On the Norman conquest many English fled to Constantinople, where they were eagerly received by Alexius, and opposed to the Normans under Robert Guiscard: Orderic. Vitalis, p. 506.

† Victor II. succeeded Leo IX. in 1056, and died in 1057. Stephen or Frederic, brother of duke Godofroi, succeeded Victor II. on the second of August, 1057, and Nicolaus became pope in 1059.

‡ That is, of Malmesbury. This Elmer is not to be confounded with Elmer or Ailmer prior of Canterbury.
thee long since; but I now behold thee much more terrible, threatening to hurl destruction on this country." He was a man of good learning for those times, of mature age, and in his early youth had hazarded an attempt of singular temerity. He had by some contrivance fastened wings to his hands and feet, in order that, looking upon the fable as true, he might fly like Daedalus, and collecting the air on the summit of a tower, had flown for more than the distance of a furlong; but, agitated by the violence of the wind and the current of air, as well as by the consciousness of his rash attempt, he fell and broke his legs, and was lame ever after. He used to relate as the cause of his failure, his forgetting to provide himself a tail.

Another prophecy similar to this, Edward uttered when dying, which I shall here anticipate. When he had lain two days speechless, on the third, sadly and deeply sighing as he awoke from his torpor, "Almighty God," said he, "as this shall be a real vision, or a vain illusion, which I have seen, grant me the power of explaining it, or not, to the bystanders." Soon after speaking fluently, "I saw just now," continued he, "two monks near me, whom formerly, when a youth in Normandy, I knew both to have lived in a most religious manner, and to have died like perfect Christians. These men, announcing themselves as the messengers of God, spake to the following effect: 'Since the chiefs of England, the dukes, bishops, and abbots, are not the ministers of God, but of the devil, God, after your death, has delivered this kingdom for a year and a day, into the hand of the enemy, and devils shall wander over all the land.' And when I said that I would show these things to my people; and promised that they should liberate themselves by repentance, after the old example of the Ninevites; 'Neither of these,' said they, 'shall take place; for they will not repent, nor will God have mercy on them.' When then, said I, may cessation from such great calamities be hoped for? They replied, 'Whenever a green tree shall be cut through the middle, and the part cut off, being carried the space of three acres from the trunk, shall, without any assistance, become again united to its stem, bud out with flowers, and stretch forth its fruit, as before, from the sap again uniting; then may a cessation of such evils be at last expected.'
Though others were apprehensive of the truth of this prediction, yet Stigand, at that time archbishop, received it with laughter; saying, that the old man doted through disease. We, however, find the truth of the presage experimentally; for England is become the residence of foreigners, and the property of strangers: at the present time, there is no Englishman, either earl, bishop, or abbat; strangers all, they prey upon the riches and vitals of England; nor is there any hope of a termination to this misery. The cause of which evil, as I have long since promised, it is now high time that my narrative should endeavour briefly to disclose.

King Edward declining into years, as he had no children himself, and saw the sons of Godwin growing in power, despatched messengers to the king of Hungary, to send over Edward, the son of his brother Edmund, with all his family: intending, as he declared, that either he, or his sons, should succeed to the hereditary kingdom of England, and that his own want of issue should be supplied by that of his kindred. Edward came in consequence, but died almost immediately at St. Paul’s* in London: he was neither valiant, nor a man of abilities. He left three surviving children; that is to say, Edgar, who, after the death of Harold, was by some elected king; and who, after many revolutions of fortune, is now living wholly retired in the country, in extreme old age: Christina, who grew old at Romsey in the habit of a nun: Margaret, whom Malcolm king of the Scots espoused. Blessed with a numerous offspring, her sons were Edgar, and Alexander, who reigned in Scotland after their father in due succession: for the eldest, Edward, had fallen in battle with his father; the youngest, David, noted for his meekness and discretion, is at present king of Scotland. * Her daughters were, Matilda, whom in our time king Henry has married, and Maria, whom Eustace the younger, earl of Boulogne, espoused. The king, in consequence of the death of his relation, losing his first hope of support, gave the succession of England to William earl of Normandy.† He was well worthy of such a gift, being a young man of superior mind, who had raised himself to the highest eminence by his un-

* Died and was buried at St. Paul’s. Sax. Chron. A. 1067.
† It is hardly necessary to observe, that the succession of William is one of the most obscure points in our history.
woreried exertion: moreover, he was his nearest relation by consanguinity, as he was the son of Robert, the son of Richard the second, whom we have repeatedly mentioned as the brother of Emma, Edward’s mother. Some affirm that Harold himself was sent into Normandy by the king for this purpose: others, who knew Harold’s more secret intentions, say, that being driven thither against his will, by the violence of the wind, he imagined this device, in order to extricate himself. This, as it appears nearest the truth, I shall relate. Harold being at his country-seat at Bosham,* went for recreation on board a fishing boat, and, for the purpose of prolonging his sport, put out to sea; when a sudden tempest arising, he was driven with his companions on the coast of Ponthieu. The people of that district, as was their native custom, immediately assembled from all quarters; and Harold’s company, unarmed and few in number, were, as it easily might be, quickly overpowered by an armed multitude, and bound hand and foot. Harold, craftily meditating a remedy for this mischance, sent a person, whom he had allured by very great promises, to William, to say, that he had been sent into Normandy by the king, for the purpose of expressly confirming, in person, the message which had been imperfectly delivered by people of less authority; but that he was detained in fetters by Guy, earl of Ponthieu, and could not execute his embassy: that it was the barbarous and inveterate custom of the country, that such as had escaped destruction at sea, should meet with perils on shore: that it well became a man of his dignity, not to let this pass unpunished: that to suffer those to be laden with chains, who appealed to his protection, detracted somewhat from his own greatness: and that if his captivity must be terminated by money, he would gladly give it to earl William, but not to the contemptible Guy. By these means, Harold was liberated at William’s command, and conducted to Normandy by Guy in person. The earl entertained him with much respect, both in banqueting and in vesture, according to the custom of his country; and the better to learn his disposition, and at the same time to try his courage, took him with him in an expedition he at that time led against Brittany. There, Harold, well proved both in ability and courage, won the

* Near Chichester.
heart of the Norman; and, still more to ingratiate himself, he of his own accord, confirmed to him by oath the castle of Dover, which was under his jurisdiction, and the kingdom of England, after the death of Edward. Wherefore, he was honoured both by having his daughter, then a child, betrothed to him, and by the confirmation of his ample patrimony, and was received into the strictest intimacy. Not long after his return home, the king was crowned* at London on Christmas-day, and being there seized with the disorder of which he was sensible he should die, he commanded the church of Westminster to be dedicated on Innocents-day.† Thus, full of years and of glory, he surrendered his pure spirit to heaven, and was buried on the day of the Epiphany, in the said church, which he, first in England, had erected after that kind of style which, now, almost all attempt to rival at enormous expense. The race of the West Saxons, which had reigned in Britain five hundred and seventy-one years, from the time of Cerdic, and two hundred and sixty-one from Egbert, in him ceased altogether to rule. For while the grief for the king’s death was yet fresh, Harold, on the very day of the Epiphany, seized the diadem, and extorted from the nobles their consent; though the English say, that it was granted him by the king: but I conceive it alleged, more through regard to Harold, than through sound judgment, that Edward should transfer his inheritance to a man of whose power he had always been jealous. Still, not to conceal the truth, Harold would have governed the kingdom with prudence and with courage, in the character he had assumed, had he undertaken it lawfully. Indeed, during Edward’s lifetime, he had quelled, by his valour, whatever wars were excited against him; wishing to signalize himself with his countrymen, and looking forward

* It was customary for the king to wear his crown on the solemn festivals of Easter, Whitsuntide, and Christmas: it being placed on his head in due form by the archbishop.

† “Westminster Abbey was consecrated on the 28th of December, 1065. Alred of Rievaulx, in his Life of Edward, states that the church had been commenced some years before, in performance of a vow the king had made to go to Rome; but being dissuaded from it, he sent to the pope to obtain his dispensation from that journey; the pope granted it, on condition that Edward should, with the money he would have spent in that voyage, build

St. Peter.”—Hardy.
The following year a回, the Danes, with a fleet of
sailors and soldiers, defeated the English, and
besieged York. In the meantime, the
English army was victorious at the Battle of
Hastings, and the Danes were forced to
retreat. The English then occupied the
province, and the Danes were forced to
accept the terms of peace dictated by the
English. The peace treaty included the
payment of a ransom by the Danes, the
return of English prisoners, and the
promise of future peace.

The next year, the Danes again invaded
England, but were defeated by the
English army. The English then occupied
the province, and the Danes were forced to
accept the terms of peace dictated by the
English. The peace treaty included the
payment of a ransom by the Danes, the
return of English prisoners, and the
promise of future peace.
passing over without opposition, destroyed the disheartened and flying Norwegians. King Harflog and King Tosti, the king’s son, with all the ships, was kindly sent back to his own country. Harold, saved by his successful expeditions, vouchsafed no part of the spoil to his soldiers. Wherefore many, as they found opportunity, stealing away, deserted the king, as he was proceeding to the battle of Hastings. But with the exception of his stipendiary and mercenary soldiers, he had very few of the people with him; on which account, circumvented by a stratagem of William’s, he was defeated with the army he headed, after possessing the kingdom nine months and some days. The effect of war is, this affair was trifling; it was brought about by the secret and wonderful counsel of God: since the Angles never again, in any general battle, made a struggle for liberty, as if the whole strength of England had fallen with Harold, who certainly might and ought to pay the penalty of his perfidy, even though it were at the hands of the most unwarlike people. Not in saying this, do I at all derogate from the valour of the Normans, to whom I am strongly bound, both by my descent, and for the privileges I enjoy. Still those persons appear to me to be, who augment the numbers of the English, and undertake their courage; who, while they design to extol the Normans, load them with ignominy. A mighty commendation indeed! that a very warlike nation should conquer a set of people who were obstructed by their multitude, and fearful through cowardice! On the contrary, they were few in number and brave in the extreme; and sacrificing every regard to their bodies, poured forth their spirit for their country. But however, as these matters await a more detailed narrative, I shall now put a period to my second book, and return to my composition, and my readers to the perusal of it, with fresh ardour.

What hath hitherto here relates is highly probable, from the shortness of the time which elapsed from William’s landing to the battle of Hastings, only fifteen days. In this interval, therefore, the intelligence was to be conveyed to York, and Harold’s march into Sussex to be completed; of course few could accompany him, but such as were incensed.

Wili Pictannenis, to whom he seems here to allude, assures that Harri had collected immense forces from all parts of England; and that Denmark had supplied him with auxiliaries also. But the circumstances mentioned in the preceding note show the absurdity of this statement.
BOOK III.

PREFACE.

Normans and English, incited by different motives, have written of king William: the former have praised him to excess; extolling to the utmost both his good and his bad actions: while the latter, out of national hatred, have laden their conqueror with undeserved reproach. For my part, as the blood of either people flows in my veins, I shall steer a middle course: where I am certified of his good deeds, I shall openly proclaim them; his bad conduct I shall touch upon lightly and sparingly, though not so as to conceal it; so that neither shall my narrative be condemned as false, nor will I brand that man with ignominious censure, almost the whole of whose actions may reasonably be excused, if not commended. Wherefore I shall willingly and carefully relate such anecdotes of him, as may be matter of incitement to the indolent, or of example to the enterprising; useful to the present age, and pleasing to posterity. But I shall spend little time in relating such things as are of service to no one, and which produce disgust in the reader, as well as ill-will to the author. There are always people, more than sufficient, ready to detract from the actions of the noble: my course of proceeding will be, to extenuate evil, as much as can be consistently with truth, and not to bestow excessive commendation even on good actions. For this moderation, as I imagine, all true judges will esteem me neither timid, nor unskilful. And this rule too, my history will regard equally, with respect both to William and his two sons; that nothing shall be dwelt on too fondly; nothing untrue shall be admitted. The elder of these did little worthy of praise, if we except the early part of his reign; gaining throughout the whole of his life, the favour of the military at the expense of the people. The second, more obsequious to his father than to his brother, possessed his spirit unsubdued either by prosperity or adversity: on regarding his warlike expeditions, it is matter of doubt, whether he was more cautious or more bold; on contemplating their event, whether he was more fortunate, or un-
successful. There will be a time, however, when the reader may judge for himself. I am now about to begin my third volume; and I think I have said enough to make him attentive, and disposed to receive instruction: his own feelings will persuade him to be candid.

Of William the First. [A.D. 1066—1087.]

Robert, second son of Richard the Second, after he had, with great glory, held the duchy of Normandy for seven years, resolved on a pilgrimage to Jerusalem. He had, at that time, a son seven years of age, born of a concubine, whose beauty he had accidentally beheld, as she was dancing, and had become so smitten with it, as to form a connexion with her: after which, he loved her exclusively, and, for some time, regarded her as his wife. He had by her this boy, named, after his great-great-grandfather, William, whose future glory was portended to his mother by a dream; wherein she imagined her intestines were stretched out, and extended over the whole of Normandy and England: and, at the very moment, also, when the infant burst into life and touched the ground, he filled both hands with the rushes strewn upon the floor, firmly grasping what he had taken up. This prodigy was joyfully witnessed by the women, gossipping on the occasion; and the midwife hailed the propitious omen, declaring that the boy would be a king.

Every provision being made for the expedition to Jerusalem, the chiefs were summoned to a council at Feschamp, where, at his father's command, all swore fidelity to William: earl Gilbert was appointed his guardian; and the protection of the earl was assigned to Henry, king of France. While Robert was prosecuting his journey, the Normans, each in his several station, united in common for the defence of their country, and regarded their infant lord with great affection. This fidelity continued till the report was spread of Robert's death, upon which their affection changed with his fortune; and then they began severally to their towns, to build castles, to carry in provisions,
and to seek the earliest opportunities of revolting from the child. In the meantime, however, doubtless by the special aid of God who had destined him to the sovereignty of such an extended empire, he grew up uninjured; while Gilbert, almost alone, defended by arms what was just and right: the rest being occupied by the designs of their respective parties. But Gilbert being at this time killed by his cousin Rodulph, fire and slaughter raged on all sides. The country, formerly most flourishing, was now torn with intestine broils, and divided at the pleasure of the plunderers; so that it was justly entitled to proclaim, “Woe to the land whose sovereign is a child.”

William, however, as soon as his age permitted, receiving the badge of knighthood from the king of France, inspired the inhabitants to hope for quiet. The sower of dissension was one Guy, a Burgundian on his father’s side, and grandson to Richard the Second by his daughter. William and Guy had been children together, and at that time were equally approaching to manhood. Mutual intercourse had produced an intimacy between them which had ripened into friendship. Moreover, thinking, as they were related, that he ought to deny him nothing, he had given him the castles of Briony and Vernon. The Burgundian, unmindful of this, estranged himself from the earl, feigning sufficient cause of offence to colour his conduct. It would be tedious, and useless, to relate what actions were performed on either side, what castles were taken; for his perfidy had found abettors in Nigel, viscount of Coutances, Ralph, viscount of Bayeux, and Haimo Dentatus, grandfather of Robert, who was the occupier of many estates in England in our time. With these persons, this most daring plunderer, allured by vain expectation of succeeding to the earldom, was devastating the whole of Normandy. A sense of duty, however, compelled the guardian-king to succour the desperate circumstances of his ward. Remembering, therefore, the kindness of his father, and that he had, by his influence, exalted him to the kingdom, he rushed on the revolters at Walesdun. Many thousands of them were there slain; many drowned in the river Orne, by its rapidity, while, being hard-pressed, they spurred their horses to ford the

* Ecclesiast. x. 16.*
current. Guy, escaping with difficulty, betook himself to Briony; but was driven thence by William, and unable to endure this disgrace, he retired, of his own accord, to Burgundy, his native soil. Here too his unquiet spirit found no rest; for being expelled thence by his brother, William, earl of that province, against whom he had conceived designs, it appears not what fate befell him. Nigel and Ralph were admitted to fealty: Haimo fell in the field of battle; after having become celebrated by his remarkable daring for having unhorsed the king himself; in consequence of which he was despatched by the surrounding guards, and, in admiration of his valour, honourably buried at the king's command. King Henry received a compensation for this favour, when the Norman lord actively assisted him against Geoffrey Martel at Herle-Mill, which is a fortress in the country of Anjou. For William had now attained his manly vigour; an object of dread even to his elders, and though alone, a match for numbers. Unattended he would rush on danger; and when unaccompanied, or with only a few followers, dart into the thickest ranks of the enemy. By this expedition he gained the reputation of admirable bravery, as well as the sincerest regard of the king; so that, with parental affection, he would often admonish him not to hold life in contempt by encountering danger so precipitately; a life, which was the ornament of the French, the safeguard of the Normans, and an example to both.

At that time Geoffrey* was earl of Anjou, who had boastingly taken the surname of Martel, as he seemed, by a certain kind of good fortune, to beat down all his opponents. Finally, he had made captive, in open battle, his liege lord, the earl of Poitou; and, loading him with chains, had compelled him to dishonourable terms of peace; namely, that he should yield up Bourdeaux and the neighbouring cities, and pay an annual tribute for the rest. But he, as it is thought, through the injuries of his confinement and want of food, was, after three days, released from eternal ignominy by a timely death. Martel then, that his effrontery might be complete, married the stepmother of the deceased; taking his brothers under his protection until they should be capa-

* Geoffrey II., son of Foulques III., earl of Anjou, whom he succeeded, A.D. 1040.
ble of governing the principality. Next entering the territories of Theobald, earl of Blois, he laid siege to the city of Tours; and while he was hastening to the succour of his subjects, made him participate in their afflictions; for being taken, and shut up in prison, he ceded the city from himself and his heirs for ever. Who shall dare cry shame on this man’s cowardice, who, for the enjoyment of a little longer life, defrauded his successors for ever of the dominion of so great a city? for although we are too apt to be severe judges of others, yet we must know, that we should consult our own safety, if we were ever to be placed in similar circumstances. In this manner Martel, insolent from the accession of so much power, obtained possession of the castle of Alençon, even from the earl of Normandy; its inhabitants being faithlessly disposed. Irritated at this outrage, William retaliated, and invested Danfrunt, which at that time belonged to the earl of Anjou. Geoffrey, immediately, excited by the complaints of the besieged, hastily rushed forward with a countless force. Hearing of his approach, William sends Roger Montgomery* and William Fitz-Osberne to reconnoitre. They, from the activity of youth, proceeding many miles in a short time, espied Martel on horseback, and apprized him of the dauntless boldness of their lord. Martel immediately began to rage, to threaten mightily what he would do; and said that he would come thither the next day, and show to the world at large how much an Angevin could excel a Norman in battle: at the same time, with unparalleled insolence, describing the colour of his horse, and the devices on the arms he meant to use. The Norman nobles, with equal vanity, relating the same of William, return and stimulate their party to the conflict. I have described these things minutely, for the purpose of displaying the arrogance of Martel. On this occasion, however, he manifested none of his usual magnanimity, for he retreated without coming to battle; on hearing which, the inhabitants

* "He was the son of Hugh de Montgomery and Semina his wife, daughter of Turolf of Pont-Andomare, by Wora, sister of Gunnora, great-grandmother to the Conqueror. He led the centre of the army at the battle of Hastings, and was afterwards governor of Normandy. William the Conqueror gave him the earldoms of Arundel and Shrewsbury. See more of him in Sir H. Ellis’s Introduction to Domesday, vol. i. p. 479.”—Hardy.
of Alençon surrendered, covenanted for personal safety; and, afterwards, those of Danfrunt also, listed under the more fortunate standard.

In succeeding years William, earl of Arches, his illegitimate uncle, who had always been faithless and fluctuating from his first entrance on the duchy, rebelled against him; for, even during the siege of Danfrunt, he had unexpectedly stolen away, and had communicated to many persons the secrets of his soul. In consequence of this, William had committed the keeping of his castle to some men, whom he had erroneously deemed faithful; but the earl, with his usual skill in deception, had seduced even these people to his party, by giving them many things, and promising them more. Thus possessed of the fortress, he declared war against his lord. William, with his customary alacrity, contrary to the advice of his friends, laid siege to Arches, declaring publicly, that the miscreants would not dare attempt any thing, if they came into his sight. Nor was his assertion false: for more than three hundred soldiers, who had gone out to plunder and forage, 'the instant they beheld him, though almost unattended, fled back into their fortifications. Being inclined to settle this business without bloodshed, he fortified a castle in front of Arches, and turned to matters of hostile operation which required deeper attention, because he was aware that the king of France, who had already become adverse to him from some unknown cause, was hastening to the succour of the besieged. He here gave an instance of very laudable forbearance; for though he certainly appeared to have the juster cause, yet he was reluctant to engage with that person, to whom he was bound both by oath and by obligation. He left some of his nobility, however, to repress the impetuosity of the king; who, falling into an ambush laid by their contrivance, had most deservedly to lament Isembard, earl of Ponthieu, who was killed in his sight, and Hugh Bardulf, who was taken prisoner. Not long after, in consequence of his miscarriage, retiring to his beloved France, the earl of Arches, wasted with hunger, and worn to a skeleton, consented to surrender, and was preserved, life and limb, an example of clemency, and a proof of perseverance. During the interval of this siege, the people of the fortress called Moulin, becoming dis-
affected, at the instigation of one Walter, went over to the king's side. An active party of soldiers was placed there, under the command of Guy, brother of the earl of Poitou, who diligently attended for some time to his military duties: but on hearing the report of the victory at Arches, he stole away into France, and contributed, by these means, considerably to the glory of the duke.

King Henry, however, did not give indulgence to inactivity; but, muttering that his armies had been a laughing-stock to William, immediately collected all his forces, and, dividing them into two bodies, he over-ran the whole of Normandy. He himself headed all the military power which came from that part of Celtic Gaul which lies between the rivers Garonne and Seine; and gave his brother Odo the command over such as came from that part of Belgic Gaul which is situated between the Rhine and the Seine. In like manner William divided his army, with all the skill he possessed; approaching by degrees the camp of the king, which was pitched in the country of Briony, in such a manner, as neither to come to close engagement, nor yet suffer the province to be devastated in his presence. His generals were Robert, earl of Aux; Hugo de Gournay, Hugo de Montfort, and William Crispin, who opposed Odo at a town called Mortemar. Nor did he, relying on the numerous army which he commanded, at all delay coming to action, yet making only slight resistance at the beginning, and afterwards being unable to withstand the attack of the Normans, he retreated, and was himself the first to fly. And here, while Guy, earl of Ponthieu, was anxiously endeavouring to revenge his brother, he was made captive, and felt, together with many others surpassing in affluence and rank, the weight of that hand which was so fatal to his family. When William was informed of this success by messengers, he took care that it should be proclaimed in the dead of night, near the king's tent. On hearing which he retired, after some days spent in Normandy, into France; and, soon after, ambassadors passing between them, it was concluded, by treaty, that the king's partizans should be set at liberty, and that the earl should become legally possessed of all that had been, or should hereafter be, taken from Martel.

It would be both tedious and useless, to relate their per-
petual contentions, or how William always came off conqueror. What shall we say besides, when, magnanimously despising the custom of modern times, he never condescended to attack him suddenly, or without acquainting him of the day. Moreover, I pass by the circumstance of king Henry's again violating his friendship; his entering Normandy, and proceeding through the district of Hiesmes to the river Dive, boasting that the sea was the sole obstacle to his farther progress. But William now perceiving himself reduced to extremities by the king's perfidy, at length brandished the arms of conscious valour, and worsted the royal forces which were beyond the river—for part of them, hearing of his arrival, had passed over some little time before—with such entire loss, that henceforth France had no such object of dread as that of irritating the ferocity of the Normans. The death of Henry soon following, and, shortly after, that of Martel, put an end to these broils. The dying king delegated the care of his son Philip, at that time extremely young, to Baldwin earl of Flanders. He was a man equally celebrated for fidelity and wisdom; in the full possession of bodily strength, and also ennobled by a marriage with the king's sister. His daughter, Matilda, a woman who was a singular mirror of prudence in our time, and the perfection of virtue, had been already married to William. Hence it arose, that being mediator between his ward, and his son-in-law, Baldwin restrained, by his wholesome counsels, the feuds of the chiefs, and of the people.

But since the mention of Martel has so often presented itself, I shall briefly trace the genealogy of the earls of Anjou,* as far as the knowledge of my informant reaches. Fulk the elder, presiding over that county for many years, until he became advanced in years, performed many great actions. There is only one thing for which I have heard him branded: for, having induced Herbert earl of Maine to come to Saintes, under the promise of yielding him that city, he caused him, in the midst of their conversation to be surrounded by his attendants, and compelled him to submit to his own conditions: in other respects he was

* For an account of the earls of Anjou consult the Gesta Consulum Anglicanum, actore Monacho Benedictino Maioris Monasterii (apud Acherit. tom. iii.)—Hardy.
a man of irreproachable integrity. In his latter days, he ceded his principality to Geoffrey his son so often mentioned. Geoffrey conducted himself with excessive barbarity to the inhabitants, and with equal haughtiness even to the person who had conferred this honour upon him: on which, being ordered by his father to lay down the government and ensigns of authority, he was arrogant enough to take up arms against him. The blood of the old man, though grown cold and languid, yet boiled with indignation; and in the course of a few days, by adopting wiser counsels, he so brought down the proud spirit of his son, that after carrying his saddle* on his back for some miles, he cast himself with his burden at his father's feet. He, fired once more with his ancient courage, rising up and spurning the prostrate youth with his foot, exclaimed, "You are conquered at last! you are conquered!" repeating his words several times. The suppliant had still spirit enough to make this admirable reply, "I am conquered by you alone, because you are my father; by others I am utterly invincible." With this speech his irritated mind was mollified, and having consoled the mortification of his son by paternal affection, he restored him to the principality, with admonitions to conduct himself more wisely: telling him that the prosperity and tranquillity of the people were creditable to him abroad, as well as advantageous at home. In the same year, the old man, having discharged all secular concerns, made provision for his soul, by proceeding to Jerusalem; where compelling two servants by an oath to do whatever he commanded, he was by them publicly dragged naked, in the sight of the Turks, to the holy sepulchre. One of them had twisted a withe about his neck, the other with a rod scourged his bare back, whilst he cried out, "Lord, receive the wretched Fulk, thy perfidious, thy runagate; regard my repentant soul, O Lord Jesu Christ." At this time he obtained not his request; but, peacefully returning home, he died some few years after. The precipitate boldness of his

* To carry a saddle was a punishment of extreme ignominy for certain crimes. See another instance in W. Gemeticensis, Du Chesme, p. 259, and Du Cange, in voce "Sella;" who very justly supposes the disgrace to arise from the offender acknowledging himself a brute, and putting himself entirely in the power of the person he had offended.
son Geoffrey has been amply displayed in my preceding history. He dying, bequeathed to Geoffrey, his sister’s son, his inheritance, but his worldly industry he could not leave him. For being a youth of simple manners, and more accustomed to pray in church, than to handle arms, he excited the contempt of the people of that country, who knew not how to live in quiet. In consequence, the whole district becoming exposed to plunderers, Fulk, his brother, of his own accord, seized on the duchy. Fulk was called Rhechin, from his perpetual growling at the simplicity of his brother, whom he finally despoiled of his dignity, and kept in continual custody. He had a wife, who, being enticed by the desire of enjoying a higher title, deserted him and married Philip king of France; who so desperately loved her, regardless of the adage,

"Majesty and love
But ill accord, nor share the self-same seat,"

that he patiently suffered himself to be completely governed by her, though he was at the same time desirous of ruling over every other person. Lastly, for several years, merely through regard for her, he suffered himself to be pointed at like an idiot, and to be excommunicated from the whole Christian world. The sons of Fulk were Geoffrey and Fulk. Geoffrey obtaining the hereditary surname of Martel, ennobled it by his exertions: for he procured such peace and tranquillity in those parts, as no one ever had seen, or will see in future. On this account being killed by the treachery of his people, he forfeited the credit of his consummate worth. Fulk succeeding to the government, is yet living;* of whom as I shall perhaps have occasion to speak in the times of king Henry, I will now proceed to relate what remains concerning William.

When, after much labour, he had quelled all civil dissension, he meditated an exploit of greater fame, and determined to recover those countries anciently attached to Normandy, though now disunited by long custom. I allude to

* From this passage it is clear that Foulques IV. was still the reigning earl of Anjou, which therefore proves that Malmesbury had finished this work before 1129, in which year Geoffrey le Bel, better known as Geoffrey Plantagenet, son of Foulques, became earl of Anjou."—Harley.
the counties of Maine and Brittany; of which Mans, long since burnt by Martel and deprived of its sovereign Hugo, had lately experienced some little respite under Herbert the son of Hugo; who, with a view to greater security against the earl of Anjou, had submitted, and sworn fidelity to William: besides, he had solicited his daughter in marriage, and had been betrothed to her, though he died by disease ere she was marriageable. He left William his heir, adjuring his subjects to admit no other; telling them, they might have, if they chose, a mild and honourable lord; but, should they not, a most determined assertor of his right. On his decease, the inhabitants of Maine rather inclined to Walter of Mantes, who had married Hugo's sister: but at length, being brought to their senses by many heavy losses, they acknowledged William. This was the time, when Harold was unwillingly carried to Normandy by an unpropitious gale; whom, as is before mentioned, William took with him in his expedition to Brittany, to make proof of his prowess, and, at the same time, with the deeper design of showing to him his military equipment, that he might perceive how far preferable was the Norman sword to the English battle-axe. Alan, at that time, earl of Brittany, flourishing in youth, and of transcendent strength, had overcome his uncle Eudo, and performed many famous actions; and so far from fearing William, had even voluntarily irritated him. But he, laying claim to Brittany as his hereditary territory, because Charles had given it with his daughter, Gisla, to Rollo, shortly acted in such wise, that Alan came suppliantly to him, and surrendered himself and his possessions. And since I shall have but little to say of Brittany hereafter, I will here briefly insert an extraordinary occurrence, which happened about that time in the city of Nantes.

There were in that city two clerks, who though not yet of legal age, had obtained the priesthood from the bishop of that place, more by entreaty than desert: the pitable death of one of whom, at length taught the survivor, how near they had before been to the brink of hell. As to the knowledge of literature, they were so instructed, that they wanted little of perfection. From their earliest infancy, they had in such wise vied in offices of friendship, that according to the
expression of the comic writer, * "To serve each other they would not only stir hand and foot, but even risk the loss of life itself." Wherefore, one day, when they found their minds more than usually free from outward cares, they spoke their sentiments, in a secret place, to the following effect: "That for many years they had given their attention sometimes to literature, and sometimes to secular cares; nor had they satisfied their minds, which had been occupied rather in wrong than proper pursuits; that in the meanwhile, the bitter day was insensibly approaching, which would burst the bond of union which was indissoluble while life remained: wherefore they should provide in time, that the friendship which united them while living should accompany him who died first to the place of the dead." They agreed, therefore, that whichever should first depart, should certainly appear to the survivor, either waking or sleeping, if possible within thirty days, to inform him, that, according to the Platonic tenet, death does not extinguish the spirit, but sends it back again, as it were from prison, to God its author. If this did not take place, then they must yield to the sect of the Epicureans, who hold, that the soul, liberated from the body, vanishes into air, or mingles with the wind. Mutually plighting their faith, they repeated this oath in their daily conversation. A short time elapsed, and behold a violent death suddenly deprived one of them of life. The other remained, and seriously revolting the promise of his friend, and constantly expecting his presence, during thirty days, found his hopes disappointed. At the expiration of this time, when, despairing of seeing him, he had occupied his leisure in other business, the deceased, with that pale countenance which dying persons assume, suddenly stood before him, when awake, and busied on some matter. The dead first addressing the living man, who was silent: "Do you know me?" said he; "I do," replied the other; "nor am I so much disturbed at your unusual presence, as I wonder at your prolonged absence." But when he had accounted for the tardiness of his appearance; "At length," said he, "at length, having overcome every impediment, I am present; which presence, if you please, my friend, will be advantageous to you, but to me totally unprofitable; for I am doomed, by a sentence

* Terent. Andr. iv. 1.
which has been pronounced and approved, to eternal punish-
ment." When the living man promised to give all his pro-
perty to monasteries, and to the poor, and to spend days and
nights in fasting and prayer, for the release of the defunct;
he replied, "What I have said is fixed; for the judgments
of God, by which I am plunged in the sulphureous whirl-
pool of hell, are without repentance. There I shall be tossed
for my crimes, as long as the pole whirls round the stars, or
ocean beats the shores. The rigour of this irreversible sen-
tence remains for ever, devising lasting and innumerable
kinds of punishment: now, therefore, let the whole world
seek for availing remedies! And that you may experience
some little of my numberless pains, behold," said he, stretch-
ing out his hand, dripping with a corrupted ulcer, "one of
the very smallest of them; does it appear trifling to you?"
When the other replied, that it did appear so; he bent his
fingers into the palm, and threw three drops of the purulent
matter upon him; two of which touching his temples, and
one his forehead, penetrated the skin and flesh, as if with a
burning cautery, and made holes of the size of a nut. When
his friend acknowledged the acuteness of the pain, by the
cry he uttered, "This," said the dead man, "will be a strong
proof to you, as long as you live, of my pains; and, unless
you neglect it, a singular token for your salvation. Where-
fore, while you have the power; while indignation is sus-
pended over your head; while God's lingering mercy waits
for you; change your habit, change your disposition; be-
come a monk at Rennes, in the monastery of St. Melanius."
When the living man was unwilling to agree to these words,
the other, sternly glancing at him, "If you doubt, wretched
man," said he, "turn and read these letters;" and with these
words, he stretched out his hand, inscribed with black charac-
ters, in which, Satan, and all the company of infernals sent
their thanks, from hell, to the whole ecclesiastical body; as
well for denying themselves no single pleasure, as for sending,
through neglect of their preaching, so many of their subject-
souls to hell, as no former age had ever witnessed. With
these words the speaker vanished; and the hearer dis-
tributing his whole property to the church and to the poor,
went to the monastery; admonishing all, who heard or saw
him, of his sudden conversion, and extraordinary interview,
so that they exclaimed, "It is the right hand of the Almighty
that has done this."

I feel no regret at having inserted this for the benefit of
my readers: now I shall return to William. For since I
have briefly, but I hope not uselessly, gone over the transac-
tions in which he was engaged, when only earl of Normandy,
for thirty years, the order of time now requires a new series
of relation; that I may, as far as my inquiries have dis-
covered, detect fallacy, and declare the truth relating to his
regal government.

When king Edward had yielded to fate, England, fluc-
tuating with doubtful favour, was uncertain to which ruler
she should commit herself: to Harold, William, or Edgar:
for the king had recommended him also to the nobility, as
nearest to the sovereignty in point of birth; concealing his
better judgment from the tenderness of his disposition.
Wherefore, as I have said above, the English were distracted
in their choice, although all of them openly wished well to
Harold. He, indeed, once dignified with the diadem, thought
nothing of the covenant between himself and William: he
said, that he was absolved from his oath, because his daughter,
to whom he had been betrothed, had died before she was
marriageable. For this, man, though possessing numberless
good qualities, is reported to have been careless about ab-
staining from perfidy, so that he could, by any device, elude
the reasonings of men on this matter. Moreover, supposing
that the threats of William would never be put into execution,
because he was occupied in wars with neighbouring princes,
he had, with his subjects, given full indulgence to security.
For indeed, had he not heard that the king of Norway was
approaching, he would neither have condescended to collect
troops, nor to array them. William, in the meantime, began
mildly to address him by messengers; to expostulate on the
broken covenant; to mingle threats with entreaties; and to
warn him, that ere a year expired, he would claim his due
by the sword, and that he would come to that place, where
Harold supposed he had firmer footing than himself. Harold
again rejoined what I have related, concerning the nuptials
of his daughter, and added, that he had been precipitate on
the subject of the kingdom, in having confirmed to him by
oath another's right, without the universal consent and edict
of the general meeting, and of the people: again, that a rash oath ought to be broken; for if the oath, or vow, which a maiden, under her father's roof, made concerning her person, without the knowledge of her parents, was adjudged invalid; how much more invalid must that oath be, which he had made concerning the whole kingdom, when under the king's authority, compelled by the necessity of the time, and without the knowledge of the nation.* Besides it was an unjust request, to ask him to resign a government which he had assumed by the universal kindness of his fellow subjects, and which would neither be agreeable to the people, nor safe for the military.

In this way, confounded either by true, or plausible, arguments, the messengers returned without success. The earl, however, made every necessary preparation for war during the whole of that year; retained his own soldiers with increased pay, and invited those of others; ordered his ranks and battalions in such wise, that the soldiers should be tall and stout; that the commanders and standard-bearers, in addition to their military science, should be looked up to for their wisdom and age; insomuch, that each of them, whether seen in the field or elsewhere, might be taken for a prince, rather than a leader. The bishops and abbots of those days vied so much in religion, and the nobility in princely liberality, that it is wonderful,† within a period of less than sixty‡ years, how either order should have become so unfruitful in goodness, as to take up a confederate war against justice: the former, through desire of ecclesiastical promotion, embracing wrong in preference to right and equity; and the latter, casting off shame, and seeking every occasion.

* "These words seem to imply that the Great Council of the kingdom had never agreed to any settlement of the crown on the duke; and without such sanction no oath made by Harold in favour of William would have been binding."—Hardy.
† Some copies omit from "it is wonderful," to "But," and substitute as follows:— . . . . "that in the course of a very few years, many, if not all, things were seen changed in either order. The former became, in some respects, more dull but more liberal: the latter, more prudent in every thing, but more penuorious; yet both, in defending their country, valiant in battle, provident in counsel; prepared to advance their own fortune, and to depress that of their enemies."
‡ This passage enables us to ascertain nearly the year in which William of Malmesbury's work was written.
for begging money as for their daily pay. But at that time the prudence of William, seconded by the providence of God, already anticipated the invasion of England; and that no rashness might stain his just cause, he sent to the pope, formerly Anselm, bishop of Lucca, who had assumed the name of Alexander, alleging the justice of the war which he meditated with all the eloquence he was master of. Harold omitted to do this, either because he was proud by nature, or else distrusted his cause; or because he feared that his messengers would be obstructed by William and his partisans, who beset every port. The pope, duly examining the pretensions of both parties, delivered a standard to William, as an auspicious presage of the kingdom: on receiving which, he summoned an assembly of his nobles, at Lillebourne, for the purpose of ascertaining their sentiments on this attempt. And when he had confirmed, by splendid promises, all who approved his design, he appointed them to prepare shipping, in proportion to the extent of their possessions. Thus they departed at that time; and, in the month of August, re-assembled in a body at St. Vallery,* for so that port is called by its new name. Collecting, therefore, ships from every quarter, they awaited the propitious gale which was to carry them to their destination. When this delayed blowing for several days, the common soldiers, as is generally the case, began to mutter in their tents, "that the man must be mad, who wished to subjugate a foreign country; that God opposed him, who withheld the wind; that his father purposed a similar attempt, and was in like manner frustrated; that it was the fate of that family to aspire to things beyond their reach, and find God for their adversary." In consequence of these things, which were enough to enervate the force of the brave, being publicly noised abroad, the duke held a council with his chiefs, and ordered the body of St. Vallery to be brought forth, and to be exposed to the open air, for the purpose of imploring a

* "There are two places called St. Valeri; one in Picardy, situated at the mouth of the Somme, and formerly called Leugonaus; the other is a large sea-port town, situated in Normandy, in the diocese of Rouen, and was formerly called S. Valeri les Plaines, but now S. Valeri en Caux. It seems to be the former place to which Malmesbury here refers, 'In Pontivo apud S. Walericum in ancoris congrue stare fecit,' writes William of Jumièges."—HARDY.
wind. No delay now interposed, but the wished-for gale filled their sails. A joyful clamour then arising, summoned every one to the ships. The earl himself first launching from the continent into the deep, awaited the rest, at anchor, nearly in mid-channel. All then assembled round the crimson sail of the admiral’s ship; and, having first dined, they arrived, after a favourable passage, at Hastings. As he disembarked he slipped down, but turned the accident to his advantage; a soldier who stood near calling out to him, “you hold England, my lord, its future king.” He then restrained his whole army from plundering; warning them, that they should now abstain from what must hereafter be their own;† and for fifteen successive days he remained so perfectly quiet, that he seemed to think of nothing less than of war.

In the meantime Harold returned from the battle with the Norwegians; happy, in his own estimation, at having conquered; but not so in mine, as he had secured the victory by parricide. When the news of the Norman’s arrival reached him, reeking as he was from battle, he proceeded to Hastings, though accompanied by very few forces. No doubt the fates urged him on, as he neither summoned his

* This was said in allusion to the feudal investiture, or formal act of taking possession of an estate by the delivery of certain symbols. “This story, however, is rendered a little suspicious by these words being in exact conformity with those of Cæsar, when he stumbled and fell at his landing in Africa, Teneo te, Africa. The silence of William of Poitou, who was the duke’s chaplain, and with him at his landing, makes the truth of it still more doubtful.”—Hardy.

† “Whatever may have been the conqueror’s order, to restrain his army from plundering, it is conclusive, from the Domesday Survey, that they were of no avail. The whole of the country, in the neighbourhood of Hastings, appears to have been laid waste. Sir Henry Ellis, in the last edition of his General Introduction to Domesday, observes, that the destruction occasioned by the conqueror’s army on its first arrival, is apparent above particularly under Hollington, Bexhill, &c. The value of each manor is given as it stood in the reign of the conqueror; afterwards it is said, ‘vastatum fuit;’ and then follows the value at the time of the survey. The situation of those manors evidently shows their devastated state to have been owing to the army marching over it; and this clearly evinces another circumstance relating to the invasion, which is, that William did not land his army at one particular spot, at Bulwerhith, or Hastings, as is supposed,—but at all the several proper places for landing along the coast, from Bexhill to Winchelsea.”—Hardy.
troops, nor, had he been willing to do so, would he have found many ready to obey his call; so hostile were all to him, as I have before observed, from his having appropriated the northern spoils entirely to himself. He sent out some persons, however, to reconnoitre the number and strength of the enemy: these, being taken within the camp, William ordered to be led amongst the tents, and, after feasting them plentifully, to be sent back uninjured to their lord. On their return, Harold inquired what news they brought: when, after relating at full, the noble confidence of the general, they gravely added, that almost all his army had the appearance of priests, as they had the whole face, with both lips, shaven. For the English leave the upper lip unshorn, suffering the hair continually to increase; which Julius Cæsar, in his treatise on the Gallic War,* affirms to have been a national custom with the ancient inhabitants of Britain. The king smiled at the simplicity of the relatours, observing, with a pleasant laugh, that they were not priests, but soldiers, strong in arms, and invincible in spirit. His brother, Girth, a youth, on the verge of manhood, and of knowledge and valour surpassing his years, caught up his words: "Since," said he, "you extol so much the valour of the Norman, I think it ill-advised for you, who are his inferior in strength and desert, to contend with him. Nor can you deny being bound to him, by oath, either willingly, or by compulsion. Wherefore you will act wisely, if, yourself withdrawing from this pressing emergency, you allow us to try the issue of a battle. We, who are free from all obligation, shall justly draw the sword in defence of our country. It is to be apprehended, if you engage, that you will be either subjected to flight or to death: whereas, if we only fight, your cause will be safe at all events: for you will be able both to rally the fugitives, and to avenge the dead."

His unbridled rashness yielded no placid ear to the words of his adviser, thinking it base, and a reproach to his past life, to turn his back on danger of any kind; and, with similar impudence, or to speak more favourably, imprudence, he drove away a monk, the messenger of William, not deigning him even a complacent look; imprecating only, that God would decide between him and the earl. He was the bearer

of three propositions; either that Harold should relinquish the kingdom, according to his agreement, or hold it of William; or decide the matter by single combat in the sight of either army. For William* claimed the kingdom, on the ground that king Edward, by the advice of Stigand, the archbishop, and of the earls Godwin and Siward, had granted it to him, and had sent the son and nephew of Godwin to Normandy, as sureties of the grant. If Harold should deny this, he would abide by the judgment of the pope, or by battle: on all which propositions, the messenger being frustrated by the single answer I have related, returned, and communicated to his party fresh spirit for the conflict.

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

* This is from W. Pictaviensis, who puts it in the mouth of the conqueror, but it is evidently false; for Godwin died A.D. 1053, Siward A.D. 1055, and in 1054 we find Edward the Confessor sending for his nephew from Hungary, to make him his successor in the kingdom, who, accordingly, arrives in A.D. 1057, and dies almost immediately after. He could not, therefore, have made the settlement as here asserted.
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 under foot 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, from having his brain pierced with 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

* As the armour of that time was of mail, this might easily happen.
† What this was is not known; but it is supposed to have been a ballad or romance, commemorating the heroic achievements of the pretended nephew of Charlemagne.