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Annex

THE

April 1832

HISTORY
OF THE
ANGLO-SAXONS:

COMPRISING THE

History of England

FROM

THE EARLIEST PERIOD TO THE
NORMAN CONQUEST.

By SHARON TURNER, F. A. S.

IN THREE VOLUMES.

VOL. I.

THE THIRD EDITION.

LONDON:

PRINTED FOR LONGMAN, HURST, REES, ORME, AND BROWN,
PATERNOSTER-ROW.

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PREFACE.

THE first edition of this work was published, in successive parts, between the years 1799 and 1805. When the first volume appeared, the subject of the Anglo-Saxon antiquities had been nearly forgotten by the British public; although a large part of what we most love and venerate in our customs, laws, and institutions, originated among our Anglo-Saxon ancestors. A few scholars in a former century had cultivated the study, and left grammars, dictionaries, and catalogues for our use; but their labours had been little heeded, and no one had added to the information which they had communicated. The Anglo-Saxon MSS. lay still unexamined, and neither their contents, nor the important facts which the ancient writers and records of other nations had preserved of the transactions and fortunes of our ancestors, had been ever made a part of our general history. The Quida, or death-song, of Ragnar Lodbrog first led the present author to perceive the deficiency, and excited his wish to supply it. A series of careful researches into every original document

that he had the opportunity of examining was immediately begun, and steadily pursued, till all that was most worth preserving was collected from the Anglo-Saxon MSS. and other ancient books. The valuable information thus obtained the author endeavoured to give to the public, in a readable form, in this work, of which two-thirds have not appeared in English history before. His favourite desire has been fulfilled—a taste for the history and remains of our Great Ancestors has revived, and is visibly increasing.

MANY writers have since followed in the same path. Their publications have spread the useful taste, and contributed to obtain for our venerable forefathers the attention of their enlightened posterity. To gratify more fully this patriotic curiosity, some additional portions of original matter, from the Anglo-Saxon remains, have been inserted in the present edition. The most important of these consist of the following additions:

ON reading our Alfred's Anglo-Saxon translation of Boetius, the author observed passages which were not in the original. Struck with this curious fact, he compared the king's work carefully with the Latin of Boetius, and found that Alfred had frequently taken occasion to insert his own thoughts and reasonings in various parts, forming so many little essays, dialogues, and imitated tales of our venerable sovereign's own composition. Some of the most important of these have been selected and

translated, and inserted in the second volume of the present edition, p. 153—213.

SINCE the author called the attention of the public, in 1805, to the neglected, and indeed unknown Saxon heroic poem on Beowulf, Dr. Thorkelin has printed it at Copenhægen in 1815. This valuable publication has assisted the author in giving a fuller analysis of this curious composition in the third volume.

ON the composition of the Anglo-Saxon parliament, or witena-gemot, many have desired more satisfactory information than the author had incorporated in the preceding editions. He has inserted, in the present, all the facts that he found, which seemed to have an actual relation to this interesting subject, and has added such remarks as they have suggested to a mind, wishing to be correct and impartial.

THE author has added a statement of the great principles of the Anglo-Saxon Constitution and laws, as far as an attentive consideration of our most ancient documents has enabled him to discriminate them.

HE has been long since requested to give some detail of the Anglo-Saxon population. The Conqueror's Record of Domesday afforded good materials for this subject. It has been examined, with this object in view; and the reader will find, in the third volume, an enumeration of the different classes and numbers of people whom it records to have been living

in England about the time of the Norman conquest.

SOME pains have been taken to make the work, in its other parts, as improved and as complete as a careful diligence could secure, and at the same time to comprise the whole within the compass of three octavo volumes. This object has been attained without the sacrifice of any material information, although, to accomplish it, some parts have been necessarily printed in a smaller type, and others as appendices. But the convenience to the public of compressing this history into three volumes seemed to outbalance the disadvantage of a partial alteration of the printed letter. As it now stands, it presents the reader with the History of England from the earliest known period to the time of the Norman conquest.

It would have been desirable, for the gratification of the curious student, that the original Anglo-Saxon of the various passages that are cited and given in English should have been added; but this would have extended the work into a fourth volume, and have made it more expensive than the author desired. The public may rely on his assurance, that he has endeavoured to make the translations literally faithful, in order that the style, as well as the sense, of the Anglo-Saxon writer may be perceived.

LONDON,
March, 1820.

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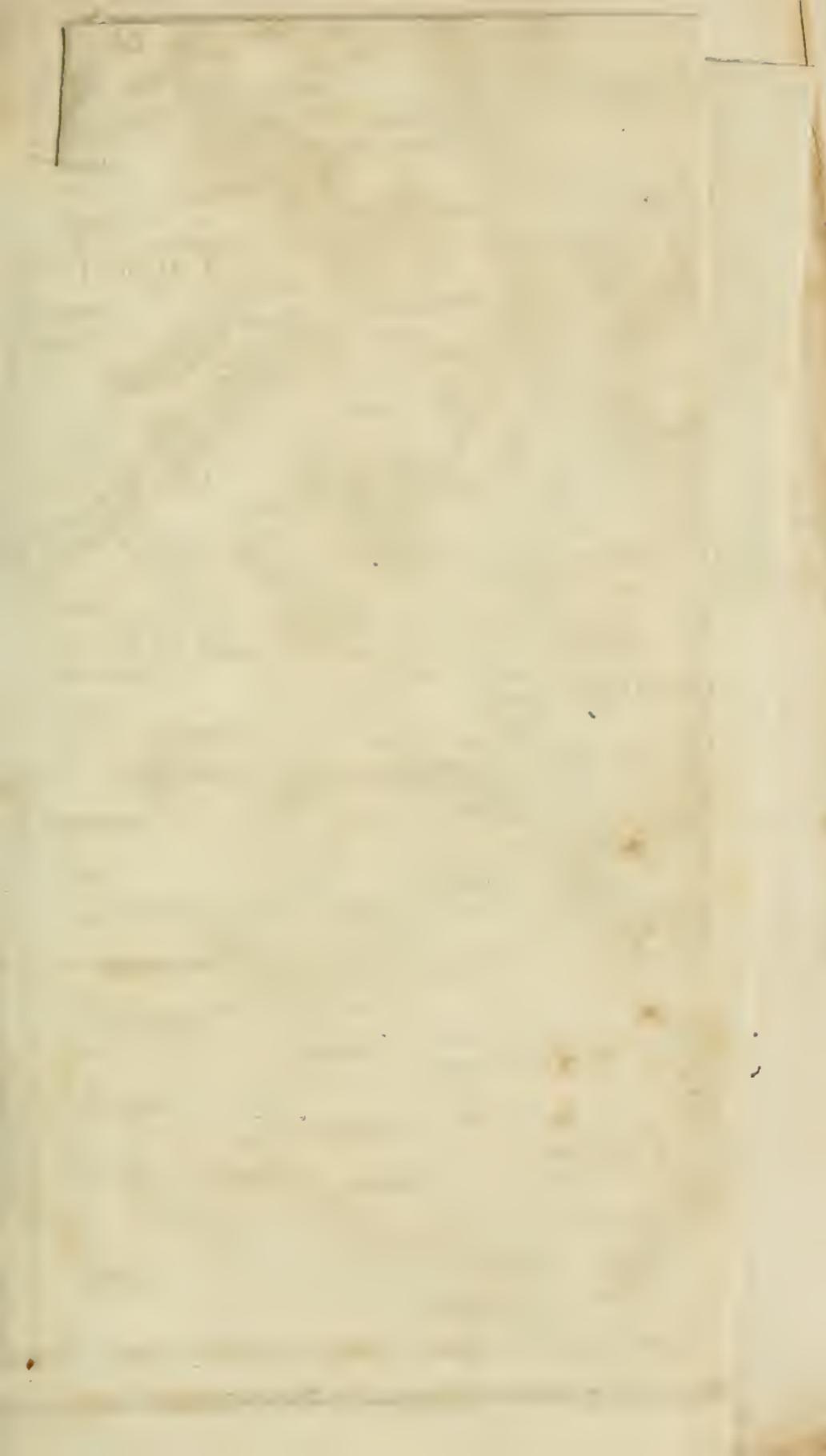
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Map
of the
(TERRITORY)
Inhabited by the
ANCIENT SAXONS
South of the
(ELBE).



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THE
HISTORY
OF THE
ANGLO-SAXONS.

BOOK I.

CHAP. I.

The early Division of Mankind into the civilized and Nomadic Nations.—The most ancient Population of Britain proceeded from the Nomadic.

NO subject has been more disputed by anti-CHAP.
quarian writers, than the origin of the I.
population of Europe; and no discussions have
been more fanciful, more ill-tempered, or more
contradictory. The controversies, on the peo-
pling of Great Britain, have been as vehement
and pertinacious. Few topics would seem to be
more remote from the usual currents of human

BOOK

I.

passions, than the enquiry from what nations our primeval ancestors descended: and yet the works of our historical polemics, on investigations so little connected with any present interest or feeling, abound with all the abusive anger that irritability can furnish, as well as with all the dogmatism, confusion, errors, dreams, and contradictions, that egotism could generate, or wranglers and adversaries pursue.

It is not intended in this work to renew disputations so interminable and so useless. But in order to present the reader with a complete view of the History of England, from the earliest period to the Norman Conquest, when the Anglo-Saxon dynasty ceased, the first book of this history will be devoted to collect, from an impartial consideration of the original and ancient writers, that series of facts and those reasoned inferences, which most deserve the attention and belief of an enlightened age. The authentic will be distinguished from the conjectural; and the nearest approach to unbiassed judgment, and to historical truth, that can be effected on periods so obscure, because so remote, will be dispassionately attempted.

AFTER a succession of controversies, which only increased the labyrinths of investigation, and made the doubtful more uncertain, Dr. Percy, in 1770, struck out a clear and certain path, by distinguishing the Keltic from the Gothic tribes; and by arranging the prin-

incipal languages of Europe, under these two distinct genera, with specimens of the Lord's prayer in each. ¹ CHAP. I.

HE did not pursue his subject farther. But this clear separation of the Gothic from the Keltic tribes, laid the foundation for the true history of ancient Europe.

MR. PINKERTON in his dissertation on the Scythians and Goths, endeavoured to verify the idea of the Bishop of Dromore, by quotations from ancient authorities, but disfigured his work by an abuse of the Keltic nations; by attempting to add unauthorised chronologies; by some wrong citations; and by several untenable opi-

¹ Dr. Percy's genealogical table was thus composed :



Preface to Mallet's Northern Antiquities, vol. i. p. xxiv.

BOOK I. unions and digressions, with which he embarrassed Dr. Percy's simple and judicious discrimination.

To the two genera of languages pointed out by Dr. Percy, a third must be added, which prevails in the eastern regions of Europe; the Slavonian or Sarmatian. These three present us with the three great stocks, from which, the nations of the western regions of Europe, have chiefly derived their various population.

THE most authentic facts that can be now gleaned from ancient history, concur with the most probable traditions, to prove, that Europe has been peopled by three great streams of population from the East, which have followed each other, at intervals so distinct, as to possess languages clearly separable from each other. The earliest of these, we shall find to have comprised the Kimmerian and Keltic race. The second consisted of the Scythian, Gothic, and German tribes; from whom most of the modern nations of continental Europe have descended. The third, and most recent, comprehends the Slavonian and Sarmatian nations, who were bordering on the second race, as they spread over Germany; and who have now established themselves in Poland, Bohemia, Russia, and their vicinities. It is from the two first genera of the European population, that the ancient inhabitants of England descended.

Two fanciful, but unscientific opinions have, at different times, been started, on the origin of

mankind. One, that men have sprung fortuitously from the earth: the other, that there have been several aboriginal races. The first was a vulgar error of antiquity, arising from its ignorance of natural history, which philosophy has long since exploded, both from the animal and vegetable kingdoms. The other is also yielding to our increasing knowledge of physiology and geography.

THE intelligent and impartial enquirer is now satisfied, that population has been, every where, the result of emigration from some primeval residence. We can trace, from historical documents, the colonization of many parts of the world; and the traditions of other nations sufficiently assure us, that they have been effusions from more ancient sources. Where history and tradition fail, we can discern the same kind of origin, from the impressive attestations of analogous manners and languages. The unnecessary fables of various original races, as well as of spontaneous animal vegetation, are therefore now discredited. Nations have branched off from preceding nations, sometimes by intentional emigration, and sometimes by accidental separation. War, commerce, want, caprice, turbulence, and pride, have each, in various regions, contributed to disperse the human race into new settlements; and among those tribes, which have frequented the sea, the casualties of the

C H A P
I.
}

BOOK I. weather have often compelled undesigned colonizations.

THAT there has been some catastrophe, like an universal deluge, to which all authentic history must be posterior, is now becoming the belief of the most scientific geologists. The petrifications of animal and vegetable substances, which are to be found in every part of the globe, and of which many species are extinct, concur with the earliest traditions of almost all countries; and especially of those, which had any ancient literature preserving their history, to prove this momentous event.

BUT the only ancient record, which connects a rational chronology with this revolution of physical nature — the Genesis of Moses — has authorised our best chronologers to place it about 2348 years before the Christian æra. This period is, therefore, the limit of all credible antiquity; and precedes, by a long interval, every document that has survived to us. But if the human race were at this time renewed, it is to a much later date, that we must look for the beginnings of the British population.

THE safe rule of Sir Isaac Newton, to admit no more causes of natural things, than are sufficient to account for their phenomena, may be efficaciously applied to the question, whether the human race has originated from one, or many, primeval stocks?

THERE are no more varieties of form or manners among the numerous tribes of mankind, than such as the descendants of one pair may have exhibited, under the varying influences of different climates and countries; and of dissimilar food, customs, diseases, and occupations. We may therefore believe the account of the most ancient history, which we possess, that all nations have sprung from one original race; and to its primitive parents in the first source, and in the second, to one or more of their three descendants, who survived the awful catastrophe, in which the first diffusion of human population disappeared, we must refer the various colonies of Britain whom we are about to enumerate.

THE peopling of a globe that is nearly twenty-four thousand miles in circumference, could not have been immediately effected; and the naturally slow progress of population over so large a surface, must have been made more gradual, by the mountains, deserts, lakes, and rivers, which divide its various regions.

THE impenetrable forests, ever increasing from the vegetative agencies of nature, till checked by human labour; and the continual and deleterious marshes, which rain and rivers are, every year, producing and enlarging in all uninhabited countries, must have long kept mankind from spreading rapidly, or numerously, beyond their first settlements. These appear not to have been in Europe.

BOOK

I.

ALL ancient history agrees with the Mosaic, and with the researches of modern science and antiquarian curiosity, to place the commencement of population, art, and knowledge, in the eastern portions of the world. Here men first appeared and multiplied; and from hence first spread into those wilder and ruder districts, where nature was living in all her unmolested, but dreary, and barbarous majesty.

IN the plains of warm and prolific climates, where the human race first diffused itself, ease, abundance, leisure, and enjoyment, produced an early civilization, with all its advantages and evils. As the experience of the latter has, in subsequent times, driven many, from their native soil and patriotic comforts, to pursue the shadows of their hopes in new and uncultivated regions; so it appears to have actuated several, to similar emigrations, in the earliest periods of society. In all ages, mankind have grown up in two great classes, which have diverged into a marked distinction from each other. It has been usual to call one of these, in its connected ramifications, the civilized states of antiquity; and to consider the other, with much complacent contumely, as savage and barbarous tribes.

BUT as both these descriptions of society have had a common origin, we may more philosophically contemplate them as the same people; of whom the Nomadic radiated like the modern settlers on the Ohio, the Mississippi, the Mis-

souri, and Oronooko, from civilized communities, into new circumstances of life and residence; into desolate solitudes, often grand and picturesque; but for a long time comfortless and appalling: where nature reigned in a state of magnificence, as to her vegetable and animal subjects, but diffused for some time terror, penury, and disease, to all that was intellectual and human. It was impossible for any portion of the civilized population of the world, to wander from their domestic localities, and to penetrate far into these unpeopled regions, without changing the character and habit of their minds; or without being followed by a progeny, still more dissimilar to every thing which they had quitted. In some, the alteration was a deteriorating process, declining successively into absolute barbarism. But in more, became rather peculiarity, than perversion.

ORIGINAL forms of character, and many new and admirable habits and institutions, often grew up, in these abodes of want, exertion, independence, and vicissitudes. The loss of some of the improvements of happier society, was compensated by energies and principles, which that must necessarily sacrifice, or cannot obtain: and it will be nearer the actual truth, to consider the barbarous and civilized states of antiquity, as possessed of advantages distinct from each other; and perhaps not capable of continuous union,

BOOK I. although often becoming intermingled, for a time, with mutual improvement.

IN our late age of the world, the term barbarian is often correctly applicable to many countries which we have visited; but it will be unjust to the ancestors of all modern Europe, not to consider, that the appellation had not anciently a meaning so directly appropriate. The Greeks denominated all nations as *barbaroi* but their own; although Egypt, Phenicia, Babylon, and Carthage had preceded them in civilization.

THE two ancient grand divisions of mankind, were not as strongly unlike, as the New Hollander, or Caffre, is to a modern European. They were at first to each other, what the Dorians were to the Athenians in Greece; the one a settled population, the other migratory. And though we may retain the expression of civilization, as the character of the settled races, it will less mislead our imaginations, if we call the other portion of mankind the Nomadic race. These had improvements and civilization of their own, though of a sterner and more hardy nature. They differed in attainments from their more polished relatives; but were not in all things their inferiors. It is unjust to degrade those with the appellation of barbarians, in the present meaning of the term, from whose minds, institutions, and manners, all that we now possess in civilization, superior to the most cultivated states

of antiquity, has been principally derived. Our ancestors sprung from the great barbaric or Nomadic stock; and it may divest us of some of our unreasonable prejudices and false theories about them, if we make a rapid survey of the circumstances by which the two great classes of mankind have been principally distinguished.

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OF these, the civilized were those nations, who from their first appearance in history, have been found numerously and durably associated together; building fixed habitations; cultivating continuously the same soil; and fond of connecting their dwellings with each other into cities and towns, which, as external dangers pressed, they surrounded with walls. They multiplied inventions in the mechanic and manufacturing arts; allowed an individual property in ground and produce, to be acquired and transmitted; and guarded and perpetuated the appropriation, with all the terrors of law and civil power.

THEY became studious of quiet life, political order, social courtesy, pleasurable amusements, and domestic employments. They exercised mind in frequent and refined thought; pursued intellectual arts and studies; perpetuated their conceptions and reasonings by sculptured imagery, written language, and an improving literature; and valued those who excelled in mental studies. They promoted and preserved the welfare of their societies, by well arranged governments,

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which every citizen was desirous to uphold; by a vigilant policy, which they contentedly obeyed; and by laws, wise in their origin and general tenor, but often pursuing human actions with inquisitorial severity; with vindictive jealousy; and with a minuteness and subtlety, which destroyed individual freedom, and bounded public improvement. They have usually loved religion; though they have made it a slavery, whose established superstitions it was treasonable to resist. They erected temples, oracles, and altars; they divided the energies and attributes of the Supreme Being, into distinct personalities, which they adored as divinities; made images and mythologies of each; devised and established a ceremonial worship, and permanent priesthood, which has usually been intimately connected with their political government; and made the sanctioned teachers of the belief, morals and main opinions of their people.

BUT these civilized nations, notwithstanding all their improvements, and from the operation of some, have degenerated into sensuality; into the debasing vices, and to effeminate frivolities. The love of money, and a rapaciousness for its acquisition; and the necessities and false emulation, which continual luxuries create, have dissolved their social morality, and substituted a refined, but persevering and ever-calculating selfishness, for that mutual benevolence, which reason desires; which Christianity now enjoins;

and which our best sympathies suggest. Superstition and despotism increase, as the moral attachments to probity and order lessen; and yet by their increase assist to undermine both loyalty and patriotism.

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FACTIOUS violences on the one hand; legal oppressions and persecutions on the other; and an augmenting soldiery, every day becoming dangerous to the authorities that need them, from a practical sense of their own importance and power; and every day enfeebled by inefficient chiefs, because the promotion of talent is dangerous to its employers, and is impeded by the claims of the interested and powerful, have increased the evils of a voluptuary civilization, till states have subsided from secret and selfish disaffection, into feeble and disunited masses; which enemies have shaken, and powerful invaders at last subdued. Their mental progress, from all these causes, has been usually checked into that limited and stationary knowledge, soon becoming comparative ignorance, into which, even the cultivation and social comforts of civilization have hitherto invariably sunk; and from which the irruptions, spirit, and agencies of the Nomadic tribes, or the newer kingdoms which they have founded, have repeatedly rescued the human race.

THE other important part of the ancient population—that from which we have sprung—which the civilized world always contemplated with

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disdain, and frequently with horror, comprised those, who under various names, of which the Kimmerians, Kelts, Scythians, Goths, and Germans, are the most interesting to us, long preferred a wilder, roaming, and more independent life.

By these, the forests and the hills; the unbounded range of nature; the solitude of her retreats; the hardy penury of her heaths; the protection of her morasses; and the unrestricted freedom of personal exertion and individual humour, (though with all the privations, dangers, wars, and necessities that attend self-dependance, and even human vicinity, unassociated by effective government and vigilant laws,) have yet been preferred to crowded cities and confused habitations; to petty occupations and contented submission; to unrelaxing self-government and general tranquillity.

THE comfort, plenty, and security; the knowledge, the milder virtues, and sensual gratifications, which would have accompanied the change, were for ages unable to affect their fiercer temper; and even when the Nomadic have conquered the civilized, as in the case of the Gothic irruptions on the Roman empire, the habits and institutions of the polished race, have given way to the hardier customs of the barbaric tribes.

THIS class of mankind was composed of distinct families, that multiplied into separate tribes,

living insulated from each other; and rarely coalescing into nations; though sometimes confederating for the purposes of war and depredation. Their primeval state was, in some, that of the shepherd, and in others, of the hunter. Or if any migratory clans paused awhile for agriculture, they quitted the soil after they had reaped the harvest; and sought out new plains to consume and to abandon; new woods to range, and new game to chase. Too fond of individual liberty—probably the first stimulus to their separation from civilized society—and too moveable and too jealous of restricting laws, to have a regular government,—they became fierce, proud, and irascible; easily excited, rugged in manners, boisterous in temper, and implacable in resentments. Looking on the kingdoms and cities of refined life with contempt for its effeminate habits, and with the eye of rapacity for its tempting abundance, all their intercourse with it was war, depredation, and captivity. Sometimes multiplying too rapidly for the produce of their locality, they moved in large bodies to regions unoccupied, or incapable of resisting them; and, with their wives, families, and humble property, transported themselves forcibly from one country to another, to be often again, by some more numerous or warlike tribe, dispossessed of their new soil, or to be destroyed, in wars which were usually exterminations. Revolting as these habits are to our better and

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happier feelings, yet they served at that period to penetrate the wild earth; to subdue the exuberance of excessive vegetation, and to begin the first processes of preparing the unpeopled world for the cultivation and settlements of an improved posterity. They levelled some forests, and made roads through others: they found out the fords of rivers, the passes of the mountains, and the permeable parts of the insalubrious marshes. Their wars and depredations; their ravages and restless dispositions, were perpetually clearing new ground for human cultivation; and making new channels for human intercourse, through unknown countries. Their vicissitudes, though perpetuating their ferocity, yet kept them under particular excitement; and nourished hardy and active bodies.

BUILDING their rude huts in the woods for easier defence, every invader that dislodged them, and proclaimed his triumph by his conflagrations, only drove them to explore and people more inaccessible solitudes; and rendered the district they quitted, unfit for barbaric occupation; but more adapted to become the residence of peaceful colonists. By their desultory movements, the domesticated animals, most useful to mankind, were every where scattered; the savage beasts destroyed, and new germs of future tribes were every where deposited; till some branches or other of these Nomadic tribes had moved, from the Asiatic Bosphorus, to the farthest shores

of the European continent. Of these, the Kim-
 merians were the most advanced in the north-
 west; and the Kelts towards the west and south.

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IN this state, a new description of society became perpetuated and diffused, in which the greatest degree of individual liberty was exerted and allowed, that could be made compatible with any social combination.

LIBERTY was the spring and principle of their political associations; and pervaded the few civil institutions which their habits required, and their humours permitted. Neither chief nor priest was suffered to have much power. Influence, not authority, was the characteristic of the shadowy government which they respected; and it was the sacred custom of almost all their tribes, that a national council should be an inseparable portion of the sovereignty of each; in which all legislation should originate; by which the executive power of the chosen ruler should be continually controuled; in which all general measures of the state should be considered and determined; and to which, every freeman that was aggrieved, might appeal for redress. We have direct historical evidence of this fact among all the German and Gothic tribes; and sufficient intimation that it had once prevailed among the Kimmerians and Kelts. Hence, while a political submission became the mark and practice of the civilised, individual independence and political liberty became the cha-

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racteristic of the Nomadic. A fierce and jealous spirit of controul never left them. As each man chose to be principally his own avenger, instead of leaving, like the civilised, the punishment of wrong to the magistrate and the laws, their feuds were unceasing and inveterate. A martial temper and habit became necessary to their existence; and the penury which attended their aversion to peaceful drudgery, their mutual desolations, and their wandering life, compelled them to seek both their food and comforts from war and rapine.

YET amid these habits, a fearless and enterprising spirit, and a personal dignity and high-minded temper were nourished; and the hardy and manly virtues became pleasing habits. In this life of constant activity, want, privation, courage, vigilance, endurance, and exertion, the female virtues were called perpetually into action; and their uses were felt to be so important, that the fair sex obtained among all the tribes of ancient Germany a rank, an estimation, and an attachment, which were unknown in all the civilised world of antiquity; and which the spirit of Christianity has since matured and completed.

MOST of our improvements are, for a time, incompatible with each other; and must be separately pursued and sucessively attained. Hence, both the Nomadic and the civilised

conditions of society have been instrumental to its progress, and productive of its blessings. C H A P.
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THE subjected temper and patient habit of civilised life acquire merits, which the fierce and enterprising temper of the wilder state cannot attain; and this possesses an originality, an activity, a strength, and a vigorous virtue, which gives civilisation new energies; dissipates its corruptions, and breaks its enslaving bonds. All nations have been most improved by due mixtures of these two great classes. The earlier civilised have been repeatedly improved by the invasions and conquests of the Nomadic. Many debasing vices have been checked: many injurious governments and institutions dissolved; and many pertinacious errors destroyed. And of those ruder nations, from which the British population has been formed, it will be obvious to every enquirer, that some of their peculiar habits and institutions, which were well adapted to their freer life, and originated from their peculiar necessities and circumstances, have become the source of our greatest improvement in legislature, society, knowledge, and general comfort. The Nomadic mind is a mind of great energy and sagacity, in the pursuits and necessities peculiar to that state; and has devised many principles of laws, government, customs, and institutions, which have been superior to others that the earlier civilised have established.

THE Saxons, Franks, Burgundians, Goths, and Northmen have been distinguished by these characteristics.

THAT these nations were ignorant of Grecian and Roman literature, and of the sciences of Egypt, was the consequence of their early separation from the civilised communities, before these intellectual blessings had been attained, or much diffused; and of their subsequent loss of intercourse with those nations, when more generally enlightened.

A STATE of ignorance must, in all countries, and in every individual, precede that of knowledge; because knowledge cannot be intuitive, though the power to receive and to apprehend it be innate. In whatever world the mind exists, it must acquire the knowledge of what that world contains, after its birth; after its senses have begun to act, and to be acted on by the objects and events which it may contain.

ALL the facts of science have been successively observed; and all reasoning upon them must be posterior to their discovery.

So the knowledge which has flowed from human history could not be possessed before that history occurred.

BUT although our Nomadic ancestors were long without the cultivation of knowledge and literature, they were not therefore mentally inert.

THERE is an education of mind, distinct from the literary, which is gradually imparted by the

contingencies of active life. In this, which is always the education of the largest portion of mankind, our ancestors were never deficient. CHAP.
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THE operation of this practical, but powerful intellect, may be traced in the wisdom and energy of their great political mechanisms and municipal institutions. It pervades their ancient laws; and is displayed in full dimensions, as to our Saxon and Norman ancestors, in that collection of our native jurisprudence, which our Bracton has transmitted to us. The system of our common law, there exhibited, was admirably adapted to their wants and benefit; and has mainly contributed to form the national bulwarks; and that individual character, by which England has been so long enriched and so vigorously upheld.

WE may remark generally of the two states, which we have been considering, that literary and scientific knowledge has been the earliest acquired by the civilised; and has always continued to be, with some partial fluctuations, their peculiar property; continually, though often tardily increasing, till they have reached that line of limitation, which their manners and institutions usually at last create.

BUT the natural capacity and the intellectual activity, though with a different application, have been the same in both. Influenced by dissimilar circumstances, and directed to distinct subjects, the mental power of each may have appeared

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to be disproportionate; but its exertion among those called barbarians, in their forest-habitations, in their predatory expeditions, in their rude councils and national wars, was unceasing; and so finally effective, that the genius of civilised Rome, repeatedly endangered by their hostilities, was at last subdued by their superior energies.

THESE two states seem to have been in all ages so contemporaneous, and to have pervaded the world so equally together, and in such constant vicinity, that history has recorded no era, since the separation of mankind at Babel, in which either has been extinct. On the contrary, the settler and the wanderer; the restless and the tranquil; the Scythian and the Egyptian, have always co-existed. As far as history ascends, the world has never been without both. This fact confirms the idea, that the Nomadic were originally but branches of the civilised, as the migratory settlers on the Ohio and Missouri in our days are the effusions of other states, more advanced and improved: and, but that these men cannot now go, where civilisation from its commanding extent, and with its transforming effects, will not soon pursue them, their posterity would become the Scythians and Goths of modern times; and exhibit an example of the formation of new barbaric tribes.

THE first nations that have appeared in the civilised state, were the Egyptians, Phenicians,

Assyrians, Chinese, and Babylonians; and these have never been known in the Nomadic or barbaric state. In a later age, partly offsets from these, or from a kindred seed, emerged the Carthaginians, Greeks, Persians, Hindus, and Romans; of whom the Greeks and Romans began, at first, to act in their uncivilised condition.

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SOME of these nations — both of the earlier and the later improved — the Phenicians, Carthaginians, and Greeks, either visited Britain, or were acquainted with it; and the Romans ultimately conquered and occupied it. But the great masses of the populations, which have successively planted themselves in the British islands, have sprung from the Nomadic classes. The earliest of these that reached the northern and western confines of Europe, the Kimmerians and Kelts, may be regarded as our first ancestors; and from the German or Gothic nations who formed, with the Scythians, the second great flood of population into Europe, our Anglo-Saxon and Norman ancestors proceeded. The Sarmatic, or third Nomadic race, have never effected any settlements among us; nor reached those states of the continent from which they could have troubled us. England has seen them only as visitors and friends.

THE migrations by land precede those by sea. The facilities of movement are greater, and the ocean is a scene of danger, that repels adventure, as long as other avenues of hope, or safety,

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are as accessible. But the chronology of these transplantations cannot now be ascertained. It is most probable, that population advanced contemporaneously, though not with an equal ratio, from both land and sea. The sea coasts, nearest to the first civilised states, were gradually visited and peopled, as Greece from Egypt and Tyre; — and the islands of the Archipelago and the Mediterranean, as well as Africa and Spain, by the Phenicians. But the great waves of population have rolled inland from the east. Tribe after tribe moved over the Bosphorus into Europe, until at length the human race penetrated its forests and morasses, to the frozen regions in the north, and to the farthest shores of the ocean on the west. Our islands derived their population chiefly from branches of the inland hordes of Europe, though the habitual visits of the maritime nations of antiquity, the Phenicians and Carthaginians, and their Spanish settlements, were not likely to have occurred without leaving some colonial results.

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That the Kimmerian and Keltic Nations were the earliest Inhabitants of the West of Europe. — A brief Outline of their Migrations and Expeditions. — Settlement of their Colonies in Britain. — Welsh Traditions on this Subject.

FROM the languages already remarked to have prevailed in Europe, we have clear indications of the three great and distinct streams of population, at separate and successive periods, to which we have alluded, because we find two distinct families of languages to have pervaded the northern and western regions; with a third, on its eastern frontier; each family peculiar to certain states. These three languages may be classed under the general names of the Keltic, the Gothic, and the Slavonic; and from the locality in which we find them, and from the names of the ancient nations who are first recorded to have inhabited that locality, they may be also called the Kimmerian, the Scythian, and the Sarmatian. Of these, the Welsh, the Gaelic, the Irish, the Cornish, the Armoric, the Manks, and the ancient Gaulish tongue, are the related languages which have proceeded from the KIMMERIAN or KELTIC source. The Anglo-

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Saxon, the Franco-theotisc, the Mæso-gothic, and the Islandic of former times; and the present German, Suabian, Swiss, Dutch, Swedish, Danish, Norwegian, Orkneyan, English, and Lowland Scotch, are ramifications of the great GOTHIC or SCYTHIAN stock. The third genus of European languages, the ancient Sarmatian, or modern Slavonic, appears in the present Polish and the Russian, and in some regions adjacent.

ALL the languages, classed under each of the above heads, are so visibly related together, as to make one and the same family, and to announce the same parent stock: but are so dissimilar to the others, as to mark a different source and chronology of origin. The local position in Europe, of the different nations using these tongues, is also evidence of their successive chronology. The Keltic or Kimmerian is in the farthest part of the west, in the British islands, and on the western shores of France. The Scythian or Gothic languages occupy the great body of the European continent, from the ocean to the Vistula. And in the eastern parts of Europe, most contiguous to Asia, and also spreading into Asia, the Sarmatian or Slavonic tongues are diffused. So that we perceive at once, that the Kimmerian or Keltic nations, to have reached the westerly position, must have first inhabited Europe: that the Scythian or Gothic tribes must have followed next; and

have principally peopled it: and that the Sarmatian, or Slavonic people, were the latest colonists. Other nations have entered it, at more recent periods, as the Huns and the Romans; and some others have established partial settlements, as the Lydians in Tuscany; the Greeks at Marseilles, and in Italy; the Phœnicians and Carthaginians in Spain. But the three stocks, already noticed, are clearly the main sources of the ancient population of the European continent, in its northern and western portions.

THE most authentic accounts of ancient history confirm the preceding statement.

THAT the Kimmerians were in Europe before the Scythian tribes, we learn from the information of Herodotus, the father of Grecian history. He states, apparently from the information of the Scythians themselves, that the Kimmerians anciently possessed those regions in Europe which the Scythians were occupying in his time.² And these Scythians were then spread from the Danube, towards the Baltic and the north.

It cannot now be ascertained, when the Kimmerians first passed out of Asia over the Bosphorus, which they named; but that they were in Europe, in the days of Homer, is obvious,

² Herod. Melpom. s. 11. I have adopted the Greek orthography of the K, Κιμμεριοι, because it expresses the proper pronunciation of the word.

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because he mentions them in his ³Odyssey; and he appears to have lived, at least eight hundred years before the Christian æra. That he was acquainted with the position of the Kimmerians, in the north-eastern parts of Europe, is three times asserted by Strabo.⁴

THAT the Kimmerians were inhabiting these places, above seven hundred years before our Saviour's advent, we have direct historical evidence; because it was about this period, if not before, that they were attacked by the Scythians in these settlements.⁵ Overpowered by this invasion, the Kimmerians of these districts moved from Europe into Asia Minor; and afflicted its maritime regions with calamities, from their warfare, which Ionia remembered with such horror, as to believe that they sprang

³ *Κιμμεριων ανδρων*, Od. A. v. 14. He places them on the Pontus, at the extremities of the ocean; and describes them as covered with those mists and clouds, which popular belief has attached to the northern regions of the Euxine. The Turkish name Karah Deksi, the Greek *Μαυρο Θαλασσα*, and our Black Sea imply the same opinion. Bayer says, that he has had it from eye-witnesses, that all the Pontus and its shores are infested by dense and dark fog. Comm. Acad. Petrop. t. ii. p. 421.

⁴ Strabo, Geog. p. 12. 38. 222.

⁵ Herodotus states this invasion to have occurred in the reign of Ardyes, the son of Gyges, lib. i. s. 15. Ardyes reigned from 680 to 631 years before Christ. Strabo places the same event in Homer's time or before, on the authority of some other historians, p. 38. 222. We can scarcely reduce any of the facts of ancient classical history, before the Persian war, to exact chronology.

from the infernal regions ; to the neighbourhood of which even Homer consigns them.⁶

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THAT part of the Kimmerian population, which the Scythians thus disturbed, was then occupying the peninsula, which from them obtained the name of the Kimmerian Chersonesus; and its vicinity. Their name was also retained, after their departure, in the adjoining Bosphorus, in a mountain, and in a city on the peninsula, where the isthmus was protected by a ditch and a rampart. In these parts of Europe they had possessed great power, before the Scythians attacked them⁷; and Herodotus says, that in his time, several Kimmerian walls and ports were to be seen there.⁸ The Turks are now the masters of this country.

THE retreat of the Kimmerians, who fled before the Scythians, has given rise to the assertion, that they conquered Asia, because what the Romans called Asia Minor, was by the more ancient Greeks usually denominated Asia; but it is clear that their irruption was along the sea coast, and did not extend beyond the maritime districts.⁹ One of their chiefs who con-

⁶ "As Homer knew that the Kimmerians were in the north and west regions on the Bosphorus, he made them to be near Hades; and perhaps according to the common opinions of the Ionians concerning that race." Strabo, Geog. p. 222.

⁷ Strabo, lib. xi. p. 756. 475. Ed. Amst. 1707.

⁸ Herod. Melpom. lib. iv. s. 12.

⁹ Herod. Clio, s. 15.

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ducted it was called Lygdamis; he penetrated into Lydia and Ionia, took Sardis, and died in Cilicia. This destructive incursion, which succeeded probably because it was unexpected, has been mentioned by some Greek poets¹⁰, as well as by Herodotus¹¹, Callisthenes¹², and¹³ Strabo. They were at length expelled from Asia Minor by the father of Cræsus.¹⁴

WHEN the Scythians first attacked them on the European side of their Bosphorus, their endangered tribes held a council; the chiefs and their friends wished to resist the invaders, but the others preferred a voluntary emigration. Their difference of opinion produced a battle, and the survivors abandoned their country to the Scythians.¹⁵ But while one portion went under Lygdamis to Asia, the more warlike and larger part of the Kimmerian nations, according to the geographers cursorily mentioned by Plutarch¹⁶, receded westward from the Scythians, and proceeded to inhabit the remoter regions of Europe, extending to the German Ocean. "Here," he adds, "it is said, that they live in

¹⁰ By Callinus in his poems, who calls them the "impetuous Kimmerians." Strab. lib. xiv. p. 958., and by Callimachus, Hym. in Dian. 252.

¹¹ Herod. Clio, s. 6. Ibid. Melpom.

¹² Ap. Strab. p. 930.

¹³ Strab. Geog. lib. i. p. 106. et al.

¹⁴ Herod. Clio, s. 16.

¹⁵ Herod. Melpom. s. 11.

¹⁶ Plutarch in Mario.

a dark, woody country, where the sun is seldom seen, from their many lofty and spreading trees, which reach into the interior as far as the Hercynian forest." But whether their progress to these parts was the consequence of the Scythian attack, or had preceded it, is of little importance to us to ascertain. The fact is unquestionable, that the Kimmerians anciently diffused themselves towards the German Ocean.

THE history of the Kimmerians, from their leaving the eastern Bosphorus, to their reaching the Cimbric Chersonesus on the Baltic, has not been perpetuated. The traditions of Italy, and even an ancient historian intimate, that Kimmerians were in those regions near Naples, where the ancient mythologists place the country of the dead.¹⁷ Their early occupation of Europe and extensive dispersion divest this circumstance of any improbability. They who wandered across Europe from the Thracian Bosphorus into Jutland, may have also migrated southward into Italy, like the Goths and Lombards of a future age. But as nations, in the nomadic state, have little other literature than

¹⁷ Strabo says, "And they deem this place Plutonian, and say that the Kimmerians are there; and they who sail thither, first sacrifice to propitiate the subterraneous demons, which the priests exhort them to do, on account of the profit which they derive from the offering. There is a fountain of river water; but all abstain from this, as they think it the water of the Styx. Geog. p. 171.—Ephorus applying this place to the Kimmerians," &c. *Ib.* p. 375.

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funeral inscriptions, the brief and vague songs of their bards, wild incantations, or rude expressions of martial trophies, divested of all circumstance or chronology, it is not till they assail the welfare of the civilised, and become a part of their history, that we have any notice of their transactions; and often not till this period, any indication of their existence. But two intimations have been preserved to us of the Kimmerians, which probably express the general outline of their history. They are stated to have often made plundering incursions¹⁸, and they were considered by Posidonius, to whose geographical works Strabo was often indebted, as a predatory and wandering nation.¹⁹

The Cim-
bri were
Kimme-
rians.

IN the century before Cæsar they became known to the Romans by the harsher pronunciation of Cimbri²⁰, in that formidable irruption

¹⁸ Strabo, p. 106. This habit no doubt occasioned the word Cimbri to signify robbers among the Germans, as Plutarch remarks in Mario.

¹⁹ Posid. ap. Strab. p. 450.

²⁰ That the *Κιμμεριοι* of the Greeks, were the Kimbroi of the Greeks, and Cimbri (Kimabri) of the Latin writers, was not only the opinion of Posidonius, whom Strabo quotes, lib. vii. p. 293. but of the Greeks generally: "quum *Græci* Cimbros Cimmeriorum nomine afficiant, ib. Diodorus Siculus expressly says, that to those who were called *Κιμμεριοι*, the appellation of *Κιμβρων* was applied in process of time, and by the corruption of language, lib. v. p. 309. Plutarch, in his life of Marius, also identifies the Kimabri with the Kimmerioi. He says, "from these regions, when they came into Italy, they began their march, being anciently called Kimmerioi, and in process of time Kimbroi."

from which Marius rescued the Roman state. At this period a great body of them quitted their settlements on the Baltic, and, in conjunction with other tribes, entered the great Hercynian forest, which covered the largest part of ancient Germany. Repulsed by the Boioi, they descended on the Danube. Penetrating into Noricum and Illyricum, they defeated the Roman consul Narbo; and a few years afterwards, having by their ambassadors to Rome solicited in vain the senate, to assign them lands for their habitation, for which they offered to assist the Romans in their wars, they defeated four other consuls in as many successive battles, and entered Gaul. Having ravaged all the country between the Rhone and the Pyrenees, they spread into Spain, with the same spirit of desolation. Repulsed there by the Celtiberi, they returned to France; and joining with the Teutones, who had also wandered from the Baltic, they burst into Italy with a force, that had accumulated in every region which they had traversed. Rome was thrown into consternation by their progress, and it required all the talents and experience of Marius, Sylla, and the best Roman officers to overthrow them.²¹

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II.

²¹ Liv. Epit. 63—67. Florus, lib. iii. c. 3. Oros. lib. v. c. 16. Strabo, lib. v. Plut. Vit. Mai. We have the names of three of their kings from Livy, Plutarch, and Florus; Bolus, Bojoris, and Teutochus.

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THE great mass, of the Kimbric population, perished in these conflicts. The Romans are stated to have destroyed, from two to three hundred thousand, in two battles. It is impossible to read of human slaughter without lamenting it, or without feeling some abhorrence of those, however famed as heroes, by whom it has been effected. But in this war, the Kimbri provoked the destruction, by their desolating aggressions: and considering the spirit and customs of barbaric ferocity, which they maintained, and their national restlessness, their disappearance was advantageous to the progress of civilisation, and to the interests of humanity. Marius did not, like Cæsar, go into Gaul in search of a sanguinary warfare. He obeyed the call of his country to rescue her from a calamitous invasion. His successes filled Rome with peculiar joy, and were sung by the poet Archias, whom Cicero's eloquence has made illustrious.²²

THE rest of the Kimmerian nation on the continent remained in a feeble and scattered state. They are noticed by Strabo, as existing in his time on the Baltic²³; and are more briefly

²² Even the illiterate Marius was pleased with this Parnasian effusion. "Ipsi illi C. Mario, qui durior ad hæc studia videbatur, jucundus fuit." Cicer. Or. pro. Arch. c. 9.

²³ He remarks that, in his time, Kimbri continued to inhabit their former settlements on the Baltic, and had sent a present of one of their sacred cauldrons to Augustus, lib. vii. p. 449.

alluded to by Pliny.²⁴ Both these writers represent them on the north-western shores of Europe, or on those coasts of the German Ocean, from which the Saxons and Danes made afterwards, expeditions into Britain.

IN the days of Tacitus, this ancient nation had almost ceased to exist on the continent of Europe; but his expressions imply their former power and celebrity. When he mentions those who in his time remained in the peninsula of Jutland, he says, “A small state now, but great in glory; the marks of their ancient fame yet remain, far and wide, about the Elbe; by whose extent you may measure the power and greatness of this people, and accredit the reported numbers of their army.” They were existing, or their fame continued in those parts, in the days of Claudian.²⁵

THUS far we have proceeded upon the authentic authorities, which remain to us in the classical writers, of the primeval population of Europe. From these it is manifest, that the earliest inhabitants of the north of Europe, were the Kimmerians or Kimbri; and that they spread over it from the Kimmerian Bosphorus,

²⁴ Nat. Hist. lib. iv. c. 27. and 28. The latter passage intimates Inland Cimbræ near the Rhine, as well as the Cimbræ in the Peninsula. In lib. vi. c. 14. he mentions Cimærii in Asia, near the Caspian.

²⁵ Tacitus de morib. Germ. Claudian calls the Northern Ocean by their name, “Cimbricæ Thetis,” Cons. Hon. lib. iv.

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to the Kimbric Chersonesus; that is from Thrace and its vicinity, to Jutland and the German Ocean; to that ocean from which the passage is direct to Britain;—the regular voyage in our times from Hamburgh to England or Scotland.

Kimme-
rians and
Cymry in
Britain.

THE habit of moveable nations in the uncivilized or nomadic state, would lead us to infer, as these Kimmerii or Kimbri are characterised as a wandering nation, and are shown by all that remains of their history to have been so, that at some early period, after they reached the shores of the German Ocean, they crossed it in their rude vessels to Great Britain. This reasonable supposition, analogous to all that we know of the customs of such nations, and of the colonization of other parts of the world, has a remarkable support in the name and traditions of the Welsh and their ancient British literature. It is agreed by the British antiquaries, that the most ancient inhabitants of our island were called Cymry (pronounced Kumri): they are so named in all that remains of the ancient British literature. The Welsh, who are their descendants, have always called themselves Cymry; and have given the same appellation to the earliest colonists of our island: and as the authorities already referred to, prove, that the *Κιμμεριοι* or Kimbri were the ancient possessors of the northern coasts of the Germanic Ocean, and attempted foreign enterprises, it seems to be a safe and reasonable inference, that

the Cymry of Britain originated from the continental Kimmerians.²⁶ That a district, in the northern part of England, was inhabited by a part of the ancient British nation, and called Cumbria, whence the present Cumberland, is a fact favourable to this presumption.

THE Danish tradition of expeditions and conquests in Britain, from Jutland and its vicinity, long before our Saviour's birth, which Saxo Grammaticus has incorporated into his history, may here be noticed. He is an authority too vague to be trusted alone; but he is evidence of the traditions of his countrymen, and they may claim that attention, when they coincide with those of the ancient British, which they would not otherwise deserve. They add something to the probability of early migrations, or expeditions from these regions into our islands, but yet must not be confounded with historical fact.

THE historical triads of the Welsh connect themselves with these suppositions in a very striking manner.²⁷ They state that the Cymry

Hu Cadarn.

²⁶ Tacitus mentions a circumstance favourable to this deduction. He says of the *Æstii* on the Baltic, that their language resembled the British, "*lingua Britannicæ proprior.*" *De mor. Germ.* If the opinion maintained in the text be true, the *Æstii* must have been a Kimmerian tribe.

²⁷ The Welsh have several collections of historical triads; which are three events coupled together, that were thought by the collector to have some mutual analogy. It is the strange form into which their bards, or ancient writers,

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were the first inhabitants of Britain, before whose arrival it was occupied by bears, wolves, beavers, and oxen with large ²⁸ protuberances. They add, that Hu Cadarn, or Hu the Strong, or Mighty, led the nation of the Kymry through the Hazy, or German Ocean into Britain, and to Llydaw or Armorica in France; and that the Kymry came from the eastern parts of Europe, or the regions where Constantinople now stands.²⁹ Though we would not convert Welsh traditions into history, where they stand alone,

chose to arrange the early circumstances of their history. One of the most complete series of their triads has been printed in the *Archaiology of Wales*, vol. ii. p. 57—75. It was printed from a MS. dated 1601, and the writer of it states that he had taken them out of the books of Caradoc of Llancarvan, and of John Breckfa. Caradoc lived in the twelfth century. Breckfa was much later.

²⁸ It may not be uninteresting to translate the whole triad. “Three names have been given to the Isle of Britain since the beginning. Before it was inhabited, it was called *Clas Merddin* (literally the country with sea cliffs), and afterwards *Fel Ynys* (the island of honey). When government had been imposed upon it by Prydain, the son of Aedd the Great, it was called *Ynys Prydain* (the island of Prydain); and there was no tribute to any but to the race of the Kymry, because they first obtained it; and before them, there were no men alive in it, nor any thing else but bears, wolves, beavers, and the oxen with the high prominence.” *Triad 1. Arch. v. ii. p. 57.*

²⁹ “The three pillars of the nation of the isle of Britain. First, Hu Gadarn, who led the nation of the Cymry first to the isle of Britain; and from the country of Summer, which is called *Deffrobani*, they came; this is where Constantinople is: and through the hazy ocean they came to the island of Britain, and to Llydaw, where they have remained.” *Triad. 4. p. 57.*

it cannot be unreasonable to remember them, when they coincide with the classical authorities. In the present case the agreement is striking. The Kimmerians, according to the authorities already stated, proceeded from the vicinity of the Kimmerian Bosphorus to the German Ocean; and the Welsh deduce their ancestors, the Cymry, from the regions south of the Bosphorus. The Welsh indeed add the name of their chieftain, and that a division of the same people settled in Armorica. But if the memory of Lygdamis, who led the Kimmerian emigration to Asia, and of Brennus, who marched with the Kelts against Greece, were preserved in the countries which they overran; so might the name of Hu Cadarn, who conducted some part of the western emigrations, be remembered in the island which he ³⁰ colonized. That Armorica, or Bretagne, was peopled by a race of men similar to those who inhabited Britain, is verified by the close resemblance of the languages of the two countries.

As we have traced the probable identity of the Kymry with the Kimmerii, and the actual identity of these with the Kimbri; it will be right to add the few circumstances, of the manners of these ancient people, which the

Manners
of the
Kimmerians
and
Cimbri.

³⁰ Pausanias has preserved the names of many of the kings of the Kelts who invaded Greece. So, Livy has transmitted to us those of the Keltic leaders, who attacked Italy in the time of the first Tarquin.

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classical writers have transmitted. They appear to have been such, as might be expected from the earliest emigrants of the civilised stock, who diverged the farthest from their primitive seats of civilisation. But as no Tacitus took the trouble to study their internal customs, we know nothing of their polity or national institutions. The repulsive features that most struck the attention of their enemies are nearly all that is recorded about them. They were too much dreaded or hated, to be carefully inspected or favourably delineated.

EPHORUS said of the Kimmerians, that they dwelt in subterraneous habitations, which they called *argillas*, communicating by trenches.³¹ It is certainly a curious analogy of language, that *argel*, in the language of the Cymry, or British, means a covert, a place covered over.³² This mode of habitation seems to have been the primitive state of barbaric life. The Troglodytes

³¹ Ap. Strabo, Geo. lib. v. p. 375.

³² The word occurs in the ancient Welsh poetry, as in the *Afallenau of Merddhin*,

a dyf yn *argel* yn argoedydd,
will come in the *covert* in the lofty woods.

1 W. Archaiol. p. 152.

It is also used in the Englynton Beddau of Taliessin:

Bet Llia Gwitel in *argel* arduddy
dan y guellt ac guevel.

The Grave of Llia the Gwyddelian in the *covert* of
Arduddy.

under the grass and withered leaves.

1 Archaiol. p. 80.

of Asia are said to have lived in caves; and Tacitus describes some of the ruder German tribes as dwelling under ground. The practice of several animals which burrow in the earth may have suggested the custom, and it suits that savage state into which even the emigrants from civilised society may lapse, among woods and marshes, want and warfare, if they lose the knowledge of the mechanic arts, or the tools which they require. Ephorus added, that they had an oracle deep under ground. The Kimbri swore by a brazen bull, which they carried with them. In battle they appeared with helmets representing fierce beasts gaping, or some strange figures; and added a high floating crest to make them look taller. They used white shining shields, and iron mail, and either the battle-axe, or long and heavy swords. They thought it base to die of a disease, and exulted in a military death, as a glorious and happy end.³³

CALLIMACHUS applies to these people the epithet horse-milkers.³⁴ This incident corresponds with the preceding accounts. The attachment to mare's milk has been common to most nations in their uncivilised state. Most rude and poor nations drink the milk of the animals they ride: as the Arabs of the desert use that of their camels. This habit suits their move-

³³ Plut. in Mario. Val. Max. l. ii. c. 6.

³⁴ Callim. Hym. in Dian, v. 252.

BOOK I. ability, scanty property, small fodder, and a sterile or uncultivated country.

THE religious rites of the Kimmerians included occasionally human sacrifices, one of the most ancient and universal superstitions, which affected and disgraced mankind in the first stages of their idolatrous and polytheistic worship. Strabo after remarking of the Kimbri, that their wives accompanied them in war, says that many hoary priestesses of their oracle followed, clothed in white linen garments, bound with a brazen girdle, and with naked feet. These women, with swords in their hands, sought the captives through the army, and threw them into a brass vessel of the size of twenty amphora. Then one of the prophetesses, ascending an elevation, stabbed them singly, as suspended above the cauldron; and made her divinations from the manner in which the blood flowed into it. The other assistants of the horrible superstition opened the bodies and predicted victory from the inspection of the bowels. In their conflicts, they used a species of immense drum; for they struck upon skins stretched over their war chariots, which emitted a very powerful sound.³⁵ Plutarch describes the women as placed on their waggons in the conflict with Marius; and when the men gave way in the battle, as killing those who fled, whether

³⁵ Strabo, lib. vii. p. 451.

parents or brothers. They strangled their infants at the same time, and threw them under the wheels, while fighting the Romans, and at last destroyed themselves rather than survive the calamity. These descriptions lead us to recollect some analogous passages of Tacitus concerning the Britons at the period of the Roman invasion. He describes women, with firebrands in their hands, running like furies among the army of the Britons in Anglesey; and adds, that they stained their altars with the blood of their captives; and consulted their gods by the fibres of men. He mentions also, that before their destruction of the colony at Camelodunum, “Women, agitated with the prophetic fury, sang its approaching ruin.”³⁶

CHAP.
II.

BUT upon investigating the remains of antiquity, we find another ancient people, placed in some of the western regions of Europe, at the time when Greek history begins. They were called *Κελτοι*, and afterwards *Γαλαται*; and Cæsar says of them, that they called themselves *Celtæ*, or *Keltæ*, though the Romans gave them the appellation of *Galli*.³⁷

The Kelts

³⁶ Tacitus Annal. lib. xiv. Stabat pro litore diversa acies, densa armis virisque, intercurantibus feminis. In modum furiarum, veste ferali, crinibus dejectis, faces preferebant— Nam cruore captivo adolere aras; et hominum fibris consulere deos fas habebant— Et feminæ in furore turbatæ, adesse exitium canebant.

³⁷ Cæsar. Comment. de bell. Gall. lib. i. s. 1. Pausanius says of these people, “They have but lately called themselves

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sprang
from Kim-
merians.

THE Keltai, to follow the Greek orthography of the word, appear to have been one of the branches of the Kimmerian stock. The term Kimmerian, like German, or Gaul, was a generic appellation. The people to whom it extended had also specific denominations. Thus, part of the Kimmerians who invaded Asia, under Lygdamis, were likewise called Trerones, or ³⁸Treres. That the Keltæ were Kimmerians is expressly affirmed by Arrian in two passages³⁹; and with equal clearness and decision by Diodorus⁴⁰, and is implied by Plutarch.⁴¹

As the Kimmerians traversed the north of Europe, from east to west, the Kelts seem to have proceeded more to the south and west. Some geographers, before Plutarch, extended the country of the Kelts as far as the sea of Azoph.⁴² Ephorus was probably one of these; for he is not only mentioned to have made Kel-

γαλαται. They anciently called themselves *κελτοι*, and so did others," p. 6. And that *γαλαται* was but another appellation of the *κελτοι*, see Diod. Sic. lib. v. p. 308. ed. Hanov. 1604. So Origin calls the Druids of Gaul. *της Γαλατων δευαδης*, adv. Cels. Galatai seems to be only a more euphonous pronunciation of Keltai; and Galli is probably but the abbreviation of Galatai. Strabo also says, all this nation whom they now call Gallikon or Galatikon, p. 298.

³⁸ Strabo, lib. i. p. 106. In another place he says, Magnetus was utterly destroyed by the Treres, a Kimmerian nation, lib. xiv. p. 958.

³⁹ Appian in Illyr. p. 1196., and de bell. civ. lib. i. p. 625.

⁴⁰ Diod. Sic. lib. v. p. 309.

⁴¹ Plut. in Mario.

⁴² Plut. in Mario.

tica of vast magnitude, and including much of Spain⁴³; but he likewise divided the world into four parts, and made the Kelts to inhabit one of the four towards the west.⁴⁴ This statement leads us to infer, that the Kelts had been considered to be an extensive people⁴⁵; which indeed the various notices about them, scattered in the writings of the ancients, sufficiently testify. All the classical authors, who mention the Kelts, exhibit them as seated in the western regions of Europe. While the Kimmerians pervaded Europe from its eastern extremity, to its farthest peninsula in the north-west, their Keltic branch spread down to the south-western coasts. When their most ancient transactions are mentioned by the Greek and Roman writers, we find them placed in France, and Spain, and emerging into Italy.

IN the time of Herodotus, the Kelts were on the

The Kelts
in the
West of
Europe.

⁴³ Strabo, lib. iv. p. 304.

⁴⁴ Strabo, lib. i. p. 59. Ephorus, in his fourth book, which was entitled Europe, Strabo, p. 463., divided the world into four parts, *ibid.* p. 59.: in the East he placed the Indians; in the South the Ethiopians; in the West the Keltæ; and in the North the Scythians.

⁴⁵ Ephorus was a disciple of Isocrates, who desired him to write a history, (Photius, 1455,) which he composed from the return of the Heraclidæ into the Peloponnesus to the twentieth year of Philip of Macedon. It obtained him a distinguished reputation. His geography is often mentioned, and sometimes criticised by Strabo. But he is extolled for his knowledge by Polybius, Diodorus, and Dionysius Halicarnassus.

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western coasts of Europe. He says, that they inhabited the remotest parts of Europe to the west ⁴⁶; and in another part, he states them to live beyond the Pillars of Hercules, and about Pyrene; and he places among them the origin of the Danube.⁴⁷

ARISTOTLE frequently mentions the Kelts. In one place, he notices them as neither dreading earthquakes, nor inundations ⁴⁸; in another, as rushing armed into the waves ⁴⁹; and in another, as plunging their new-born infants in cold water, or clothing them in scanty ⁵⁰ garments. In other works attributed to him, he speaks of the British islands as lying above the ⁵¹ Kelts: he mentions Pyrene as a mountain towards the west in Keltica, from which the Danube and the Tartessus flow; the latter north of the columns of Hercules; the former passing through Europe into the Euxine.⁵² He elsewhere speaks of Keltica, and the ⁵³ Iberians. He places the Kelts above Iberia; and remarks,

⁴⁶ Herod. Melpom. c. 49.

⁴⁷ Herod. Euterpe. c. 33. So Arrian. Herodotus places a people, whom he calls Cunesioi, beyond the Kelts.

⁴⁸ Arist. ηθικων Νικομ. lib. iii. c. 10.

⁴⁹ Arist. ηθικ. Ευδημ, lib. iii. c. 1.

⁵⁰ Arist. Πολιτ. lib. vii. c. 17.

⁵¹ De Mundo, c. iii. p. 552.

⁵² Meteor. lib. i. c. 12. This passage makes it probable, that by Pyrene the ancients meant the Pyrenees, though Herodotus calls it a city, and places it inaccurately as to the sources of the Danube.

⁵³ De Mirab. Auscult. 1157. de Gen. An. lib. ii. c. 8.

that their country was too cold for the ass, which our present experience contradicts; or, perhaps, we should rather say, that the temperature of France has been softened, by the demolition of its forests, the disappearance of its marshes, and the cultivation of its soil. Hipparchus also mentioned Keltica, but seems to have extended it into the arctic circle; for he placed Keltæ at the distance of six thousand stadia from Marseilles; and said that the sun shone all night in Keltica during the summer, and was not raised above the horizon, more than nine cubits, in winter.⁵⁴

THE opinions may be fanciful, but they shew this great astronomer's notion of the extent of the Keltic population. The Boii who named Bohemia, and the Helvetians, are both admitted to be Keltic.⁵⁵

THE tendency of the notices of the Kelts, by Herodotus, Aristotle, and Ephorus, is to show,

Strabo also calls their country Keltica, and Livy, Kelticum. Timagetes placed the springs of the Danube in the Keltic mountains. Schol. Appoll.

⁵⁴ Strabo cites Hipparchus, p. 128., but adds his own belief, that the Britons were more north than Keltica, by fifteen hundred stadia. In the time of Strabo the Keltæ were not more north than France. Hipparchus lived one hundred and fifty years before Strabo, and Keltica had become much limited, when the Roman wrote, by the successful progress to the Rhine of the German nations. The Belgæ had then passed this river, and even entered Gaul.

⁵⁵ See Tac. Mor. Germ. — Strabo, lib. vii. — Cæsar. de bell. Gall.

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that in their times, this people lived in the western parts of Europe, about Gaul and Spain. They are spoken of as being in the same places by later writers.⁵⁶ But the evidence of Cæsar is particularly interesting on this subject. In his time the German or Scythic hordes had spread themselves over Europe, and had incorporated, or driven before them the more ancient races, whom we have been describing. But he found the Kelts possessing, at the period of his entrance into Gaul, the most considerable, and the best maritime part of it. He mentions that the Seine and the Marne separated them from the Belgæ, and the Garonne from the Aquitani.⁵⁷ But if the Kelts occupied the sea-coast of France, from the Seine to the Garonne, and had been driven to the Seine by the invasions of northern assailants, they were in a position extremely favourable for passing over into Britain; and had been under the same circumstances to impel them to it, which afterwards drove the Britons to seek refuge on a part of their coast, when the Saxons pressed upon them.

THE Kelts had certainly been much spread upon the continent, in the times anterior to Cæsar, and had shaken both Greece and Rome by perilous invasions. From the earliest of their predatory migrations which has been recorded

⁵⁶ As Pausanius, p. 62. Diod. Sic. p. 308.; and Strabo in many places; also by Livy.

⁵⁷ Cæsar. Comment. de bell. Gall. lib. i. c. 1.

by the classical writers, we find, that they were in the occupation of France about 600 years before the Christian æra. At that period, their population in this country was so abundant, that their chiefs recommended two of their Princes to lead a numerous body over the Alps into Italy. One large multitude passed them near Turin, defeated the Tuscans, and founded Milan; another party settled about Brixia and Verona, while succeeding adventurers spread themselves over other districts. The reign of Tarquinius Priscus at Rome marks the chronology of these expeditions.⁵⁸

C H A P.
II.

THE next great movement of the Kelts, in the Italian States, that has been transmitted to us, occurred about 180 years after the preceding migration, when Brennus led them to that attack upon Rome itself, in which they became masters of the city, killed its senate, and had nearly taken its capitol, when Camillus rescued

⁵⁸ We derive our information of this important chronology and event from Livy. He states, that when Tarquinius Priscus reigned, the chief sovereignty of the Keltæ was with the Bituriges, (the inhabitants of that part of France where Bourges is now situated,) and that these gave a king to Kelticum. His name at that time was Ambigatus. The princes whom he sent out at the head of these expeditions were Bellovesus and Sigovesus, his sister's sons. The party under Sigovesus took the direction of the Hercynian forest. But Bellovesus commanded the invasion of Italy. Livy, Hist. lib. v. c. 34. The elder Tarquin died 578 years before the Christian æra.

the perishing republic from its barbaric conquerors. ⁵⁹

ONE hundred and ten years afterwards, Greece suffered from the irruptions of this prolific people, under another Brennus. ⁶⁰ The Kelts burst from Illyria into Macedonia and Thrace, poured thence into Thessaly, passed the Strait of Thermopylæ, as Xerxes had done, and proceeded to attack Delphos, when they were affected and destroyed by that panic which the reputation of the place, and the contrivances of its priesthood produced, and which preserved Greece from their further desolations. ⁶¹ These events occurred about 280 years before our Saviour's birth. The Kelts are noticed afterwards as attempting Asia Minor, and as serving in the armies of Ptolemy and also of Antigonus ⁶², and they had frequent battles with the Romans, but usually experienced ruinous defeats ⁶³; especially in that tremendous

⁵⁹ Dionysius Halic. dates this Keltic irruption, εφοδος Κελτων, in the first year of the ninety-eighth Olympiad, or 120 years after Junius Brutus and Collatinus. lib. i. p. 60.

⁶⁰ That the leader of the Keltæ in the attack of Rome, and their chief a century after in their invasion of Greece, should both be named Brennus, induces one to believe that this word is rather a descriptive than a personal appellation, and, therefore, to recollect that Brennin means a king in the Welsh and ancient British language.

⁶¹ The fullest account of this expedition of the Kelts into Greece, occurs in Pausanias, Attic. lib. i. p. 6—8. and Phoc. lib. x. p. 643—655.

⁶² Pausan. lib. i. p. 23.

⁶³ Liv. Hist.

conflict with Quintus Fabius Maximus, of which Cæsar reminded the Gauls of his day⁶⁴, when they were about to war with him, and in which Strabo states, that two hundred thousand Keltæ were cut off.⁶⁵

Strabo remarks of the Keltæ, that it was common to them and the Iberians to lie on the ground⁶⁶, that they used waxen⁶⁷ vessels, that they were addicted to human sacrifices, from which the Romans reclaimed⁶⁸ them, and that they were accustomed to bring home the heads of their enemies and fix them on the gates of their towns.⁶⁹ That the Keltæ, or Gauls, were easier conquered than the Spaniards, he ascribes to their fighting more in masses.⁷⁰ In the time of Alexander, there were Kelts on the Adriatic who offered him their friendship with language which he thought arrogant.⁷¹ The expeditions and positions above

⁶⁴ Cæsar de Bell. Gall.

⁶⁵ Strabo places the scene of this battle where the Isar and the Rhone flow, near the Kemminon mountains. The conqueror erected a trophy of white stone, and built two temples, one to Mars, and one to Hercules, p. 283.

⁶⁶ Strabo, p. 249.

⁶⁷ Ib. p. 233.

⁶⁸ Ib. p. 303.

⁶⁹ He says, that Posidonius declares he saw several of their heads, p. 303.; a custom which Strabo thought barbarian; but which reminds us of our own legal practice with executed traitors.

⁷⁰ Ib. p. 299.

⁷¹ Strabo, lib. vii. p. 462. Arrian lib. i. p. 8. The account, related on the authority of Ptolemy Lagus, his General, and

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noticed of the Kelts, prove that they were in the habit of spreading themselves from France into other countries; and considering the spirit of enterprise, the abundant population, and power of the Keltæ in France, and the vicinity and fertility of Britain, we cannot avoid believing, that they crossed the sea to colonize it. Cæsar expressly mentions, that one of the Keltic kings in Gaul, Divitiacus, who governed there the Suessiones, and was the most powerful Prince in that country, had subjected also part of Britain to his power.⁷² From him also we learn, that the Kelts of Armorica called upon some of the British tribes to aid them against his hostilities⁷³; and one of his reasons for attacking Britain was that they had assisted the Keltic Gauls to resist him.⁷⁴ He speaks also of its being visited by the Keltic merchants; and before his invasion of Britain, he sent one of the Keltic Princes of Gaul, whom he had made a king, into our island to persuade the Britons to be friendly to the Roman state, because the authority of this chieftain was great in Britain. Thus Cæsar affords sufficient evidence of the mi-

King of Egypt, is, that the King received the ambassadors with great civility, and asked them at his banquet what they most dreaded, expecting a complimentary answer as to himself. But they said they feared nothing, unless that the sky should fall and overwhelm them, though they highly valued his friendship. Alexander admitted them to his alliance, but called them arrogant.

⁷² Lib. ii. c. 4.

⁷³ Lib. iii. c. 9.

⁷⁴ C. 18.

litary and commercial intercourse between the two nations in his time, a fact favourable to the opinion of the affinity, between some parts of their respective populations.

C H A P.
II.

THAT colonies of Keltic race entered the British islands from Gaul, has always appeared to our antiquaries so probable, that there is scarcely any circumstance on which they have so cordially agreed. The Welsh tradition may be therefore read without incredulity, which deduces two colonies from Gaul, not Kymry, or Kimmerians, but of Kimmerian origin; the one from Armorica, and the other from Gascony.⁷⁵ The distinction taken as to their origin suits the situation of the Kelts, who, to use the expression of the triad, were of the first race of the Kymry. The Armorican emigration was of the tribe called Brython⁷⁶, a name which recalls to

The Kelts
enter Bri-
tain.

⁷⁵ The fifth triad is this: "The three peaceful people of the isle of Britain. The first were the nation of the Kymry, who came with Hu Cadarn to the island of Britain. He obtained not the country, nor the lands, by slaughter or contest, but with justice and peace. The other was the race of the Lloegrwys, who came from the land of Gwasgwyn; and they were of the first race of the Kymry. The third were the Brython, and from the land of Llydaw they came; and they were of the first race of the Kymry. And these were called the three peaceful nations, because they came one to the other with peace and tranquillity; and these three nations were of the first race of the Kymry, and they were of the same language." *Trioedd ynys Prydain*. 2 *Archaïol*. p. 58.

⁷⁶ The Brython are frequently mentioned by the old Welsh poets: by Aneurin, in his *Gododin*, 1 *Archaïol*. p. 10., and

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our recollection, that Pliny found a people called Britanni remaining in Gaul in his time.⁷⁷ The colony from Gascony was the Lloegrwys, whose name became attached to that part of the island which they occupied; the largest part of England has been always named Lloegr by the Welsh poets⁷⁸ and chroniclers.⁷⁹ Tacitus expresses his belief, that the Gauls peopled Britain⁸⁰, and Bede derives its inhabitants from Armorica.⁸¹ The position of the Kelts on the

by Taliessin, p. 31. 50. 66. 67. 73. He once mentions the Morini Brython, in his Prif Gyfarch, or Primary Gratulation, p. 33.

⁷⁷ Pliny Hist. Nat. lib. iv. c. 31.; and Dionysius.

⁷⁸ Aneurin speaks of Lloegr, p. 7., and calls its inhabitants Lloegrwys, p. 4. 9. and 11. Taliessin has Lloegr, p. 64. and 59., and Lloegrwys, p. 51. 55. Llywarch Hen and Myrddhin also use both words, as 108. 117. 153, &c.

⁷⁹ Besides the fabulous Brut Tysilio, and the Brut ab Arthur, 2 Archaiol. p. 116, 117., their historical chronicles Brut y Saeson, and the Brut y Tywysogion, p. 469. 471, &c. speak of England under this name.

⁸⁰ Tacitus Vit. Agric. In Camden's Britannia numerous analogies of manners and language between the Britons and Gauls are collected, to prove their identity of origin. Some of these are worth our consideration.

⁸¹ Bede Hist. Eccl. lib. i. c. 1. We have two collateral proofs from the analogy of language of the affinity between the inhabitants of Britain and the ancient Kelts. Pausanias, mentioning that every Keltic horseman was followed to battle by two attendants, says that the Kelts called this custom, in their native language, Trimarkisian, because the name of a horse among the Kelts is *Markan*, Phoc. lib. x. p. 645. *Mark* is also a horse, *tri* is three, and *trimarkwys* is literally three horsemen, in the ancient British, and present Welsh. Cæsar states, that the Keltic people, who bordered upon the ocean,

maritime regions of the west of Europe, placed them more within the reach of intercourse with the civilised nations of antiquity, who frequented the ocean, and they had begun to feel the influence of the superior progress of the improved part of the world. The Grecian settlement of the Phœcians, at Marseilles, which had occurred about 540 years before the Christian æra, had flourished into great wealth and consequence. They subdued some of the Keltic regions around them, founded cities in it, built a splendid temple to the Ephesian Diana, raised large fleets, pursued extensive navigations, of which the voyage of Pytheas towards Iceland is an instance; and became distinguished for the elegance of their manners, their love of literature, and spirit of philosophy. They made their city so attractive for its intellectual resources, that some of the noblest of the Romans lived there, in preference to Athens, and they diffused such a taste for Grecian customs around them, that the Gauls used Greek letters, and wrote their contracts in Greek.⁸² The Keltic invaders of Greece must have also introduced many beneficial improvements into their native country; for Strabo mentions, that treasures taken from Delphi, in the expedition under Brennus,

were in his time called *Armoricæ*, lib. v. c. 44. In the ancient British, and in the Welsh, *ar-mor-uch* literally mean upon upon the sea-heights.

⁸² Strabo, p. 272, 273.

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I.

were found by the Romans at Tholouse.⁸³ It was remarked by Ephorus, that the Keltæ were fond of the Greeks⁸⁴, and their diffusion into Spain, which he also mentions⁸⁵, brought them into immediate contact with the Phenicians and Carthaginians; and their Druids are certainly evidence that a part of the population had made some intellectual advance. The preceding facts connected with the analogy of the language, as at first remarked, satisfactorily prove that our earliest population came from the Kimmerian and Keltic stock.

⁸³ Strabo, p. 286.

⁸⁴ *Ib.* p. 304.

⁸⁵ Ephorus stated, that they occupied the largest part of Spain, up to Cadiz. Strabo, p. 304. And Strabo mentions, that before the Carthaginians possessed Spain, the *Keltoi* and the Tyrians held it, p. 238.

CHAP. III.

Phenicians and Carthaginians in Britain.

BUT though the Kimmerii, and their kindred the Kelts, may have peopled Britain, a more celebrated people are also stated to have visited it. The Phenicians, in their extensive commercial navigations, colonized many of the islands, and some of the coasts of the Ægean and Mediterranean Seas. Inscriptions in their language have been found in Malta. They occupied Spain, and founded Cadiz, and it was probably in pursuit of them, that Nebuchadnezzar the celebrated King of Babylon became the conqueror of Spain. They had also an established intercourse with islands, which the Greeks called “the Islands of Tin,” or Cassiterides. This, being a descriptive name, was probably the translation of the Phenician appellation.¹ As Herodotus

CHAP.
III.

Phenicians
in Spain
and Bri-
tain.

The Cassi-
terides.

¹ *Κασσιτερον* is the word used by the Greeks for tin. Borchart has founded an ingenious etymology of the “Britannic islands” on the Hebrew *ברת־אֵנַךְ*, Baratanac, which he says, means the Land of Tin. He says Strabo calls Britain, *Βρεττανική*. Boch. Canaan, lib. i. c. 39. p. 720. He also intimates, what is more probable, that the word *Κασσιτερον* may have been of Phenician origin. The Chaldean Targums, of Jonathan and Jerusalem, certainly call tin *kastira* and *kistara*, and the Arabs *kasdar*. See Numbers, xxxi. 22.

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intimates, that the Cassiterides were, with respect to Greece, in the farthest part of Europe²; as Aristotle talks of *Keltic* tin³; and Strabo describes both these islands and Britain to be opposite to the Artabri, or Gallicia in Spain, but northward, and places them within the British climate⁴; as in another passage he states them to be as to Rome, without, or on our side of the columns of Hercules⁵; as he mentions them to be productive of tin, obviously connecting them at the same time with the British islands⁶; and in another part, as being in the open sea, north from the port of the Artabri⁷, or Gallicia; the most learned, both at home and abroad, have believed the Cassiterides to have been some of the British islands. This opinion is warranted by there being no other islands famous for tin near the parts designated by Strabo; and by the fact, that British tin was so celebrated in anti-

² Herod. Thalia. c. 115.

³ Aristot. lib. Mirabilium; and Mela places the Cassiterides in Celticis, or among the Keltæ, lib. iii. c. 6. p. 262.

⁴ Strabo Geog. lib. ii. p. 181.

⁵ Strabo Geog. lib. ii. p. 191. He joins them with the British islands, και Κασιτεριδες, και Βρετανικαι.

⁶ Ib. lib. iii. p. 219. Here he says, that tin is produced among the barbarians above Lusitania and in the islands Cassiterides, and from Britain is brought to Marseilles.

⁷ Ib. lib. iii. p. 265. In this passage Strabo says likewise, they are ten in number, adjoining each other.

quity, that Polybius intended to write on the British islands, and the preparation of tin. ⁸

CHAP.
III.

It has been suggested, that the Scilly islands and Cornwall were more peculiarly meant by the Cassiterides. When Cornwall was first discovered from the south of Europe, it may have been thought an island, before greater familiarity with the coast taught the navigators that it was only a projecting part of a larger country; and even then, when the whole country connected with it, was found to be an island, there was no reason to change its insular appellation. In our navigations to the Pacific, new discovered places have been at first marked as islands, which were afterwards traced to be parts of a continent; and others have been deemed continental, which have been discovered to be insular. ⁹

⁸ Polyb. Hist. lib. iii. c. 5. Festus Avienus describes islands under the name of *Æstrymnides*, which are thought to be the same with Strabo's *Cassiterides*. He says they were frequented by the merchants of Tartessus and Carthage, and were rich in tin and lead. *De oris Marit.*

⁹ The reasons for supposing the *Cassiterides* to be the Scilly islands, are thus stated in Camden's *Britannia*. They are opposite to the *Artabri* in Spain; they bend directly to the north from them; they lie in the same clime with Britain; they look towards *Celtiberia*; the sea is much broader between them and Spain, than between them and Britain; they lie just upon the Iberian sea; there are only ten of them of any note, and they have veins of tin which no other isle has in this tract. *Camd. Brit.* p. 1112. Ed. 1695. All these circumstances have been mentioned of the *Cassiterides*.

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I.

MUCH of the false description with which the position of the Cassiterides has been confused, may have been designedly circulated by the Phenicians themselves. We know from Strabo, that they were anxious to deprive the rest of the world of any acquaintance with these islands. He has told us a very striking incident of this monopolizing solicitude, which must have been the parent of many misrepresentations about Britain, till the Romans subdued and examined it. He says, “anciently the Phenicians alone, from Cadiz, engrossed this market; hiding the navigation from all others. When the Romans followed the course of a vessel, that they might discover the situation, the jealous pilot wilfully stranded his ship; misleading those, who were tracing him, to the same destruction. Escaping from the shipwreck, he was indemnified for his losses out of the public treasury.”¹⁰ When Cæsar invaded Britain, we know from his Commentaries, that he was unacquainted with its magnitude, its harbours, or its people. It was even doubted whether it was a continent or an island.¹¹ Of course the Romans at that time could have known nothing of the connection and continuance of coast between Cornwall and Dover. This ignorance of other nations, and the designed misinformation given by the Phenicians,

¹⁰ Strabo, lib. iii. p. 265.

¹¹ Dio Cass. lib. xxxix. p. 127. Cæsar. Comm. de bell. Gall. lib. iv. s. 18.

may have occasioned the distinction to have been taken between the Cassiterides and Britain, and a supposition, favoured by Strabo, that some sea intervened.¹² The Cassiterides had become imperfectly known to the Romans, in the time of Strabo, by the attempt of¹³ Publius Crassus to discover them. He seems to have landed at one of them, but the short account given of his voyage does not incline us to believe that he completely explored them.¹⁴

C H A P.
III.

If we once presume that the Phenicians reached the Scilly islands, and extracted tin from them, we shall do great injustice to their memory to suppose that they, who could sail from Tyre to the Scilly islands, would not have adventured across the small sea between them and the Land's End. Indeed, the voyage of Himilco shows that the Carthaginians, the offspring of

¹² Solinus says, that a turbid sea divided the Scilly isle (Siluram) from Britain, Polyhist. c. 22. p. 31. The distance is near forty miles. Whit. Manch. ii. p. 172. 8°.

¹³ Strabo, lib. iii. p. 265. Huet thinks this was not the Crassus who perished against the Parthians, though he had fought in Portugal and triumphed in Spain; but his son, who was Cæsar's lieutenant in his Gallic wars, and who subdued the people of Vannes and its vicinity. He may have undertaken the voyage from curiosity, as Volusenus by Cæsar's orders examined part of the sea coasts of our island for military purposes. Hist. de Com. des Anciens, c. 38. p. 183. ed. Par. 1727.

¹⁴ Whitaker's description of the present state of the Scilly islands is worth reading. Hist. Manch. ii. p. 169. Though the same chapter in other parts discovers a fancy painting far beyond the facts in the authorities.

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Tyre, pursued voyages even more northward than Britain. ¹⁵ We may therefore admit, without much chance of error, that the Cassiterides visited by the Phenicians were the British islands, though the Romans understood by the name the Islands of Scilly, with perhaps part of the coast of Cornwall. ¹⁶

Welsh traditions.

HAVING thus stated the most authentic circumstances that can be now collected, of the peopling Britain by the Kimmerians, the Keltoid, and the Phenicians; it may not be improper to state in one view, all that the Welsh traditions deliver of the ancient inhabitants of the island. As traditions of an ancient people committed to writing, they deserve to be preserved from absolute oblivion.

ACCORDING to the Welsh triads, while it was uninhabited by human colonies, and was full of bears, wolves, beavers, and a peculiar kind of wild cattle, it had the name of ¹⁷Clas Merddhin. In this state, Hy Cadarn led the first colony of the Cymry to it, of whom some went to Bretagne. ¹⁸ It then acquired the name of the Honey Island. ¹⁹ In the course of time Prydain, the son of Aedd the Great, reigned in it, and

¹⁵ Pliny, lib. ii. c. 67.

¹⁶ Pliny has preserved the name of the Phenician navigator who first procured lead from the Cassiterides. He says, *Plumbum ex Cassiteride insula primus apportavit Midacritus*. Hist. Nat. lib. vii. c. 57.

¹⁷ Trioedd 1.

¹⁸ Ib. 4. and 5.

¹⁹ Ib. 1.

from him it was called Ynys Prydain, the Isle of Prydain ²⁰, which is its present denomination in Welsh, and which the Greeks and Romans seem to have extended into Britannia. It was afterwards visited by two foreign tribes of Kimmerian origin, the Lloegrwys, from Gwasgwyn, or Gascony; and the Brython, from Llydaw, or Bretagne. ²¹ Both of these were peaceable colonists. The Lloegrwys impressed their name upon a large portion of the island. At subsequent periods, other people came with more or less violence. The Romans ²²; the Gwyddyl Fficti (the Picts) to Alban or Scotland, on the part which lies nearest to the Baltic ²³; the Celyddon (Caledonians) to the north parts of the island; the Gwyddyl to other parts of Scotland ²⁴; the Corraniaid from Pwyll (perhaps Poland) to the Humber ²⁵; the men of Galedin, or Flanders, to Wyth; the Saxons ²⁶; and the Llychlynians, or Northmen. ²⁷

As the prosperity of the Phenicians declined under the hostilities of the ancient conquerors, who emerged from Assyria, Babylon, and Persia, their descendants, the Carthaginians, succeeded to the possession of their European settlements; and in some places, as in Spain, and Scilly,

Carthagi-
nians ac-
quainted
with Bri-
tain.

²⁰ Trioedd 1. Isidorus says, that Britain derived its name from a word of its inhabitants.

²¹ Ib. 5. ²² Ib. 8. ²³ Ib. 7. ²⁴ Ib. 6. ²⁵ Ib. 7.

²⁶ Ib. 6. ²⁷ Ib. 8.

BOOK I. greatly extended their territorial power. The Carthaginian occupation of Spain is fully attested to us by the Roman historians, and was distinguished by the wars in that country of the celebrated Carthaginian Generals, Asdrubal and Hannibal. It was natural that when possessed of Spain, they should also acquire the more distant colonies of the Phenicians, and continue their commercial intercourse with the British islands, and the neighbouring shores. Hence, there is no reason to disbelieve the opinion, that the Carthaginians had the same intercourse with the British islands, which the Phenicians established. The voyage of Himilco warrants the supposition. This Carthaginian officer sailed from Spain, on a voyage of discovery of the northern coasts of Europe, at the same time that Hanno was directed to circumnavigate Africa.²⁸

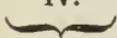
²⁸ Plin. Nat. Hist. lib. ii. c. 67.

CHAP. IV.

On the Knowledge which the Greeks had of the British Islands.—And on the Tradition of the Trojan Colony.

THE Grecian knowledge of Europe was gradually obtained. The calamities experienced at sea, by the conquerors of Troy on their return, dispersed them into many parts of the maritime regions of Europe.¹ The subsequent settlements of several Grecian colonies in Italy, as well as that already noticed at Marseilles, from which they pursued distant navigations; and the visits of Grecian travellers and philosophers to the Phenician cities in Spain², led them to some knowledge of its western and northern seas, shores, and islands. The attack of Darius, the Persian king, on the Scythians in Europe, revealed more knowledge of these people than former ages had acquired³, and the expeditions of Alexander, before his eastern adventure, disclosed to the Greeks all the north of Europe, up

CHAP.
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¹ Strabo, p. 223. 236. Plutarch in Nic. p. 238.

² Of which we have an instance in Posidonius. See Strabo, 264.

³ Herodotus.

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to the Danube. In the same manner, the restless enterprises of Mithridates made known to both Greeks and Romans the various tribes that inhabited the sea of Azoph and its ⁴ vicinity. Hence the Grecians had much information of the ancient chorography of Europe, though they were unacquainted, as Polybius intimates, with many of its inland regions. ⁵

Britain
known
to the
Greeks.

BUT that Britain and Ireland were known to the Greeks, at least by name, is an unquestionable fact. The ancient Argonautica, ascribed to Orpheus, but of much later origin ⁶, describes the voyage of the Argonauts, on their return to Greece. In this curious work, they are made to sail round the north of Europe, from the Kimmerian Bosphorus. In coming southward, the author says “they passed by the island Iernida.”⁷ Whether the next island they noticed,

⁴ Strabo, p. 26. Hence several of the Greeks wrote on the ancient geography of Europe, whose works we have lost, as Dicæarchus, Messenius, Eratosthenes, and Posidonius, whom Strabo mentions, p. 163., and whom he seems too fond of censuring, which is one of the faults of Strabo. It was a favorite point with him to attack all former geographers. He comes a good deal within the remark of “bearing no brother near the throne.”

⁵ Polybius, lib. iii. remarks this of the tract between Narbonne and the Tanais.

⁶ Suidas says, the Argonautica was written by an Orpheus of Crotona, whom Asclepiades, in the sixth book of his Grammaticæ, declared to be the friend of Pisistratus, vol. ii. p. 339. Some other works, published under the name of Orpheus, he attributes to Onomacritus, ib. 338.

⁷ *Ἀργοναυτικά*, v 1179. p. 156. ed. Lips. 1764. Strabo, lib. iv.

which is described as full of pine trees, was any part of Britain, cannot be ascertained. As this work, if not written in the time of Pisistratus, which many assert it to have been, is at least of great antiquity⁸; it is an evidence that Ireland was known to the ancient Greeks.

CHAP.
IV.

IN the book de Mundo, which is ascribed to Aristotle, the British islands are mentioned, with their specific names, Albion and Ierne.

THE voyage of Pytheas, which was in existence in the fifth century⁹, must have transmitted much information to the Greeks, concerning our islands. He seems to have lived about the time of Aristotle.¹⁰ He sailed from Marseilles, where he made an observation to determine its latitude, which enabled Eratosthenes and Hipparchus to calculate it with a precision which

p. 307. calls Ireland *Ιεσην*, and Diodorus Siculus gives it a name that approaches very near its native appellation. Its name in the Gaelic is Erin; in Diodorus it is *Ιρην*, lib. v. p. 309.

⁸ The antiquity of the *αργοναυτικα* has been ably vindicated by D. Ruhnkenius. He shows that it was quoted by two ancient grammarians, Orus and Draco Stratonicensis. He gives his own critical judgment of their antiquity in strong terms: "Is, qui Argonautica et Hymnos Orpheo subjecit, sive Onomacritus fuerit, ut plures traducit, sive alius, scriptor certe meo iudicio *Vetustissimus* est; in quo quamvis animus diligenter attenderim ne levissimum quidem recentioris ætatis vestigium reperi; contra, proba omnia et antiquitatem redolentia." Epist. Crit. 2. p. 128. ed. 1782.

⁹ He is quoted by Stephanus, Voc. *ωσιωνες*, who lived at this period.

¹⁰ See M. Bougainville's very able Memoir on his Life and Voyages, Mem. Ac. des Inscript. v. xxx. p. 285.

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modern astronomers have found exact.¹¹ He coasted Spain, Portugal, and France, into the British Channel. He passed along the eastern shore of Britain, to the north, till he reached the island which he has called Thule. He is the first navigator that penetrated so far into the Northern Ocean. After this, he made a voyage to the German Ocean; passed the Sound into the Baltic Sea, and sailed on to a river, which he thought the Tanais, the boundary of¹² Europe. In all his course, he made many observations on the climate, the people, and the productions of the countries he visited, of which only a very few fragments have descended to us; and it is evident, from what has been transmitted to us of his opinions, that Britain was a principal object of his examination.¹³

IN the third book of his history, Polybius has intimated that the British islands, and the manner of making tin, would be one of his subjects

¹¹ Bougainville, p. 289 Pytheas referred the cause of the tides to the agency of the moon. Plut. de placit. Phil. His description of the stars in the north was cited with approbation by Hipparchus, in his Commentary on Aratus.

¹² Bougainville has collected the passages from Pytheas' voyage, in Strabo and Pliny, which express these circumstances; and has vindicated him from the angry invectives of Strabo, who, though occasionally erring himself, is very unsparing in his censure of Pytheas.

¹³ See Pliny, lib. ii. c. 77. & c. 99; lib. iv. c. 27. & c. 30.; and Strabo p. 163. and 175. Pytheas has had a singular fortune: he has been attacked by Strabo and Polybius; and followed by Eratosthenes and Hipparchus.

for a future composition.¹⁴ His friend the great Scipio, made enquiries concerning Britain¹⁵, of the merchants of Narbonne and Marseilles; but though he could obtain, from their ignorance or their jealousy, nothing worthy of memory, yet, as Polybius mentions that many authors before him had treated fully, though variously, on this and the other subjects which he postpones; and as he himself had travelled through Spain and Gaul, and had sailed over the ocean which bounds them¹⁶; the remarks of an author, so inquisitive and judicious, would have been an invaluable present to our curiosity. If they were ever written¹⁷, time has deprived us of them. We have equally lost the works of Timæus, Isidorus, Artemidorus, Messenius, Eratosthenes, Hipparchus, and Posidonius, who are all mentioned to have noticed the British islands.¹⁸

CHAP.
IV.

INDEED it is evident that the Grecian geographers directed their attention to the north-

¹⁴ Hist. lib. iii. c. 5.

¹⁵ Strabo, lib. iv. p. 289.

¹⁶ Polybius, lib. iii. c. 5.

¹⁷ In speaking of the British islands, Polybius rather expresses a treatise which he had it in his contemplation to compose, than one which he had made. From this passage, it is not certain, whether he fulfilled his intentions; and yet some allusions of Strabo seem to have been taken from such a work.

¹⁸ Pliny, lib. iv. c. 30. Strabo, lib. ii. p. 163; lib. iv. p. 304.; lib. i. p. 111. We find from Tacitus, Vit. Agr. that Livy and Fabius Rusticus, "eloquentissimi auctores," had treated of Britain before him.

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I.

ern and western parts of Europe. Cæsar mentions, that the great Hercynian forest of Germany was known to Eratosthenes, and some other Grecians who called it Orcynia.¹⁹ But that Grecian colonies were in Britain, cannot be believed on the vague intimation of St. Jerome.²⁰ That Hiero, King of Sicily, had the main mast of his ship from England, rests on a passage in Athenæus²¹ which has been thought corrupted, because a sentence of Polybius, if it had not been corrected, would have made Hannibal to have fought in Britain.²² Later Greek stories are mere random fictions.²³ But that

¹⁹ Cæsar, lib. vi. c. 22.

²⁰ St. Jerome in his questions on Genesis referring to Varro Sisinius Capito and Phlegon, but without giving their precise words, says, that the Greeks possessed all the sea coasts from the mountains Amanus and Taurus to the British Ocean. But these writers most probably meant no more than the Grecian colony at Marseilles.

²¹ Athenæus describes at length the celebrated ship which Archimedes made for Hiero, because he had just read very carefully the book which Moschion had written upon it. After giving a full detail of its various parts, he comes to its masts. He says, the second and third were easily found, but the first was obtained with difficulty. It was found by a herdsman, *ἐν τοῖς ὄρεσιν τῆς Βρετανίας*, and Phileas the Tauromenian, the mechanist, brought it down to the sea. Deip. lib. v. p. 208. Camden suggests that this may be a corruption for *Βρετανίας*, or the Brutii in Italy.

²² The corrupt passage of Polybius occurs in the eclogue of the 11th book. The corruption here is manifest, as Camden has remarked. The passage applies wholly to Italy.

²³ There have been some absurd fancies about the earlier intercourse of the Greeks and Romans with Britain. That

Britain was at least in the recollection of the Romans before Cæsar, is obvious from the passage of Lucretius which alludes to it.²⁴ The remarks of Dion Cassius and of Diodorus, express the real state of the question as to the actual intercourse of the Grecians and Romans with Britain.²⁵

It is well known, that Jeffrey of Monmouth, who diffused in the twelfth century that history of Britain, which in former times so much occupied the public mind, deduces the first colonization of Britain from a Trojan source; from Brutus, the son of Æneas, who after wandering through the sea, and landing in Gaul, finally settled in this island. The same story is in the Welsh Chronicles which are ascribed

Alexander the Great came from Cadiz to Britain, or that British kings made presents to Cato the Elder, in approbation of his virtue, as Cedrenus and J. Tzetzes mentions, are circumstances which show that the introduction of romance into history did not originate merely from our minstrels.

²⁴ "Nam quid Britannium cœlum differre putamus

Et quod in Ægypto est, qua mundi claudicat axis." Luc.

²⁵ Dion says, "Its existence was not known to the earliest Greeks and Romans, and that to the more recent it was a doubt whether it was a continent or an island. But though several maintained each opinion, they had no actual knowledge about it, as they neither saw the island themselves nor conversed with its natives" lib. xxxix. p. 127. Diodorus remarks, "Anciently it remained untouched by foreign powers; for we have not heard that either Bacchus or Hercules, or any of the other heroes reigned in it," lib. iv. p. 300. Mela's opinion is, that Cæsar subdued in it tribes, not only unconquered before, but even unknown, lib. iii. p. 263.

BOOK I. to Tyssilio, and supposed, though too gratuitously, to have been Jeffrey's originals.

NOT a line of history can be written from a work so obviously fabulous as the composition, or, as he describes it, the translation from Breton manuscripts, of Jeffrey. But the curious student may fairly ask, did this Trojan story originate with Jeffrey, or had it an earlier origin? A few observations will be sufficient on the subject.

It appears from Nennius, who wrote in the ninth century, that the opinion of this descent was in Britain in his time; for he mentions an outline of that story²⁶, which Jeffrey has so much amplified and dramatised.

TALIESIN, in his poems, frequently mentions Troy, and seems to allude to the tradition of such a descent.²⁷ All this is too vague for history. But it is remarkable, that there should have been in Europe several traditions connected both with the conquerors and the conquered, in that celebrated warfare which Homer has immortalized.²⁸

²⁶ Nennius professes to derive his account from the annals of the Romans. It is briefly this: Brutus was the grandson of Ascanius, the son of Eneas. Driven from Italy and the Tyrrhenian Sea, he went to Gaul and founded Tours, and thence came to this island, gave it his name, and peopled it about the time that Eli was the judge in Israel, c. 33.

²⁷ See Welsh Archaology, vol. i.

²⁸ Thus Tacitus mentions the opinion of the Germans, that

It was the ambition of Cæsar, which delighted to accomplish what no man before him had achieved, that led him, after the conquest of the Keltic nation in Gaul, and its German invaders, to attempt the discovery and subjugation of Britain. He knew not, whether it was a vast continent or a confined island. But the doubt and obscurity were but additional temptations to his aspiring genius. To great minds, the unknown is as attractive as the wonderful; and untried danger is but a mysterious incentive to explore it. He prepared a small fleet to examine its coasts, and resolved, with the force which he could then venture to take from Gaul, to attempt to penetrate a country, which none of the conquerors of the civilised world appeared to have even seen.

Ulysses was driven into the Northern Ocean, and built there Asciburgum; and that an altar dedicated to Ulysses, with the name of Laertes his father, had been found there, De Mor. Germ. s. 3. Solinus notices a tradition of Ulysses having reached a bay in Caledonia; "which," he adds, "an altar with a Greek inscription shows," c. 22. A Trojan colony is stated to have founded Trapano in Italy, Dion. Hal. p. 41, 42. But the tradition more immediately connecting itself with the intimations of Nennius, is that noticed by Ammianus Marcellinus, that some Trojans, flying from the Greeks and dispersed all around, occupied regions in Gaul then uninhabited, lib. xv. c. 9.

CHAP. V.

*The Manners of the Ancient Britons.—The
Druids.*

BOOK
I.

WHEN Britain was invaded by the Romans, it exhibited the state of a country which had been peopled from several shoots of the barbaric or nomadic stocks, at different periods, with some grafts or improvements from more civilised nations. Its inhabitants were divided into many tribes, of which about forty-five have been enumerated with distinct appellations.¹ Of

¹ I. From Kent to Cornwall were the

Cantii	Belgæ
Regni	Durotriges
Bibroces	Hædui
Attrebates	Carnabii
Segontiaci	Damnonii.

These were afterwards comprised in the Roman district called *Britannia Prima*.

II. In the Peninsula of Wales were the Silures, Ordovices, and Dimetæ, whose country formed the *Britannia Secunda* of the Romans.

III. Between the Thames, the Severn, the Mersey, the Humber, and the ocean, the district afterwards named *Flavia Cesariensis*, comprised the

Trinobantes	Dobuni
Iceni	Huicci
Coritani	Ancalites
Cassii	Carnabii.

these, the Belgæ whom Cæsar particularises to have passed over from Belgic Gaul, and to have been established in the island by their victories, occupied part of the coasts of the British Channel. He distinguishes the Cantii, or people of Kent, as more advanced than the rest in the habits of civilised life, and as not differing much from the people of Gaul. The Belgæ pursued agriculture. But most of the interior tribes lived on milk and flesh, or in that state which has

CHAP.
V.

IV. In the Maxima Cesariensis of the Romans, or in our present Lancashire, Westmoreland, Cumberland, Yorkshire, Durham, and part of Northumberland, were the

Setantii	or	Sistuntii
Volantii	or	Voluntii
Brigantes.		

V. The five nations, who occupied the districts of the Roman province of Valentia, which, comprising chief part of Northumberland, extended from the Wall of Hadrian, into Scotland, as far as the Wall of Antoninus, were the

Ottadini	Novantes
Gadeni	Damni.
Selgovæ	

VI. Beyond these, in North Britain, were the tribes included in the Roman province of Vespasiana.

Horestii	Vacomagi
Vecturones	Albani
Taixali	Attacotti.

VII. In the rest of Scotland, were the

Caledoni	Mertæ
Cautæ	Carnonancæ
Logi	Cerones
Carnabii	Creones
Catini	Epidii.

BOOK I. been called the pastoral, and clothed themselves with skins.²

ALL the Britons stained themselves of a blue colour with woad, which gave them a more horrible appearance in battle.³ They wore long hair on their heads, but shaved it from the other parts of the body excepting the upper lip. Their population appeared numerous to the Romans.⁴

THE aspect of the country, as it first struck their view, presented a succession of forests, lakes, and great rivers; and Mela remarks of it, what must have been true of most parts of Europe, where agriculture was little practised, that it was more adapted to the kindly nourishment of cattle than of men. He also represents the people in general as not only uncivilised, but as much behind the nations on the continent in their social culture. Their cattle and fields:

² Cæsar. Comment. lib. v. c. 10. Herodian speaks of those in the northern districts, with whom Severus fought, as usually naked, with an iron ring round their neck or stomach. lib. iii. p. 83.

³ Cæsar. *ib.* Mela, lib. iii. c. 6. This seems to have been done from infancy, as Pliny says the British wives and nurses did it, lib. xxii. c. 2. Hence Marshal's epithet, "Cæruleis Britannis," lib. xi. c. 32. Herodian remarks, of the Britons who resisted Severus, that they painted the figures of all kinds of animals on their bodies, lib. iii. p. 83.; and as Claudian mentions "the fading figures on the dying Pict," it seems to have pervaded the island, and to have been continued by the less civilised to his time. Claud. de bell. Get.

⁴ Cæsar.

were their general wealth, and they seemed to be acquainted with no other.⁵

CHAP.
V.

LIKE all barbaric tribes, who have reached their stations at successive periods, or have grown up in separate and independent states, and whose active spirits are not occupied by the pursuits of civilised life, they were perpetually at war with each other⁶; and it is probable that the present state and people of New Zealand exhibit more nearly than any other, the condition of Britain when the Romans entered it.

THE Britons were taller than the Gauls, but not so strong. The young Britons whom Strabo saw at Rome, were higher by half a foot than the tallest man there, but their lower limbs were not straight; nor did the general outline of their make display the symmetry of beauty. Their hair was less yellow than that of the Gauls.⁷ The Silures are mentioned with ruddy cheeks and curled hair; and the inhabitants of Caledonia with red hair.⁸ As the Belgæ in Gaul wore loose breeches and a waistcoat with sleeves, instead of a tunic and a sagum or upper

⁵ Mela, lib. iii. c. 6. Cicero gives us the impression of his day on this subject. In a letter to Atticus he says, "It is known that there is not a scruple of money in the island; nor any hope of booty, but in slaves," lib. iv. ep. 16.

⁶ Mela, ib. Herodian speaks of the Britons as "a most warlike nation, eager for slaughter," lib. iii. p. 83.

⁷ Strabo, lib. iv. p. 305.

⁸ Tacitus, Agric. Vit. Rutilatæ Comæ, Livy notices of the Gauls, lib. xxxviii. c. 17.

BOOK I. garment⁹, we may suppose that their settlers in Britain used the same dress. Bonduca's royal costume, when she addressed the Britons, was long yellow hair, with a large golden torques; and a *χιτων* or tunic swelling round her bosom in various colours, with a thick cloak thrown over it.¹⁰ The Britons had gold rings on their middle finger.¹¹

THEIR houses, chiefly formed of reeds or wood, were very numerous, like those of the Gauls, and were usually seated in the midst of woods, perhaps for better defence, as those of the New Zealanders are, for the same reason, placed on fortified hills. The wars of fierce and rude men, unacquainted with military discipline, or disdaining to submit to it, usually consist of attempts to surprise and ravage; and therefore precautions against sudden aggressions are the most essential parts of their defensive skill. The Britons seem to have cleared a space in the wood, on which they built their huts and folded their cattle; and they fenced the avenues by ditches and barriers of trees. Such a collection of houses formed one of their towns.¹²

⁹ Strabo, 300.

¹⁰ Xiph. epit. Dio. p. 169.

¹¹ Pliny, lib. xxxiii. c. 6. This author remarks that the person, who first put rings on the fingers, introduced one of the worst crimes of life, *ibid.* c. 4. The proximum scelus was coining money from gold, *ibid.* c. 13.

¹² Strabo, lib. iv. p. 306. Cæsar, lib. v. c. 17. Diod. Sic. lib. v. p. 301.

THEY had great quantities of cattle.¹³ Some of the British tribes are said not to have had the art of making cheese, though they had abundance of milk; others knew nothing of either agriculture or gardening.¹⁴ They housed their corn in the ear, in subterraneous places, and threshed out no more than served them for the day.¹⁵ The little money which they had, was of the Spartan kind; it was either copper, or of iron rings, of a definite weight. They thought it a crime to eat hares, geese, or hens, though they bred them for pleasure.¹⁶ One of their most extraordinary and pernicious customs was, that community of women among ten or twelve men, who chose to form such an association, which reminds us of the Arreoyoys of Otaheite. The British Arreoyoys, however, seem not to have destroyed their children; as these were agreed to be considered as the offspring of the man who had married the mother.¹⁷

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V.

¹³ Cæsar, lib. v. c. 10.

¹⁴ Strabo, lib. iv. p. 305.

¹⁵ Diod. lib. v. p. 301. Pliny notices that they used a species of lime as a manure, which he calls white chalk, lib. xvii. c. 4.

¹⁶ Cæsar, lib. v. c. 10. It is supposed that Cunobelin, the successor of Cassivellaun, first coined money in Britain. "About fifty of his coins, with his own name, have come down to the present age. Some of them exhibit a plane surface, but most a small convexity." Whit. Manch. book i. c. 9. One of them represents a bard with his harp, *ibid.* c. 7. sect. 5.

¹⁷ Cæsar, lib. v. c. 10.

BOOK

I.

IN battle their chief strength was in their infantry.¹⁸ But they fought also on horses, and more especially in chariots, with scythes at the axles.¹⁹ In these they rode, throwing darts on every side; and, by the dread of the horses, and the noise of the wheels, they often disordered their opponents. When they had broken in among the horse, they leaped from the cars, and fought on foot. The drivers retired a little out of the battle, but so stationed themselves, as to be ready to receive the combatants if pressed by the enemy. Thus, to the activity of cavalry, they united the steadiness of infantry. By daily use and practice, they were so expert, that they could stop their horses at full speed down a declivity, could guide and turn them, run along the beam, stand on the yoke, and from thence, with rapidity, dart into their chariots.²⁰ Diodorus, in mentioning the British war-chariots, recalls to our mind, that the heroes of the Trojan war used them likewise; there was however this difference, that among the Britons the driver was the superior person.²¹

THE honorable testimony of Diodorus to their superiority to the Romans in some of those moral virtues, in which the nomadic nations

¹⁸ Tacitus.

¹⁹ Mela, lib. iii. c. 6.

²⁰ Cæsar, lib. iv. c. 29.

²¹ Diod. lib. v. p. 301. *Honestior auriga; clientes propugnant*, Tacit. Vit. Agr.

excelled the civilised must not be omitted. “ There is a simplicity in their manners, which is very different from that craft and wickedness which mankind now exhibit. They are satisfied with a frugal sustenance, and avoid the luxuries of wealth.”²²

C H A P.
V.

THE religion of the Britons was of a fierce and sanguinary nature. It resembled that of the Gauls, which is thus described. They who were afflicted with severe disease, or involved in dangers or battles, sacrificed men for victims, or vowed that they would do so. The Druids administered at these gloomy rites. They thought that the life of a man was to be redeemed by a man's life; and that there was no other mode of conciliating their gods. Some made images of wicker work of an immense size, and filled them with living men, whom they burned alive. Thieves and robbers, or other criminals, were usually made the victims; but if there were a deficiency of these, the guiltless were sacrificed.²³ At some of their sacred rites the British women went naked, but stained dark, like Ethiopians, by a vegetable²⁴ juice. That they consulted their gods on futurity, by inspecting the quivering flesh of their human

Their religion.

²² Diod. p. 301.

²³ Cæsar, lib. vi. c. 15.

²⁴ Pliny, lib. xxii. c. 2.

BOOK
I.

victims, and that they had prophetic women, has been already mentioned.²⁵

THEIR superstitious fancies deemed the misseltoe sacred, if it vegetated from the oak. They selected groves of oaks, and thought every thing sent from heaven which grew on this tree. On the sixth day of the moon, which was the beginning of their months and years, and of their period of thirty years, they came to the oak on which they observed any of the parasitical plant (which they called all-healing), prepared a sacrifice and a feast under this venerated tree, and brought thither two white bulls, whose horns were then first tied. The officiating Druid, in a white garment, climbed the tree, and, with a golden knife, pruned off the misseltoe, which was received in a white woollen cloth below. They then sacrificed the victims, and addressed their gods to make it prosperous to those to whom it was given; for they believed that it gave fecundity, and was an amulet against poison. They performed no ceremonies without the leaves of the oak.²⁶

²⁵ See before, p. 43. that the Kelts sacrificed human victims to a deity, whom the Greeks called Kronos, and the Latins Saturn, we learn from Dionysius Halic. lib. i. p. 30.

²⁶ Pliny, lib. xvi. c. 95. As *derw* is British for an oak, and *derwydd* is the term for a Druid in the same language, it is probable that this class of persons was named from the tree they venerated. Maximus Tyrius calls the oak, the Keltic image of the Deity. Dissert.

THE ancient world, including the most enlight-
 ened nations, even Greece and Rome, were uni-
 versally impressed with a belief of the powers of
 magic. But the expressions of Pliny induce us
 to imagine, that this mischievous imposture was
 peculiarly cultivated by the British Druids. He
 says, " Britain now celebrates it so astonishingly,
 and with so many ceremonies, that she might
 even be thought to have given it to the Per-
 sians." ²⁷ The Druids were indeed so superior
 in knowledge and intellect to the rest of the
 nation, that their magical frauds must have
 been easily invented and securely practised.

CHAP.
 V.

THE Druidical system began in Britain, and
 from thence was introduced into Gaul. In
 Cæsar's time, they who wished to know it more
 diligently, for the most part visited Britain, for
 the sake of learning it. The Druids were pre-
 sent at all religious rites; they administered at
 public and private sacrifices; and they inter-
 preted divinations. They were so honoured,
 that they decided almost all public and private
 controversies, and all causes, whether of homi-
 cide, inheritance, or boundaries. They ap-
 pointed the remunerations, and the punish-

Their
 Druids.

²⁷ Pliny, lib. xxx. c. 4. The Welsh term for right-hand, seems to have some reference to the ancient superstitions of the Britons. It is *deheulaw*, or the south-hand; an expression which can only be true, when we look at the east. The circles at Stonehenge seem to have a reference to the rising of the sun at the solstice.

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I.

ments. Whoever disobeyed their decree, was interdicted from their sacrifices, which with them was the severest punishment. An interdicted person was deemed both impious and wicked; all fled from him, and avoided his presence and conversation, lest they should be contaminated by the intercourse. He was allowed no legal rights. He participated in no honours.

THE Druids obeyed one chief, who had supreme authority over them. At his death, he was succeeded by the next in dignity. If others had equal pretences, the suffrages of the Druids decided it; and sometimes arms determined the competition.²⁸

THE Druids had great privileges. They neither paid taxes, nor engaged in war. They were allowed exemption from warfare and all other offices. Excited by such advantages, many voluntarily submitted to the discipline, and others were sent by their friends and relations. They were said to learn a great number of verses there; so that some remained twenty years under the education. They conceived it not lawful to commit their knowledge to writing, though in all other things they used Greek characters. Cæsar adds, that a great number of youth resorted to them for education.

THEY taught that souls never perished; but

²⁸ Cæsar.

passed at death into other bodies; and as this opinion removed the fear of death, they thought that it excited strongly to virtue. They discussed and taught also many things concerning the stars, and their motion; the size of the world, and its countries; the nature of things; and the force and power of the immortal Gods.²⁹ Such subjects of contemplation and tuition as these, show a knowledge and an exerted intellect, that could not have been the natural growth of a people so rude as the Britons and Gauls. They must have derived both the information and the habit from more civilised regions. The Druidical order consisted of three sorts of men; Druids, Bards, and Ouates. The Bards were the poets and musicians, of whom some were satyrists, and some encomiasts. The Ouates sacrificed, divined, and contemplated the nature of things. The Druids cultivated physiology and moral philosophy; or, as Diodorus says, were their philosophers and theologians.³⁰

OF the Druidical superstitions, we have no monuments remaining, unless the circles of stones, which are to be seen in some parts of the island, are deemed their temples. Of all the suppositions concerning Stonehenge and

²⁹ Cæsar, lib. vi. c. 15. Mela, lib. iii. c. 20.; and see Lucan's celebrated verses on their theory of transmigration.

³⁰ Diod. Sicul. lib. v. p. 308. Strabo, lib. iv. p. 302.

BOOK

I.

Avebury, it seems the most rational to ascribe them to the Druidical order; and of this system we may remark, that if it was the creature of a more civilised people, none of the colonisers of Britain are so likely to have been its parents, as the Phenicians and Carthaginians.³¹ The fact so explicitly asserted by Cæsar, that the Druidical system began in Britain, and was thence introduced into Gaul, increases our tendency to refer it to these nations. The state of Britain was inferior in civilisation to that of Gaul, and therefore it seems more reasonable to refer the intellectual parts of Druidism to the foreign visitors, who are known to have cultivated such subjects, than to suppose them to have originated from the rude unassisted natives.³²

³¹ Syria, Phenicia, and Palestine abound with many solid rocks and stony mountains cut into shapes, and excavated into chambers, and with erections of stones for the purposes of superstition. Mr. Watts' Views in Syria and Palestine, from the drawings in Sir Robert Ainslie's collection, exhibit some curious remains of this sort.

³² I purpose, if my health permit, to give, either as an appendix to this work, or in a separate publication, a review of the opinions and literature of the ancient British Bards, of which much must have descended to them from the Druids.

CHAP. VI.

*Invasion of Britain by Julius Cæsar.—Its final
Conquest by the Romans.*

SUCH were the Britons whom Cæsar invaded. After his conquests in Gaul, and an expedition into Germany, he resolved to visit Britain. We need not ascribe this invasion to the British pearls, alluded to by Suetonius. The ambition of Cæsar, like that of all men of great minds, who have accomplished vast attempts, expanded with his successes. Accustomed to grand conceptions, and feeling from their experience of their own talents, and the abundance of their means that they possess, a facility of prosecuting the most capacious plans; it has been usual with conquerors, who have united sovereignty with their military triumphs, instead of enjoying their fame in peaceful repose, to dare new enterprises of danger and difficulty, and of mighty issue. Cæsar appears to have amused himself in forming great projects. He not only purposed to build a temple to Mars, whose magnitude was to surpass whatever the world had seen of religious architecture; to drain the Pomptine marshes; to make a highway through the Apennines, from the Adriatic to the Tiber;

CHAP.
VI.

BOOK
I. and to cut through the isthmus of ' Corinth :
but he had also a dream of subduing the Parthians on the Euphrates; of marching along the Caspian, and Mount Caucasus to the Euxine; of invading Scythia; from thence of penetrating and conquering Germany; and from that country, of returning through Gaul into Italy and Rome.² That a mind, delighting to contemplate schemes so vast and extravagant, should not have reached the shores of Gaul, and surveyed the British island, then possessing the fame of being a new world, little known even to its Keltic neighbours as to its interior, without feeling the desire to explore it, was a natural event. Cæsar, under this impulse, collected the merchants of Gaul, who had been accustomed to visit the island; and enquired of them its size, what and how many nations inhabited it, their mode of warfare, their customs, and their harbours. Obtaining from those whom he questioned but scanty information, he sent one of his officers, in a vessel, to explore the coast, and collected all the ships, within his command, to make the exploring enterprise.

SOME of the British states, hearing of his intentions from the Keltic merchants, sent envoys of peace.

His first expedition into Britain was to recon-

¹ Suet. vit. Cæs. s. 44.

² Plut. vit. Cæs.

noitre; not to subdue. He was compelled to fight upon his landing, in the vicinity of Dover, because the Kentish Britons immediately opposed him—conflicting even amidst the waves, with signal courage; and although Cæsar, observing his troops to be dispirited by the British attacks, ordered up the vessels with his artillery, and poured from their sides stones, arrows, and other missiles, yet the natives stood the unusual discharges with intrepidity, and he made no impression. It was the rushing forward, alone, of the bearer of the eagle of the tenth legion, exclaiming, “Follow me, unless you mean to betray your standard to your enemies,” that roused the Roman legions to that desperate and closer battle, which at length forced back the Britons, and secured a landing. The Britons retired; and Cæsar did not pursue. The natives of the locality sent a message of peace; but, four days afterwards, a tempest dispersing his fleet, they assaulted the Romans with new attacks. Cæsar repulsed them; but after this success he thought it expedient, without advancing, to quit the island suddenly at midnight. He ascribes his departure to the approach of the autumnal equinox; but he knew of this event before his landing. The truth seems to be that he found his present force, though sufficient to repel the Britons, yet incompetent to subdue them.³

³ Cæsar. lib. iv. c. 18—33. On this expedition Dio's ob-

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I.

HIS next invasion, in the ensuing summer, was more formidable. It was made with five well appointed legions, and two thousand cavalry—a force of thirty thousand of the best disciplined troops then known, under the ablest commander. As the Britons did not contest the landing, it was easily effected. On this visit he quitted the coast, and marched twelve miles into the island. There he repulsed an attack. A storm again shattering his fleet, he stopped his advance, and returned to the coast, to provide for the safety of his ships. Ten days afterwards he resumed his former position, and was immediately assaulted by some of the British tribes, who had confederated under the temporary command of Cassivellaun. They were repelled. They attempted hostilities again on the succeeding day; but were again defeated. On these failures, the auxiliary bodies left Cassivellaun; and Cæsar being informed of their desertion, ventured to advance to the Thames, and to the borders of the state of the British prince. The ford had been fortified by sharp stakes, under the water, and on the banks. The Romans passed it, up to their necks in water, in the presence of the natives, collected

servation seems a fair one:—“ He obtained from it nothing, either for himself or for his country, but the glory of having fought in it; and as he stated this very strongly, the people of Rome wondered, and extolled him.” lib. xxxix. p. 128.

in arms on the other side, who, dismayed at the courage of the enemy, hastily retired.

CHAP.
VI.

CASSIVELLAUN, keeping only four thousand war chariots with him, confined his efforts to harassing the invaders.

THE civil dissensions of the island then began to give Cæsar the advantage of his enterprises. The Trinobantes, of whose territories London was the metropolis, desired his aid, for their chief Mandubratius or Androgorius, against Cassivellaun: and five other tribes also sent in their submission. Cæsar was afterwards attacked by four kings of Kent, Cingetorix, Carnilius, Taximagulus, and Segonax, but without success; and Cassivellaun now sending an embassy for peace⁴, Cæsar immediately granted it, demanded hostages, appointed a tribute, retired with his army to the sea coast, and relanded it in⁵ Gaul.

⁴ Cæsar. lib. v. c. 7—19. Dio remarks that it would have been dangerous to him to have wintered in the island, lib. xl. p. 137. Polyænus has preserved a story that Cæsar's success in battle against the Britons was obtained by placing an armed elephant with a tower of soldiers in his front, whose appearance threw the natives into a panic. But Cæsar's force, skill, and discipline were sufficient to have obtained his victories without this stratagem.

⁵ From Cæsar's own account, as thus abstracted, we perceive the propriety of Horace applying the epithet of *intactus* to Britain, as also of the *invictus* of Propertius. Tacitus has justly given the amount of his successes, when he states, that he did not subdue the island, but only showed it to the Romans. This correct intimation keeps clear of Lucan's extreme, that he showed his affrighted back to the Britons; and of that of Paternulus, that he twice passed

BOOK I. The Romans appeared no more in Britain, nor attempted to molest it, for several years.

AUGUSTUS afterwards talked of an expedition to Britain, and entered France, as if beginning it. But the Britons met him there with peaceful embassies; and custom-duties were imposed on the commodities, that were objects of trade between Gaul and Britain: as ivory, bridles, amber, and glass vessels. Strabo well remarks, that to have raised a tribute from the island, he must have established a military force there, but the expence of these troops would have consumed the contribution; and when violent courses are pursued, he adds, danger begins.⁶

TIBERIUS was content to leave Britain unmolested. Caligula was flattered in Gaul, by one of the British princes seeking an asylum in his court; and drawing up his army on the sea shore, he sounded a charge and commanded them to gather cockle-shells, as indications of a

through the island. His successes however astonished and delighted his countrymen. He offered to Venus, whom he once stated to be the ancestor of one of his aunts, (Suct. c. 6.) a breast-plate of British pearls. Pliny. The victories over the Britons were painted on purple hangings; and some of the natives were given to the theatre. See Virgil, Georg. 3., and Servius on the passage, p. 126.

⁶ Horace. Strabo. In the following year he resumed his project of an invasion, because the natives broke their treaty; but the insurrection of the Cantabri in Spain prevented it. The "adjectis Britannis imperio," of Horace, is therefore rather a poetical figure, than an achieved fact.

conquest. With this bloodless triumph, and the erection of a watch-tower to commemorate it, his ambition was satisfied. He left Britain to the continuation of those internal wars, which all uncivilised nations pursue; and which at last occasioned some to sacrifice their patriotism to their revenge, and to incite Claudius, his successor, to order Aulus Plautus to lead an army into the island.⁷ This general landed with a powerful force, comprising German auxiliaries and some elephants; and with Vespasian for one of his officers. He had the usual successes of the Roman discipline and skill. The Emperor Claudius came himself to partake the triumph. He took Camalodunum or Malden, the capital of Cunobellin's dominion; and, after a residence of sixteen days in the island, returned to Rome, leaving Plautus to govern Britain.⁸ Games, triumphal arches, dramatic representations, horse races, bear-combats, pyrrhic dances, gladiators, rewards to his officers, and a splendid triumph to himself, with the sur-

⁷ Dio mentions Bericus as one of this description, lib. lx. p. 779. His remark on the political state of the Britons is, "that they were not *αυτονομοι*, but were subject to several kings," *ibid.* Of these Plautus first defeated Kataratakos, and afterwards Togodounnos, the two sons of Kunobellin. *ibid.*

⁸ Dio, lib. lx. p. 781, 782. Tacitus's account of this invasion has perished in his last books. That elephants were used by the Romans in England, appears from the bones of an elephant having been found, on digging for gravel, in a field near Battle Bridge. 1 *Lel. Collect.* p. lxiv.

BOOK I. name of Britannicus, attested his own and the national exultations, at his successes in Britain.

VESPASIAN distinguished himself in Britain at this period. He fought thirty battles with the natives, took twenty towns, and subdued the Isle of Wight⁹: exertions which imply corresponding efforts and intrepidity on the part of the Britons. The great Titus, the conqueror of Jerusalem, fought here also, as military tribune under his father, with much reputation both for his modesty and courage.¹⁰ It is interesting to read of this celebrated man, that when Vespasian was surrounded by the Britons, and in extreme danger, Titus rushed upon the assailing enemies, and at last extricated his revered parent.¹¹ We may consider this great instrument of Providence as training himself, unconsciously, in Britain, for the awful task he was to accomplish.

THE island, although thus penetrated to a certain extent, and the southern parts occupied by the Romans, was as yet neither conquered nor tranquil. Seven years afterwards, we find

⁹ Sueton. Vesp. c. 4.

¹⁰ Suet. Tit. c. 4.

¹¹ Dio. Cass. lib. lx. p. 788. Josephus mentions the extraordinary strength and activity of Titus, and gives instances of his rescuing his soldiers from the Jews by his personal exertions. Few pieces of history are more interesting, than Josephus's account of the final siege and destruction of Jerusalem.

Ostorius withstanding the British assaults, and establishing a line of posts between the Nen and the Severn. The Britons on the east and north, and afterwards those of Wales, renewed the conflicts. The defeat and capture of Caradawg or Caractacus, whose appearance at Rome, as a prisoner, excited peculiar exultation; and for whom an impressive speech has been composed by Tacitus, of which the rude Briton could only recognise the manly feeling it displays¹², secured the Roman conquests.

ABOUT ten years afterwards, the Britons rushed to a new effort to regain their independence, under Boadicea, which they began, like Mithridates in Asia, by an inhuman massacre of all the Romans within their reach. This new struggle has been described by Tacitus with all his energy. The Roman governor Suetonius happened to be a man of talent, equal to the emergency, and finally triumphed over all the fury and forces of the Britons. Boadicea poisoned herself; and the island was

¹² See it in Tacitus, Ann. lib. xii. c. 37. Cartismandua, queen of the Brigantes, whom Caractacus had married, was afterwards subdued, *ibid.* c. 40. The allusions to these victories in Britain, in the Roman poets of the day, show the joy of the public feeling on the occasion. See them collected in Camden's Introduction to the Britannia. It is amusing to read, that our island was deemed a new world, an impervious region of frost and snow, where stars never set, and placed beyond the limits of the earth, &c. &c.

BOOK again subdued into terror and peace¹³, though
 1. much remained unconquered.

VESPASIAN had the recollection of his personal exploits, to excite his military attention to Britain, after he had obtained the empire. He sent powerful armies to extend the Roman conquests. The conflicts continued with varying success: but the Britons were resolute and undaunted by failure.¹⁴

SEVENTEEN years after the revolt of Boadicea, Agricola was appointed to command the Roman forces in Britain; and by him the conquest of the island was completed. The pen and affection of Tacitus have amply, and interestingly, detailed his political and military conduct; and has made Galgacus or Gallawg, on the Gram-pian Hills, as interesting as Caractacus.¹⁵ It is needless to detail battles that so much resemble each other; and always pain humanity both to read and to narrate. It is more pleasing to contemplate the wisdom of his liberal mind, which directed its powers to civilise and improve the fierce natives. He assisted them to build temples, forums, and more convenient habit-

¹³ Tacit. Ann. lib. xiv. c. 29—39., and more concisely in his life of Agricola, c. 14—16.

¹⁴ These events are briefly noticed by Tacitus in his Agricola, c. 16, 17. One of the able governors here was Frontinus, the author of the book on the stratagems of war.

¹⁵ His animated, and no doubt much amplified and polished speech is in Vit. Agric. s. 30.

ations. He inspired them with a love of education; he applauded their talents; flattered them as possessing a genius superior to the Gauls; and he persuaded the sons of the chiefs to study letters. The Roman dress, language, and literature gradually spread among the natives. All this was improvement; but human advantages are mingled with imperfections. The civilisation of Rome also introduced its luxury: and baths, porticoes, and sensual banquets became as palatable to the new subjects as to their corrupted masters.¹⁶ Four legions were kept in the island. Their labours pervaded it with four great military roads, that became the chief Saxon highways; and in the military stations, upon and near them, laid the foundations of our principal towns and cities. The Roman laws and magistracies were every where established, and the British lawyers, as well as the British ladies¹⁷, have obtained the panegyrics of the Roman classics. It is beautifully said by Rutilius, that Rome filled the world with her

¹⁶ Tac. Ag. s. 21.

¹⁷ The stern Juvenal has

Gallia caudicos docuit facunda Britannós.

Sat.

And Martial has an epigram on the decus formæ of a British lady, whom he calls Claudia Rufina. The epithet of blue-eyed, which he applies to the Britons, was also given to them by Seneca. All the northern nations of Europe exhibit in their physiognomy, this contrast with the black eyes and darker skins of Italy.

BOOK I. legislative triumphs, and caused all to live under one common pact; that she blended discordant nations into one country; and by imparting to those she conquered a companionship in her rights and laws, made the earth one great united city.¹⁸

A. C. 121. BRITAIN, nearly half a century after Agricola, was visited by the Emperor Hadrian, who ordered the construction of a military work, from the mouth of the Tyne to the Solway Firth, as the boundary of the Roman provinces in Britain. In the next reign, of Antoninus Pius, the Romans penetrated again to the isthmus, between the firths of Forth and Clyde; and built another military rampart, for the farthest boundary of their empire in Britain.¹⁹ In 170 the Romans are said to have deserted all the country which lay to the north of the wall of Antoninus.²⁰

AFTER this period, the Roman legions in Britain began to support their commanders in their competitions for the empire. During these disputes, two unsubdued nations in the northern parts of Britain, the Caledonians and Meatae, broke

¹⁸ Legiferis mundum complexa triumphis
Fædere communi vivere cuncta facit—
Fecisti patriam diversis gentibus unam—
Dum que offers victis proprii consortia juris
Urbem fecisti quod prius orbis erat.

Rutil. Itin.

¹⁹ “Betwixt them Agricola had formerly erected a line of forts. These had not been destroyed, and Lollius joined them together by a long rampart.” Whit. Manch. vol. ii. p. 86. 8vo.

²⁰ *Ibid.*

through the rampart between the firths, and harassed the province. The emperor Severus came to Britain, to repress them.²¹ His wars in Scotland cost him much toil, and many men; but he subdued his wild opponents, and, instead of the weaker barrier of Hadrian, he erected an immense wall of stone, twelve feet high, and eight feet thick, strengthened with towers, castles, and stations at proper distances, and defended by a ditch and military way. This great work (the vestiges of which are still visible in several places) was built nearly parallel to that of Hadrian, at the distance of, a few paces further to the north, and from the east coast near Tinmouth, to the Solway firth at Boulness, on the west coast.²² Severus died at York. As it was soon after this period that the Saxons began to molest Britain, we shall proceed to narrate the history of the invasion and occupation of Britain, by the Saxons and Angles, after first stating all that can be collected of their authentic history before they left the continent.

CHAP.
VI.
A. C. 207.

The wall
built.

A. C. 211.

²¹ Herodian, lib. iii. p. 83. Xiphelin in Sever. p. 339.

²² Eutropius, lib. viii.; and see Henry's History of England, vol. ii. App. No. 9. and Horsley Britannia Romana. We derive some curious information on the Roman stations and residence in Britain, from the compilation of Richard of Cirencester, first printed in 1757 from a MS. of the fourteenth century. It presents us with eighteen Itinera, which, he says, he collected from the remains of records which a Roman general had caused to be made. Mr. Whitaker's remarks upon it, a little tinged with his sanguine feelings, are in his Hist. Manch. v. ii. p. 83—91.

BOOK II.

CHAP. I.

The Origin of the SAXONS.

CHAP.

I.

THE Anglo-Saxons were the people who transported themselves from the Cimbric peninsula, and its vicinity, in the fifth and sixth centuries, into England. They were branches of the great Saxon confederation, which, from the Elbe, extended itself at last to the Rhine. The hostilities of this formidable people had long distressed the western regions of Europe; and when the Gothic nations overran the most valuable provinces of Rome, the Anglo-Saxons invaded Britain soon after the Romans quitted it. The ancient inhabitants, and the progeny of the Roman settlers, disappeared as the new conquerors advanced, or accepted their yoke; and Saxon laws, Saxon language, Saxon manners, government, and institutions, overspread the land.

THIS revolution, than which history presents

to us, none more complete, has made the fortunes of the Saxons, during every period, interesting to us. Though other invaders have appeared in the island, yet the effects of the Anglo-Saxon settlements have prevailed beyond every other. Our language, our government, and our laws, display our Gothic ancestors in every part: they live, not merely in our annals and traditions, but in our civil institutions and perpetual discourse. The parent tree is indeed greatly amplified, by branches engrafted on it from other regions, and by the new shoots, which the accidents of time, and the improvements of society have produced; but it discovers yet its Saxon origin, and retains its Saxon properties, though more than thirteen centuries have rolled over, with all their tempests and vicissitudes.

CHAP.
I.

ALTHOUGH the Saxon name became, on the continent, the appellation of a confederacy of nations, yet, at first, it denoted a single state. The Romans began to remark it, during the second century of the Christian æra; until that period, it had escaped the notice of the conquerors of the world, and the happy obscurity was rewarded by the absence of that desolation which their ambition poured profusely on mankind.

PTOLEMY, the Alexandrian, was the first writer whom we know to have mentioned the Saxons. By the passage in his Geography, and by the concurrence of all their future history, it

Saxons
first men-
tioned by
Ptolemy.

BOOK
II.

is ascertained, that, before the year 141 after Christ¹, there was a people called Saxones, who inhabited a territory at the north side of the Elbe, on the neck of the Cimbric Chersonesus, and three small islands, at the mouth of this river. From the same author it is also clear, that the Saxones were of no great importance at this period; for in this peninsula, which is now divided into Jutland, Sleswick, and Holstein, no fewer than six other nations were stationed, besides the Saxones and the remnant of the Cimbri.²

BUT it is not probable, that the Saxons should have started suddenly into existence, in the days of Ptolemy. The question of their previous history has been therefore much agitated; and an equal quantity of learning and of absurdity has been brought forward upon the subject.

IT has been observed, that to explain the ori-

¹ Ptolemy lived in the reign of Marcus Aurelius, according to Suidas, vol. ii. p. 646.; but he testifies himself, in the 7th book Mag. Synt. p. 167., that he made astronomical observations at Alexandria in the 2d year of Ant. Pius, or ann. Christ, 139. 3 Fab. Bibl. Græc. 412. He speaks also of an eclipse of the moon in the 9th of Adrian, or ann. Chr. 125. De la Lande's Astron. i. p. 312. He mentions no observation beyond 141. Ib. 117.

² Cl. Ptolemæus Geog. lib. ii. c. 11. Marcianus of Heraclea, somewhat later than Ptolemy, gives the Saxons the same position on the neck of the Chersonesus. Pont. ib. 651. Thegeographical Lexicographer of Byzantium, usually named Stephanus, briefly says, "dwelling in the Cimbric Chersonesus." Steph. Byz. voc. Saxones.

gin of the Saxons, the most wild and inconsistent fictions have been framed.³ But it is not this nation only, which has been thus distinguished by the perverseness of the human mind, labouring to explore inscrutable antiquity; every people may recount similar puerilities.

CHAP.
I.

To claim an extravagant duration, has been the folly of every state which has risen to any eminence. We have heard, in our childhood, of the dreams of the Babylonians, Egyptians, Indians, and Chinese; and we know, that even Athenians could wear a golden grasshopper⁴, as an emblem, that they sprung fortuitously from the earth they cultivated, in ages far beyond the reach of human history: we may therefore pardon and forget the fables of the Saxon patriots.

It has caused much surprise, that Tacitus, who wrote a particular description of Germany, many years before Ptolemy, should have omitted to name the Saxons.⁵ Every author has been unwilling to suppose, that they came to the Elbe in the short interval between these authors; and therefore it has been very generally imagined,

Not noticed by Tacitus..

³ Krantz remarked this: "Ita puerilibus fabulis et anilibus deliramentis omnia scatent, ut nihil in his sibi constet, nihil quadret. Saxonia, p. 1. Yet the absurdity of others did not preserve him from an imitation.

⁴ Potter's Antiq. of Greece, vol. i. p. 2. So the Arcadians boasted they were *προσεληνοί*, or before the moon. Ib. p. 1.

⁵ Conringius thinks, that by some unexplained accident, time has effaced from the text of Tacitus a passage about the Saxons. Schilter's Thes. Ant. Teut. iii. p. 704.

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II.

that the nation, to whom Tacitus gave the denomination of Fosi⁶, were the warriors, who acquired afterwards so much celebrity, under the name of Saxons.

BEFORE such violent suppositions are admitted, it seems necessary to ask, if Ptolemy mentions any other people, in his geography of Germany, whom Tacitus has not noticed? if he does, the omission of Tacitus is not, in the present instance, singular; if he does not, the conjecture that the Fosi were the Saxons, comes to us with authority.

Other
tribes
omitted by
Tacitus.

UPON comparing the Cimbric Chersonesus of Tacitus, with the delineation of the same place by Ptolemy, the question above stated is decided. Ptolemy does not mention the Saxones only, as being there; on the contrary, he names, separately, six other nations, before he comes to the Cimbri. Tacitus, after mentioning the Frisii, Chauci, and Cherusci, speaks of the Fosi, and closes his account of this part of Germany with the Cimbri. Tacitus has not merely neglected to name the Saxons, but also the Sigulones, the Sabalingii, the Cobandi, the Chali, the Phundusii, and the Charudes.⁷ If either of these

⁶ Cellarius Geog. Ant. i. p. 303., and Cluverius, iii. Germ. Ant. 87., and many others assert this. Spener with diffidence defends it. Notit. Germ. Ant. 363. With a manly but rare impartiality he states forcibly the objections to the opinion he adopts, 371. Leibnitz places the Fosi on the Fusa, a river which falls into the Aller. near Zell. *ibid.* 372.

⁷ Cluverius thus stations these tribes. The Sigulones

tribes had risen to eminence, the one, so successful, would have been thought the Fosi. The Saxons became renowned, and their celebrity, rather than their situation, has made some persons desirous to find them in Tacitus. The name of Fosi cannot be strictly applied to the Saxons, with more justice than to the others.³

BUT it cannot be inferred from the silence of Tacitus, that the Saxons were not above the Elbe in his days. In this part of his map of Germany, he does not seem to have intended to give that minute detail of information, which Ptolemy, fortunately for our subject, has delivered. Tacitus directed his philosophical eye on the German states, who differed in manners, as well as in name. He seldom presents a mere nomenclature; he seems to enumerate those the most carefully, whose wars, customs, fame, vicissitudes, and power, had distinguished them from the rest. As the Saxons, and their neigh-

northward from the Saxons, as far as Tunderen and Appenrade; Sabalingii, above these, to the Nipsa and Tobesket, on which are Ripen and Kolding; Cobandi, thence to Holm and Horsens; Chali, beyond these to Hensburg and Hald; the Phundusii and Charudes on the west and east, northward, to the Lymfort; and the Cimbrici in Wensussel. Ant. Ger. iii. p. 94. See also on this Chorography Pontanus, p. 649.

³ Strabo, Tacitus, and Ptolemy, exhibit a very natural progression of information on the German geography. Tacitus gives a more accurate detail than Strabo, and Ptolemy, writing later, is still more minute.

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II.

bours, were not remarkable in either of these circumstances, he knew them not, or he passed them over; but Ptolemy pursues the plan of a plain and accurate chorographer; he is solicitous to mark positions, latitudes, distances, and names, leaving narrations of history and manners almost out of his consideration. It was therefore a part of his plan to notice the Saxons, as it was consistent in Tacitus to have omitted them.

THE only inferences which can be safely drawn from the silence of Tacitus, and the preceding geographers, are, that the Saxons were then an obscure and inconsiderable people, and had neither molested the nations of greater notoriety, nor incurred the enmity of the Roman government.

The Scythian population of Europe.

It will be unnecessary to waste our time, in enumerating the many fallacious theories which have been framed, on the origin of our Anglo-Saxon ancestors. It will be more useful to select those few facts which may be gleaned from the writers of antiquity on this subject, and to state to the reader, rather what he may believe, than what he must reject.

THE early occupation of Europe, by the Kimmerian and Keltic races, has been already displayed. The next stream of barbaric tribes, whose progress formed the second great influx of population into Europe, were the Scythian, German, and Gothic tribes. They also entered

it out of Asia. It is of importance to recollect the fact of their primeval locality, because it corresponds with this circumstance, that Herodotus, besides the main Scythia, which he places in Europe, mentions also an Eastern or Asiatic Scythia, beyond the Caspian and Iaxartes.⁹ As these new comers pressed on the Kimmerians and Kelts, their predecessors, these nations retired towards the western and southern extremities of Europe, pursued still by the Scythian invaders. This new wave of population gradually spread over the mountains, and into the vast forests and marshes of Europe, until, under the name of Germans, an appellation which Tacitus calls a recent name¹⁰, they had not only reached the Rhine, but had also crossed it into France. Here Cæsar found one great body firmly settled, descended from them, whom he calls Belgæ; though its component states had their peculiar denominations¹¹, besides a very

⁹ This Asiatic Scythia suits Mr. Abel Remusat's inference, in his Memoir lately read before the Academie des Inscriptions, that the Goths originally issued from Tartary, because near Mount Altai inscriptions have been found in Runic characters like those of Scandinavia. On this point we must always recollect, that the northern traditions about Odin, the common ancestor of the Scandinavians, Saxons, and Goths, bring him, at the head of the Asæ, from the Asiatic regions.

¹⁰ De Mor. Germ.

¹¹ De Bell. Gall. The fact that nations of the same origin had yet different local or provincial names, as the Germans who passed the Rhine becoming Tungri, and part of the

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II.

large force of recent German invaders, under the command of Ariovistus.

THIS second stock of the European population is peculiarly interesting to us, because from its branches not only our own immediate ancestors, but also those of the most celebrated nations of modern Europe, have unquestionably descended. The Anglo-Saxons, Lowland Scotch, Normans, Danes, Norwegians, Swedes, Germans, Dutch, Belgians, Lombards, and Franks have all sprung from that great fountain of the human race, which we have distinguished by the terms Scythian, German, or Gothic.¹²

Belgæ, Bellovaci, &c., must be remembered, when we consider the derivation of nations; as the omission of this recollection has occasioned many antiquaries to consider those people as distinct in origin, who were really related. Tacitus remarks, that the Trevisi and Nervii were ambitious of a German origin, though residing in and near Gaul. Indeed his whole book, on the Germans, proves that each tribe went by very distinct appellations, though all were Germans. This may lessen the scruples of those who doubt whether the Getæ and Goths were Scythian nations.

¹² Mr. Archdeacon Coxe, in his "Vindication of the Celts," has rebuked many of Mr. Pinkerton's erroneous opinions, unfounded declamation, wrong quotations, and misconstruction and misapplication of several ancient authorities. But amid these faults I have no doubt of the correctness of Mr. Pinkerton's general notion, that the German, Scythian, and Gothic nations were of the same generic family. This is all that I can praise in his Dissertation on the Goths; for the chronology which he attempts to build up, and many of his details, are not only unwarranted, but inconsistent with true history. Mr. Pinkerton and Mr. Whitaker, alike in their angry temperament of mind, and

THE ancient languages of these nations prove their ancient affinity, the contiguous chronology of their first origin, and their common derivation; and afford evidences of these truths, from which every one may satisfy his doubts or his curiosity. We have works still existing in the ancient Gothic¹³, and Saxon¹⁴, as well as in the Frankish¹⁵ and Icelandic¹⁶, in which the phi-

mode of reading, and stating ancient authorities, are in two extremes as to their inferences. The latter strives to make every thing Keltic, the former Scythian. Both are too apt to make their authorities speak rather what they wish, than what they find: they are equally intolerant of any contrary opinion; and though the one abhors and the other accredits Ossian, almost the only point in which they agree is to abuse Mr. Macpherson. Both, however, were men of vigorous minds and extensive reading; and deserve much praise for having devoted so much attention to these uninviting studies. The fire of genius at times burnt with great energy in Mr. Whitaker, and makes us lament that he did not direct it to more congenial themes.

¹³ The fragment of the Gospels, in the celebrated Silver MSS. of the Meso-Gothic, printed by Marshall with the Saxon Gospels in 1665, and recently with more splendor and accuracy, preserve a most interesting specimen of the ancient Gothic tongue.

¹⁴ The present work will contain many specimens of this language. Wotton's *Conspectus* contains a copious catalogue of the Anglo-Saxon MSS. that exist.

¹⁵ The Franco-Theotic versified harmony of the four evangelists, by Otfrid, and several other specimens of this language of the ancient Franks, are published with a glossary valuable to a certain extent, but which is capable of much improvement, in Schilter's *Thesaurus*.

¹⁶ Many of the Icelandic sagas have been published by the northern literati, with Latin translations. I have accustomed myself to rely on the accuracy of these versions, but

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II.

lologist will easily perceive their mutual relationship. The comparison of these with the modern German, Danish, Dutch, Swedish, and Flemish will equally demonstrate the kinship between the ancient parents and their existing descendants.¹⁷

Scythians
in Asia.

THE first appearance of the Scythian tribes in Europe may be placed, according to Strabo and Homer, about the eighth, or according to Herodotus, in the seventh century before the Christian æra.¹⁸ Herodotus likewise states, that the Scythians declared their nation to be more recent than any other, and that they reckoned only one thousand years between Targitaos, their first king, and the aggression of Darius. The first scenes of their civil existence, and of their progressive power, were in Asia, to the east of the Araxes. Here they multiplied and extended their territorial limits, for some centuries, unknown to Europe. Their general appellation among themselves was Scoloti, but the Greeks called them Scythians¹⁹, Scuthoi or Nomades.

some passages of Mr. Thorkelin's late translation of Beowulf, lead me to recommend to the student an acquaintance with the original language. Peringskiold's catalogue of the sagas is printed in the pars altera of Hicke's Thesaurus.

¹⁷ The continental writers have not so clearly distinguished the Keltic and Gothic nations as our own authors have done, but most frequently confuse the two races.

¹⁸ See before, p. 28.

¹⁹ Herod. *Melp.* s. 5. 7. 6. 11. The wars of the Scythians

To this judicious and probable account of Herodotus, we add the information collected by Diodorus. He says, that the Scythians, formerly inconsiderable and few, possessed a narrow region on the Araxes; but, by degrees, they became more powerful in numbers and in courage. They extended their boundaries on all sides; till at last they raised their nation to great empire and glory.²⁰

CHAP.
I.

ONE of their kings becoming valiant and skilful in the art of war, they added to their territory, the mountainous regions about Caucasus, and also the plains towards the ocean, and the Palus Mæotis, with the other regions near the Tanais. In the course of time they subdued many nations, between the Caspian and the Mæotis, and beyond the Tanais. Thus, according to Diodorus, the nation increased, and had kings worthy of remembrance. The Sakai, the Massagetai, and the Arimaspoi, drew their origin from them.²¹

before this period must have been with their Asiatic neighbours; but I think there is no credit to be given to the system of an ancient Scythic empire. The passage in Justin, which seems to warrant it, and for which I have no great respect, does not appear to me to be a sufficient foundation for it. His period of 1500 years I believe to be fabulous: and am much inclined to the supposition that xv has been con-founded in the MS. of Justin for xv^c; and that, in consequence, fifteen hundred has been read instead of fifteen. The supposition of a great and early Scythian empire has no foundation. See Vindic. of the Celts, p. 14.

²⁰ Diod. Siculus, p. 127.

²¹ Ibid.

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II.

THE Massagetai seem to have been the most eastern branch of the Scythian nation. Wars arising between them and the other Scythic tribes, an emigration from the latter took place, according to the account which Herodotus selects, as in his opinion the most authentic²², which occasioned their entrance into Europe. Such feuds and wars have contributed, more than any other cause, to disperse through the world its uncivilised inhabitants.

Scythians
enter Eu-
rope.
600—700
Ant. Chr.

THE emigrating Scythians crossed the Araxes, passed out of Asia, and, invading the Kimmerians, suddenly appeared in Europe, in the seventh century before the Christian æra. Part of the Kimmerians flying into Asia Minor, some of the Scythian hordes pursued them; but, turning in a direction different from that which the Kimmerians traversed, they missed their intended prey, and fell unintentionally upon the Medes. They defeated the Medes, pressed on towards Egypt, and governed those parts of Asia for twenty-eight years, till Cyaxares, the king of Media, at last expelled them.²³

THE Scythian tribes however continued to flock into Europe; and, in the reign of Darius, their European colonies were sufficiently numerous and celebrated to excite the ambition

²² Herod. Melpom. s. 11.

²³ Herod. Clio, s. 15. 103—106. It was at this period that Idanthyrigus the Scythian king overran Asia as far as Egypt, Strabo, 1007. At this time also occurred the expedition of Maduos their king, Strabo, 106.

of the Persian monarch, after his capture of Babylon; but all his efforts failed.²⁴ In the time of Herodotus, they had gained an important footing in Europe. They seem to have spread into it, from the Tanais to the ²⁵Danube, and to have then taken a westerly direction; but their kindred colonies, in Thrace, had extended also to the south. Their most northward ramification in Europe was the tribe of the Roxolani, who dwelt above the Borysthenes, the modern Dnieper.²⁶

CHAP.
I.

It would be impertinent to the great subject of this history, to engage in a minuter discussion of the Scythian tribes. They have become better known to us, in recent periods, under the name of Getæ and Goths²⁷, the most celebrated of their branches.

²⁴ Herod. Melpom.

²⁵ Ibid. Melp. s. 47—57.

²⁶ Strabo says, "above the Borysthenes dwell the last of the known Scuthoi, the Roxolanoi. The parts beyond them are uninhabitable from the cold," 175. He repeats this again. "If any live above the Roxolanoi we know not. They are the most northern, and inhabit the places between the Tanais, (the Don,) and the Borysthenes, p. 470.

²⁷ That the Getæ were Goths cannot be doubted. The Getæ were the same as the Daci, or as they were more anciently called, Davi. Hence the Greek terms for slaves in their comedies, which Terence has borrowed, Geta and Davus, Strabo, lib. vii. 467. The Getæ used the same language with the Thracians, and the Greeks called them a Thracian nation: so does Menander. Strabo, p. 453—455. Ovid, who was banished to Tome, a town of Mysia, on the Euxine, fre-

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As they spread over Europe, the Kimmerian and Keltic population retired towards the west and south. In the days of Cæsar, the most advanced tribes of the Scythian, or Gothic race, were known to the Romans under the name of Germans. They occupied all the continent but the Cimbric peninsula, and had reached and even passed the Rhine. One of their divisions, the Belgæ, had for some time established themselves in Flanders and part of France; and another body, under Ariovistus, were attempting a similar settlement near the center of Gaul, which Cæsar prevented.²⁸ It is most probable that the Belgæ in Britain were descendants of colonists or invaders from the Belgæ in Flanders and Gaul.

THE names Scythians and Scoloti, were, like Galli and Kimmerians, not so much local as generic appellations. The different tribes of the Scythians, like those of the Kimmerians and Gauls, had their peculiar distinctive denominations.

The Sakai-suna probably the Saxons.

THE SAXONS were a German or Teutonic, that

quently talks of his Getic and Scythic locality in his epistles and Tristia. As he was so near the borders of the Sarmatians, it is a natural circumstance that their name is also mentioned in his verses; but this is no identification of nations whose origin was so distinct.

²⁸ These two facts are fully asserted by Cæsar. He expressly distinguishes the Kelts from the Belgians in Gaul, as differing in language, laws, and customs, and ascribes to the Belgians a German origin.

is, a Gothic or Scythian tribe; and of the various Scythian nations which have been recorded, the Sakai, or Sacæ, are the people from whom the descent of the Saxons may be inferred, with the least violation of probability. Sakai-suna, or the sons of the Sakai, abbreviated into Sak-sun, which is the same sound as Saxon, seems a reasonable etymology of the word Saxon. The Sakai, who in Latin are called Sacæ, were an important branch of the Scythian nation. They were so celebrated, that the Persians called all the Scythians by the name of Sacæ; and Pliny, who mentions this, remarks them among the most distinguished people of Scythia.²⁹ Strabo places them eastward of the Caspian, and states them to have made many incursions on the Kimmerians and Treres, both far and near. They seized Bactriana, and the most fertile part of Armenia, which, from them, derived the name Sakasina; they defeated Cyrus; and they reached the Cappadoces on the Euxine.³⁰ This important fact of a part of Armenia having been named Sakasina, is mentioned by Strabo in another place³¹; and seems to give a geographical locality to our primeval ancestors, and to account for the Persian words that occur in the Saxon language, as they must have come into Armenia from the northern regions of Persia.

²⁹ Pliny, lib. vi. c. 19.

³⁰ Strabo, lib. xi. p. 776. 778.

³¹ Strab. p. 124.

BOOK
II.

THAT some of the divisions of this people were really called Saka-suna, is obvious from Pliny; for he says, that the Sakai, who settled in Armenia, were named Sacassani³², which is but Saka-suna, spelt by a person unacquainted with the meaning of the combined words. And the name Sacasena³³, which they gave to the part of Armenia they occupied, is nearly the same sound as Saxonia. It is also important to remark, that Ptolemy mentions a Scythian people, sprung from the Sakai, by the name of Saxones. If the Sakai, who reached Armenia, were called Sacassani, they may have traversed Europe with the same appellation; which being pronounced by the Romans from them, and then reduced to writing from their pronounciation, may have been spelt with the x instead of the ks, and thus Saxones would not be a greater variation from Sacassani or Saksuna, than we find between French, François, Franci, and their Greek name, φραγγι; or between Spain, Espagne, and Hispania.

It is not at all improbable, but that some of these marauding Sakai, or Sacassani, were gradually propelled to the western coasts of Europe, on which they were found by Ptolemy, and from which they molested the Roman empire, in the third century of our æra. There was a people

³² Pliny, lib. vi. c. 11.

³³ Strabo, lib. xi. p. 776. 778.

called Saxoi, on the Euxine, according to Stephanus.³⁴ We may consider these also, as a nation of the same parentage; who, in the wanderings of the Sakai, from Asia to the German Ocean, were left on the Euxine, as others had chosen to occupy Armenia. We may here recollect the traditional descent of Odin preserved by Snorre in the Edda and his history. This great ancestor of the Saxon and Scandinavian chieftains, is represented to have migrated from a city, on the east of the Tanais, called Asgard, and a country called Asaland, which imply the city and land of the Asæ or Asians. The cause of this movement was the progress of the Romans.³⁵ Odin is stated to have moved first into Russia, and thence into Saxony. This is not improbable. The wars between the Romans and Mithridates involved, and shook most of the barbaric nations in these parts, and may have excited the desire, and imposed the necessity of a westerly or European emigration.

OF the ancient Scythian language, the probable parent of all the Gothic tongues, we have a few words preserved to us:

Ancient
Scythian
language,

Exampaiois	sacred ways.
Arima	one.
Spou	an eye.

³⁴ Stephanus de Urb. et Pop. p. 657.

³⁵ Snorre Ynglinga Saga, c. 2. and 5.

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II.

Oior	a man.
Pata	to kill.
Groucasum	white with ³⁶ snow.

and dei-
ties.

OF their Gods, we learn that they had seven; whose character and attributes were thought, by Herodotus, to be like some of the most distinguished in the Grecian mythology: as,

Tabiti, their principal deity,	
resembled the Greek	Vesta.
Papaios	Jupiter.
Oitosuros	Apollo.
Artimpasa, or Arippasa	Venus.
Thamimasadas	Neptune.
Apia, wife of Papaios	Earth.

THEY had also a warlike deity, like Mars, whose name has not been given to us; and to whom only they raised altars, images, and temples³⁷, and to whom they sacrificed annually horses and sheep, and a portion of their prisoners. Their bows were proverbial.³⁸ In battle they drank the blood of the first enemy whom they mastered. They scalped their opponents, and offered their heads to their king;

³⁶ Herod. Melpom. s. 52. 28. 110. Pliny, lib. vi. c. 19.

³⁷ Herod. Melp. s. 59. Lucian tells us that they adored a sword, Jup. Trag., which Herodotus mentions as their emblem of Mars. Lucian also says that despising the Grecian worship as unworthy of the deity, they sacrificed men to their Diana, who delighted in human blood.

³⁸ "Like a Scythic bow," Strabo, 187.

and they made drinking vessels of the skulls of their greatest enemies or conquered friends. They had many diviners, who used rods of willow for their predictions.³⁹ In these customs our Gothic ancestors resembled them. They had the moral virtues of Nomadic nations. Eschylus mentions them with an epithet that implies their habits of social justice. Homer declares that no nation was more just than theirs; and Strabo asks where is the wonder of this, as they cared little for money or commerce, which he considers to be the fountains of civilised dishonesty.⁴⁰

³⁹ Her. s. 64, 65. 67. Strabo remarks, that they used skulls for their cups, lib. vii. p. 458. In the days of Herodotus their customs were sufficiently ferocious. But by the time that their branches the Germans and Saxons had pervaded Europe and attracted the attention of Tacitus, they had attained the improvements whose benefits we feel. How superior both they and the Kelts of Gaul were to the more savage and uncivilised tribes of America we may perceive, by contrasting Tacitus' account of the Germans, with Brainerd's the Indian missionary's description of the North American Indians. Of these he says, "they are in general wholly unacquainted with civil laws and proceedings; nor have any kind of notion of civil judicatures: of persons being arraigned, tried, judged, condemned or acquitted. They have little or no ambition or resolution. Not one in a thousand of them has the spirit of a man. They are unspeakably indolent and slothful. They discover little gratitude or even manhood, amidst all the kindnesses they receive. They seem to have no sentiments of generosity, benevolence, or goodness." See Brainerd's Life by President Edwards. He died 1747.

⁴⁰ Strabo, 460, 461. 454.

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II.

THE nations who entered Europe, after the Scythic or Gothic or Teutonic tribes, have been called Sclavonian or Sarmatian, forming a third great race who have appeared on the vast Germanic continent. The Sarmatian or Slavonic branches have occupied Russia, Poland, Eastern Prussia, Moravia, Bohemia and their vicinity. As our ancient history is not connected with this race, it will be sufficient to remark, that they had reached the neighbourhood of the Tanais on the borders of Europe, in the time of Herodotus, who calls them Sauromatæ.⁴¹ This fact gives one solid basis for their just chronology. Herodotus lived 450 years before our æra; and thus he gives evidence of the existence and approach to Europe of the Sarmatian race at that period.

The Sclavonic.

THE Sclavonic is a genus of languages which every examiner would separate from the Keltic and Gothic. The present Russian is thought to be the most faithful specimen of the original Sclavonic. The Poles, the Bohemians, the Dalmatians, the Croatians, the Bulgarians, Carinthians, Moravians, and some other tribes adjacent, formerly used its various dialects.⁴² It

⁴¹ He says the regions beyond the Tanais are no part of Scythia. The first portion belongs to the Sauromatæ, lib. iv. c. 21.

⁴² The extent of the nationes Slavorum, and of their language, is stated by Helmoldus, Chron. Slav. p. 3.; by Krantz in his Wandalia, p. 2.; by Chrytæus, Wandalia, p. 3.; by Munster, 1 Schard. Hist. Gerin. 486.; and by Faber, Rer.

prevailed in those parts of Europe where the ancients placed the Sarmatæ.⁴³ The numerous tribes who spoke the Slavonic preserved their ancient name of Venedi, long after their invasion of Germany, in the fifth or sixth century, though they were also called Slavi. Their successes enabled them to reach the Saxons and the Franks, but their conquests were terminated by the opposition of Charlemagne, and their incessant civil feuds.

CHAP.

I.

THE incontrovertible fact, of the existence in ancient Europe of at least three genera of languages, strongly distinguished from each other, conducts us safely to the conclusion, that the collections of nations who spoke them, must have also differed in the chronology of their origin. As the Keltic tribes were found in the most western extremities of Europe, it is reasonable to infer that they visited it earlier than the others: so the Slavonic peoples, being found to reside about its eastern boundaries, may be fairly considered as the latest settlers. The Gothic or Teutonic states, from their position, claim justly an intermediate date. As they ad-

Their
chronolo-
gical suc-
cession.

Musc. 132. On the Slavi, see Spener's Notitia, ii. p. 384. Sunt a Germanis plane diversi generis. Pontanus, Chor. Dan. 710.

⁴³ Dubravii Hist. Bohem. 44. Helmoldus, p. 3., says, that the Hungarians nec habitu nec linguâ discrepant. But Krantz disputes his authority, and affirms, that all acknowledge the Hungarian and Slavonic to be dissimilar languages. Wandalia, 36.

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II.

vanced westwards, the Keltoi retired before them. As the ramifications of the Scythians, Saxons and Goths, spread toward the Germanic Ocean, the Slavonic hordes flowed after them from Asia. The Saxon was one of the Gothic or Teutonic states, and it was as far west as the Elbe in the days of Ptolemy. The Saxons were therefore, in all likelihood, as ancient visitors of Europe as any other Gothic tribe. Their situation seems to indicate that they moved among the foremost columns of the second great emigration into Europe; but the particular date of their arrival on the Elbe, or a more particular derivation, it is impossible to prove, and therefore unprofitable to discuss.⁴⁴

⁴⁴ The most ancient nations of Italy and Greece, and those on the coasts of the Mediterranean, the Ægean Sea, and the Adriatic, appear to me to have sprung partly from Phœnician and Egyptian colonisations, and partly from the migrations of the Kimmerian and Keltic races. From this ancient population, secondary colonisations took place, like those which peopled Magna Græcia, and the north coast of the Euxine, and which settled at Marseilles. In their later population, the Gothic or Scythian tribes, as well as the Carthaginians, must have had some share. The most remarkable fact of the Latin language is, that although visibly of the same family with the Greek, yet it contains many striking resemblances, especially in its terminations, to the ancient Sanscrit. Meric Casaubon has taken some pains to show that the Saxon language has great affinity with the Greek. *De Ling. Sax.* 234—376.

CHAP. II.

Description of the Country inhabited by the SAXONS, near the ELBE, before they occupied BRITAIN.

THE infant state of the Saxon people, when the Romans first observed them, exhibited nothing from which human sagacity would have predicted greatness. A territory, on the neck of the Cimbric Chersonesus, and three small islands, contained those whose descendants occupy the circle of Westphalia, the electorate of Saxony, the British islands, the United States of North America, and the British colonies in the two Indies. Such is the course of Providence, that empires the most extended, and the most formidable, are found to vanish as the morning mist; while tribes scarce visible, or contemptuously overlooked, like the springs of a mighty river, often glide on gradually to greatness and veneration.

CHAP.
II.

THE three islands, which the Saxons in the days of Ptolemy inhabited, were those which we now denominate North Strandt, Busen, and Heiligland.¹

Saxon
islands.

¹ Cluver. Ant. Ger. iii. p. 97. Pontanus Chorog. 737. Du Bos Histoire Critique, i. p. 148. The geographer of

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North
Strandt.

NORTH STRANDT, formerly torn from South Jutland by the violence of the waves, is situated opposite to Hesum, and above Eiderstede, from both which it is separated by intervals of sea. The Hever, a bay which flows below it, and washes the northern shore of the Eiderstede, is favourable to commercial navigations. This island was formerly about twenty miles long, and in most parts seven miles broad. It once contained twenty-two parishes, and was noted for its agricultural produce, as well as its ² fish. The raging of the sea has materially damaged it since the time of the Saxons. Four calamitous inundations are recorded to have happened, in 1300, 1483, 1532, and 1615; but the most destructive of all began in the night of the 11th October, 1634; the island was entirely overflowed; 6408 persons, 1332 houses, and 50,000 head of cattle were washed away into the ³ sea. Such devastations have almost annihilated the place. There is now remaining of Nord-strand only the small parish of Pelworm, which derives its safety from the height of its situation.

Ravenna places Eustrachia among the Saxon isles, lib. v. c. 30. This may mean the neighbouring peninsula, Eyderstadt, which was almost an island.

² Chrytæus, 65. Pontanus, p. 741. Ubbo Emmius, p. 30. 158.

³ The destruction extended to other parts of Jutland. In the Eyderstede, 664 houses, 2107 persons, and 12,000 cattle and sheep were swept off. Busching's Geography.

BUSEN lies north of the mouth of the Elbe, to the westward of Ditmarsia, and looks towards Meldorp; in breadth is above two miles, in length near three. It is situated close upon the main land, of which it is suspected to have once formed a part. Being one even plain, the stormy ocean around makes the island a perilous habitation; it has therefore been surrounded by a strong dyke. It contains three or four parishes, with about as many villages; and though boasting no pre-eminence of soil, it commonly yields its produce with moderate fertility.⁴

C H A P.
II.
Busen.

BUT the most celebrated, and the most frequented of the Saxon islands was HEILIG-ISLAND. The words literally mean the sacred island.⁵ In the eighth century, and in the eleventh, it had two other names; Fossetis-land⁶, and Farria, which have been written with various orthography.

Heilig-
island.

THIS ancient seat of our forefathers has now

⁴ Ubbo Emmius, *Rer. Fris.* p. 31. Pontanus *Chorog.* 737, 738. and 741. He derives its name from Buysen, or Busch, a wood. His vernacular names of the fishes, with their Latin names of that day, are in p. 741.

⁵ Some derive the name from Hilgo, a bishop of the place; others, and in the opinion of Pontanus, verior, from some holy virgins who inhabited it. Their sacred steps the respectful grass never covered, as all the credulous natives will attest and show!! Pontanus *Chorog.* 739. But as an idol much revered, called Foseti, was in it, the epithet perhaps arose from the Pagan superstition.

⁶ *Altf. vita St. Lieudg.* ap. Bouquet, t. V. p. 449.

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become united to the British dominions.⁷ As it was the principal station of their naval excursions, it is peculiarly interesting to us, and an important object of our national history. But its condition has greatly varied: we will therefore subjoin its earliest, as well as its subsequent and latest descriptions, to give the reader the fullest information of its successive states that can now be obtained.

IN the eighth century it is noticed by a writer as the place where the idol Fosete was adored.⁸ In the eleventh century, it is thus described by Adam of Bremen, under the name of Farria. "It lies in a long recess at the mouth of the Elbe. It is the first island that occurs in the ocean. It has a monastery and is inhabited. It is very fruitful: rich in corn, and a nurse of cattle and birds. It has one hill and no trees: it is surrounded with the steepest rocks, with only a single entrance, where there is fresh water. It is a place venerated by all sailors, and especially by pirates. Hence it is called Heiligeland."⁹

Its state about 1630, we take from Pontanus.

⁷ On 26th August, 1814, the king of Denmark signed an official act, announcing his cession of this island to the crown of Great Britain. It had been annexed to Denmark in 1714. It was formerly possessed by the dukes of Holstein, Gottorf. Busching.

⁸ See note 6.

⁹ Ad. Bren. Hist. c. 210. p. 64. ed. Linden.

“ It had formerly seven parishes, and from its inhabitants and incidents, we learn that it was once much larger than it is at present. For in our times the sea receding, the soil has been worn down and carried off on all sides by the violence of the waves. It is eight German miles from Eyderstadt, and about nine from the Elbe. On the west, opposite England, it is 46 ells high, and towards the Elbe 30. They who have examined its shores, report that solid bodies formed of stone, and like shells, oysters, and human hands, have been found there, and even books and candles. Its banner is a ship in full ¹⁰ sail.” He adds another description from its Governor, which is translated in the note. ¹¹

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¹⁰ Pontan. Chorog.

¹¹ “ The island consists of two rocks, one red, the other white. The first, containing the fortress and garrison of the place, can be ascended by only one path. Like a red mulberry it emerges straight up from the sea like Segeburg in Holsatia, 406 ells high, with a rich and fertile soil upon it, from two ells and a half to one ell deep. It bears pease, beans, and English barley, of such peculiar goodness, that two bushels of it excel three of Eyderstadt. It has lettuces, radishes, and spinnage, and is free from serpents, toads, and every venomous animal. It has fine cattle and horses, but their motions must be restricted or they fall into the sea. The air is pure and salubrious. It has a church, 50 families, and about 300 inhabitants, an industrious and healthy race, skilled in navigation, and rich, and advancing themselves in other regions to wealth and dignities. The rock abounds with birds, of whom incredible numbers fly hither in crowds every autumn, especially cranes, swans, geese, ducks, thrushes, larks, and others, which supply the inhabitants with

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THE occupations of its inhabitants have generally been those of the fisherman and the pilot. Perpetually at sea, like their Saxon ancestors, they disregard the terrors of the ocean. Their food consists of their oats, and the produce of their nets. But though sacred in human estimation, the elements have not respected this island. In the year 800, a furious tempest from the north-west occasioned the greater portion to be swallowed up by the waves. In 1300 and 1500 it suffered materially from the same cause; but the inundation of 1649 was so destructive, that but a small part of the island survived it.¹² If another attack should wash away

many banquets. They detain and use rain-water. It has a safe and capacious port, very deep and open to the south. This sometimes holds above 100 ships of burthen, and defends them from the north and west winds. Larger ships may find a shelter in it. The other white rock is sandy, and has springs of fresh water. It has rabbits; it affords no pasture, but it grows hemp. It has towards the north and east a metal like gold, which they call mummergoldt, from which gold may be extracted, and sulphur enough to pay the expense of the smelting. Petrified almonds and wax-candles are found in its veins in abundance, and snails and shells converted into the metallic gold. There are small metallic branches, as of trees, so fine that no artificer could make such of gold. The island was formerly famous for the capture of herrings, and now abounds with fish, especially oysters." *Pont. Chorog.* p. 739, 740. As gold is seldom found united with sulphur, auriferous pyrites are very rare, though some have been found in Peru, Siberia, Sweden, and Hungary.

¹² Busching's *Geog.* vol. i.

the sandy downs, scarce one-sixth of the present population could subsist. C H A P.
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SITUATED near nations highly civilised, this island exists for the benefit of all who navigate the Elbe, which, from its dangerous coast, could not be entered without it. A sea-mark by day, a light-house by night, Heiligland points out the path of safety to the anxious mariner, and abounds with skilful pilots, who possess the local knowledge which he needs. They conduct vessels to the Elbe, the Weser, the Eider, or the Hever. But though now so useful to the navigator, it was anciently an object of terror. Its safe harbour, so contiguous to many marts of wealth and industry, long invited to it the adventurous pirate. From the age of the Saxons almost to our own, it has been thronged with maritime depredators.¹³ It is a subject of geographical contest, whether it be the Actania of Pliny, and the island of the Castum Nemus of Tacitus.¹⁴

¹³ It has been often the seat of a royal residence. Radbodus, king of Frisia, had his last sovereignty upon it. See Ubbo Emmius, p. 52. The Sea-kings also frequented it. But this island has been often confounded with Helgoland, a populous district of Norway, which is mentioned in Othter's voyage, Alfred's Orosius, 24.; and in Sir Hugh Willoughby's voyage, Hackluyt, p. 268.; and of which the kings of Helgoland, mentioned in the Norwegian Chronicle, were kings. Pont.

¹⁴ See Pontanus, 665. 737. — Cluverius gives Heiligland as Actania; and Rugen, from its wood and lake, as the island designated by Tacitus, Ant. Germ. 107. 97. — Heiligland

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II.

THE latest account of this curious island which has appeared, is that of an intelligent traveller who visited it in 1805, from which it appears, that its population has increased.¹⁵ Connected now with the trade and interests of Great Britain, its prosperity will augment with our commerce, and from its local utility as a safe point of intercourse between England and the continent, its importance can no longer be undervalued. The island of Nieuwerk, at the very mouth of the Elbe, is a mere sand, with a beacon to guide the course of the approaching mariner.

Their continental territory.

THE territory which the original Saxons occupied on the continent, was situated on the western side of the Cimbric peninsula, between the Elbe and the Eyder. This latter river is the boundary of Denmark, and has always been un-

has no woods. Pontanus, while he hints the pretensions of Zealand, seems to prefer Heiligland, because it is near the Elbe, and is almost a translation of *castum nemus*.

¹⁵ Dr. Adam Neale, in his travels, states, "The present inhabitants amount to about two thousand souls. The men gain their subsistence by fishing and pilotage, while the women tend the flocks of sheep and cows, and cultivate the soil, which produces little more than barley and oats. The communication between the cliff and the downs is carried on by means of a broad wooden staircase fixed in the rock, which is red breccia. There are three wells of fresh water, but scarcely a shrub or tree of any kind in the island; and turf, wood, fruit, and garden vegetables, are brought from Cuxhaven and Hamburg, in exchange for the fish with which the hardy Heligolandiers supply these towns."

derstood to mark the termination of the German states.¹⁶ It rises from a district which was anciently a forest; and from Borsholm, passing Kiel and Rensberg, it continues its course into the British ocean below Eiderstadt.

THE region between the Eyder and the Elbe, was denominated Nordalbingia, and its inhabitants Nordalbingi, in the earliest records we possess of these parts.¹⁷ North of the Eyder, extended Sleswick, in South Jutland; and beyond that, the district of North Jutland was continued into Wendila, and ended in Skawen, from which in a clear atmosphere the rocks of Scandinavia are visible.

THREE districts, in ancient times, divided this country of Nordalbingia or Eald¹⁸ Saexen. These unequal portions which have preserved their names to recent times, are Ditmarsia, Stormaria, and Holsatia. The progress of the Slavi occasioned a fourth division in the province of Wagria. As the early state of all distinguished nations is a curious subject of contemplation, it may not be uninteresting to add a short account

¹⁶ Saxo Gram. Preface, p. 2. Svaningius, in Steph. Comm. in Sax. p. 16.

¹⁷ Ad. Brem. p. 63. — The Privilegia, Eccl. Hamb. 146, 147. — Helmoldus Chron. Slav. 40. — Some name the people Transalbini.

¹⁸ So Alfred in his Orosius, p. 20, 21.; and his kinsman Ethelwerd, 833., entitle this region. The three divisions exist in Ad. Brem. 22., and Helmoldus Slav. 40. Subsequent geographers acknowledge it.

BOOK of the provinces which our ancestors first occu-
 II. pied on the continent.

Ditmarsia. DITMARSIA¹⁹ is separated on the north from Sleswick by the Eyder, and from Stormaria on the South by the Stoer. It fronts the isles of Heiligland and Busen, and extends in length thirty-seven miles, and in breadth twenty-three. Its general aspect is a soil low and marshy, and strong mounds are necessary to keep the ocean to its natural limits. The land on the coast is favourable to corn and cattle, but in the interior appear sterile sands, or uncultivated marshes. Its inhabitants, like those of all unfruitful regions, have been tenacious of the right of enjoying their poverty in independence, and the nature of the country has favoured their military exertions. Their habits of warfare and scanty livelihood produced a harshness of disposition, which often amounted to ferocity.²⁰

Stormaria. BELOW Ditmarsia, and reaching to the Elbe, was STORMARIA.²¹ The Stoer, which named

¹⁹ It is called Thiat-mares-gaho in S. Anscharius, who lived in 840, and in whose work the name is first met with. 1 Langb. Script. 347. Thiatmaresca, in a diploma of 1059, ib., and Thiatmarsgoi, in Ad. Brem. 22. — Teutomarsia, Chryteus Proem. — Also Dythmersi, Dytmerschi. — Suhm has investigated the etymology in his Nordfolk. Oprin. 263.

²⁰ Pontanus, ch. 667. — Cilicius Belli Ditmars. 427. annexed to Krantz. — Their banner was an armed soldier on a white horse.

²¹ Ad. Brem. p. 22. derives the name from Storm, a metaphor expressive of the seditions of the inhabitants; but

the province, confined it on the north. The Suala, Trave, and Billa, determined the rest of its extent. It was almost one slimy marsh. The wet and low situation of Stormaria and Ditmarsia exactly corresponds with the Roman account of the Saxons living in inaccessible marshes.²² The Stoer is friendly to navigation and fishing. Stormaria is somewhat quadrangular, and its sides may be estimated at thirty-three miles.²³

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DIVIDED from Sleswick by the Levesou on the north, bounded by Wagria on the east, and by the Trave on the south,²⁴ HOLSATIA stretches its numerous woods to Ditmarsia. The local appellation of the region thus confined has been, by a sort of geographical catachresis, applied to denominate all that country which is contained within the Eyder, the Elbe, and the Trave. In the age approaching the period of the continental residence of our ancestors, the Holtzati

Holsatia.

Stoer, the river, and Marsi, the residents in marshes, seem to compose a juster etymology. Chryteus Sax. 66. — Pont. 664.

²² Saxones, gentem in oceani littoribus et paludibus inviis sitam. Orosius, 7. 32.

²³ Pontanus, 666. — Ad. Brem. 22. distinguishes the Sturmarii with the epithet, nobiliores. Their banner was a white swan with a golden collar. Hammaburg (Hamburg) was their metropolis, which before the eleventh century had been viris et armis potens; but in Adam's time, was in solitudinem redacta. Ib.

²⁴ Holsatia was 42 miles from Wilster to Kiel, and about 33 from Hanrahuw to New Munster. Pontan. 665.

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II.

were nominally as well as territorially distinguished from the other states which we have considered.²⁵ Their country received from the bounty of nature one peculiar characteristic. As the western and southern coasts of Eald Saexen were repetitions of quagmires, the loftier Holsatia presented a continued succession of forests, and of plains which admitted cultivation.

STRENGTH and courage were qualities which grew up with the Holsatian, in common with his neighbours; he has been proverbial for his fidelity; his generosity has been also extolled; but an ancient writer diminishes the value of this rare virtue, by the companions which he associates to it. "They are emulous in hospitality, because to plunder and to lavish is the glory of an Holsatian; not to be versed in the science of depredation is, in his opinion, to be stupid and base."²⁶

²⁵ Their etymology has been variously stated; 1. from the woods they inhabited; Holt, a wood; saten, to be seated. Ad. Brem. and Pontan. — 2. From their country having been called Olt Saxen, Old Saxony. Shering, De Gent. Angl. 28. It certainly was so named by Ravenna, Geog. lib. v. s. 31. So in Bede, lib. i. c. 15. and lib. v. c. 11. Chron. Sax. p. 13. By Gregory, Ep. Bib. Mag. v. 16. p. 101. and Boniface, ib. p. 55., who lived in the seventh century. Nennius. 3 Gale Script. Angl. 115. — 3. See another derivation in Verstegan, 91. Eginhard, in the ninth century, names it Holdunstetch. The derivation of Adam of Bremen has prevailed.

²⁶ Helmoldus, Chron. Slav. 40. He adds, that the three people of Nordalbingia differed little either in dress or language. They had the jura Saxonum.

SUCH were the countries in which our Saxon
ancestors were residing when the Roman geo-
grapher first noticed them; and from these they
spread terror through Europe, when the atten-
tion of their population became directed to ma-
ritime depredations.

C H A P.

II.

CHAP. III.

*Circumstances favourable to the Increase of the
SAXON Power on the Continent.*

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ABOVE a century elapsed after Ptolemy, before the Saxons were mentioned again by any author who has survived to us. Eutropius is the second writer who noticed them. In accounting for the rebellion of Carausius, and his assumption of the purple, he states the Saxons to have united with the Franks, and to have become formidable to the Romans for their piratical enterprises. In the century which elapsed between Ptolemy and Carausius, the Saxons had greatly advanced in power and reputation, and they were beginning their system of foreign depredations when that Emperor encouraged them to pursue it. Their prosperity during this interval seems to have arisen from the repulse of the Romans from the Elbe to the Rhine; from the rise of the Franks; and from their own application to maritime expeditions.

Progress
of the Ro-
mans to
the Elbe.

THE descendants of the first Scythian population of Europe had acquired the name of Germans in the time of Cæsar. That it was a re-

cent appellation, we learn from Tacitus.¹ They were first invited into Gaul, to assist one of its contending factions, and the fertility of the country was so tempting, that their 15,000 auxiliaries gradually swelled into 120,000 conquerors², who established themselves in the northern provinces. Cæsar defeated them with great destruction, but he admits, that France, from the Rhine to the Seine and Marne, was peopled by German tribes, differing from the Kelts in language, laws, and customs, little civilised, averse to trade, but excelling in³ bravery.

THE same insuppressible love of distinction and adventure which led Cæsar into Britain, actuated him to an invasion of Germany. He resolved to pass the Rhine that he might show them that the Romans could both dare and accomplish the attempt.⁴ He was offered ships, but he chose to construct a bridge as better suited to the dignity of the Roman nation.⁵ He crossed the Rhine, burnt the towns and villages of one tribe, alarmed others, and after staying eighteen days in the country returned to⁶ France, and made his first incursion into Britain. In a subsequent year, he entered Germany again by a

¹ Tacitus, *Mor. Germ.* c. 2.

² So one of the Keltic princes told Cæsar, *lib. i. c. 23*. In combating these Germans, the Eduari of Gaul, a Keltic race, had lost almost all their nobility, senate and cavalry.

³ Cæsar, *lib. ii. c. 1. lib. i. c. 1.*

⁴ Cæsar, *lib. iv. c. 13.* ⁵ *Ib. c. 15.* ⁶ *Ib. c. 16. c. 17.*

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temporary bridge, but the natives retiring to their woods he thought it dangerous to pursue them, and left a garrison on the Rhine.⁷ He used some German auxiliaries against the Gauls, and was materially benefited by a charge of German horse, in his great battle at Pharsalia.⁸ His vast project of entering and subduing Germany from the Euxine has been already noticed.

YET Cæsar had but shown Germany to the Romans, as he had led them to the knowledge of Britain. It was the succeeding reign of Augustus, which was the actual æra of the establishment of the Roman power in Germany, as that of Claudius afterwards introduced it into our island. The reign of Augustus was, therefore, as important in its consequences to the Barbaric as it was to the Roman mind. It spread an intellectual cultivation through his civilised empire, superior to that which its varying provinces had before enjoyed, and it began the improvement of the German intellect and society, by adding to the principles, customs, and spirit of the Barbaric continent, whatever it could successively imbibe of the literature and arts of the Roman world. The Germans had much which the wild savages of the New World have been found without, and in which even the Romans were deficient, for they had some of the noblest principles of social polity and morals,

⁷ Cæsar, lib. vi. c. 27.

⁸ Florus.

but they had scarcely any literature, few arts, few luxuries, and no refinement. When these became united to their own nobility of spirit and political principles, kingdoms arose in many parts of Europe, whose peoples have far transcended those of the Grecian states, and of the Roman empire.

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UNDER Augustus, Gaul or France was completely reduced to Roman provinces, and most of its natives adopted the Roman appearance, language, and modes of life, and polity. Many colonies of the Romans were planted both in France and Spain, each a little image of Rome, and the natives assisted him to subdue the Germans.

THE country between Gaul and the Rhine was also subdued into Roman provinces, and roads were constructed in every part. Eight of these were made in Belgium, diverging from a single town. All these parts were formed into two grand divisions called *Germania Prima*, and *Germania Secunda*.

CASTLES and forts were built all along the Rhine, nearly fifty, and chiefly on its left bank, over which several bridges were thrown. A whole nation, the *Ubii*, was transplanted from beyond the Rhine to live along its left side: a Roman colony was placed among them, which increased afterwards into the city of Cologne. Other towns, as *Mentz*, *Bonn*, *Worms*, and *Spire*, arose from Roman stations. Eight legions were

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divided and placed in the most commanding spots to watch and overawe the Germans; and Augustus expressed and cultivated so strong an attachment to them, that he had a body of Germans for his guard.

THUS the reign of Augustus completely reduced all the regions up to the Rhine into the condition of Roman provinces: all within that boundary were debilitated into a state of subjection, and of beginning civilisation.

THE natives immediately beyond the Rhine stretching to the ancient country of our ancestors, were the Batavi, in the present Holland; the Frisii, in Friesland; the Bructeri, towards the Ems; the Catti, and the Cherusci, who extended to the Weser; and the Chauci, who inhabited the shores from the Weser to the Elbe: while the Suevi spread from the Main to the Danube. The German nations nearest to the Rhine frequently passed it in the reign of Augustus, to attack the stations of the Romans, and these as willingly crossed the same river to defeat, plunder, and ravage, as far as they could penetrate.

AUGUSTUS frequently visited these parts of Germany, but operated more decisively on its southern regions. From the progress of his legions, the southern part, from the Alps to the Danube, became a Roman province under the name of Noricum, and two other contiguous provinces, called Rhetia and Vindelicia, were

also established from the Alps to the Rhine, the Inn, and the Adige.⁹ The capital of Vindelicia was the present Augsburg, which Tacitus then called a most splendid colony. The Roman dominion being thus established in the southern district of Germany, the Emperor's son-in-law, Drusus, felt the same spirit of enterprize which had incited Cæsar, projected the conquest of the whole continent, and actually began it. A passage in Tacitus displays the insatiable thirst of distinction with which, the active minded youths of Rome were urged upon expeditions, incompatible with the comforts of the rest of mankind. Drusus crossed the Rhine from Holland, and ravaged around to the Main, while a fleet navigated along the coast into the Zuyderzee, and the Ems. In the ensuing spring he penetrated to the Weser, and in another year to the Elbe, laying the country waste, and building forts on the Maese, the Rhine, the Weser, and the Elbe, but before he passed that river he suddenly received, from natural causes, the fate which he was unsparingly dealing to others. Tiberius succeeded to the station, though not to the abilities of Drusus. He moved several times into Germany. In one year he passed the Weser, and in another, attacking the Chauci and Langobardi, he waved the imperial standards over the Elbe. His fleet triumphantly

⁹ Tacitus.

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sailed up the river; he contemplated the collected warriors who lined its northern bank; but hazarded no attack.¹⁰ Two of the princes of the Cherusci served in the Roman army; of whom one was the celebrated Arminius, and another became a Roman priest.

TIBERIUS was called by other wars to the Danube; and while he was there conflicting with the Marcomanni and their allies, the avarice of Quintilius Varus, combined with his precipitate attempt to civilise them, provoked the Germans of the Rhine to rebel. Arminius stood forward as the champion of Germany, and by his skill and exertions the Roman general and his army were destroyed. This misfortune struck Rome with consternation, and the horrors of an invasion like that of the Cimbri and Teutones, were anticipated; but Arminius was contented to have merited the title of the deliverer of his country.¹¹ He had either not the means or the

¹⁰ Dion. Cassius, p. 622—628., and the authors in Mascou's learned history of the Germans, i. p. 78—85.

¹¹ Tacitus gives him this title, Ann. lib. ii. c. 88. Kenler calls him the leader of the Saxons. 1 Schard. H. G. 501.; but he was of the Cherusci. Spen. Not. 297. His character in Paterculus is interesting; "Juvenis genere nobilis, manu fortis, sensu celer, ultra promptus ingenio, ardorem animi vultu oculisque preferens." He had served in the Roman armies, and obtained the equestrian dignity. The pen of Tacitus has completed his fame. For the disaster of Varus, see Dion. Cass. 667.; Paterc. ii. c. 117., and Tac. Ann. lib. i.

desire to pursue schemes of offensive conquest or of vengeful devastation beyond the precincts of Germany. He drove back the Roman empire from the Weser to the Rhine. He restored to his countrymen the possession of their native soil up to the latter river; destroyed all the Roman forts on the Ems, the Weser, and the Saal; and when Tiberius hastened to relieve the capitol from its dismay, the imperial general could gain no decisive laurels from the cautious patriot.¹² Thus Arminius raised Germany into a new military and political position. Having learned himself all the Roman discipline, he diffused among his countrymen as much of it as they could be persuaded to adopt, and prepared them to receive more; and from this period the wars of these fierce people became every year more formidable to the Roman empire, and more instructive to themselves. Nearly twenty years

¹² There is a history of Arminius by Kenler, 1 Schard. p. 501—518. In the dialogue on his military merit by Hutt, ib. 426., the German prince says to Hannibal, with some truth, “*Nam eorum qui res preclaras gesserunt, nemo majoribus difficultatibus enisus, aut gravioribus circa impedimentis eluctatus est. — In summa rerum aut hominum inopia, misera egestate, desertus ab omnibus, impeditus undique, tamen ad recuperandam libertatem, viam mihi communivi; citraque omnem extra opem, omne adjumentum, hoc solo præditus et suffultus animo, a me ipso rerum initia petivi et bellum extremè periculosum, non antea cœptum sed ab omnibus desperatum prosequitus sum.*” He details his exertions, and contrasts them, with more patriotism than critical judgment, with the exploits of Scipio and Alexander.

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had elapsed between the time that Tiberius had marched to the Weser and the period in which Arminius effected his revolt. During all this space, the Germans had all the Roman habits and peculiar civilisation in their immediate contemplation: and all that intercourse occurred, which so large a portion of the country, as from the Rhine to the Weser, being made Roman provinces; which the serving of their chiefs and people in the Roman armies, and acting with them as allies; which their perpetual communications with the numerous Roman forts and stations could produce. Germany was thus constantly advancing to improvement from the time that Augustus established the Roman armies on its continent; and the successes of Arminius kept it from being too Romanised. By driving back the Romans to the Rhine, he preserved to his countrymen and their neighbours the power of continuing not merely in independence, but in their native manners and customs, with only so much addition of the Roman civilisation as would naturally and beneficially harmonise with these. Many new ideas, feelings, reasonings, and habits, must have resulted from this mixture; and the peculiar minds and views of the Germans must have been both excited and enlarged. The result of this union of Roman and German improvement, was the gradual formation of that new species of the human character

and society, which has descended with increasing melioration to all the modern states of Europe. CHAP.
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GERMANY was not at this time very populous. The Hercynian forest, sixty days' journey in length, overspread a large portion of its surface. Each state made a little desert around it for its defence, and the Suevi who were in Suabia and Franconia used this desolating protection so abundantly, that they kept the country for 500 miles around them in a devastated condition. The population of Germany was, therefore, but scanty, and dwelt chiefly near the rivers, at their mouths, and on the sea-coasts. The Roman invasions repeatedly thinned the numbers of their tribes, by the slaughter of their battles and subsequent cruelties; and when new populations multiplied, as these existed under new circumstances, and amid many alterations of native manners around them, every succeeding generation differed from its predecessors: and this difference, from the continual intercourse with the only civilised empire which then existed, was that of progressive improvement producing progressive power, until Rome became their conquest, and its provinces their spoil, and the scites of their new kingdoms.

GERMANICUS renewed the victories of his father Drusus, and endangered for a while the independence of the barbaric continent. His warfare, though his name lives in the panegyric

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of Tacitus, can be only compared with that which we have witnessed in our days in St. Domingo. His first expedition was undertaken for the express purpose of human slaughter. One part of his legions, having destroyed their mutinous comrades, desired to attack the enemy, to appease, by the blood of the Germans, the manes of their rebellious fellow-soldiers. They accordingly rushed to the massacre of the Marsi. "Germanicus, to spread the slaughter as wide as possible, divided his men into four battalions. The country fifty miles round was laid waste with fire and sword: neither sex nor age excited pity, nor any places, holy or profane; their sacred temple, the Tanfanæ, was destroyed. This slaughter was perpetrated without their receiving a wound, because the enemies they attacked were sunk in sleep, or unarmed and dispersed."¹³

THE surprise of the Catti, against whom Germanicus sent Cœcina, was one of their next exploits. "His arrival was so little expected by the Catti, that their women and children were either immediately taken prisoners or put to the sword; Mattium, the capital, was destroyed by fire, and the open plains were laid¹⁴ waste." In subsequent battles we usually find the addition, that "no quarter was given to the barbarians;" and in the progress of the Romans, the country was always desolated. In one battle

¹³ Tacit. Ann. lib. i.¹⁴ Ibid.

we have this ferocious plan of warfare, even commanded by the applauded hero of the historian: "Germanicus rushing among the ranks, besought his men to give no quarter; he told them they had no need of prisoners, and that the extirpation of the barbarians would alone end the war!"¹⁵

TRAINED amid their soldiery to such sanguinary habits, it is not surprising that the Roman emperors should have carried to the throne the cruelties of the camp, and have exhibited there the merciless character, which in such campaigns as these, they must have acquired. But to destroy the uncultivated nations of Europe, (however unoffending, was no crime in the popular estimation at Rome. A surname from a country subdued, was a charm which made its chieftains deaf to all the groans of humanity and the clamours of violated right. They pursued this trade of sanguinary ambition, though Greece had taught the Romans to philosophise on morality; and their orators, to destroy an obnoxious governor, could sometimes declaim as if they had felt themselves the advocates of mankind!

AFTER these massacres of the Marsi and the Catti, Germanicus sailed up the Ems, and marched his army to the Weser. At this juncture Arminius¹⁶ was not wanting to his coun-

¹⁵ Tacit. Ann. lib. ii.

¹⁶ Many have thought that the famous Irmensul was a

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trymen; but the superior knowledge of his competitor, and the discipline of the invading troops, were rapidly annihilating the rude liberty of Germany. Its bravest tribes fell fruitlessly in its defence; the survivors trembled for the awful issue; when the jealous policy of Tiberius, who had succeeded to the empire, rescued them from absolute conquest. He called back Germanicus from his victorious progress; although he asked to continue in his command but one year more, and would have extended the Roman empire to the Elbe. ¹⁷

THE conquests of Germanicus were in truth so many depopulations. The Germans always fought till they had not men enough for future battles; and every war was the destruction of the largest portion of the generation that waged it. But new races sprang up rapidly in the vacancy thus made, and under circumstances that were continually becoming more promotive of their improvement, especially in war, and in all the mental qualities which were connected with it, and which could be excited by a struggle with an enemy so renowned and so successful. War became their

monument of Arminius, whose heroic actions the Germans long celebrated in their songs; but there is no reason to believe that Arminius was ever venerated as a deity.

¹⁷ Tacit. Ann. lib. ii. s. 26. It is painful to read that Arminius fell a victim to the treachery and ingratitude of some of his countrymen; or to his love of power and their love of liberty.

necessity, as well as the theatre of their glory; and from the reign of Tiberius to the fall of the Roman empire under their swords, the German nations beyond the Rhine on the west, and beyond the Danube on the east, were, under various denominations, of Marcomanni, Alemanni, Franks, Saxons, Burgundians, Lombards, and Goths, every year training and educating themselves in the military habits, laws, and exercises, and corresponding policy and institutions, which new events and experience discovered to be most effective, for their own welfare and the annoyance of their enemy. They were in every generation becoming more and more the Spartans of modern Europe. Their martial systems increased progressively in wisdom and vigour. The whole frame of their society was made subservient to their warlike objects; and it became impossible for Rome, in the degeneracy of its confined civilisation, to withstand the unremitted onsets of a people daily attaining superiority in force of mind, loftiness of spirit, ardent feeling, and moral fortitude and probity, as well as in technical discipline and manual activity.

THE recall of Germanicus ended the progress of the Romans in the north of Germany. They had many conflicts and some successes; but they never reached the Elbe again. They retreated gradually to the south, though not with perpetual retrogression. Sometimes the interior

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Repulse
of the
Romans
to the
Rhine.

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tribes of the country were afflicted by their victorious invasions, and as often were consoled by their expulsion. At one period Hadrian made a rampart for sixty leagues, from Neustadt on the Danube to Wimpfen on the Neckar, which lasted till Aurelian: the natives then pulled it down. Probus replaced it with stone; but it soon became an ineffective barrier. At length, after various conflicts, the Rhine, near the modern Leyden, separated the Romans and their allies, from the free nations of the north.¹⁸ It was not, indeed, an impassable boundary, but the Romans generally kept within it: and thus the nations beyond, and more especially the Saxons, who were among the most remote, had full leisure to increase their population, and to improve the propitious circumstances, which attended their peculiar situation.

THE jealousy of Tiberius having stopped Germanicus from annihilating Arminius, and from destroying the nations beyond the Weser, sufficiently for the extension of the Roman empire to the Elbe, all the German tribes from the Rhine to the Baltic were left to act, fight, and improve with the new arts and know-

¹⁸ Bebelius too eagerly denies that any part of Germany beyond the Rhine was conquered, though the emperors arrogated the surname Germanicus. *Orat. vet. Ger.* 1 Schard. 257. Mascou fairly states the fact, i. p. 131.—The *Tabula Peut.* (on which some excellent remarks of M. Freret are in *Mem.* vii. p. 292.) confirms this boundary.

ledge which they had learnt from the Romans, and afterwards imbibed from their intercourse with the empire.

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THEIR continuation in an independent state was favoured by the fall of Arminius. His talents and ambition might have subdued the north-western coast of Germany into one dominion; but he being killed, and his Cherusci weakened, no similar hero, and no great kingdom, which such a character usually founds, arose in those parts. Hence every state from the Rhine to the Elbe, and amongst these the Saxons, grew up in the free exercise of its energies and means of power. Warlike activity was necessarily their predominating principle, not only to repel the Romans, but to protect themselves from each other. It was indeed an essential individual quality. The life of each depended on his martial efficiency, for their wars were always those of desolation and death.

THE Romans continued to be the military educators of the population in these parts, without intending an effect so dangerous to their dominion. But their new principle or necessity of forming part of their armies of German troops led to this momentous result. They frequently felt its evil without changing their system. So early as the year 28, the Frisii, the neighbours of the Saxons, and some of whose nobles had served in the Roman armies, revolted,

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and for a long time remained ¹⁹ independent. Fifteen years afterwards, Batavi were serving in the Roman armies in Britain. ²⁰

FROM the Batavian marshes, in A. D. 47, Gennascus became the leader of the Chauci, and began that plan of operations which the Saxons in an after age so eagerly pursued. He plundered on Gaul with light ships. He became strong enough to invade Lower Germany. ²¹ In A. D. 69, the Emperor Vitellius became so fond of his German auxiliaries, as to take them to Rome, in their dresses of skins and long spears, and to consult their superstitions. ²² After him Civilis proved what military efficiency, the tribes of these regions had acquired from Roman tuition. He had served among the Batavian cavalry that was employed in Britain, and he visited Rome. He found the sailors in the Roman fleet on the Rhine to be chiefly Batavi. With talents, which Tacitus compares with those of Hannibal and Sertorius, he roused his countrymen to arms against the Romans. The whole Batavian nation, Bructeri, Tencteri and their neighbours allied with him. He defeated the imperial forces, and was joined by the auxiliary forces whom the Romans had trained. The Gauls submitted to him. One division of his navy sunk or took the Roman fleet; and he equipped another to

¹⁹ Tacit. Ann. lib. iv.

²⁰ Dio. Cass. lib. lx.

²¹ Tac. Ann. lib. xi. c. 18.

²² Tacit. Hist. lib. ii. Suet. in Vit.

intercept their supplies from Gaul. Defeated at one time, he maintained a doubtful battle at another, and at last obtained a creditable peace; and the Romans again took Batavians into their service in Britain.²³ These events deserve our contemplation, because they show that great improvements flowed from the Romans towards the regions where our Saxon ancestors were stationed.

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FROM Civilis to Caracalla, in the beginning of the third century, the emperors left the nations beyond the Rhine, to the natural course of their own means of continuing the progress, which the preceding events had excited. In Caracalla's reign, the tribes that dwelt on the Elbe near the North Sea, a position that includes the Saxons, felt so highly their own importance, as to send an embassy to Rome offering peace, but requiring money for observing it. The emperor gave the demanded payment; and so greatly favoured them, as to form a German body-guard, and to wear himself a German dress.²⁴

BUT the savage Maximin soon changed this

²³ Tacit. Hist. lib. iii. iv. Civilis had maintained a personal friendship with Vespasian. "Cum privatus esset amici vocabamur," lib. v. c. 26. Mascou, to his summary of the actions of Civilis, adds that his memory continued dear to the Hollanders: that in the Great Hall of the States General there were twelve pictures of his exploits, by Otto Veenius; and that the Dutch were fond of comparing him with their William, Prince of Orange, "the fountain of the liberties of Holland," vol. i. p. 159.

²⁴ Herodian, lib. iv. c. 7.

B C O flattering scene. After the assassination of
 II. Alexander Severus, the ferocious Thracian as-
 Rise of the assumed the contaminated purple, and an-
 Franks, nounced his accession to the north of Ger-
 A.D. many in a series of victorious slaughter and
 235-240. unrelenting devastation. So irresistible was
 the tempest, that unless (says the historian) the
 Germans had escaped by their rivers, marshes,
 and woods, he would have reduced all Germany
 into subjection. His furious valour once be-
 trayed him into a situation of so much danger
 in a marsh, that he was saved with difficulty,
 while his horse was drowning. His haughty
 letters to the senate display the exultation and
 the ferocity of his mind. "We cannot relate
 to you how much we have done. For the space
 of four hundred miles we have burnt the Ger-
 man towns, we have brought away their flocks,
 enslaved their inhabitants, and slain the armed.
 We should have assailed their woods, if the
 depths of the marshes had permitted us to
 pass."²⁵

THIS destructive invasion, like many other
 evils, generated, by the greatness of the neces-
 sity, a proportionate benefit. By a conjecture
 more probable in itself, and more consistent
 with contemporaneous facts than any other
 which has been mentioned, a modern writer has
 very happily ascribed to it the formation of that

²⁵ Jul. Capitol. Maxim. c. 12. Herodian, lib. vii. p. 146.
 ed. Steph. The history of Maximin is related by Mr. Gib-
 bon with elegance and accuracy, i. p. 173—190. 4to.

important confederation, which, under the name of Franks, withstood the Roman arms, and preserved the liberties of Germany.²⁶

CHAP.
III.

Their true
origin.

It is the prevailing opinion of the learned, that about the year 240 a new confederation was formed, under the name of Franks, by the old inhabitants of the Lower Rhine and²⁷ Weser. As the incursion of Maximin took place about the year 235, the additional supposition of Spener is very happy, that this confederation arose from a general desire of security and revenge.

THE horizon of Rome was at this juncture darkening; civil wars were consuming the strength of the empire, and its Germanic enemies, who had many losses of liberty, life, and property to avenge, were learning the dangerous secret of the benefit of union. The²⁸ Alemanni had alarmed Marcus Aurelius with its first exhibition. The advantage of this confederation generated others, until the Roman empire was overwhelmed by the accumulating torrent; and her western provinces were parcelled out among

²⁶ Spener's Notit. Germ. lib. iv. p. 338. "Non valde vereor adfirmare, Maximini crudelem in Germaniam incursionem fœdus inferioris Rheni accolis Germanis suasisse."

²⁷ 1 Gibbon, 259.—Foncemagne Mem. Ac. xv. p. 268. Freret Hist. Ac. Insc. ix. p. 88. and Mem. xxxiii. p. 134. unite in the opinion.—Mascou, who dislikes it, p. 196. has evidently not weighed all the circumstances.

²⁸ For the nations who assumed this name, see Spener, 175. 179.

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those warlike spoilers, whose improved posterity now govern Europe.

Their use
to the
Saxons.

THIS sagacious union of strength in a common cause, was consecrated on the Rhine by the general name of Franks, in which the peculiar denominations of the tribes were ²⁹ absorbed. Their valour achieved its end; and their existence and general conduct were peculiarly useful to the Saxon nation.³⁰ The safety and success of our ancestors may have flowed from this timely confederation. The Saxon exploits on the ocean inflicted such wounds on the Roman colonies and commerce, that a peculiar fleet was appointed to counteract them; the southern coast of Britain was put under an officer called Comes Littoris Saxonici; and every historian mentions them with dread and hatred. It does not seem visionary to state, that it would have been one of the first employments of the Roman indignation to have exterminated them by an expedition like those of Drusus, Germanicus,

²⁹ The states who united in the league, are particularised by Spener, p. 341.; and by Chrytæus, Sax. Proem.

³⁰ The ancient writers give us some curious traits of the Franks of this period: "Francis familiare est ridendo fidem frangere." Vopiscus Proc. c. xiii. p. 237. Ed. Bip. "Gens Francorum infidelis est. Si perjeret Francus quid novi faciet, qui perjurium ipsum sermonis genus putat esse non criminis." Salvian de Gub. Dei, lib. iv. p. 82. Mag. Bib. Pat. 5.—Again, lib. vii. p. 116. "Franci mendaces, sed hospitales."—This union of laughter and crime, of deceit and politeness, has not been entirely unknown to France in many periods since the fifth century.

and Maximin, if the confederation of the Francs had not interposed a formidable barrier that was never destroyed, and which kept the imperial armies employed on the south banks of the Rhine.³¹ We may add, that the furious desolations of Maximin were favourable to the growth of the Saxon power; for they depopulated the contiguous states, and left the Saxons without any strong neighbours to coerce or endanger them.

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III.

ANOTHER cause peculiarly promotive of the prosperity of the Saxons was their application to maritime expeditions.

³¹ Pontanus Origin. Franc.—Spener, 333—360.; and his 2 vol. 421—429.; and Schilters' Glossary, 316—322. furnish much information on this people.

CHAP. IV.

*The Application of the SAXONS to Maritime Expeditions.*BOOK
II.

THE situation of the Saxons on the sea-coast of that part of Europe, which was in the neighbourhood of some fertile provinces of the Roman empire, and yet remote enough to elude their vengeful pursuit; and the possession of an island, with an harbour so ample, and yet so guarded against hostile assaults, were circumstances propitious to a system of piracy.

THE tribes on the sea-coasts, from the mouths of the Rhine to the Baltic, had from the days of Cæsar been gradually forming themselves to maritime exertions. The Romans themselves, inattentive to the consequences, contributed to their progress in this new path of war. Drusus equipped a fleet on the Rhine to waft his army to the Ems: he cut a channel for its passage into the Zuyder Zee; and we find in his time, that the Bructeri, who lived on the left of the Ems, were able to fight a battle with him on the seas.¹ In the reign of Tiberius, Germanicus built a thousand vessels on the Rhine, Maes,

¹ Mascou, Hist. vol. i. p. 80.

and Scheld,² teaching the attentive natives the use of ships, and the manner of their constructing them, and employing them in their navigation.

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WITHIN thirty years afterwards, Gennascus, at the head of the Chauci, evinced their improvement; for with light ships, armed for plunder, he made the descent already noticed on the contiguous shores, and particularly on the Roman provinces in France, knowing that they were rich, and perceiving that they were weak against such attacks.³ His enterprises were in fact the precursors of those, with which the Franks and Saxons afterwards annoyed the Roman empire. The naval exertions of Civilis have been stated before.

As the population between the Rhine and Ems were thus accustomed to maritime exertions, the Saxons began to multiply near them, and to spread into the islands we have described. But an active system of naval enterprise is not naturally chosen by any nation, and still less distant voyages, which are fatal to land warriors from their ignorance, and still more formidable from their superstitions. Hence the Saxons might have lived amid their rocks and marshes, conflicting with their neighbours, or sailing about them in petty vessels for petty warfare, till they had mouldered away in the vicissitudes in which so many tribes perished, if one incident

² Tacitus Ann. lib. ii. c. 6. ³ Tacit. Ann. lib. xi. c. 18.

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had not excited their peculiar attention to maritime expeditions on a larger scale, with grander prospects, and to countries far remote.

THIS event, which tinged with new and lasting colours the destiny of Europe, by determining the Saxons to piratical enterprises, was the daring achievements of the Franks, whom Probus had transported to the Pontus. To break the strength of the barbaric myriads, who were every year assaulting the Roman state with increasing force, this emperor had recourse to the customary policy of his nation, of settling colonies of their warriors, in places very distant from the region of their nativity.

Voyage of
the Franks
from the
Euxine.

AMONG others, a numerous body of Franks, or rather of the contiguous tribes united under that name, was transplanted to the Euxine. The attachment of mankind to the scenes of their childhood; and their ardent longing, when in foreign lands, for the country, which their relatives inhabit, where their most pleasing associations have been formed, where their individual characters have been acquired, and customs like their own exist, are feelings so natural to every bosom, and so common to every age, that it is not surprising that the Frankish exiles, when removed to the Euxine, regretted their native wilds.⁴ We read therefore with general

⁴ So strong was this feeling in Germany, that some of the German chiefs, whom Augustus forced from their country, killed themselves, 1 Mascou, 85.

sympathy, that they soon afterwards seized the earliest opportunity of abandoning their foreign settlement. They possessed themselves of many ships, probably the vessels, in which they had been carried from the German Ocean to the Euxine, and formed the daring plan of sailing back to the Rhine. Its novelty and improbability procured it success; and the necessities which attended it, led them to great exploits. Compelled to land wherever they could for supplies, safety, and information, they ravaged the coasts of Asia and Greece. Reaching at length Sicily, they attacked and ravaged Syracuse with great slaughter. Beaten about by the winds; often ignorant where they were; needing subsistence, and excited to new plunder by the successful depredations they had already made, they carried their triumphant hostility to several districts of Africa. They were driven off by a force sent from Carthage, but, sailing at last to Europe, they concluded their remarkable voyage by reaching in safety their native shores.⁵

IN this singular enterprise, a system to endure for ages received its birth. It discovered to themselves and their neighbours; to all who heard and could imitate, that from the Roman colonies, a rich harvest of spoil might be gleaned by those, who would seek for it at sea. It like-

⁵ The original authorities are Zosimus, end of book i.; Eumen. Paneg. iv. c. 18.; and Vopiscus in Probo, c. 18.

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wise removed the veil of terror that hung over distant oceans and foreign expeditions. These Franks had desolated every province almost with impunity; they had plunder to display, which must have fired the avarice of every needy spectator; they had acquired skill, which those who joined them might soon inherit; and perhaps the same adventurers, embarking again with new followers, evinced by fresh booty the practicability of similar attempts. On land the Roman tactics and discipline were generally invincible; but at sea they, who most frequent it, are usually the most expert and successful. The Saxons perceived this consequence: their situation on the ocean tempted them to make the trial. They soon afterwards began their depredations, and by this new habit evinced the inciting and instructive effects of the Frankish adventure.

Usurpa-
tion of
Carausius.

THE piracies of the Franks and Saxons are not mentioned in the imperial writers anterior to this navigation; but they seem to have become frequent after it; for, within a few years subsequent, the Franks and Saxons so infested the coasts of Belgium, Gaul, and Britain, that the Roman government was compelled to station a powerful fleet at Bologne, on purpose to confront them. The command was entrusted to Carausius, a Menapian, of the meanest origin, but a skilful pilot, and a valiant soldier. It was observed, that this commander attacked the pirates

only after they had accomplished their ravages, and never restored the capture to the suffering provincials. This excited a suspicion, that by wilful remissness he permitted the enemy to make the incursions, that he might obtain the booty on their return. Such conduct was fatal to the design of suppressing the piracies of the Franks and Saxons. It permitted the habit of such enterprises to become established, and the success of those who eluded his avarice, on their return, kept alive the eagerness for maritime depredations.⁶

CHAP.
IV.

ANOTHER incident occurred to establish their propensity and power. The emperor, informed of the treasons of Carausius, ordered his punishment. Apprised of his impending fate, he took refuge in augmented guilt and desperate temerity; he boldly assumed the purple, and was acknowledged emperor by the legions in Britain. The perplexities in which the Roman state was at that time involved, favoured his usurpation; and, to maintain it, he had recourse to one of those important expedients which, originally intended for a temporary exigency, lead ultimately to great revolutions.

As it was only by active warfare that his sovereignty could be maintained, he made alliances with the Germans, and particularly with the Saxons and Franks, whose dress and man-

He teaches the Saxons, A. D. 287. the naval art.

⁶ 1 Gibbon; 362. 1 Mascou, 243.

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II.

ners he imitated, in order to increase their friendship. To make them of all the use he projected, he encouraged their application to maritime affairs; he gave them ships and experienced officers, who taught them navigation and the art of naval combat.⁷ No circumstance could have tended more to promote their future successes and celebrity. They had sufficient inclination to this new path of action. They only wanted the tuition and encouragement. Fostered by this imperial alliance, and supplied with those essential requisites, without which they could not have become permanently formidable, they renewed their predatory attacks with licensed severity. Every coast which had not received Carausius as its lord was open to their incursions. They perfected themselves in their dangerous art, and by the plunder which they were always gaining, they increased their means as well as their avidity for its prosecution, and nurtured their population in the perilous but attractive warfare. The usurpation of Carausius, and this education of the Saxons to the empire of the ocean, lasted seven years.

Magnentius allies with them.

SIXTY years afterwards, a similar occurrence advanced the Saxon prosperity. Magnentius, another usurper of the bloody and restless sceptre of Rome, having murdered Constans, endeavoured to preserve the perilous dignity by

⁷ 1 Mascou, 244. 1 Gibbon, 364.

an alliance of fraternization with the Franks and Saxons, whom in return he protected and encouraged.⁸ This was another of those auspicious incidents, which enhanced the consequence and power of those tribes who had been invisible to Tacitus, and who had been merely known by name to Ptolemy. But as Providence had destined them to be the stock of a nation whose colonies, commerce, arts, and knowledge are pervading every part of the world, it cherished them by a succession of those propitious circumstances which gradually formed and conducted them to that great enterprise for which they were principally destined.

⁸ Julian Orat. cited 1 Mascou, 280.

CHAP. V.

The League of the SAXONS with other States, and their Continental Aggrandizement.

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II.

BUT in the beginning of the fourth century, the Saxons were not alone on the ocean; other states, both to the south and north of their own locality, were moving in concert with them, whose nominal distinctions were lost in the Saxon name. This addition of strength multiplied the Saxon fleets, gave new terror to their hostility, and recruited their losses with perpetual population. The league extended. Their depredations increased their population, affluence, and celebrity; and these results extended their power. What emulation, policy, or rapacity may have first prompted, success and fear made more universal. They who would not have been tempted to unite, dreaded the wrath of those whose proffered alliance they refused: and at length, most of the nations north of the Rhine assumed the name, strengthened the association, and fought to augment the predominance of the Saxons. Towards the south, between the Elbe and the Rhine, the Chauci seem to have led the way. The Frisii, urged by kindred passion and a convenient position, willingly followed. The

precise date of the accession of others is not so clear; but in some period of their power the Chamavi, and at last the Batavi, the Toxandri, and Morini, were in their alliance. North of their territorial position the Cimbri, the Jutes, the Angles, and others not so discernible, added their numbers to the formidable league, which lasted until their expedition to Britain¹, and then began to dissolve.

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V.

WITHOUT detaining the reader by a detail of the modern chorography answering to the position of these tribes², it may be sufficient to state concisely, that the progress and leagues of the Saxon states enlarged gradually from the Elbe to the Weser; from the Weser they reached to the Ems, and still augmenting, they diffused themselves to the Rhine with varying latitude, as the Franks, many of whose allies they seduced, quitting that region, and abandoning their exploits on the ocean, marched upon Gaul. The extension of this new confederation was favoured, by the change of policy and position,

¹ Spener's Notitia, 363—370. That the Saxons of the fifth century were an association of peoples, was remarked by Stillingfleet, Orig. Brit. 305.; and Langhorn, Elench. Ant. Alb. 342. See also Freret, Mem. Ac. Inscr. xxxiii. p. 134.; and 2 Gibbon, 523.

² This may be seen as to the Chauci, Spener, 302—313. Cluverius, lib. iii. p. 72. Cellarius, Ant. Geog. i. p. 298.—As to the Frisii, Spener, 314—332. Cluv. p. 55. Cell. 295. As to the Chamavi, Sp. 260, &c. The same authors treat of the others.

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II.

adopted by the Franks. As this people stood foremost to the Roman vengeance, they experienced its effects. They had many distressing wars to maintain, which in time compelled them to abandon maritime expeditions, and to consolidate their strength for their continental conflicts. Their ultimate successes made this warfare the most popular among them. Hence, the nearer we approach the period of the invasion of England, we find the Franks less and less united with the Saxons on the ocean, and even wars begin to be frequent between the rival friends. As the former moved onward, to the conquest of Belgium and Gaul, the Saxons appear to have been the only nation, under whose name the vessels of piracy were navigated. Saxons were the enemies every where execrated, though under this title several nations fought. Some of the tribes on the maritime coast, who had composed the league of the Franks, abandoned it, to share the easier warfare and ampler booty of the Saxons. At last this successful people diffused themselves into the interior of Germany so victoriously, that the vast tracts of country embraced by the Elbe, the Sala, and the Rhine, became subjected to their ³ power,

³ That continental Saxony at last extended to the Rhine is affirmed by Adam of Bremen, p. 3.; and see the later writers. Chrytæus, 72.; et Præm. Krantz Saxon, p. 5. Spener Notit. 2 vol. 400—413. Eginhart, the secretary of Charlemagne, says, p. 7., that in his time, Saxony Germaniæ pars non modica est.

in addition to their ancient territory from the Elbe to the Eyder.⁴ An old Belgic chronicle, in rhyme, makes Neder Sassen, Lower Saxony, to have been confined by the Scheld and the Meuse⁵; but this is a larger extent than others admit.

C H A P.

V.

BUT those allies of the Saxons with whom the history of Britain is most connected, were the Jutes and Angles. The Jutes inhabited Jutland, or rather that part of it, which was formerly called South Jutland⁶, but which is now known as the duchy of Sleswick. The little band first introduced into England by Hengist and Horsa,

The Jutes.

⁴ The Saxon poet commemorates the Saxons to have retained this region in the time of Charlemagne:

Saxonum populus quidam quos claudit ab austro

Albia sejunctum positos Aquilonis ad axem,

Hos Northalbingos patrio sermone vocamus.

ap. Du Chesne, Hist. Fran. Script.

2. p. 160.

⁵ Oude bocken hoor ick gewagen,
Dat all t'land beneden Nyemagen,
Wilén neder Sassen hiet,
Alsoo als die stroom verschieet
Van der Maze ende van den Rhyn,
Die Schelt was dat westende syn.

Schilt. Thes. 706.

I have heard that old books say,
That all the land beneath Nyemagen
Whilom was called Nether Saxony,
Also that the stream
Of the Maes and the Rhine confined it:
The Scheld was its western end.

⁶ Chrytæus, Saxon, 65. Pont. Chor. Dann. 655.

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II.

The
Angles.

were Jutes. Their name has been written with all the caprices of orthography.⁷

THE Angles have been derived from different parts of the north of Germany. Engern, in Westphalia, was a favourite position, because it seemed to suit the geography of Tacitus. Angloen, in Pomerania, had good pretensions, from the similarity of its name; and part of the duchies of Mecklenburg and Lunenburg was chosen out of respect to Ptolemy; but the assertion of Bede and Alfred, which Camden has adopted, has, from its truth, prevailed over all. In the days of Tacitus and Ptolemy, the Angli may have been in Westphalia or Mecklenburg, or elsewhere; but at the era of the Saxon invasion, they were resident in the district of Anglen, in the duchy of Sleswick.⁸

⁷ As Geatum, Giotæ, Jutæ, Gutæ, Geatani, Jotuni, Jetæ, Jutæ, Juitæ, Vitæ, &c. The *Vetus Chronicon Holsatiæ*, p. 54., says the Danes and Jutes are Jews of the tribe of Dan! and Munster as wisely calls the Helvetii, Hill-vitæ, or Jutes of the hills!

⁸ Bede's words are: "De illa patria quæ, angulus dicitur et ab eo tempore usque hodie, manere desertus inter provincias Jutarum et Saxonum perhibetur," lib. i. c. 15. His royal translator's expressions are similar: "Is tha land-betwyh Geatum and Seaxum. Is sæd of thære tide the hi thanon gewiton oth to dæge tha hit weste wunige," p. 483. Alfred in his *Orosius*, alluding to the Danish countries on the Baltic, says, "on thæm landum eardodon Engle ær hi hider on land coman." Camden, in his introduction, attributes to the Angles the German cities Engelheim, where Charlemagne was born, Ingolstad, Engleburg, Engelrute; and Angleria, in Italy.

THE duchy of Sleswick extends from the river Levesou, north of Kiel, to the Tobesket, on which stands Colding; but that particular position, which an ancient Saxon author calls Old England, extends from the city of Sleswick to Flensberg. Sleswick was the capital of Anglen, and was distinguished, in the eleventh century, for its population and wealth.⁹

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V.

⁹ Pontanus, *Geographia*, 655, 656. It is our Ethelwerd who gives us the ancient scite of the Angles most exactly. *Anglia vetus sita est inter Saxones et Giotos, habens oppidum capitale quod sermone Saxonico Sleswic nuncupatur, secundum vero Danos, Haithabay, p. 833.* Some, who admit this situation, will not allow that the Angli were German emigrants. Schilter's *Glos.* p. 49.—Wormius derives them from the Jutes. *Literat. Runica*, p. 29. This is a mere supposition. As Tacitus notices Angli in Germany, but does not specifically mention Jutes, a speculative reasoner might, with greater probability, make the Angli the parents of the Jutes. That they were kindred nations is clear from the identity of their language. Our Kentish Jutes have always talked as good English as our Mercian, and Norfolk, and Yorkshire Angles. Jutes, Angles, and Saxons, seem to have been coeval twigs of the same Teutonic branch of the great Scythian or Gothic tree.

CHAP. VI.

*Sequel of their History to the Period of the
ANGLO-SAXON Invasion.*

BOOK
II.

WHILE the Saxons were in this state of progressive greatness, in the fourth century, the prosperity and contiguity of Britain invited their frequent visits; and their attacks were favoured by the incursions of other enemies, who are called by the historians Picti, Scoti, and Attacotti.

A. C.
368.
The Saxons attack
Britain:

IN a similar combination of hostilities, Nectaridus, the commander of the Saxon shore, was slain, and the general of the island, Fullo-faudes, perished in an ambush. Several officers were sent by the Roman emperors to succeed them; but their exertions being inadequate to the necessity, Theodosius, an experienced and successful leader, was appointed by Valentinian in their room. The Picts and the co-operating tribes attacked from the north, while the Saxons and their allies assaulted the maritime coasts. Theodosius, from Richborough, marched towards London, and dividing his army into battalions, correspondent to the positions of the enemies, he attacked the robbers incumbered with their plunder. The bands that were carrying away the manacled inhabitants and their cattle, he

destroyed, and regained the spoil; of this he distributed a small share among his wearied soldiers; the residue he restored to its owners, and entered the city, wondering at its sudden deliverance, with the glories of an ovation.

CHAP.
VI.

are defeated by
Theodosius.

LESSONED by experience, and instructed by the confessions of the captives and deserters, he combated this mixture of enemies, with well-combined artifice and unexpected attacks. To recal those who in the confusion, from fear or from cowardice, had abandoned their ranks or their allegiance, he proclaimed an amnesty¹; and to complete the benefit he had begun, he prosecuted the war with vigour in the north of Britain. He prevented by judicious movements the meditated attack; and hence the Orkneys became the scene of his triumphs. The Saxons, strong in their numbers and intrepidity, sustained several naval encounters before they yielded to his genius.² They ceased at last to molest the tranquillity of Britain, and the addition of a deserved sur-name, Saxonicus, proclaimed the services of Theodosius.³ He added

¹ Am. Marcel. lib. xxvii. c. 8. p. 283.

² Claud. 4 Cons. Hon. 31. "maduerunt Saxone fuso Orca-des." Saxo consumptus bellis navalibus, Pacatus Paneg. Theod. p. 97.

³ Pacat. 98. "Quum ipse Saxonicus."—The British government have wisely done equal justice to the defenders of their country; We have Earl St. Vincent, Lord Viscount Duncan Baron of Camperdown, and Baron Nelson of the Nile, and Earl of Trafalgar.

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II.

the province of Valentia to Roman Britain, restored the deserted garrisons, and coerced the unruly borderers by judicious stations and a vigilant defence.⁴

370.
Defeated
by the Ro-
mans on
the conti-
nent.

THE Saxon confederation might be defeated, but was not subdued. Such was its power, that they were bold enough to defy the Roman armies by land, and invaded the regions on the Rhine with a formidable force. The imperial general was unable to repulse them; a reinforcement encouraged him. The Saxons declined a battle, and sued for an amicable accommodation. It was granted. A number of the youth fit for war was given to the Romans, to augment their armies; the rest were to retire unmolested. The Romans were not ashamed to confess their dread of the invaders, by a perfidious violation of the treaty. They attacked the retreating Saxons from an ambush; and, after a brave resistance, the unguarded barbarians were slain or made prisoners.⁵ It is to the disgrace of literature, that the national historian of the day has presumed, while he records, to apologise for the ignominious fraud.

SUCH an action might dishonourably gain a temporary advantage, but it could only exaspe-

⁴ Am. Marc. p. 406. Claudian. de 3 Consul. Hon. states his successes against the Picts and Scots, p. 44.

⁵ Am. Mar. 416.—Orosious, vii. c. 12. and Cassiodorus, 2 vol. 636. also mention the incident.

rate the Saxon nation. The loss was soon repaired in the natural progress of population, and before many years elapsed, they renewed their depredations, and defeated Maximus.⁶ At the close of the fourth century they exercised the activity and resources of Stilicho. The unequal struggle is commemorated by the encomiastical poet, whose genius gilds, with a departing ray, the darkening hemisphere of Rome.⁷ After his death the Saxons commenced new ⁸ eruptions. They supported the Armorici in their ⁹ rebellion, awed the Gothic Euric, began to war with the Franks¹⁰, and, extending the theatre of their spoil, made Belgium, Gaul, Italy, and Germany tremble at their presence; at length, Charlemagne having prosecuted against them one of the most obstinate and destructive wars which history has recorded, their predominance was abased, and their spirit of aggression "destroyed: The celebrity and power of the Saxons on the

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⁶ S. Ambrose, quoted 1 Mascou, 371.

⁷ Claudian. de Laud. Stil. lib. ii. p. 140. Elz. edit.

⁸ Jerom. in Mascou, 410.

⁹ Sid. Apoll. Paneg. Avit. v. 369.

¹⁰ 2 Mascou, 39. Gregory of Tours, lib. ii. c. 19. mentions the capture of the Saxon islands by the Franks; and lib. iv. c. 10. what he calls their rebellion and Chlotarius' successes against them. Ib. et c. 14.; and their ravages in France, c. 37. p. 35.

¹¹ See this war in Eginhart's Vita Carol. Magn. and in the Poeta Saxôn. Antiq. Annal. de gestis Caroli M. ap. Duchesne, ii. p. 136.

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II.

continent then ceased. They dwindled to a secondary rank, and have ever since acted a secondary part in the events of German history. But they have never been obscure. In the tenth and eleventh and twelfth centuries, colonies of their population settled themselves in ¹² Hungary and Transilvania¹³; and allied themselves by marriages with the ruder chieftains of those regions. Saxon dukes became emperors of Germany soon after the separation of this dignity from the crown of France. Branches from their stem have formed the most illustrious princes in the north of Germany, and Saxony has the honour of having given birth to the great Reformer of Christianity in the fifteenth century, and her chieftains of successfully supporting this intellectual emancipation and improvement, till it became impossible for power or craft to suppress it. A king of Saxony still exists, though with dismembered dominions, and the country yet presents a people of the most cultivated mind of all the German continent. The rise of the Saxon nation has been, therefore, singularly propitious to human improvement. It created a new formation of mind and manners,

¹² See the Chronicles of Hungary, of Thwroc, pars ii. c. 11. c. 22.

¹³ See the authorities collected by Eder on this point, in his *De initiis, juribus que primævis Saxonum Transilvanorum*. Comment. p. 17. and 63—78. Flemings, Hollanders, and others also went there, *ibid.* Ed. Vienn. 1792.

and polity in the world, whose beneficial results the state and history of England expressively display. No events tended more to civilise Germany from the third century to the eleventh, than the activity, leagues, colonies, conquests, and transactions of this people. All the improvements of Germany, beyond what Rome imparted, have arisen from the Saxon and the Frankish mind. They kept from it the more barbarous population of the Slavonians and the Huns, and of the ruder heroes of Scandinavia and the Baltic. The imperial reigns of the house of Saxony, notwithstanding the faults of some of its princes, principally contributed to establish the German independence, civilisation, and prosperity during the middle ages. But the beneficial agencies of this race on the continent having ceased, other nations, whom they assisted to form and educate, are now attaining a political, and will probably gain a mental, preponderance.

CHAP. VII.

The History of BRITAIN elucidated from the Death of MAXIMUS in 388, to the final Departure of the ROMANS.

BOOK
II.

SOON after the termination of the fourth century, the Saxon invasion of England occurred. It will be therefore useful to consider the state of the island at that time. A just perception of the events which occurred in Britain previous to their arrival, will usefully illustrate the causes of their success, and remove some of the difficulties, with which this portion of our history has been peculiarly embarrassed.

THE transactions of the natives of Britain, from the fall of Maximus, to the Saxon invasion, are almost lost to us, from the want of accurate historiographers of this period. The crude declamation of Gildas, Bede's extracts from him, the abrupt intimations of Nennius, and Jeffry's historical romance, or rather amplification of Nennius, with many additions from unknown sources, or from his own invention, are all the original documents which either Britons or Saxons have left us on this curious and important interval.

THE querulous and vague invectives of Gildas

have been reduced to some chronology by Bede; and the broken narrations of Nennius have been dramatised by Jeffry: but the labours of Bede have not lessened the original obscurity of Gildas; and all that the imagination of Jeffry has effected, has been to people the gloom with fantastic shapes, which in our search for authentic history only make us welcome the darkness that they vainly attempt to remove.¹

CHAP.
VII.

THE chronology into which Bede has distorted the rhetoric of Gildas, was erroneously chosen by our venerable and valuable historian.² His

Bede's
chronology
of this
period
erroneous.

¹ In the Archaiology of Wales are two copies of Jeffry's History in Welsh; but they are not entitled to more historical respect than his Latin work. The Welsh triads have some curious notices concerning the ancient history of the Britons; but these are very unlike the fables of Jeffry; and this dissimilarity, while it makes the most ancient triads more respectable, increases our disrespect for his work, whether in Welsh or Latin. Some of the triads, indeed, which have a more modern aspect, seem to be taken from Jeffry's history. But I cannot believe that this history, whether first written by Tyssilio, Caradoc of Lancarvan, or Jeffry, was in existence, in its present details, before the eleventh century. Some of its incidents may have been earlier traditional stories; but their present arrangement, chronology, and details, and the amplifications and additions with which they are accompanied, appear to me to be fictitious, and unauthorised. The true cannot now be separated from the invented. We are therefore compelled to discredit the whole.

² Bede postpones the invasions of the Picts and Scots, and the coming of the legions, until after Constantine. I have considered attentively the reasonings of his ingenious editor in his behalf, but I cannot coincide in his opinion. See Smith's Bede, App. p. 672.

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authority, which his learning would in any age make respectable, has been peculiarly impressive, because, without his ecclesiastical history, we should have lost almost all knowledge of the Anglo-Saxons for three centuries after their establishment in this island. With unsuspecting deference, our historians have rather studied Gildas, as he has been transcribed by Bede, than in his own composition; and thus they have governed the chronology of this interesting interval by the authority of Bede, without examining if Bede has not been himself mistaken.

It will much assist our inquiry to take a general survey of the history of the Roman empire at this period.

Rise and
fall of
Maximus,
385—388.

WHILE Gratian governed the western empire, and Theodosius the eastern, the legions of Britain, who had so often been conspicuous for their turbulence, seceded from their allegiance to Gratian; and, in concert with the Britons, appointed Maximus, a Spaniard by birth, but then in the Roman service in Britain, to be their emperor in his stead.³ He was a man of great merit. He accepted the dangerous honour, and prepared to support it. Perhaps, if he had been contented to have reigned in Britain, his throne might have been perpetuated, and then

³ Zos. lib. iv. p. 247. Socrates, lib. iv. c. 11. Sulpicius gives him a high character. Vir omni vitæ merito etiam predicandus,—if he had refused the offered diadem. Dial. ii. c. 7.

a new destiny would have changed the fortune of England and the western world. The Saxons would in that case not have obtained Britain; and a Roman British kingdom might have stemmed the barbaric torrent that afterwards overwhelmed the empire. But either from the desire of extending his dominion into his native country, or because the dignity and life of the new sovereign were insecure until victory had confirmed the usurpation, he collected a great body of British youth, and with these he passed into Gaul. Many wonders have been fabled of his levies, and of the fatal effects of their absence from the island. Many legends of the most ridiculous nature have been appended, which grave historians have believed.⁴ That he raised all the

⁴ See Usher, 617—636. Ib. 200. This affair, as stated by Jeffry, lib. v. c. 14., is, that Maximus ordered 100,000 common people and 30,000 soldiers out of Britain, to colonize Armorica; c. 15. he desired wives for them; and c. 16. the king of Cornwall sent Ursula, his beautiful daughter, with 11,000 noble ladies, and 60,000 meaner women, who embarked at London. Great storms drowned part, and Gannius king of the Huns, and Melga king of the Picts, murdered the others, who resolved to be virtuous. Johan Major will have Ursula to be the daughter of the Scottish king, that Scotland may have the credit of her story. A lady settles the point by averring, that Verena, one of the virgins, assured her, in an express revelation, that the blessed Ursula was a Scots woman; her convenient visions also authenticated their relics!! Vision Elizabeth, lib. iv. c. 2. Usher Primord. 618—624. Baronius, who with others countenances the emigration, mentions, that the Martyrologies devoted the 11th October to the memory of Ursula and the 71,000, a day

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force from Britain which he could collect, is probable, because he had a great stake to contend for, and the power of an ancient empire to withstand. But we need not extend this to the depopulation of our island, or to the total destruction of its military strength. His officer assassinated Gratian, after he had reigned fifteen years, and Valentinian admitted Maximus into a participation of the empire. He retained it until he failed to conciliate Theodosius, or ventured to contend with him for the dominion of the whole.

THE superior forces or ability of the emperor of the East avenged the death of his unfortunate patron. Maximus perished at Aquileia.⁵ The British soldiers did not long survive the leader they had befriended; but that they wandered into Armorica, and new-named it, seems to be unfounded.⁶

still religiously observed at Cologne for this superstitious incident. Some affirm, that no person can be buried at Cologne, in the place where they were said to have lain, because the ground throws up other corpses, which some deny!! Usher, 202. and 993.

⁵ Socrates, p. 270—273.

⁶ This point has been much controverted, but I cannot avoid agreeing with Du Bos, that *quant aux tems ou la peuplade des Bretons insulaires s'est établié dans les Gaules*, it was not before the year 513. *Hist. Crit.* ii. 470. The chronicle of the abbey of Mont S. Michel, in Bretagne, gives this year as the epoch of their arrival. *Anno 513, venerunt transmarini Britanni in Armoricam, id est minorem Britanniam.* *Ib.* 472. The ancient Saxon poet, ap. Duchesne *Hist. Fran. Script.* ii. p. 148. also peoples Bretagne after the Saxon conquest.

IN 391, the generous Theodosius delivered the sceptre of the western empire to Valentinian, who marched into Gaul against the Franks. He renewed the ancient leagues with them, but perished by the weapon of a murderer in 392. A new adventurer for empire, Eugenius, assumed his dignity, made fresh treaties with the Franks and Alemanni, collected troops from all parts to maintain the exalted station he had ventured to seize, and advanced to defy the genius of Theodosius. In 394, he sustained a destructive combat near Aquileia, which terminated his ambition and his life.

THE next year was marked by the death of Theodosius himself; and, at his death, the Roman glory began to set. His two sons lived only to disgrace him. The western hemisphere was possessed by Honorius, the youngest son of Theodosius, who, in January 395, at the age of eleven, became master of an empire, almost besieged by enemies; Italy, Africa, Gaul, Spain, and Britain, looked up to him for protection⁷, and in turns demanded it: while Arcadius, his brother, filled the throne of the East. A minister able to have upheld a falling state directed the young mind of Honorius. Stilicho, his appointed guardian, passed the Alps soon after the new accession, reviewed the garrisons on the

395.

⁷ 3 Gibb. 104. Aurelius Victor has drawn a very exalted and interesting character of Theodosius.

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Rhine, and negotiated with the Germans. During the progress of the same year he marched the legions of the empire along the coast of the Adriatic, to punish the guilty favourite, who was diffusing misery through the East. In November, the fate of Rufinus delivered Stilicho from a competitor, and the world from a subordinate tyrant, who converted a trust of power into an instrument of base oppression.⁸

BUT the enemy that was destined to shake the Roman empire to its foundation, and to give the signal of successful onset to the barbarians who were crowding to encompass it, began now to appear. Superior genius frequently produces great revolutions on the theatre of the world, when it is placed in the sphere of command. Empires rise to grandeur by the potent springs which that only can set in action; but when these have spent their force, and a new poten-

⁸ Gibbon, 117—120. Claudian has punished the vices of Rufinus by a fine effusion of heroic satire. His description of the council of the calamities of mankind is a living picture:

“ Nutrix Discordia belli,
Imperiosa Fames, Leto vicina Senectus,
Impatiens que sui Morbus, Livorque secundis
Anxius, et scisso mœrens velamine Luctus,
Et Timor et cæco preceps Audacia vultu,
Et Luxus populator opum, quem semper adhiærens
Infelix humili gressu comitatur Egestas,
Fœda que Avaritiæ complexæ pectora matris
Insomnes longo veniunt examine Curæ.”

In. Ruf. lib. i. p. 21. Elz. ed.

tate appears, gifted with the same creative powers; the scenes of greatness change, the descendants of the illustrious are destroyed, and new edifices of sovereignty are erected, to tower, to menace, and to fall, like those on whose ruins they exist. Such was Alaric, who, at the close of the fourth century, united under his sovereignty the strength of the Gothic nation.

CHAP.
VII.

Rise of
Alaric.

THE Gothic nation had slowly but steadily advanced to consequence and power. Augustus had extended the Roman empire in the eastern part of Germany, up to the Danube. Before he died, Maraboduus, a German who had been educated by serving in the Roman armies, and by fighting against them, led the nation of the Marcomanni, with others of the Suevian race, into Bohemia; and founded there a new barbaric kingdom, which became peculiarly formidable to the Romans. His movements excited most of the nations between his new position and Italy to take up arms; and Tiberius was three years employed with fifteen legions, and an equal proportion of auxiliary troops, before he could subdue what was called Illyricum, or the countries that lay between the Danube and the Adriatic. The civil dissensions of the Marcomanni enabled the Romans to establish themselves beyond the Danube. Of the subsequent Roman emperors, Nerva, Trajan, and Antoninus had successful wars with these people, and their neighbours, the Dacians, Quadi, and others;

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but about the year 167, from a confederation of all these nations, Marcus Aurelius had to sustain a war, the most dangerous and destructive that the Romans had experienced. Almost all the nations from Illyricum to Gaul appeared in arms. Aurelius made proportionate exertions. To his regular armies he added slaves and gladiators, robbers whom he pardoned, and Germans whom he could trust. He sold by auction, at Rome, all his personal property to augment his pecuniary funds, and after the military efforts of many years, at last subdued them; but the succeeding emperors were unable to retain any province beyond the Danube; and as they retreated, the nations to the north became more prosperous and daring.

OF these the Goths were the most adventurous and successful. They begin to appear in the imperial history about the time that the Franks are mentioned. They invaded Dacia. One Roman emperor, Alexander, used the ruinous policy of paying them an annual subsidy, and their history afterwards is that of continual progression. Many barbaric nations joined them; and, assuming their name, enlarged both their power and celebrity, as other tribes had thus contributed to the importance of the Franks and Saxons. Under Decius, about the year 250, the Gothic king passed the Danube at the head of 70,000 men, and ravaged Thrace and Macedonia; others afterwards invaded Asia, and with fleets ravaged

the Pontus. In 267, the Goths, Heruli, and Scythiæ plundered the Archipelago, and devastated Greece. All the talents of Aurelian were insufficient to preserve the provinces beyond the Danube. He therefore abandoned Dacia to the warlike nations who were threatening it, and transplanted the friendly population to the right bank of the Danube. Probus pursuing this policy, caused 100,000 Bactarnæ to cross the Danube, and to settle in the southern provinces, which had been depopulated in these contests. To the same districts he also transplanted the Francs and Saxons. But all these measures were ineffectual to resist the perpetual advance of the enterprising Goths, becoming in every campaign better disciplined by their unceasing contests with the Roman armies, and by the education of their chieftains in the Roman service during the intervals of peace. The ambition and spirit of the Gothic nation increased with their improvement and power; and when Alaric appeared to lead them, they discovered themselves to be as superior to the Romans in their military qualities, as they were in their political institutions, and in some of the moral virtues.

IN this year, the western world had been alarmed by the irruption of the Huns.⁹ After

576.

⁹ Their history is ably abridged by Mr. Gibbon, vol. ii. p. 561.; he traces their unsuccessful contests with the Chinese, their divisions and emigrations, their conquests, the

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swelling their army by the nations they conquered, they had rushed on the Gothic tribes. Unable to repulse the ferocious invaders, the Goths had precipitated themselves over the Danube. Stationed by the emperor Valens in Lower Mœsia, the Goths had revolted, had penetrated into Thrace, defeated and killed their imperial benefactor, in 378, at Adrianople, and from this disastrous day never abandoned the Roman territory.¹⁰ At length Theodosius had made an accommodation with them; a large portion of their warriors had been taken into the imperial service, and a successful attempt had been made to convert them to the Christian faith.

AMONG the Goths, who were allied to the Roman-armies, Alaric passed his youth. Born in the island of Peuce¹¹, on the Euxine, of one of the principal families of the Goths¹², he had early abandoned the confined limits of his native soil for the civilised regions of Europe, where he cultivated his mind with their improvements. He solicited an appointment in

union of the Alani, and their wars upon the Goths. One of their ancient historians, Jornandes, c. 24., gives their execranda origine, that is, *veneficarum cum immundis spiritibus congressu*. M. de Guignes leads the way on their history.

¹⁰ Gibbon, ii. p. 591—617. Ib. 640.

¹¹ Claud. de 6 Consul. Hon. p. 174. Peuce is an island at the mouth of the Danube, formed by two of its discharging torrents. Strabo, p. 211. Dionys. Periegetes, v. 301.

¹² Jornandes says of Alaric, "*Secunda nobilitas Baltharum que ex genere origo mirifica,*" &c.

the Roman armies, and he was only entrusted with the command of barbarian battalions. Though by birth a barbarian himself, he felt the superiority of his assuming mind, and was disgusted by the degradation. In Thrace, in Macedonia, and in Thessaly, he showed the terrors of his discontent; he obtained the passage of the immortalised Thermopylæ, overran Bœotia, Attica, and the Peloponnesus; and though his superstition protected Athens from his fury, the other famed cities in Greece, Corinth, Argos, and Sparta, now enfeebled and degenerated, were conquered by his valour, his fortune, or his name.¹³ When Stilicho advanced with the imperial troops, to chastise the daring invader, Alaric, by a great exertion of skill, escaped to Epirus, and extorted from the timid ministers of the Byzantine court the title and authority of governor of the Eastern Illyricum. He was soon after recognized king of the Visigoths.¹⁴

396.

WITH these recollections of the Roman history, we may proceed to contrast the loose phrases of Gildas with the circumstances we can glean from the Greek and Latin writers which seem applicable to the British history.

IMMEDIATELY after mentioning the death of

¹³ Zosimus, lib. v. p. 292—295. Yet let not the historian's apology for Sparta be forgotten, "nec armis amplius nec idoneus ad pugnam viris munita propter Romanorum avaritiam."

¹⁴ The history of Alaric is narrated by Gibbon, v. iii. p. 134.

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II.

Gildas
compared
with the
imperial
writers.

Maximus, Gildas states¹⁵, that Britain, despoiled of her soldiery and military apparatus, and her youth, who followed the usurper to return no more; and being utterly ignorant of war, groaned for many years under the incursions of the Scots from the north-west¹⁶, and of the Picts from the north.

THIS account, though obviously the language of exaggeration, is countenanced by the writers of the imperial history. It is stated by Sozomen, that Maximus collected a numerous army from Britain, Gaul, and Germany, and went to¹⁷ Italy. We learn from others, that the Francs took advantage of his absence to invade Gaul, and that the Saxons also moved in succesful hostility against him.¹⁸ During the reign of his prospe-

¹⁵ Gildas, s. xi. p. 4. Gale's xv *Scriptores*. Richard, entitled of Cirencester by some, by others Monk of Westminster, places this invasion in the year after the death of Maximus, lib. ii. c. 1. See his *de Situ Britanniae* in the *Antiquitates Celto-normannicæ*, p. 120. Ado. Viennensis, an author of the ninth century, gives a similar chronology. *Chron. Ætas Sexta*, p. 353. *Bib. Mag. Patrum*, v. 7.—Bede, without any authority, and contrary to the literal meaning of Gildas, postpones it for above twenty years, lib. i. c. 12. and thus lays a foundation for his subsequent mistakes.

¹⁶ The *Circius*, which is the expression of Gildas, is mentioned by Pliny, ii. 46. as a wind famous in the province of Narbonne, and inferior in vehemence to none. Harduin interprets it, nord-west-nord.

¹⁷ "Collecto ex Britannia et vicinis Galliis, et ex Germanis ac finitimis gentibus numero exercitu, in Italiam profectus est." Sozomen, *Hist. Eccl.* lib. vii. c. 13. p. 721. Ed. Vales.

¹⁸ The valuable fragment of Sulpitius Alexander, pre-

city, in the second year of his empire, the Picts and Scots had vigorously defied him.¹⁹ It becomes, therefore, highly probable, that these Irish and Caledonian wanderers would be alert to profit by the opportunity of his absence, as well as the Franks and Saxons. On this occasion we shall accredit Gildas, and as Maximus was killed at Aquileia in 388²⁰, we may consider that as the year in which the incursions began.

THE next account of Gildas is, that the British nation, unable to endure these ravages, sent an embassy to Rome, desiring a military force, and promising a faithful obedience to the imperial sceptre.²¹ That a province suffering under a hostile invasion should solicit succour from the fountain of power, and that to obtain it they should lavish assurances of fidelity, to expiate the imputation of treason, which the elevation of Maximus would produce, are circumstances which bear the marks of truth in their natural probability.

HE adds, that a legion came by sea, well ap-

served by Gregory of Tours, lib. c. c. 9. p. 34. mentions the Francic incursion: and St. Ambrose, ep. 17., intimates, though with no particulars, the Saxon success. "Ille statim a Francis, a Saxonum gente in Sicilia Siciæ et Petavione ubique denique terrarum victus est." 1 Mascou, 371.

¹⁹ Prosper in his Chronicon says, "incursantes Pictos et Scotos, Maximus strenue superavit."

²⁰ 3 Gibbon, 40. The British history miscalls him Maximian, and kills him at Rome, lib. v. c. 16.

²¹ Gildas, s. 12.

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pointed with every requisite for service; that, engaging with the enemy, they destroyed a great multitude, drove them from the borders, and liberated the subjected natives from their rapacity and tyranny.²²

If we inquire of the imperial writers by whom this service was performed, we shall find that for three years after the fate of Maximus, both divisions of the Roman empire were governed by Theodosius²³, who, by his edict, made void all the usurper's exertions of the prerogative, that every thing might resume its pristine²⁴ situation. It was a necessary consequence of these orders, that the civil powers of the revolted provinces should be immediately replaced: we accordingly find that a Vicarius, named Chrysanthus, was sent to Britain by Theodosius, whose good conduct was admired.²⁵ No other period seems to have been more suitable to his²⁶ administration.

²² Gildas, s. 12.

²³ Gibbon, iii. p. 55.

²⁴ Cod. Theod. lib. xv. tit. 14.

²⁵ Socrates, Hist. Eccles. lib. vii. c. 12. This temperate expression of Socrates, ἐθαυμάσθη, was construed by Carte to imply the attainment of such a height of glory, that he must have stopped the Scottish depredations, p. 169. Our Henry also amplifies it so far as to say, that Chrysanthus was sent on purpose to check them, that he executed his commission with great ability and success, expelled the enemies, and restored the tranquillity of the province. He refers to Socrates as his authority, who only mentions what the text expresses.

²⁶ The remark of Carte is just, that in no other juncture

BUT from the time of Constantine the policy of the emperors had completely separated the civil and military powers.²⁷ This regulation could not allow Chrysanthus to have been the deliverer of Britain. The military arm was wielded by an arrangement of officers jealously distinguished from the civil authority.²⁸ Chrysanthus may have governed Britain as Vicarius, to diffuse internal quiet over a revolted province, as far as the civil magistracy was able to operate, but could have no forces to coerce the menacing barbarians.

DURING the latter period of the reign of Theodosius, and for many years in the reign of his successor, the military force of the western empire was under the command of Stilicho, the master-general of the cavalry and infantry of the west.²⁹ It must have been under him that every military aid was dispatched into Britain,

could Theodosius have intermeddled in the affairs of the western empire, p. 169.

²⁷ Gibbon, ii. 43. Du Bos, Hist. Crit. i. 60. Le prefet du pretoire, et les officiers qui lui etoient subordonnés, ne commanderent plus les troupes.—The Vicarius of Britain was under the præfectus prætorio of the Gauls, Notitia, s. 36., and was a civil officer.

²⁸ Even Julien, when sent to command the army in Gaul, though he, en qualité de Cesar, ou d'heritier presomptif de l'empire, put pretendre a une autorité plus etendue que celle qu'un generalissime ordinaire auroit exercée en vertu de sa commission, cependant Julien n'osoit rien decider concernant la levée des subsides et la subsistance des troupes. Du Bos, 61.

²⁹ Gibbon, iii. 116.

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THE indistinct intimations of the Monk of Bangor are confirmed by Claudian; his mellifluous muse devoted herself to pursue the triumphs, and to proclaim the glory of Stilicho; and in Claudian's historic picture of his fame, the victorious battles of this superior man with the Picts and Scots, form one of those groupes, which, for this part of his life, have ensured to Stilicho an honourable celebrity.³⁰

BUT the desired euphony and imagery of poetry are unfriendly to geographical and chronological detail. We must not, therefore, expect from Claudian, the exact year of the Christian æra in which Stilicho or his officers approached Ireland and Caledonia. We must endeavour to trace the chronology from other sources.

BRITAIN, according to Gildas, mourned these devastations many years. A probable interval seems to arise from the situation of the empire. Though Maximus was conquered in 388, yet the Franks and Saxons continued in hostility. When Valentinian, who was sent against them into Gaul, was murdered, the usurpation of Eugenius harassed the empire for two years. Soon after he had perished, Theodosius expired.

THE death of Rufinus left Stilicho at leisure, in the year 396. The African war was not prosecuted till 398, in which Gildo fell³¹; there-

³⁰ Claudian de Laud. Stil. lib. ii. p. 140. Elz. edit.

³¹ Gibbon, iii. p. 128.

fore we may consider either the preceding years, or the subsequent, 399, as the æra in which Britain was rescued from the spoilers.³² This last will allow eleven years for the *multos annos* which Gildas notes to have intervened between the invasion after Maximus and its suppression.

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THE querulous narration adds, that the Romans ordered the natives to build a wall between the two seas, in the north of Britain, to deter the invaders, and to protect the natives; that the irrational vulgar, having no director, constructed it of turf instead of stone.³³

THIS narration has the appearance of being an ignorant account of the construction of one of those famous walls, which have so deservedly attracted the curiosity of antiquaries.

GILDAS states, that this legion having returned home, the plunderers came again.³⁴ A

³² Richard places it eleven years before the capture of Rome by Alaric, or 399, lib. ii. c. i. p. 121. *Antiq. Celto-Nor.* The criticism of Mascou, p. 394., on Pagius, who dates a similar passage in 402, confirms our Richard's chronology, as it makes 399 the year in which Honorius was preparing the expeditions alluded to in the lines:

Domito quod Saxone Tethys
Mitior, aut fracto securâ Britannia Picto
Ante pedes humili Franco, &c.

In Eutrop. p. 196.

³³ Gildas, s. 12.

³⁴ Gildas, s. 13. The peculiarity of style in which he indulges himself is remarkable: "Rabid robber wolves, with profound hunger and dry jaws, leaping into the sheep-fold," are the invaders who are brought over by "the wings of oars, and the arms of rowers, and sails swelling in the wind."

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passage in Claudian verifies the fact, that the legion quitted the wall soon after the successes of Stilicho, and diffuses a ray of light, which determines the chronology of the incident.

WE have mentioned the pacification which Alaric extorted from the eastern government: it might seem to them a release from anxiety; it was made by Alaric an interval of earnest preparation for more fortunate warfare. He surveyed the state of the world with the eyes of prophetic penetration, and discerned the vulnerable part, in which the genius of Rome might be fatally assailed. About the year 400,³⁵ he suddenly marched from his eastern settlements to the Julian Alps, and poured his forces into Italy. The emperor of the West fled at his approach, when Stilicho again interposed the shield of superior talents. To meet the destructive Goths with a competent force, he summoned the Roman troops out of Germany and Gaul into Italy; even the legion which had been stationed to guard the wall of Britain against the Caledonians was hastily recalled, and attended the imperial general at ³⁵ Milan. In the battle of Pollentia, Alaric discovered the inferiority of his troops, and made a bold but ruinous retreat.³⁶

³⁵ Claudian, in his poem de Bello Getico, p. 169. : —

Venit et extremis legio prætenta Britannis,
Quæ Scoto dat fræna truci, ferro que notatas
Perlegit exangues Picto moriente figuras.

³⁶ Gibbon, iii. 147—155.

THE battle of Pollentia was fought in March, 403. We must allow time for the troops to have travelled from the north of Britain to Milan, and may date this departure of the Roman legion in the year 402. No one can disbelieve that in their absence the habitual depredators would return.

GILDAS proceeds to inform us, that ambassadors went to Rome with rent garments, and with ashes on their heads, to implore further aid.³⁷ However we may be inclined to ascribe the costume of the embassy to the imagination of the author, we cannot dispute the probable fact, that the province solicited and obtained the protection of its sovereign.

WE have no direct evidence from the imperial writers that Stilicho sent back the legion, after the battle of Pollentia, into Britain, but it must have been there before 406, because we read of soldiers then choosing and deposing emperors in the island. Their presence must have been attended with its usual effect on the Picts and Scots.³⁸

BEFORE we state the next sentence of Gildas, it will be proper to narrate the incidents, which, as he does not notice, though of principal im-

³⁷ Gildas, s. 14.

³⁸ For the origin and history of these two nations, the reader may usefully consult Mr. Pinkerton's Inquiry into the early history of Scotland.

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portance, we may presume he never knew: they occurred between this last defeat of the Picts and Scots, and the final departure of the Romans.

THE unwearied genius of Claudian has resounded the praise of Stilicho in poetry, which, though sometimes defective in taste, yet has too much energy and felicity to perish. The acts which the general achieved justify his bard, and raise the minister above his degenerate countrymen. But it may be said of human virtue, as Solon pronounced to Croesus of human happiness, that we should wait until the life is closed before we pronounce decisively upon it. Stilicho for a while was the saviour of the Roman empire; he ended his career its most destructive scourge. He excited invasions, which he wished to have the merit of repressing; he introduced the barbarian hordes into the provinces, who quitted them no more; he occasioned rebellions which completed the debility of the imperial government; and paved the way for the complete extinction of the western empire.

Desolation of
Gaul.

WHEN Alaric menaced Italy, Stilicho drove off the tempest; but he wanted to have his son invested with the imperial dignity, and he hoped to extort the concession from the trembling Honorius, by the terror of impending evils. To effect this, he excited the German nations

to invade Gaul.³⁹ Fatal contrivance of unprincipled ambition!"⁴⁰ A most formidable irruption of the tribes between the Rhine and Danube,

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³⁹ Orosius, lib. vii. c. 38. and c. 40.; and from him Isidorus, Wandal. Grotius, p. 732. expressly affirm the treason. Jerom Ep. ad Ager. exclaims against the semi-barbarian traitor, who armed, against his adopted country, its worst enemies. Prosper says, that *saluti imperatoris tendebat insidias*, p. 50. —Marcellinus more explicitly says of him, “*Spreto Honorio, regnumque ejus inhians, Alanorum, Suevorum, Wandalorum que gentes donis pecuniisque illectas contra regnum Honorii excitavit, Eucherium filium suum paganum, et adversum Christianos insidias molientem, cupiens Cæsarem ordinare.*” Chron. p. 37. added to Scaliger’s Euseb. — If these authors are not sufficient to make the imputation credible, the point seems to be decided by the evidence of a contemporary, who, being a pagan, gives more weight to an opinion, in which he and the Christians coincide; I mean Rutilius, whom Gibbon does not mention; he says,

Quo magis est facinus diri Stilichonis acerbum,
Proditor arcani quod fuit imperii.

Romano generi dum nititur esse superstes,
Crudelis summis miscuit ima furor:
Dumque timet, quidquid se fecerat ipse timeri,
Immisit Latiāe barbara tela neci.

Visceribus nudis armatum condidit hostem,
Illatāe cladis liberiore dolo.

Ipsa satellitibus pellitis Roma patebat,
Et captiva prius, quam caperetur, erat.

Itinerarium, lib. ii. v. 41—50.

⁴⁰ Gibbon attempts to defend Stilicho, but the weight of evidence must prevail. Du Bos, p. 190., accredits his guilt. How fatal the scheme was to Rome, we may judge, when we recollect, that “*le dernier Decembre, 406, fut la journée funeste ou les barbares entrerent dans les Gaules, pour n’en plus sortir.*” Du Bos, 194.

II.

Alani, Suevi, Vandali, and many others, burst over the mountains, and deluged the western world. A portion of these, under Radagaisus, perished before Stilicho in Italy⁴¹, and furnished him with the laurels he coveted. The remainder crossed the Rhine, which, if the charge of treason be true, was purposely divested of its protecting troops, and overwhelmed Gaul and its vicinity. "The consuming flames of war spread from the banks of the Rhine over the greatest part of the seventeen provinces of Gaul; that rich and extensive country, as far as the ocean, the Alps, and the Pyrenees, was delivered to the barbarians, who drove before them, in a promiscuous crowd, the bishop, the senator, and the virgin, laden with the spoils of their houses and altars."⁴²

406.
Revolt of
the troops
in Britain.
Constantine
chosen.

THIS dreadful disaster spread consternation through Britain. Inflamed with their success, the invaders menaced this island. It is expressly asserted by Zosimus, that their devastations alarmed the army in Britain. Apprehensive of their further progress, and to exert an energy adequate to the crisis, the troops created an emperor for themselves. One Marcus was their first choice: finding his councils or his conduct insufficient for the exigency, they destroyed him, and elected Gratian, who is mentioned

⁴¹ For the expedition of Radagaisus, see Gibbon, iii. 163—173. and Mascou, 404—411.

⁴² Gibbon, iii. 171.

with the title of *Municeps*, in his room. Within four months afterwards he was murdered, and, induced by the flattering name, the British soldiery selected one Constantine from the ranks, and decorated him with the imperial garments.⁴³

CONSTANTINE seems not to have been unworthy of his station⁴⁴; he passed out of Britain into Gaul, stayed a short time at Boulogne, conciliated to his interest the soldiers scattered upon the continent, and defeated the terrible barbarians.⁴⁵

Constantine leaves Britain. 406.

THE authority of Constantine was acknowledged in Gaul, and he reduced Spain. His son Constans laid aside the cowl of a monk, which, previous to his father's elevation, he had assumed⁴⁶, and was created *Cæsar*. *Honorius*, to whom Constantine had respectfully stated, that his dignity had been forced upon him, appeared to acquiesce in his retaining it, and sent him the imperial robes.⁴⁷ The barbarians obtained reinforcements, but Constantine adopted the precautionary measure of placing troops to guard the passages into Gaul.⁴⁸

406—411.

⁴³ Zosimus, lib. vi. p. 373. and 371. Orosius, vii. 40.

⁴⁴ Zosimus, *ibid.*

⁴⁵ Marcellin. Com. p. 38. Orosius, vii. 40. Jornandes, c. 32.

⁴⁶ Yet *Frigeridus*, cited by Gregory of Tours, characterises him as *gulæ et ventri deditus*, lib. i. c. 9. p. 35.

⁴⁷ Zosim. lib. v. p. 359.

⁴⁸ Zosim. p. 374.

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DURING this division of the imperial power, Alaric again assembled a willing army, and appeared on the Roman frontier. The guilt of Stilicho had been detected and punished, and his death removed the last bulwark of the empire. The court of Honorius could furnish no other mind competent to confront the Gothic conqueror. In 408, he overwhelmed resistance, and besieged Rome. A ransom obtained a short security, but determined his superiority. In the next year he assailed it again, and condescended to accept from an emperor of his own nomination the title of master-general. Every doubt was now removed; he saw his irresistible power, and the succeeding summer was marked by the dismal catastrophe of a third siege and successful assault⁴⁹, whose ferocious cruelties we might notice with abhorrence, but that the generals of civilised ages choose yet to perpetrate them in violation of all moral principle or social benevolence, and in wilful contempt of the inevitable opinion of posterity!

Aug. 24.
410.

AMONG the officers attached to the interest of Constantine was Gerontius, who had proceeded from Britain. The valour and services of this person on former occasions are stated by the historians; but, offended that Constans returned to Spain, on his second visit, with another as his general, the slighted Gerontius abandoned the interests of the emperor he had supported, and

⁴⁹ Gibbon, iii. 24—1244.

elevated a friend to dethrone him.⁵⁰ He pursued his new purpose with a fatal alacrity, besieged and slew Constans at Vienne⁵¹, and menaced the father with deposition. The troops of the legal emperor, Honorius, profited by the quarrel, and destroyed the competition. Constantine was taken at Arles, and Gerontius was pursued to the confines of Spain; his house was besieged, and the assailants set it on fire. His friend and wife received from his hands the death they implored, and he joined them in the tomb.⁵²

411.

⁵⁰ Zosim. 371. 373—375.

⁵¹ Orosius, lib. vii. Olympiodorus ap. Photium, 183. Marcellin. Chron. 38. Eusebius Chronicon, 412.

⁵² See the detail in Gibbon, iii. p. 259. I am tempted to imagine, that in drawing his Vortigern, Jeffry has copied and distorted the Gerontius of the imperialists. Some particulars are alike in both. He makes Constans a monk, and Vortigern a British consul, — who rebelled against, and caused Constans to be destroyed. Vortigern being afterwards besieged in the place to which he fled, and his pursuers finding they could not get an entrance, it was set on fire, lib. vi. and lib. viii. — The facts from the Roman historians are, that Gerontius proceeded from Britain, and was a comes or count; that he revolted from Constans, who had been in a monastery, and caused his death; that he fled for refuge afterwards, and prevented his pursuers from entering his house, who therefore applied flames. These coincidences would induce me to strike Vortigern entirely out of true history, but that I find a Gurthrigernus mentioned in Gildas, and a Gwrtheyrn in the Welsh remains. Their authority inclines me to believe, that Jeffry has confounded Gerontius, who died in Spain, with Gwrtheyrn, in England, and in his Vortigern has given us a fictitious medley of the history of both.

BOOK

II.

Thebarbarians at-tack Bri-tain.
409.

AMID this complexity of rebellion and sub-rebellion, the western provinces of the Roman state were sacrificed to the revenge of the military competitors. The crime which degraded all the merit of Stilicho was, from the same motives of selfishness, repeated by Gerontius. He also, to diminish the danger of his revolt, by his incitements and advice influenced into hostile invasion the barbarians who hovered near the Celtic regions.⁵³ This desperate act of ambition was unfortunate for Rome. Constantine could not repel the torrent, because the flower of his army was in Spain.⁵⁴ Britain and Gaul experienced all its fury. The cities even of England were invaded. To whatever quarter they applied for help, the application was vain. Honorius was trembling before Alaric, and Constantine could not even save Gaul.

IN this extremity the Britons displayed a magnanimous character; they remembered the ancient independence of the island, and their brave ancestors, who still lived ennobled in the verses of their bards: they armed themselves,

⁵³ Zosimus, lib. vi. p. 375. There was a severe imperial law in existence, made A. D. 323, which was applicable to these crimes of Gerontius and Stilicho: "Si quis barbaris scelerata factione facultatem depredationis in Romanos dederit, vel si quo alio modo factam deviserit, vivus amburatur." Cod. Theod. lib. vii. tit. i. But ambition is always blind to its punishment, and as heedless of laws, as of morality.

⁵⁴ Zosimus, lib. vi. p. 375.

threw off the foreign yoke, deposed the imperial magistrates, proclaimed their insular independence, and, with the successful valour of youthful liberty and endangered existence, they drove the fierce invaders from their cities.⁵⁵ The sacred flame of national independence passed swiftly over the channel, and electrified Armorica. This maritime state, and its immediate neighbours, in the same crisis and from the same necessity, disclaimed the authority of a foreign emperor, and by their own exertions achieved their own deliverance.

THUS the authentic history from 407 is, that the barbarians, excited by Gerontius, burst in terror upon Gaul and Britain; that Constantine could give no help, because his troops were in Spain; that Honorius could send none, because Alaric was overpowering Italy; that the Britons, thus abandoned, armed themselves, declared their country independent, and drove the barbaric invaders from their cities; that Honorius sent letters to the British states, exhorting them to protect themselves⁵⁶; and that the Romans never again recovered the possession of the island.⁵⁷

409.

⁵⁵ Zosimus, p. 376.; and see Nennius, s. 25—27.

⁵⁶ Zosimus, lib. vi. p. 381. *φυλάτιστασι*. The silver ingot discovered in 1777, in digging among the old foundations of the Ordnance Office of the Tower, marked “ex officio Honorii,” implies that the authority of Honorius was at first respected in the island.

⁵⁷ The Abbe Du Bos, Hist. Crit. 211.; and Mr. Gibbon,

B O O K

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To these facts, which we know to be authentic, it is with much distrust that we endeavour to adapt the vague lamentations of Gildas, which Bede has abridged. The account which he has left us of men sitting on the wall to be pulled down; of the British nation cut up by the Picts and Scots, like sheep by butchers; of the country becoming but the residence of wild animals; of the antithetical letter to Ætius in Gaul, “the barbarians drive us to the sea, and the sea drives us back to the barbarians; so that between the two we must be either slaughtered or drowned;” of part of the natives enslaving themselves to the barbarians, to get victuals; and of the remainder turning robbers on mountains, caves, and woods, can only awake our suspicion that querulous declamation has usurped the place of history, in his verbose yet obscure composition, or has converted local incidents into a national catastrophe.

iii. 275. agree in placing the defection and independence of Britain in 409. The words of Procopius are express, that the Romans never recovered Britain, lib. i. p. 9. Grot.— Prosper, in his Chronicon, intimates as much. In the year before the fall of Constantine he says, *Hac tempestate, præ valetudine Romanorum, vires funditur attenuatæ Britannix*, p. 50. Scal. Euseb.— Bede, though he afterwards copies Gildas with mistaken chronology, yet, lib. i. c. 11. after mentioning the capture of Rome by Alaric, adds, *ex quo tempore Romani in Britannia regnare cessarunt*, after having reigned in it 470 years since Cæsar. Now in c. 2. he says, Cæsar came 60 ant. Chr.; therefore according to Bede, in this passage, the Romans lost the government of Britain by the year 410.

He who has stated these things has also declared that the Britons, whom the Romans for near four centuries had civilised, could not build a wall, nor make arms without patterns⁵⁸; has mentioned nothing of the emperors, or transactions after Maximus; and has ascribed the walls of Hadrian and Severus to the fifth century, and the castles of the Saxon shore, so long before constructed, to a legion quitting Britain for ever. As far as Gildas can be supported and made intelligible by others, he is an acceptable companion. But he contains so much ignorant and exaggerated narration, and uses so many rhetorical generalities, that he cannot be trusted alone.⁵⁹ If any application was made to Ætius from Britain, it must be referred to the period when the civil contests that pervaded it invited the attacks of the northern invaders, and facilitated their progress, as we shall afterwards notice, and may have been sent on behalf of particular districts only.

⁵⁸ Gildas, s. 12. and s. 14.

⁵⁹ Gildas. Bede, lib. i. c. 12. and 13. The errors of Gildas are not to be charged upon Bede; he has only adopted them because he had no other Latin document to use. The Roman account of British transactions ceased when the imperial troops finally quitted England. Native literature only could supply materials afterwards for future history; but the Saxons of Bede's age did not understand the British tongue. Hence Bede had no authority but Gildas for this part of his history. Nennius had certainly other materials before him; for, with some fables, he has added many original circumstances which are entitled to attention.

CHAP. VIII.

*The History of BRITAIN, between the Departure
of the ROMANS and the Invasion of the SAXONS.*

BOOK
II.

WHEN Zosimus quits the history of Britain, he leaves the natives in a state of independence on Rome, so generally armed as to have achieved the exploits of Roman soldiers, and to have driven the invaders from their cities. This appears to be authentic history. We may assume the governing powers of the island, at that period, to have been the civitates or the territorial districts, because the emperor would of course have written to the predominant authority. This was the state of the island in or after the year 410, and to this we may add from others, that the Romans never regained the possession of it.¹ There is evidence

¹ Mr. Camden makes Britain return to the subjection of Honorius, and to be happy for a while under Victorinus, who governed the province, and put a stop to the inroads of the Picts and Scots. *Introduct.* 85. *Henry*, lib. i. c. 1. p. 119. *Svo.* enlarges still more; he states, that after the death of Constantine, Britain returned to the obedience of Honorius, who sent Victorinus with some troops for its recovery and defence; and that this general struck terror into all his enemies in this island; but the increasing distresses of the empire obliged Honorius to recal Victorinus, and all his troops.

that they assailed the liberties of ² Armorica, but none that they contested with the Britons the enjoyment of their independence. CHAP.
VIII.

THE Britons, who had been strong enough to repulse from their island the barbarians who had overran Gaul, or who had taken advantage of that calamity to molest them, could not have been subdued without a serious invasion. Even the exposed and inferior Armorica maintained a vigorous resistance. But the dismal aspect of the Roman state, during the fifth century, coincides with the absolute silence of authors to

from the island.—What is the authority for this circumstantial detail? Audite iudices! Rutilius, in his journey in Italy about 416, takes occasion to compliment Victorinus on his former honours. In this friendly digression he says, the ferox Britannus knew his virtues, whom he had governed so as to excite their attachment. Itiner. 499. p. 14. ed. Amst. Whether he governed it under Theodosius or Honorius is not said. That he could have no command of troops is certain, because the vicarius or governor was a civil officer. The act of his government, according to Rutilius, was not then a recent thing, but at some distance, because he adds another event, which, he says, lately happened, “*illustris nuper sacræ comes additus aulæ:*” marking this honour as a recent event in 416, implies that the others were not recent; hence there is no reason to place him in Britain after 409.

² Du Bos, Hist. Crit. p. 213. thinks, that the revolt of Armorica contributed more than any other event to establish la monarchie Française in Gaul. Armorica comprehended five of the seventeen provinces of Gaul. On its struggles for liberty, see Du Bos, and 1 Mascou, 453. 476.; also 3 Gibbon, 275.—It had afterwards many unfavourable conflicts with the Franks. Greg. Tours. lib. iv. and v. Freculphus, lib. ii. c. 22.

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II.

prove that the Romans forbore to invade the British independence.

THE majesty of the Capitol had departed; the world no longer crouched in submission before it; and even its own subjects are said to have rejoiced over its ruin. The Goths conquered Spain; a rebel arose from the tomb of Honorius; another general repeated the treason of Stilicho; and the terrible Genseric embarked with his Vandals against Africa: even Ætius was a subject of dubious fidelity; at the head of 60,000 barbarians he extorted his dignity; he maintained his connection with the Huns and Alaric, and had to withstand the Franks and Suevi. The son of Alaric besieged Narbonne, the Belgic provinces were invaded by the Burgundians, and the desolating Attila at last burst upon Gaul.³

BUT whatever was the cause which induced Honorius to permit, or withheld his successors from molesting, the independence of Britain, it was an event which might have been made beneficial to every class of its inhabitants. The Romans had, in the beginning of their conquests in Britain, from motives of self-preservation, endeavoured to civilise it. When by their incentives the national mind had been diverted from habits of warfare to the enjoyments of luxury and the pursuits of commerce, the na-

³ See Gibbon, iii. p. 262—271. and 327—432.

tives shared in the prosperity, the vices, and the institutions of the governing empire. At the end of the fourth century, the evils of corrupted civilisation, and of its invariable attendant, a weak, tyrannical and oppressive government, were dissolving in every part the decaying fabric of the Roman dominion. Its state at this period has been described to us by a contemporary, who though he writes with the antithesis without the genius of Seneca, yet saw clearly and felt strongly the mischiefs which he laments, and the ruin to which they ⁴ tended. We may pass over his account of the social vices of the Roman world at that time—its general selfishness, rivalry, envy, profligacy, avarice, sensuality, and malignant competitions—because these are common to every wealthy, luxurious, and degenerating nation. But one important fact, on which he largely expatiates, deserves our peculiar notice, from its destructive hostility to the stability of the empire, as well as to the welfare of every individual. This was not merely the weight and repetition of the taxations imposed by the government, but still more the permitted and overwhelming oppressions of the authorised tax-gatherers, exceeding their authority, and converting their office into

⁴ This was Salvian, an ecclesiastic of Marseilles. It occurs in his treatise *De gubernatione Dei*, which is published in the *Magna Bibliotheca Patrum*, vol. v.

BOOK the means of the most arbitrary and ruinous
 II. oppressions.

State of
 the Roman
 provinces.

HE says, “ In all the cities, municipia, and villages, there are as many tyrants as there are officers of the government; they devour the bowels of the citizens, and their widows and orphans; public burthens are made the means of private plunder; the collection of the national revenue is made the instrument of individual peculation; none are safe from the devastations of these depopulating robbers. The public taxation is a continual destruction: the burthens, though severe, would be more tolerable, if borne by all equally and in common; but they are partially imposed and arbitrarily levied: hence many desert their farms and dwellings to escape the violence of the exactors; they seek exile to avoid punishment. Such an overwhelming and unceasing proscription hangs over them, that they desert their habitations, that they may not be tormented in them.”⁵

SUCH were the evils under which the people of the Roman empire were groaning, from the conduct of the officers of the public revenue. The disastrous consequences to the empire itself are as forcibly delineated.

“ FROM these oppressions many, and those not of obscure birth but of liberal education, fly to our national enemies; (that is, the bar-

⁵ Salvian, p.89. 91.

baric nations pressing on the Roman empire,) that they may not perish under the afflictions of legal prosecutions. And although the people to whom they retire differ in religion, language, and ruder manners, yet they prefer to suffer the inconveniences of dissimilar customs among barbarians than ruinous injustice among Romans. They emigrate to the Goths, to the Bagaudæ, and other ruling barbarians, and do not repent the change.”⁶

CHAPTER
VIII.

THIS preference given by the Roman people to the protection of the barbaric government, to that under which they had been brought up, explains impressively the facility with which the German nations at this period overwhelmed the Roman empire. He mentions it repeatedly and emphatically.

“THUS the name of Roman citizen, once so valued and bought so dearly, is now spontaneously repudiated and shunned: it is esteemed not only useless but abominable. What can be a greater evidence of the iniquity of the Roman administration, than that so many both noble and honourable families, and to whom the Roman state ought to be the means of the highest honour and splendour, are driven to this extremity, that they will be no longer Romans.”⁷

HIS next assertion is that, if they did not emigrate to the barbaric nations, they became

⁶ Salv. p. 90.

⁷ Ibid.

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II.
The Bagaudæ.

part of those affiliated robbers who were called Bagaudæ.⁸

“THEY who do not fly to the barbarians become themselves barbarians. In this state is a large portion of Spain, and no small part of Gaul. Roman oppression makes all men no longer Romans. The Bagaudæ are those who, plundered and maltreated by base and bloody judges, after they had been deprived of the right of Roman liberty, choose to lose the honours of the Roman name. We call them rebels and traitors, but we have compelled them to become criminal. By what other causes are they made Bagaudæ but by our iniquities; by the dishonesty of our judges; by the proscriptions and rapine of those who convert the public exactions into emoluments for themselves; who make the appointed taxations the means of their own plunder;—they fly to the public foe to avoid the tax-gatherer.”⁹

HE declares these feelings to have been universal.

“HENCE there is but one wish among all the Romans, that they did not live subject to the

⁸ To Scaliger’s note on the Bagaudæ, *Animad. Euseb.* 243., we may add that Bagat, in the Armoric, is a troop or crew. *Lhuyd Archaiol.* 196. Bagach in Irish, is warlike. Bagach in Erse, is fighting. Bagad in Welsh, is multitude. Du Cange mentions *Βαγυδαι*, vagare, and Boguedim, Hebrew for rebellis. *Glos. Med. Lat.* i. p. 482. See their history in Du Cange, *ib.* and Du Bos, p. 204.

⁹ *Salv.* p. 90. 91.

Roman laws. There is one consenting prayer among the Roman population, that they might dwell under the barbarian government. Thus our brethren not only refuse to leave these nations for their own, but they fly from us to them. Can we then wonder that the Goths are not conquered by us, when the people would rather become Goths with them than Romans with us." ¹⁰

THESE political evils, thus oppressively affecting the general population of the Roman empire, may satisfy us, that the Britons, once become independent, armed, and victorious over their barbaric invaders, would not court the return of the Roman yoke. Therefore every narration which states, that after their independence they offered unconditional submission to the Roman empire, cannot but excite our suspicion or disbelief.

WHEN we proceed to inquire into the events which followed the emancipation of Britain, the first question which naturally occurs to us is, on the government which the natives substituted to the imperial institutions.

BRITAIN, under the Romans, contained two municipia, nine *coloniæ*, ten *civitates* possessing the *Latio jure*, twelve *stipendariæ*, besides many other towns.¹¹ It was usual with the Romans to partition their conquests into districts, called *civitates*. In Gaul, during the fifth century, there were one hundred and fifteen *civi-*

¹⁰ Salv. 92. ¹¹ Richard, p.111. *Antiq. Celto-Scand.*

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tates; each of these had its capital city, in which resided a senate, whose jurisdiction extended over all the pagi which composed the territory of the civitas.¹² Now if the seventeen provinces of Gaul had one hundred and fifteen civitates, the five provinces of Britain, which were as flourishing, might reasonably have had thirty-three, which is the number of the great towns enumerated by Richard.

Civitates
of Britain.

WE are, therefore, to consider Britain, in the latter periods of the Roman residence, divided into thirty-three civitates, of which thirty were in England and Wales. The chief towns were:¹³

Municipia :

Verolanium,
Eboracum.

Coloniæ :

Londineium,
Camalodunum,
Rhutupis,
Thermæ,
Isca Secunda,
Deva Getica,
Glevum,
Lindum,
Camboricum.

Latio jure donatæ :

Durnomagus,
Catarracton,
Cambodunum,
Coccium,
Luguballia,

Latio jure donatæ :

Ptoroton, }
Victoria, } in Scotland,
Theodosia, }
Corinum,
Sorbiodunum.

Stipendarie :

Venta Silurum,
Venta Belgarum,
Venta Icenorum,
Segontium,
Muridunum,
Ragæ,
Cantiopolis,
Durinum,
Isca,
Bremenium,
Vindonum,
Durobrovæ.

¹² Du Bos, i. p. 2.

¹³ Richard, ubi sup. For the modern names, see Mr. Whitaker's Manchester, vol. ii. 330—379.

IN each of these principal towns, the offices of power and dignity belonging to each civitas, were made residentiary; the duumviri, senates, decurions, curiæ, and ediles. These civitates were arranged under five provinces, two of which were governed by consulares, and three by presides. Above these provincial magistrates a Vicarius extended his over-ruling authority, subordinate only to a prætorian præfect, with whom the emperor preserved an immediate communication.¹⁴

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THE Vicarius and the provincial magistrates, or the consulares and presides, were foreigners. With such a jealous hand did Rome maintain her empire, that no native was suffered to enjoy, in any case, the provincial administration; nor could the provincial officers, or their children, marry with a native, or purchase territorial property, slaves, or houses.¹⁵ On the other hand, the municipal officers of the civitates seem to have been natives.

It was a point carefully guarded by law, that the officers of one civitas should not interfere with any other; hence the edict, that no duumviri should with impunity extend the power of their fasces, beyond the bounds of their own civitas.¹⁶ The decurions served for the civitas of their nativity; and it was ordered, if to avoid

¹⁴ 2 Gibbon, 32—38. Notitia, s. 49.

¹⁵ 2 Gibbon, p. 39.

¹⁶ Cod. Theod. lib. xii. tit. i. s. 174.

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the office any withdrew to another civitas, that he should be made to serve in both.¹⁷

WE may, therefore, conceive England and Wales, in the fifth century, divided into thirty independent civitates, governed by native officers originating from each civitas. The imperial magistrates, whom Zosimus mentions that they deposed, were most likely the vicarius, the consulares, and the presides; and on their deposition, the island, as far as it was possessed by the Britons, would naturally divide into thirty independent republics; or, into as many separate republics as there were civitates. That this event did happen we have a sort of evidence in the circumstance, that Honorius addressed his letters to the civitates of Britain.

BUT in addition to these civil powers, the influence of the ecclesiastical, must be taken into consideration. In Gaul, therefore most probably in Britain, every civitas had a¹⁸ bishop, and every province had a superior bishop, answerable to our metropolitans, though not distinguished with the title of archbishop. The bishops had some power, and from this enjoyed much consideration and credit in every district. The people in general were in two divisions, the free and the servile.

THUS far the few facts left to us fairly extend. Independent Britain, after the year 410, con-

¹⁷ Cod. Theod. lib. xii. tit. i. s. 12.

¹⁸ Du Bos, i. p. 14.

tained many independent republics or civitates; each of these was governed by chief magistrates or duumviri, a senate, subordinate officers called decurions, an inferior senate called curiæ, with other necessary officers. The ecclesiastical concerns were regulated by a bishop in each, whose power sometimes extended into lay concerns.

C H A P.
VIII.

BUT it is probable, that these thirty independent civitates did not long continue in peace with each other. The degenerated civilisation, bad financial system and oppressive government of the Romans, must have left evil habits and tendencies in the British population. Nor can we suppose that the natives of each civitas would always be contented with the legal power of the offices to which they were called; quietly lay down the fasces at the end of the year, if duumviri; or if senators, seek no more authority than belonged to their official acts; or if inferiors, aspire not unduly to an elevation of condition. The accidents of human life, would not fail to involve disputes of jurisdiction between one civitas and others: and mankind are generally eager to determine their differences by force. We cannot doubt that no long interval would ensue, before civil discord pervaded the island, nor that this would terminate in the predominance of military tyrants; because, in that most dreadful of all evils, civil fury, it is the sword which eventually prevails.

THE lamentations of Gildas concur with the

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II.

Civil dis-
cord in the
island.

obscure intimations of Nennius to prove, that a considerable part of the interval between the emancipation of the island and the arrival of the Saxons, was occupied in the contests of ambitious partisans.

“THE country,” says Gildas, “though weak against its foreign enemies, was brave and unconquerable in civil warfare. Kings were appointed, but not by God; they who were more cruel than the rest, attained to the high dignity.”

WITH as little right or expediency as they derived their power, they lost it. “They were killed, not from any examination of justice, and men more ferocious still were elected in their place. If any happened to be more virtuous or mild than the rest, every degree of hatred and enmity was heaped upon them.”¹⁹ The clergy partook of the contentions of the day.

HE renews this picture in his address to the British kings who had survived the Saxon invasion, and though his expressions are not elucidated by an historical detail, yet they are supported by the expression of St. Jerome, “Britain, a province fertile in tyrants,” and by the assertion of Procopius, that it remained a long time under its tyrants.²⁰

¹⁹ Gildas, s. 19.

²⁰ Procop. Hist. Vandal, lib. i. sed mansit ab eo tempore sub τυραννοισι.—2 Jerom ad Ctes. Britannia provincia fertilis tyrannorum. 3 Gib. 277. 1 Masc. 516.

HERE that agreement between Gildas and other writers occurs, which intitles him to belief; and if his other loose declamations about the devastations of the barbarians in Britain, and the application of the natives to Ætius for succour have any foundation, they must be referred to the period of those civil wars which succeeded the Roman departure. We can conceive, that when the strength of the country was not directed to its protection, but was wasted in mutual conflicts, the hostilities of the Picts and Scots may have met with much success; not opposed by the force of the whole island, but by the local power of the particular civitas or district invaded, they may in many parts, especially of the northern districts, have defeated the opposition, and desolated the land of the northern borders and the adjacent coasts: with equal success, from the same cause, the western shores may have been plundered by the Scots, and the southern by the Saxons. Some of the maritime states, abandoned by their more powerful countrymen, may have sought the aid of Ætius, as they afterwards accepted that of the Saxons; but either the account of Gildas is rhetorical exaggeration, or is applicable only to particular districts, and not to the whole island.

THESE contests seem at last to have produced a great cluster of regal chiefs within the island. We hear of kings of Devonshire, Cornwall, Kent, and Glastonbury; several kings of Cum-

Many
kings in
Britain.

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bria, the kings of Deira and Bernicia, several contemporary kings of Wales, and others in the north and west of England, about the time of the Saxons.²¹ We find Malgocune styled by Gildas, the dethroner of many tyrants; and Nennius mentions the Saxons to have fought, and Arthur to have marched, with the kings of the Britons.²² But this succession of tyrants is only known to us by casual intimation, and by the denunciations of Gildas. They appear in their rest of obscurity like the distant wood at the last refractions of the departed sun: we behold only a dark mass of gloom, in which we can trace no shapes, and distinguish no individuals.

IN this period of the independence and civil warfare of Britain, one tyrant is said to have predominated over the rest, or at least in the southern part of the island whom Gildas calls Gurthrigernus, and whom the Welsh triads and poets name Gwrtheyrn.²³

BUT Britain was not now in the state in which

²¹ See Gildas, Ep. p. 10. Nennius, p. 105—107. 117. Taliesin, passim. Caradoc Llanc. ap. Usher, 469. Llyward hen; Aneurin.

²² Gildas, 12. Nennius, 114.

²³ It has been already remarked, p. 76. that the Vortigern of Jeffry seems to be a mixture of Gerontius and Gwrtheyrn. Nennius has added some idle fables to his name; yet gives him a genealogy. Mac Guortheneu, M^cGuitaul, M^cGuitolin, M^c ap Glou, p. 112. The Saxon Ethelwerd, p. 833. calls him Wrtheyrn, which corresponds with the name in the Welsh remains.

the Romans had found it. Its towns were no longer barricadoed forests²⁴, nor its houses wood cabins covered with straw²⁵, nor its inhabitants naked savages with painted bodies²⁶, or clothed with skins.²⁷ It had been for above three centuries the seat of Roman civilisation and luxury. Roman emperors had been born²⁸, and others had reigned in it.²⁹ The natives had been ambitious to attain, and hence had not only built houses, temples, courts, and market places, in their towns, but had adorned them with porticoes, galleries, baths, and saloons³⁰, and with mosaic pavements, and emulated every Roman improvement. They had distinguished themselves as legal advocates and orators³¹, and for their study of the Roman poets.³² Their cities

²⁴ Cæsar, lib. v. c. 14. Tac. Vit. Agr. Strabo, lib. iv.

²⁵ Diod. Sic. lib. v. c. 8.

²⁶ Cæsar, lib. v. Mela, lib. iii. c. 6. Pliny, Hist. lib. xxii. c. 1.

²⁷ Cæsar, lib. v. c. 14.

²⁸ As Constantine the Great; for such I consider to be the fair meaning of the orator's words addressed to him, speaking of Britannias, or the British Isles, "TU etiam nobiles, ILLIC ORIENDO fecisti." Mr. Gibbon thinks this may refer to his accession; but the other opinion is the most natural construction; and so the foreign editor thought when he added the marginal note, "Nam in Britannia Constantinus natus fuit."

²⁹ Carausius, Constantius Chlorus the father of Constantine, and others.

³⁰ Tacit. Vit. Ag. c. 21.

³¹ Hence Juvenal's "Gallia cauidicos docuit fœcunda Britannos," Sat. 15. Gaul being their place of study.

³² So Martial intimates, "Dicitur et nostros cantare Britannia, versus." Ep.

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II.

had been made images of Rome itself, and the natives had become Romans.³³ The description of Caer-leon in Wales is applicable to many others in Britain.³⁴ The ruins of Verulam, near St. Albans, exhibited analogous signs of splendour and luxury³⁵; and the numerous remains of habitations or towns built in the Roman fashion, which casual excavations are even yet every year, and sometimes every month,

³³ Hence Gildas says, “Ita, ut non Britannia, sed Romana insula censeretur,” c. v. p. 3. He adds that all their coins were stamped with the image of the emperor, *ibid.*

³⁴ Giraldus has left this account of its remains in the twelfth century. “It was elegantly built by the Romans with brick walls. Many vestiges of its ancient splendour still remain, and stately palaces, which formerly, with the gilt tiles, displayed the Roman grandeur. It was first built by the Roman nobility, and adorned with sumptuous edifices, with a lofty tower, curious hot baths, temples now in ruins, and theatres encompassed with stately walls, in part yet standing. The walls are three miles in circumference, and within these, as well as without, subterraneous buildings are frequently met with; as aqueducts, vaults, hypocausts, stoves,” &c. *Giral. Camb. Itin. Camb. p. 836.*

³⁵ One abbot of St. Albans, before the conquest, found great subterraneous passages of the ancient city, Verulam, solidly arched and passing under the river, and tiles and stones, which he set apart for the building of a church. *Mat. Par. Vit. Ab. p. 40.* The next abbot exploring farther, met with the foundation of a great palace, and remains of many buildings, with some manuscripts. He discovered several stone tabulatus with tiles and columns fit for the intended church; and *urceos et amphoras opere fictili et tornabile decenta compositas*; and also vessels of glass, containing the ashes of the dead. He also met with several dilapidated temples, subverted altars, idols, and various coins. *Mat. Par. ibid. p. 41.*

disclosing to our view, show that Britain, at the time of the Saxon invasion, had become a wealthy, civilised, and luxurious ³⁶ country. These epithets however, whenever used, are but comparative phrases, and their precise meaning varies in every age, from the dawn of Egyptian civility to our own bright day. Britain did not in the fifth century possess our present affluence and civilisation, but those of a Roman province at that epoch. It had not our mind, or knowledge, or improvements, but it shared in all that Rome then possessed or valued. Gildas has been emphatically querulous in painting the desolations which it had endured before his time—the sixth century—from the Picts, the Irish, and the Saxons, and from its own civil fury; and yet, after all these evils had occurred, he describes it as containing twenty-eight cities and some well fortified castles, and speaks of the country with metaphors, that seem intended to express both cultivation and abundance.³⁷ Bede, who

³⁶ It is mentioned by the orator Eumenius, that when the father of Constantine the Great rebuilt Autun, he was chiefly furnished with workmen from Britain, “which abounded with the best builders.” Eum. Pan. 8.

³⁷ Gildas, c. 1. The fecundity of the harvests of Britain, and the innumerable multitudes of its cattle and sheep, had been extolled by the Roman encomiast of Constantine. Paneg. Const. And we read in Ammianus Marcellinus, lib. xviii. c. 2., and Zosimus, lib. iii., of corn being carried to Germany from Britain, for the Roman armies, as if from their granary. Permission had been granted by Probus to plant vines and make wine in Britain. Scrip. Aug. p. 942.; and see Henry’s History, vol. ii. p. 106—112.

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lived two centuries after Gildas, does not subtract from his description, but on the contrary adds “nobilissimis” to his cities, and “innumera” to his castles ³⁸, which Nennius above a century later repeats. ³⁹

If our knowledge of the moral state of Britain at this period be taken from the vehement censures of Gildas, no country could be more worthless in its legal chieftains and religious directors, or in its general population. He says it had become a proverb, that the Britons were neither brave in war, nor faithful in peace; that adverse to peace and truth, they were bold in crimes and falsehood; that evil was preferred to good, and impiety to religion. That those who were most cruel were, though not rightfully, anointed kings; and were soon unjustly destroyed by others, fiercer than themselves. If any one discovered gentler manners or superior virtues, he became but the more unpopular. Actions, pleasing or displeasing to the Deity, were held in equal estimation. It was not the laity only who were of this character; the clergy, he adds, who ought to have been an example to all, were addicted to intoxication, animosities, and quarrels. ⁴⁰ He aggravates the features of this revolting picture, in his subsequent addresses to the British kings, whom he names, and for whom no epithet seems, in his opinion,

³⁸ Hist. Eccl. c. 1. p. 41.

³⁹ Nenn. 3 Gall. p. 98.

⁴⁰ See his first tract de excidio Brit.

to have been too severe: and to the clergy, on whom his vituperative powers of rhetoric and scripture-memory are exerted with unceremonious profusion; accusing them, besides their folly and impudence, of deceit, robbery, avarice, profligacy, gluttony, and almost every other vice:—"even," he adds, "that I may speak the truth, of infidelity."⁴¹ He is angry enough with the Saxons, whom he calls Ambrones, Furciferi, and Lupi, "robbers, villains, and wolves;" but these are forbearing metaphors, compared with the flow of Latin abuse which he pours first on all the British kings generally, and then specially on Constantine, "the tyrannical cub of the lioness of Devonshire;" on the other "lion's whelp," Aurelius Conan, "like the pard in colour and morals, though with a hoary head;" on Vortiper, "the stupid tyrant of South Wales, the bear-driver," and what his words seem to imply, "the bear-baiter;" on Cuneglas, whose name he is pleased with recollecting, implies the "yellow bull-dog;" and on Maglocune, "the dragon of the island," the most powerful and "the worst" of⁴² all.

⁴¹ See his last declamation against the ecclesiastical order of Britain, of which he yet says, before he dies, he sometimes wishes to be a member, "Ante mortem esse aliquandiu participem opto."

⁴² It is his epistola in which these expressions occur, with copious commentaries of the same tendency. I am rather inclined to think, that one of the passages against Maglocune, alludes to his having aided Mordred against the celebrated Arthur. "Nonne in primis adolescentiæ tuæ annis,

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But the very excess and coarseness of the invectives of Gildas, display such a cynicism of mind and atrabilious feeling in himself, as not only to show that he partook of the dispositions he reprehends, but also that he labours to exaggerate, and that he has so overloaded the actual truth, that we cannot disincumber it from his spleen, his malice, or his hyperboles. Bede has condescended to adopt a few sentences from his inculpations; but Nennius has not copied them; nor has Marc the hermit, one of the last known revisers of Nennius inserted them.⁴³

AVUNCULUM REGEM *cum fortissimis prope modum militibus, quorum vultus, non catulorum leonis in acie magnopere disparet, visebantur, acerrime ense, hasta, igni oppressisti.*" The chronology suits Arthur, and the king with his brave militibus, whose countenances in battle were not much unlike lion's whelps, will sound like remarkable expressions, to those who cherish the romances on Arthur and his knights.

⁴³ Of the small history of the Britons, usually ascribed to Nennius, the Rev. W. Gunn has recently (1819) published an edition from a MS. in the Vatican, that seems to be of the age of the tenth century, where it bears the name of Mark the Anchorite. "Incipit Historia Brittonum edita ab anachoreta Marco ejusdem gentis seto Epo. p. 46. "The original is on parchment, fairly written in double columns, and fills ten pages of a miscellaneous volume of the folio size." Gunn's Pref. It once belonged to Christina the celebrated queen of Sweden. The two MSS. of this work in the British Museum, Vitel. A. 13. and Vespas. D. 21. have the name of Nennius as the author. So has the MS. of the Hengwrt library. The Bodleian MS. No. 2016., now No. 163., makes Gildas its author. "A Gilda sapiente composita." Of the new MS. Mr. Gunn justly says, "It varies not as to general import from the copies already known. It differs from those

edited by Gale and Bertram in certain transpositions of the subject; in the omission of two introductory prefaces; in not acknowledging the assistance of Samuel Bewly, the reputed master of Nennius; and in detaching the life of St. Patrick from the body of the work, and placing it at the end." Pref. xxiv. It is in fact the former work dislocated and curtailed. I think these alterations quite sufficient to account for Mark having put his own name to the transcript he so varied. This MS. makes one of its latest computation of dates in 946, and the fifth year of Edmund the Anglo-Saxon king, p. 45. But this year is afterwards protracted to 994, pp. 62. and 80. The dates of all the copies are inconsistent. Mark by his date has varied that of Nennius, which in the MSS. used by Gale was 800, and in the Hengwrt MS. 796, and in c. xi. is made 876. This would imply that the chronicle had both earlier authors and revisals than Mark. Jeffry quotes Gildas frequently as a writer of some history which we have not; and as this history of Nennius has had the name of Gildas prefixed to it, and bears so many marks of dislocated passages and changes of its date, I am tempted to think that it is an old chronicle revised and altered by several hands. Gildas may have made the first sketch of part of it. His work, Nennius in the ninth century may have abridged and carried on, and Mark in the next age have added his revisal. It is clear that the history of Nennius is not the whole of the work of Gildas to which Jeffry alludes, because it does not contain the incident to which he refers. It is therefore either an extract or a different work.

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VIII.

B O O K III.

CHAP. I.

The Arrival of HENGIST.—His Transactions and Wars with the BRITONS, and final Settlement in KENT.

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HITHERTO England had been inhabited by branches of the Kimmerian and Keltic races, apparently visited by the Phenicians and Carthaginians, and afterwards occupied by the Roman military and colonists. From this successive population, it had obtained all the benefits which each could impart. But in the fifth century the period had arrived, when both England and the south of Europe were to be possessed and commanded by a new description of people, who had been gradually formed amid the wars and vicissitudes of the Germanic continent, and to be led to manners, laws, and institutions peculiarly their own, and adapted, as the great result has shown, to produce national and social improvements, superior to those which either Greece or Rome had attained. The Anglo-Saxon invasion of Britain must therefore not be contemplated as a barbarisation of the

country. Our Saxon ancestors brought with them the rudiments of new political, juridical, moral, and intellectual blessings. An interval of slaughter and desolation unavoidably occurred before they established themselves and their new systems in the island. But when they had completed their conquest, they laid the foundations of that national constitution, of that internal polity, of those peculiar customs, and of that vigour and direction of mind to which Great Britain owes the social progress which it has so eminently acquired. The improvements which they found in the island assisted to produce this great result.

ALTHOUGH in the fictions of Romance kingdoms fall almost at the will of the assailant, yet in real life no great revolutions of states occur without the preparatory and concurring operation of many political causes. The Saxons had for nearly two centuries been attacking Britain, with no greater successes than the half naked Scoti from Ireland had obtained. They plundered where they arrived unexpectedly. They were defeated when they encountered a military or naval resistance. Hengist and Ella would not have been more fortunate than their predatory countrymen who had preceded them, if the events of the day had not by their agencies conducted them and their successors from exile and piracy to the proprietorship and kingdoms of the English octarchy.

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AMID the sovereignties into which the island was divided, and the civil distractions which this division of power produced, it appears that one ruler was made the supreme monarch, with the addition of a council of the other chiefs. The council is mentioned by all the ancient writers who treat of this period¹, and Gwrtheyrn is named by each as the predominating sovereign.²

GWRTHEYRN is denounced by his countrymen as a proud, and described as a cruel tyrant; but with these features, their historical canvass exhibits the general body of the Britons, both clergy and laity.³ Their supreme king seems to have acted only with the selfish spirit of his contemporaries, and he was surrounded with many political difficulties that would have embarrassed a wiser and a better man. His authority was disputed⁴ by a chieftain of Roman

¹ As by Gildas, s. 22, 23. Nennius, c. 38, &c. Bede, p. 52. Flor. Wig. 194.

² Thus W. Malmsb. p. 9. "Omnes reguli insulæ Vortigerni substernebantur monarchiæ." The traditions of the Welsh that have been committed to writing, notice the same plan of government. The seventh historical triad exhibits Arthur as the pen-teyrn, literally the head-king; and Maelgwn the king of Gwynedd, as the pen-hynain, or chief elder. Welsh Archaeol. vol. ii. p. 3. According to this British appellation, Gwrtheyrn was the pen-teyrn, whose supreme power was called unbenæth, literally, the one head-ship or monarchy.

³ See Gildas's epistola annexed to his history, p. 10—39.

⁴ Nennius, c. 28.

parentage, whose parents had perished in the possession of the imperial purple, and to whom Gildas gives the name of Ambrosius ⁵ Aurelianus. The Scoti and Picts were harassing the island wherever they could penetrate⁶, and a mortal distemper was raging among the people⁷, which appears to have spread over a large part of the world.⁸ But the greatest affliction of Britain was the numerous petty sovereignties into which, after the departure of the Romans, it had become divided.⁹ Gwrtheyrn had to

⁵ Gildas, s. 25. Nennius, c. 44. The Welsh triads call him Emrys Wledig, or king Emrys, which is the name disfigured, in the MSS. or printed copy of Nennius, into Embris gleutic, c. 44. He is frequently mentioned in the triads. His descendants were alive in the time of Gildas, but much degenerated.

⁶ Gildas, c. 20. Bede, lib. i. c. 16. The Vita S. Carentoci names the leaders of the Scoti, "In istis temporibus Scotti superaverunt Britanniam; nomina ducum quorum Briscus, Thuibaius, Machleius, Anpacus." MSS. Vesp. A. xiv. p. 90.

⁷ Gildas, c. 21.

⁸ Gildas, c. 21. Marcellinus mentions a great pestilence following a famine at Constantinople, when Ætius III. and Symmachus were consuls, an. 446, p. 41. Scal. Euseb. Evagrius, lib. ii. c. 6. extends it over Asia and the world, τῆν γῆν, p. 298. ed. Vales. Corporibus tumescentibus oculos amittebant: simulque tussi vexati tertio die moriebantur. No remedy could be found for it.

⁹ The custom of gavel kind, which prevailed among the Britons increased this evil. In the Lives of the Welsh Saints in the Cottonian library, Vesp. A. 14, and Titus, D. 22, MSS. seemingly of the twelfth century, two striking instances of this custom are given. The Vita Cadoci, after mentioning a king who left ten sons, says of them, "pater-

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encounter each of these evils, and all nearly at the same time. The country became dissatisfied at its sufferings, and its discontent increased the civil factions of the period. Royalty has no safety when the sovereign is unpopular. When the fuel of rebellion abounds in every part, the restlessness of the disturbed society seldom fails to produce events or characters which begin the fatal conflagration.

Arrival of
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IN this state of the country, three Saxon cyules, or vessels, arrived from Germany on or near the British coast; whose leaders were named Hengist and Horsa, two brothers, and descendants from Woden. As their numbers were too few for conquest, their visit must have been either a matter of accident, or for the purpose of a transient depredation. Nennius says, they were exiles.¹⁰

IF we estimate the number of these Saxons, from the size of the Danish vessels in a subsequent age, they could not have exceeded three hundred men¹¹; and there is no reason to believe that the

num regnum inter se secundum eorum numerum unicuique suam provinciam diviserunt." So the Vita S. Carentoci, speaking of the son of Cunedda, states that "divisit possessiones patris sui inter fratres suos."

¹⁰ Nennius, c. 28. Many authorities mention that the Saxons were invited, and many that they came accidentally. It is most likely that the first arrival off the island was casual, but that their landing and subsequent increase were the result of invitation.

¹¹ Gildas, Bedc. Flor. Wigorn. Malmshury. H. Huntingd.

Saxon ships, as they are mentioned by Sidonius, were larger. They may have been some of the Saxons, who were at this time supporting the Armorici, and hovering on the coast of France.

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THEY arrived at Ebbs-fleet¹², in the Isle of Thanet, near Richborough. The king and British chiefs were at that time holding a public council, on the best means to repel their Irish and Scottish enemies, and it was agreed to employ these Saxon adventurers as subsidiary soldiers.¹³ They were accordingly retained to serve against the northern invaders, the Pihtas, Scoti, and other foes; they were promised food

and others, mention the ships, but not the number of men. Verstegan and his authority, p. 126., and Speed, Hist. 291., outrage probability so far as to crowd 9000 into these three ships.—The Danish ships of a subsequent age had 100 men in each. Herv. Sag. p. 25.—Lazamon gives the probable number, “Threo scipen gode comen mid than flode, threo hundred cnihten,” MSS. Cott. Calig. A. 9. p. 79.

¹² Or Ypwines fleet, Sax. Chronicle, 12. It was near the æstuary of the Wanstum, which divides Thanet from the main land of Kent.—The Wanstum was once navigable for ships of large burthen. See Batteley Ant. Rutup. 13. In Bede’s time it was three stadia broad, and fordable only in two places, lib. i. c. 25. It is now, at Reculver, one of its entrances, a brook which may be stepped over, and in its centre, towards the Sarr road, is not six feet broad. Ebbs-fleet is now an inland spot at some distance from the sea.—Sarr was a naval station formerly, and some old drawings still exist, which represent a man with a ferry-boat at this place.

¹³ Gildas, s. 22. Nen. c. 28. The British poem of Gollyddan indignantly alludes to this council, Welsh Arch. v. i. p. 156.

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and clothing, and were stationed in ¹⁴Thanet. Their first exertions are stated to have been directed against the Irish and Picts, in just performance of their engagement, and with immediate success.¹⁵ But it was not enough to repress one incursion of these active enemies. It was their habit to attack, plunder, retire, and return; and if one quarter was too well guarded to attempt another. All pirates in every age use this policy, and exhibit this perseverance. Hence it was not enough to have repelled the first assailants, and to do more, larger forces were requisite. But as the numbers which had come with Hengist were few, it was natural that he should recommend the invitation of more of his countrymen, if they were to be used for the purpose of continued military ¹⁶defence. The king assented; and they sent to their native land for further supplies.¹⁷

BUT we must not resort to Wittichind for the speech of the ambassadors. Though a Saxon himself, he appears to have been completely ignorant of the Saxon antiquities.¹⁸ We

¹⁴ Gildas, s. 13. Nennius, s. 28. 35. The ancient British name of Thanet was Ruithina, Nen. c. 28.

¹⁵ Bede, lib. i. c. 15. p. 52. Sax. Ch. p. 12. Etheiwerd, lib. i. p. 833.

¹⁶ Nennius, s. 37.

¹⁷ I would place at this period, as well as at their first arrival, that invitation which Bede, lib. i. c. 15.; Ethelwerd, 833.; Sax. Chron. 12.; and others, affirm.

¹⁸ He was the biographer of his contemporary, Otho, who died 972. Sigebert, 1196. Germ. Quat. Celeb. Chron.—He

can conceive the application to have been an address to the courage and spirit of adventure of the youth of Jutland, from which Hengist had sailed.¹⁹ Hengist may have added, as a lure, the probability of greater aggrandizement; but the lofty projects of ambition are not the first conceptions of humbler fortunes: auspicious events gradually teach hope to be more aspiring. One unexpected success occasions a further elevation to be attempted, until a greatness, at one time the most improbable, is attained with a facility which surprises the adventurer. But in the beginning of his employment, it is not probable that Hengist, with his scanty means, could have projected the conquest of a country so well peopled as Britain. It was the civil feuds, divided sovereignties, and warring interests of the unhappy island, and events not

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addresses his Saxon history to Matilda, Otho's maiden daughter. He knows nothing of the Saxons prior to their entering Thuringia. He was so ignorant of them as to say, that the Saxons in England were called Angli-Saxones, because the island was in a sort of angle of the sea. P. 3. he says, when he was a boy, he heard of the Macedonian extraction of the Saxons. If the Saxons sprang from the Sacasenæ, who lived near Persia, which is the most probable account of their origin, traditions connected with the battles of Alexander might have remained with them, as with the nations in the east; but this is a subject too illusory to deserve any attention. If it be worth recollecting at all, it is merely as another tradition pointing to their eastern origin.

¹⁹ Bede, p. 52.

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before anticipated, which also arise in disturbed periods of society, that led him to perceive that permanent settlements were attainable, and to desire their acquisition. Hence we need not fancy that his primary invitations held out magnificent hopes, or that his first friendly allies came in search of thrones. The sword of the Saxon was ready for every enterprise; war and booty were his high-prized pleasures; and it is probable, that at the first call of Hengist many thronged, who knew only that they were to fight and to be rewarded.

THE Saxons at that time had, as we have already described, spread from the Elbe to the Rhine; and the old Saxon Chronicler describes them to have then been active in depredation on all the sea-coast from Holland to Denmark.²⁰

THE subsequent actions of Hengist are not satisfactorily detailed in our oldest writers: their great result, the occupation of Britain by the Anglo-Saxon nations, and the consequent defeats and sufferings of the Britons, are strongly but generally expressed. Few of the accompanying circumstances are noticed, and these it is not easy to arrange under any definite chronology. All that criticism can do is to select

²⁰ Ethelwerd, p. 833. His Chronicle ends with Edgar about whose time he lived. He derives himself from Ethelred the brother of Alfred, p. 831. It is a rude but valuable Chronicle.

the incidents that seem indisputable, and to add the remarks which they naturally suggest.

CHAP.
I.
449.

It was not until the seventh year after his arrival in England that Hengist is stated to have begun his kingdom in Kent.²¹ Thus a period of six years intervened between his entrance and his establishment; and this interval was occupied by three classes of events, which are all mentioned, though not circumstantially narrated. These were his conflicts with the Picts and Irish, his alliance and friendship with Gwrtheyrn and the Britons, and his subsequent hostilities against them, and final conquest of Kent into a kingdom, which he transmitted to his posterity. These events followed in the order thus stated; but the time which each occupied cannot now be discriminated.

THE consequences of admitting and employing Hengist and his followers became so calamitous to the Britons, that the original policy of the measure has been generally reprobated. But this was not the single act of Gwrtheyrn. It was the unanimous resolution of the national council of kings and chiefs who decided for its

²¹ The Saxon Chronicle expressly states, that *after* the battle in 455, in which Horsa fell, Hengist acquired his little kingdom, *æfter than Hengest feng to rice*, p. 13. The more ancient Ethelwerd has the same date, with *et Hengest cepit regnum*, p. 834. Henry of Huntingdon dates his acquisition one year later, p. 311.; and Florence of Worcester one year earlier, p. 204. Nennius, without specifying the exact year, indicates a similar interval.

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adoption. It appeared to them to be an expedient means of protecting the coasts of the island, from the maritime desolations of the Irish and Picts, that one set of barbarians should be hired to combat the others; for in the eyes of the Romanised Britons all these piratical invaders were deemed barbarians, and are so mentioned. The purposed utility of the measure was immediately attained. Hengist defeated the depredators, with a slaughter which at last ended their incursions.²² To have foreseen at the outset, that the employment of a few hundred Saxons for this purpose would have induced the whole nation of the Angli, and a large portion of the continental Saxons and Jutes, to expatriate themselves from their domestic hearths into Britain, required a power of prophetic vision, which it was no disgrace to the Britons to have wanted. No such event had at that time occurred to the island. The Saxons were not, like the Romans, a mighty and civilised empire, whose ambition had been rapaciously progressive. They had been but petty and partial depredators; active, bold, and persevering, but whom moderate exertions of military vigilance had always repelled. Hence Gwretheyrn and the British council had no reason to anticipate the new spirit of permanent dominion and territorial conquest, with which so large a

²² W. Malm. lib. i. p. 9.

portion of the Saxon confederation became afterwards inspired, and still less their power of effecting such ambitious resolutions.

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THE censure, to which the Britons are more justly liable, is that, when those intentions began to appear, no vigorous system of union and patriotic resistance was adopted to frustrate their completion. On this point the evils of their political system, and the bad passions of Gwrtheyrn, operated to destroy the independence of the country. The chiefs pursued their conflicts with each other, which the people supported; and Gwrtheyrn projected to use the aid of Hengist, against those who were jealous of his power, or had become his competitors.

WHEN Hengist obtained permission to increase his forces; as the island was accessible on so many points of attack, by enemies who came by sea, and chose their own places of operation; this augmentation was necessary to the country while it continued the policy of using foreign auxiliaries. Seventeen more chiules came with his daughter Rowena²³; and

²³ Nenn. c. 36. Malmsbury, p. 9., mentions her with an "ut accepimus:" and H. Huntingdon with a "dicitur a quibusdam," p. 310. The Welsh Triads, c. 38., call her Ronwen, and some of the later Welsh poems allude to her; but there seems no historical authority for her existence, but the brief passages of Nennius, which Jeffery of Monmouth, and from him Wace and Layamon have so copiously expanded, and to which Malmsbury and Huntingdon seem to allude.

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afterwards forty more, with his son and kinsman, plundering the Orkneys and Scotland in their way, who were stationed off the Scottish coast; near the wall.²⁴

For these services an interval of cordiality occurred between Hengist and the ²⁵ Britons. That Hengist invited Gwrtheyrn to a feast, at which the fair and blue-eyed Rowena officiated as the cup-bearer, till the British king became intoxicated both with wine and love, and at last obtained her for his wife, we must believe, if at all, on the credit of Nemius.²⁶ But the burthen of their remuneration diminished the gratitude of the Britons; and the martial vigour which had produced the successes of the Saxons alarmed those whom they had benefited. The object for which they had been engaged having been attained, the natives wished their departure; but military adventurers have no proper homes: having abandoned peaceful life and its comforts for the fame and advantages of daring warfare in other countries, their new habits and gratifications are inconsistent with the quiet and content of agricultural obscurity. The Saxon-Jutes refused to leave their station in Thanet: they demanded larger supplies; and stated that they must plunder for their subsistence if these were refused.²⁷ The Britons had the spirit to

²⁴ Nen. c. 37.²⁵ Ethelw. 833.²⁶ Nen. c. 36.²⁷ Bede, lib. i. c. 15. p. 53.

resent their requisition, but not the wisdom to combine to expel them; and the third class of incidents to which we have alluded began.

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455.

THE Saxons made peace with the Picts, collected their forces, and, imitating those whom they had been employed to repress, ravaged the nearest cities and countries, from the east sea to the west.²⁸ The desolations that followed are strongly painted. Public and private edifices destroyed, priests slain at the altars, and chieftains with their people: some part of the population flying to monasteries, others to forests and mountains, and many to foreign parts, imply the successful ravages, which the first assaults of Hengist and his Jutes effected, against the unprepared and astonished natives.²⁹

BUT these victorious depredations could not long continue. These evils aroused the Britons to wiser policy and to a courageous resistance. Self-love produced the conduct which no patriotism had suggested. A vigorous system of defence was resolved upon, and Guortemir, a son of Gwrtheyrn, was appointed to conduct it. A series of battles occurred between him and Hengist and Horsa, in which victory was alternate. It is expressly stated by Nennius, that Guortemir three times defeated and besieged Hengist and his Jutes, and at last expelled them from Thanet and from England. He adds, that

²⁸ Bede, lib. i. c. 15. p. 53.

²⁹ Ibid.

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for five years they were kept out of the island, till Guortemir's death.³⁰ As Gildas asserts that the invaders at one time returned³¹ home; and Bede, though a Saxon, admits the fact by inserting it in his history³²; as Hengist did not begin his reign in Kent till six years after his arrival in the island³³; and as there are some foreign traditions of his having founded Leyden, during his absence from England³⁴, his temporary expulsion, and the successful exertions of the Britons at this period, seem entitled to our belief.

THE Britons who combined against Hengist were headed by two sons of Gwrtheyrn, who are named Guortemir and Categirn. On the Derwent the first struggle occurred³⁵; the next at a place called the Ford of the Eagles, now Ailesford in Kent, was distinguished by the death of Horsa on the part of the Saxons, and of Categirn among the Britons³⁶; a third battle

³⁰ Nenn. c. 45.

³¹ Gildas, c. 25.

³² Bede, lib. i. c. 16. p. 53.

³³ See before note 21.

³⁴ Usher, in his *Primordiæ Eccl. Angliæ*, p. 420., extracts a passage to this effect from the *Chronicon* of Gerbrandus, who died 1504. I do not know his authorities. Kempius, in his *Rer. Frisic. lib. ii. c. 1.*, affirms the same. Usher adds, that "Dousa, Meursius, Hegenitius, &c. *Vulgata Hollandiæ chronica sequuti*," also report it, p. 420.

³⁵ Nennius, c. 46.

³⁶ Sax. Chron. 13. Ethelw. 854. Nennius gives the British name of the place as Sathenegabail, p. 110.; but his British names of places and persons have been badly transcribed. On Horsa's monument, see Gough's *Camden*, vol. i. p. 231.

was fought at Stonar, on the sea-shore fronting France, from which the Saxons fled to their chiules.³⁷ Guortemir was the British chieftain who commanded in all these conflicts. But fable has obscured his title to celebrity. We may concede to him all the praise that Cambrian affection can demand, without believing that he pulled up a tree by the roots, and with the vegetating club killed Horsa, and defeated the Saxons.³⁸ Courage has been always the characteristic of the Cymry, and they may disclaim, without injury to their glory, every impossible achievement.

C H A P:
I.
455.

GUORTEMIR dying, Hengist is stated to have returned with an augmentation of his forces, which proved ultimately irresistible³⁹; but he is described as having first regained a footing in the island, by the treacherous massacre of the British chieftains at a banquet. The account of Nennius represents him not only as soliciting a treaty of peace, which was closed by the invitation of the Britons to a friendly feast; but also as commanding his Saxons to come with their short

³⁷ Nenn. c. 46, 47. Batteley thinks that the scite of this battle was Stone-end, in the south corner of Kent. Ant. Rutup. p. 19. There still remains a great quantity of human bones under the church at Hythe, which imply that some great battle has been fought in its vicinity. Nennius calls the stone, from which the field was named, "The Stone of the Title." Unless this means the boundary of the kingdom or county of Kent, the subject of the allusion is lost.

³⁸ Nenn. c. 45.

³⁹ Nenn. c. 46, 47.

BOOK
III.
455.

swords under their garments, and on his exclaiming, "Nimed eure saxes," "Unsheath your swords," to slay all but Gwrtheyrn. The meeting was held, and the cruel perfidy was accomplished.⁴⁰ It cannot now be determined how much, or if any part, of this is true; or whether the fatal issue, if it occurred, is to be attributed to premeditated villainy. One Welsh bard, two centuries afterwards, alludes to a catastrophe like this, but with no distinctness of historical detail.⁴¹

As Nennius adds to the history of Gwrtheyrn incidents undeniably fictitious⁴², and inserts fables as decided about St. Germain, in cir-

⁴⁰ Nenn. c. 48.

⁴¹ The passage in Golyddan is:

When they bargained for Thanet, with such scanty discretion,

With Hors and Hengys in their violent career,

Their aggrandisement was to us disgraceful,

After the consuming secret with the slaves at the confluent stream.

Conceive the intoxication at the great banquet of Mead;

Conceive the deaths in the great hour of necessity:

Conceive the fierce wounds: the tears of the women:

The grief that was excited by the weak chief:

Conceive the sadness that will be revolving to us,

When the brawlers of Thanet shall be our princes.

Gol. Arym. 2. W. Arch. 156.

The only words here that imply any premeditated treachery are, "rhin dilain," the consuming or destroying secret, which in the Cambrian Register for 1796 are translated too freely, "The plot of death."

⁴² See his Stories, from c. 38. to c. 34.

cumstances which the true chronology of the bishop disproves⁴³, he may have equally invented, or at least have exaggerated this event. A feast, inebriation, an unpremeditated quarrel, and a conflict may have taken place; and the battle may have ended in the destruction of the Britons. But this is all that is credible of this celebrated catastrophe; and even this statement is rather a concession to an ancient tradition, than the admission of an historical fact.

THE great battle which, according to the Saxon chroniclers, completed the establishment of Hengist in Kent, was fought at Crayford, in 457. The Britons, defeated in this with great slaughter, abandoned Kent, and fled in terror to London.⁴⁴ Eight years afterwards, the Britons attacked Hengist again, but it was with ruin to themselves. And in 473, they attempted another battle with him, but with such a calamitous issue, that they are declared to have fled from the Saxons as from fire.⁴⁵

457.

⁴³ Nennius, c. 29, 30, &c. St. Germain was bishop of Auxerre, from 418 to 448. Fabricius, *Bibl. Med. lib.* vii. p. 139. He lived thirty years and five days after St. Amator, according to his ancient biographer Constantius. Amator died in 418, *Stillingfleet, Orig. Brit.* p. 209. Bede also errs in placing the visit of St. Germain into Britain, to oppose their Pelagian opinions, *after* the arrival of the Saxons.

⁴⁴ Sax. Chron. "And tha Bryttas tha forleton Centlond," p. 13. It is from this victory that Huntingdon dates the kingdom of Hengist, p. 311.

⁴⁵ Sax. Chron. p. 14. Flo. Wig. 200, 201.

BOOK
III.
457.

THE name of Hengist has been surrounded with terror, and all his steps with victory. From Kent, he is affirmed to have carried devastation into the remotest corners of the island; to have spared neither age, sex, nor condition; to have slaughtered the priests on the altars; to have butchered in heaps the people who fled to the mountains and deserts⁴⁶; and to have finally established his dominion in Kent, Essex, Middlesex, and Sussex. But when from these hyperboles of conquest, we turn to the simple and authentic facts, that all the battles of Hengist, particularised by the Saxons, were fought in Kent; that one of the last contests was even in Thanet, in the extremity of his little⁴⁷ kingdom, and that no good evidence is extant, of his having penetrated, except in his first depredations, beyond the region which he transmitted⁴⁸ to his posterity; and above all, that at this very period the Britons were so warlike that twelve thousand went to Gaul, on the solicitations of the emperor, to assist the natives against the Visigoths⁴⁹, we must perceive that exaggera-

⁴⁶ This statement is seriously given by Hume, p. 20., and by our venerable Milton. 1 Kennett's Collection of Histor. 37. Langhorn, p. 33., follows Jeffry, and adds York, Lincoln, London, and Winchester to his conquests.

⁴⁷ Wippedfleet.

⁴⁸ Mr. Carte has observed, that he never extended his territories beyond Kent. Hist. England, p. 198. Mr. Whitaker is of a similar opinion. Manchest. ii. 4to. p. 28.

⁴⁹ The expedition of Riothamus, mentioned in Sidon.

tion has been as busy with Hengist as with Arthur; and that modern historians have suffered their criticism to slumber, while they were perusing the confused declamations of Gildas and his copyist, Bede. What Gildas related as the general consequences of all the Saxon invasions, has been too hastily applied to the single instance of Hengist. From this error the misconception of his real history has arisen. The truth seems to be, that the fame of Hengist depends more on the circumstance of his having first conceived and executed the project of an hostile settlement in Britain, than on the magnitude of his conquests, or the extent of his devastations.

FOR twelve years after the battle at Wippeds Fleot, he remained alone exposed to the vengeance of all the Britons in the island, except those in Kent whom he had subdued. The ease, with which he seems to have maintained his extorted dominion, announces the continuance of the discord between the contending native chieftains, which was wasting the British

Apollon. lib. iii. ep. 9., and Jornandes, c. 45. This incident was early noticed by Freculphus, Chron. t. ii. c. 17. — Sigebert Gembl. in mentioning it gives a gentle lash on Jeffry; *Quis autem fuerit iste, historia Britonum minime dicit, quæ regum suorum nomina et gesta per ordinem pandit.* 1 Pist. 504. Either this Riothamus was Arthur, or it was from his expedition that Jeffry, or the Breton bards, took the idea of Arthur's battles in Gaul.

BOOK

III.

465.

strength⁵⁰, and which Gildas seems to protract to the times of Arthur. At length another adventurer appeared on the island. The success of Hengist made a new species of enterprise familiar to the Saxon states. To combine to obtain riches, cultivated lands, and slaves to tend them, was more inviting than to risk the tempest for uncertain plunder. Hence it is not wonderful, that while some were diffusing themselves over Germany, the success of Hengist attracted the maritime part of the Saxon confederation; and assisted to convert it from naval piracy to views of regular conquest in Britain.

HENGIST was succeeded in Kent by his son Æsc, who reigned twenty-four years. No subsequent event of importance is recorded of this little kingdom, till the reign of Ethelbyrhte, who acceded in 560⁵¹, and enjoyed the sceptre for above half a century.⁵²

⁵⁰ Gildas in his last section, and in his epistle; and Bede, c. 22. An abrupt but valuable passage of Nennius, p. 118., also intimates that Ambrosius was connected with the civil fury at this period: "A regno Guorthrigerni usque ad discordiam Guitolini et Ambrosii anni sunt duodecim." Huntingdon delares, "Non cessabant civilia bella," p. 311. And see the Lives of the Welsh Saints, MSS. Vesp. A. 14.

⁵¹ Sax. Ch. p. 20.

⁵² Flor. Wig. dates his accession 561, and gives fifty-six years as the duration of his reign, p. 221. The names by which Alfred translates the title of duces, which Bede gives to Hengist and Horsa, are Latteowas and Heretogan, p. 483. The British king, whom Jeffery calls Vortigernus, and the Welsh writings Gwrtheyrn, Alfred names Wyrtegeorn, p. 482.

CHAP. II.

ELLA arrives in SUSSEX, and founds a Kingdom there.—CERDIC invades the South Part of the Island, and establishes the Kingdom of WESSEX.—Battles of his Successors with the BRITONS.

ELLA was the next Saxon chieftain, or king, who twenty-eight years after the first arrival of Hengist invaded Britain. He landed with three sons in Sussex¹; and drove the Britons into the great wood, which stretched from the south of Kent into Sussex and Hampshire.² Although they came with only three ships, they succeeded in gaining a settlement. Hence we may infer, that they were resisted only by the petty British sovereign of the district. By slow degrees they enlarged their conquests on the coast. In the eighth year of their arrival they attempted to penetrate into the interior; a dubious but wasteful battle on the river Mercread checked their progress.

CHAP.
II.
477.
Arrival of
Ella.

¹ Saxon Chron. 14. Flor. Wigorn. 203. Ethelwerd, 834.

² The weald of Kent was anciently 120 miles long towards the west, and 30 broad from north to south. On the edge of the wood, in Sussex, stood Andredes Ceaster. Lambard's Perambulation of Kent, 167, 168. This vast wood was a wilderness, not inhabited by men, but by deer and hogs.

BOOK
III.
490.

Recruited by new arrivals from the continent, they ventured to besiege Andredes Ceaster, a city strongly fortified according to the usages of the age. The Britons defended this with some skill. Taking advantage of the adjoining forest, while the Saxons attempted to scale the walls, a division of the Britons attacked them from the woods behind: to repel them the Saxons were compelled to desist from their assault on the city. The Britons retired from the pressure of their attack into the woods, sallying out again when the Saxons again advanced to the city. This plan was successfully repeated with great loss to the assailants, till Ella conceived the idea of dividing his Saxons into two bodies; one to storm, the other to cover the attack.³ This measure succeeded, and the Saxons burst into the city, but, irritated by their loss, disgraced their conquest, by one of those barbarous actions which history ought never to mention without horror, and which no events or reasons can justify: the inhabitants were put to the sword.⁴ This was a conquest not far distant from the shore; so that this Saxon kingdom was rather permitted by the Britons to exist

³ Hen. Hunt. p. 312. He adds that the city was never rebuilt, but remained apparently in his times in a state of ruin, which showed to the passenger how noble a place it had been.

⁴ Sax. Chron. 15. "Ne wearth thær forþon an Bryt to lafe." Our ancient chroniclers make often small differences in their chronologies. Thus the Sax. Chron. dates this event in 490, Flor. Wig. 491, and Ethelwerd 492.

than extorted from their national opposition. Ella's settlement was probably considered as a colonisation, that would have no important consequences to the British people. It became the kingdom of Sussex.

CHAP.

II.

490.

As this state was never formidable to the others, nor is much mentioned afterwards, there is no reason to imagine that Ella made any great progress; but Ella is commemorated as the preponderant Saxon chief⁵ at that time in England: his conquests were therefore superior to those of Hengist and his son, who were his contemporaries. This is another circumstance, which shows the mistake of attributing such extensive desolation and triumphs to Hengist. Both he and Ella appear to have been satisfied with the possession of the provinces they invaded. It was the next warrior who spread consternation through Britain, resisted the genius of Ambrosius and Arthur, and by his successes ensured safety to the intruders in Kent and Sussex.

EIGHTEEN years after Ella, another powerful colony of Saxons arrived in the island, under the auspices of Cerdic, who also derived his genealogy from Woden.⁶ The first essay was

495.
Invasion
of Cerdic.

⁵ Sax. Chron. 71. Bede, lib. ii. c. 5.

⁶ Sax. Chron. 15. Flor. Wig. 205. Cerdic was the ninth descendant from Woden by his son Bældæg, and his great grandson Freothogar. Allowing thirty years for a generation, this would place the existence of Odin about 225, which is near the time when the Franks accomplished their voyage from the Euxine.

BOOK

III.

495.

made with five ships; but the battles and conquests of its leaders display either abilities of the most superior kind, or an accumulation of force far beyond that which had assailed the other parts of the island. The place of his primary descent is by no means clear. The modern name, which would correspond with the ancient appellation of *Cerdices Ora*, has not been preserved.⁷ Both *Yarmouth* and ⁸*Southampton* have had their advocates; but a remarkable passage in the *Saxon Chronicle*, which indicates that he attacked *West Saexnaland* six years after his arrival⁹, induces a belief that his first attempt was on some other part of the island.

501.

IN the same year, that *Cerdic* assaulted the district afterwards denominated *Wessex*, a band of allies under *Porta* effected a landing with the companies of two ships at *Portsmouth*, and

⁷ Yet *Higden*, in his *Polychronicon*, makes *Cerdicesore* that *quæ nunc dicitur Gernemouth*, p. 224., which (if we could rely upon it) would decide that *Yarmouth* was the spot. *Camden* mentions a striking fact in favour of the claims of *Yarmouth*, "The place is called by the inhabitants at this day, *Cerdicksand*." *Britan.* 390. *Gib.*

⁸ This position is thought to be warranted by comparing the *Saxon Chron.* p. 18., which mentions the arrival of the nepotes of *Cerdic* at *Cerdicesora*, in 514, and *Matt. West.* who states their arrival in *occidentali parte Britanniae*, p. 184., but this is not conclusive evidence. *Mr. Whitaker* thinks, that all *Cerdic's* operations were confined to *Hampshire*, vol. ii. p. 61.

⁹ *Sax. Chron.* p. 15. So *Ethelwerd*, 834. *Sexto etiam anno adventus eorum occidentalem circumierunt Britanniae partem quæ Westsexe nuncupatur.*

defeated the Britons.¹⁰ Others came, thirteen years afterwards, under Stuf and Wihtgar.

CHAP.
II.

501.

It was in the battles with Cerdic that the strength of the Britons and Saxons seem to have been first opposed to each other with a national magnitude, and for many years with varying success. It was not till twenty-four years after his arrival that Cerdic and his son are noticed to have established the kingdom of ¹¹ Wessex. Of the conflicts which he had with the Britons during these twenty-four years, the Saxons have left scarcely any notice. As Cerdic did not arrive in any part of England till forty-six years after Hengist, he found a new generation of Britons, with different kings and chiefs from those who had employed and fought with the conqueror of Kent. Gwrtheyrn, Guortemir, and Ambrosius had long been dead. The Britons were in possession of all the island but Kent and Sussex, and when Cerdic attacked them, they were at liberty to have employed all their forces against him, as Ida had not yet arrived, nor had the Angles expatriated themselves.

THE only British king whom the Saxons men-

¹⁰ Sax. Chron. p. 17. Flor. Wig. 205. Ethelw. 834.

¹¹ Thus the Sax. Chron. "519, Her Cerdic and Cynric West-Saexna rice onfengun," p. 18. Flor. Wig. "regnare cæperunt," p. 208. Ethelwerd, "in ipso anno facietenus cæperunt regnare," p. 834. So Huntingdon to the same date, "Regnum West Sexe incipit," p. 313.

BOOK
III.
508.

tion in the battles that preceded the establishment of this West Saxon kingdom was Natanleod, and he appears but in one great battle, in which he fell in 508.¹² This was something like a national conflict between the two contesting races. Cerdic increased his own strength by auxiliary forces, from the Saxons in Kent and Sussex, and Natanleod assembled the greatest army of Britons that had yet met the Saxons together. He directed his main attack on their right wing, where Cerdic commanded, and drove it from the field; but, too eager in pursuit, he allowed this chieftain's son to move on him in the rear, and the victory was wrenched from his grasp.¹³ He fell with 5000 Britons, and such was the extent of his disaster, that all the region near the scene of conflict became afterwards called by his name.¹⁴ This victory gave Cerdic a firm position in the island, though it did not enable him yet to found a kingdom.

THE subsequent battles of Cerdic and his friends with the Britons, which the Saxon writers have recorded, are but few. In 514 his kinsmen Stuf and Wihtgar made their incursion on Cerdicesore. In 519, Cerdic and his son Cynric obtained a victory at Cerdices-ford, which ap-

¹² Sax. Chron. p. 18. Flor. Wig. 206. Ethelwerd, 834.

¹³ H. Hunt. 312.

¹⁴ Chron. Sax. "Her Cerdic and Cynric West Seaxna rice onfengun:" after mentioning the battle it adds, "siththan ricsadon West Seaxa cynebearn of tham dæge," p. 18.

pears to have first laid the actual foundation of the West-Saxon kingdom, as from this time the Saxon Chronicle dates the reign of the West-Saxon kings.¹⁵ The struggle lasted the whole day with varying success, but in the evening the Saxons conquered.¹⁶ In 528, another conflict is mentioned at Cerdices-leah, but its issue is not stated; and, in 530, Cerdic and his son took the Isle of Wight with great slaughter. In 534, Cerdic died.¹⁷ He does not appear to have done more than to have maintained himself in the district where he landed; but his posterity enlarged his settlement into a kingdom, so powerful, as to absorb every other in the island.

His son Cynric defeated the Britons at Searo-byrig; and four years afterwards at Beran-birig.¹⁸ In this last battle the Britons made peculiar exertions to overcome their invaders. They collected a large army, and, taught by former defeat the evil of disorderly combats, their leaders attempted an imitation of better discipline. They were formed into nine divisions; three in front, three in the center, and three in the rear, apparently to act as a

552.

556.

¹⁵ See Note 14. in the preceding page.

¹⁶ Hen. Hunt. 313. Camden places the battle at a ford of the Avon, at the place now called Charford in Hampshire.

¹⁷ Sax. Chr. 20. Flor. Wig. 219. I think Somner goes too far from the line of Cerdic's operations, when he guesses this to be Chardsley in Buckinghamshire.

¹⁸ Sax. Ch. 20. Flor. Wig. 220. This is placed at Banbury in Oxfordshire; the other at Salisbury.

BOOK

III.

556.

reserve; their archers and horse were arranged like the Romans. The Saxons observing the array, condensed themselves into one compact body, and made an attack in this mass which proved irresistible.¹⁹

571.

It was Cealwin, the third king of Wessex, who acceded in 560, that obtained the greatest successes against the natives, and took from them more of their country than his predecessors had been able to subdue. His brother defeated the Britons at Bedford, and dispossessed them of four towns²⁰; and six years afterwards Cealwin himself obtained a great victory at Deorham, against three British kings, who fell in the battle; Conmail, Condidan, and Farinmail. The number of these kings shows that the same ruinous division of the British strength continued in the island, though its rulers had at times sufficient policy to combine their efforts. This appears to have been a conflict of some magnitude, as well from the union of the three kings, as from the important results of the victory; for three of the great cities of the Britons, Gloucester, Cirencester, and Bath, submitted

¹⁹ H. Hunt. p. 314. This ancient author, from sources now lost, has preserved the particular circumstances of several of these Saxon battles. He seems to have had a military tact which led him to notice them. He had certainly other chronicles before him than those which have survived to us.

²⁰ Lygeanburh; Ægeles-burh, Bennington, and Egonesham. Chr. Sax. p. 22. These are supposed by Gibson to be Leighton in Bedfordshire; Aylesbury in Buckinghamshire; Bensington and Ensham in Oxfordshire.

after it to the conqueror.²¹ Seven years afterwards, in 584, the Britons again tried the fortune of war with him at Fethanleagh: a son of Cealwin fell in the struggle, and the Saxons retreated in disorder; but their king succeeded in rallying them, and at last obtained a hard-earned and long-contested triumph. He obtained much booty and many towns; but as the Saxon Chronicler remarks that he afterwards retired into his own district²², the Britons were still powerful enough to prevent or discourage his advance.

CHAP.

II.

571.

SUCH is the Saxon statement of the battles which attended the establishment and progress of the formidable kingdom of Wessex; by which we find that eighty-two years elapsed after the arrival of Cerdic, before it was extended to include Gloucester, Cirencester, and Bath. Its first acquisition was Hampshire by Cerdic. It was enlarged into Wiltshire, Oxfordshire, and Buckinghamshire by his son; and by his grandson into Gloucestershire and part of Somersetshire. But after these successes, it was still flanked on the west by British kingdoms in Cornwall, Devonshire, and part of Somersetshire; and on the north-west by the British princes in Wales; and by British states or king-

²¹ Chr. Sax. p. 22. F. Wig. 223. Ethelw. 835. Durham in Gloucestershire is believed to have been the scite of this battle.

²² Gehwearf thanan to his agenum, Ch. Sax. p. 22.

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III.

571.

doms on the north, from Gloucestershire to Scotland. On the south at the sea-coast it was supported by the Saxon kingdoms of Sussex and Kent. But if the nation of the Angles had not successively arrived after Cerdic's death, to over-run the east, the center, and the country beyond the Humber, the Saxon occupation of Britain would have been a precarious tenure, or have remained, like Normandy in France, but a Saxon colonisation of our southern shores. It was the emigration of the Angles from Sleswick, that ultimately wrested the island from the ancient Britons, and converted it into England. But before we narrate this great incident, which has so peculiarly affected our national fortunes and character, we will pause to consider the ancient British accounts of their conflicts with the West-Saxon invaders.

CHAP. III.

*Ancient BRITISH Accounts of the Battles with the
WEST-SAXONS, and the authentic History of
ARTHUR.*

SOME of the battles mentioned by the ancient Welsh poets, are those between Cerdic and the Britons; one of these is the battle at Llongborth. In this conflict Arthur was the commander in chief¹; and Geraint ab Erbin was a prince of Devonshire, united with him, against the Saxons. Llywarch Hen, in his elegy on his friend, describes the progress of the battle: the shout of onset, and the fearful obscurity which followed the shock, are succeeded by the terrible incidents which alarm humanity into abhorrence of war. The edges of the blades in contact, the gushing of blood, the weapons of the heroes with gore fast dropping, men surrounded with terror, the crimson gash upon the chieftain's brow, biers with the dead and reddened men, a tumultuous running together, the combatants striving in blood to the knees, and ravens feasting on human² prey,

CHAP.
III.530.
Battle of
Llong-
borth.

Llywarch Hen's Elegies, p. 9.

² Ib. p. 3—7.

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III.
530.

compose the dismal picture which this ancient bard has transmitted to us of a battle, in which he was personally engaged.

THE valiant Geraint was slain; "slaughtering his foes he fell."³ The issue of the conflict is not precisely stated, but some ambiguous expressions concur, with the absence of all triumphant language, to indicate that the Britons did not prevail. As Llongborth literally implies the haven of ships, and was some harbour on the southern coast, we may consider this poem, as describing the conflict at Portsmouth, when Porta landed. The Saxon Chronicle says, that a very noble British youth fell on that⁴ occasion, but does not mention his name.

Battle
on the
Llawen.

LLYWARCH mentions another battle on the Llawen in which Arthur was engaged. Gwen, the poet's favourite son, exerted himself in the struggle. The battle was at the Ford of Morlas. The bard describes his son, as watching the preceding night, with his shield on his shoulder. He compares his impetuosity to the assault of the eagle; and laments him as the bravest of his children. "As he was my son

³ Llywarch Hen's Elegies, p. 7. The 20th triad names him as one of the Llynghessawg, the naval commanders of Britain. The Welsh genealogies make him the son of Constantine of Cornwall, from Gwen the daughter of Gyngar. They give him a son named Seliff. Bodedd y Saint, Welsh Arch. vol. ii. p. 33.

⁴ Sax. Chron. 17. Fl. Wig. 206.

he did not retreat." Of the event of the battle, he only says, that Arthur did not recede.⁵

CHAP.
III.
530.

OF the other contests, which ensued before Wessex was colonised by Saxons, we have no further information from the British writers, except of the battle at Bath.

GILDAS intimates, that until the battle of Bath the Saxons and the Britons alternately conquered; and that this was almost the last, but not the least slaughter of the invaders. Nennius makes it the twelfth of Arthur's battles.⁶ The position of this battle has been disputed, but it seems to have occurred near Bath.⁷ Its chronology is not clear.⁸ The Welsh MSS. in the red book of Hergest, says, that 128 years intervened from the age

Battle of
Bath.

⁵ Llywarch Hen's Elegy on Old Age, p. 131—135.

⁶ Gildas, s. 26. Nennius, s. 23.

⁷ Mr. Carte describes the Mount of Badon in Berkshire, p. 205. Usher places the battle at Bath, p. 477. Camden also thinks that Badon Hill is the Bannesdowne, or that which overhangs the little village Bathstone, and exhibits still its bulwarks and a rampire. Gibson, ed. p. 470.

⁸ Gildas in a passage of difficult construction says, as we interpret, that it took place forty-four years before he wrote, —annum obsessionis Badonici montis, qui que quadragesimus quartus ut novi oritur annus, mense jam primo emenso qui jam et meæ nativitatis est, s. 26. —Bede construed it to mean the forty-fourth year after the Saxon invasion, lib. i. c. 16., but the words of Gildas do not support him. Matt. West. p. 186. places it in 520. Langhorn, p. 62. prefers 511.

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III.
530.

of Gwrtheyrn to the battle of Badon, in which Arthur and the elders conquered the Saxons.⁹

ARTHUR was the British chieftain, who so long resisted the progress of Cerdic. The unparalleled celebrity which this Briton has attained, in his own country and elsewhere, both in history and romance, might be allowed to exalt our estimation of the Saxon chief, who maintained his invasion, though an Arthur opposed him, if the British hero had not himself been unduly magnified into an incredible and inconsistent conqueror.

The probable history of Arthur.

THE authentic actions of Arthur have been so disfigured by the additions of the Minstrels, and of Jeffry, that many writers have denied that he ever lived¹⁰: but this is an extreme, as objectionable as the romances which occasioned it. The tales that all human perfection was

⁹ See this published in the Cambrian Register, p. 313. Pryse, in his Defensio, p. 120., quotes a passage of Taliesin on this battle, which I have not observed among his printed poems.

¹⁰ His existence was doubted very early. Genebrard said, it might be inferred from Bede, *Arcturum magnum nunquam extitisse*. Chron. lib. iii. ap. Usher, 522.—Sigebert, who wrote in the twelfth century, complained that, except in the then newly published British history, *nullam de eo mentionem invenimus*. 1 Pistori Rer. German. 504.—Our Milton is also sceptical about him. See his work in 1 Kennett's History of England, p. 34.—Many others are as unfriendly to his fame.

collected in Arthur¹¹; that giants and kings who never existed, and nations which he never saw, were subdued by him; that he went to Jerusalem for the sacred cross¹²; or that he not only excelled the experienced past, but also the possible future¹³, we may, if we please, recollect only to despise; but when all such fictions are removed, and those incidents only are retained, which the sober criticism of history sanctions with its approbation; a fame ample enough to interest the judicious, and to perpetuate his honourable memory, will still continue to claim our belief and applause.

CHAP.
III.
530.

THE most authentic circumstances concerning Arthur, appear to be these :

HE was a chieftain in some part of Britain near its southern coasts. As a Mouric, king of

His birth.

¹¹ And, in short, God has not made, since Adam was, the man more perfect than Arthur. Brut G ab Arthur. 2 W. Archaiol. p. 299.

¹² Nennius, or his interpolator, Samuel, pledges himself that the fragments of the cross brought by Arthur were kept in Wedale, six miles from Mailros. 3 Gale, p. 114.—Langhorn, Chron. p. 47., adduces Jerom and others to prove that Britons used to visit Jerusalem.

¹³ Joseph of Exeter, in his elegant Antiocheis, after contrasting the inferior achievements of Alexander, Cæsar, and Hercules, with those of his flos regum Arthurus, adds,

Sed nec pinetum coryli, nec sidera solem
Æquant; annales Latios, Graios que revolve;
Prisca parem nescit, æqualem postera nullum
Exhibitura dies. Reges supereminet omnes
Solut; præteritis melior, *majorque futuris.*

Ap. Usher, p. 519.

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530. Glamorganshire, had a son named Arthur at this period¹⁴; and many of Arthur's actions are placed about that district, it has been thought probable, that the celebrated Arthur was the son of Mouric: but this seems to have been too petty a personage, and too obscure for his greater namesake, who is represented by all the traditions and history that exist concerning him to have been the son of Uthur.

His ac-
tions.

HE is represented in the Lives of the Welsh Saints, with incidents that suit the real manners of the age. Meeting a prince in Glamorganshire, who was flying from his enemies, Arthur was, at first, desirous of taking by force the wife of the fugitive. His military friends, Cei and Bedguir, persuaded him to refrain from the injustice; and to assist the prince to regain his lands.¹⁵

A BRITISH chief having killed some of his warriors, Arthur pursues him with all the avidity of revenge. At the request of St. Cadoc, Arthur submits his complaint to the chiefs and clergy of Britain, who award Arthur a compensation.¹⁶

AT another time, Arthur is stated to have plundered St. Paternus, and to have destroyed a monastery in Wales.¹⁷ These inci-

¹⁴ Reg. Llandav.

¹⁵ Vita S. Cadoci, Cott. MSS. Vesp. A. 14.

¹⁶ Ibid.

¹⁷ Ibid. Vita S. Paterni MS. Cei is mentioned as his companion in a poem of Taliesin's.

dents suit the short character which Nennius gives of him, that he was cruel from his childhood.¹⁸

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It is stated, by Caradoc of Llancarvan, that Melva, the king of Somersetshire, carried off Arthur's wife, by force, to Glastonbury. Arthur, with his friends, whom he collected from Cornwall and Devonshire, assaulted the ravisher. The ecclesiastics interposed, and persuaded Melva to return her peaceably. Arthur received her, and both the kings rewarded the monks for their useful interference.¹⁹

ARTHUR also maintained a war against the Britons, in the north of the island; and killed Huel their king. He was greatly rejoiced at this success; because, says Caradoc, he had killed his most powerful enemy.²⁰ Thus Arthur, by his wars with his own countrymen, as much assisted the progress of the Saxons, as he afterwards endeavoured to check it, by his struggles with Cerdic.

HE may have fought the twelve battles mentioned by Nennius²¹; but it is obvious, from

¹⁸ Nenn. c. 62.

¹⁹ Carad. Vit. Gild. MSS. King's Lib. Malmsbury mentions, in his History of Glastonbury, p. 307., one circumstance of Arthur sending Ider, the son of king Nuth, on an adventure, after having knighted him; but it is too romantically narrated to be classed among the authentic facts. Giants have no right to admission into ordinary history.

²⁰ Carad.

²¹ Nenn. c. 62. 63. He thus enumerates them: 1st. at

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the preceding paragraphs, that they were not all directed against the Anglo-Saxons. He is represented by Nennius, as fighting them in conjunction with the kings of the Britons. It is clear from many authorities, that there were several kings at this time in different parts of Britain.²² But there appears, as the preceding pages have intimated, to have been a paramount sovereign; a Pen-dragon, or Penteyrn; who, in nominal dignity at least, was superior to every other. Arthur is exhibited in this²³ character; and his father Uthur had the same appellation.²⁴

FOUR of the battles, ascribed to him by Nennius, have been ably illustrated by Mr. Whitaker.²⁵ Mr. Camden and others had remarked, that the Douglas, on which Nennius had placed them, was a river in Lancashire. The historian of Manchester has commented on the positions

the mouth of the river called Glen; 2d, 3d, 4th, and 5th, on another river called Douglas, in the region of Linius; 6th, on the river called Bassas; the 7th, in the wood of Caledon; the 8th, in Castle Gunnion, where he adds that Arthur had the image of the cross and of Mary on his shoulders; the 9th, at Caerlcon; the 10th, on the banks of the Rebroit; the 11th, on the mount called Agned Cathregonion; the 12th, on the Badon hills.

²² The Cott. MSS. Vesp. A. 14, in the Lives of the Welsh Saints, mention several in Wales.

²³ Trioedd 7. p. 3.

²⁴ There is an elegy on Uthyr's death among the ancient British bards. See Welsh Arch. vol. i.

²⁵ Hist. Manch. vol. ii. p. 43—45. 4to. ed.

of these conflicts with great local knowledge. His fancy, though often too prolific, and even on this portion of our history peculiarly active, yet describes these with so much probability, that we may adopt his sketches as history.

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THE battle of Badon Hills, or near Bath, has been celebrated as Arthur's greatest and most useful achievement; a long interval of repose to the Britons has been announced as its consequence²⁶; yet it is curious to remark, that this victory only checked the progress of Cerdic; and does not appear to have produced any further success. We hear not of the vindictive pursuit of Arthur, of the invasion of Hampshire, or the danger of Cerdic. The Saxon was penetrating onwards even towards Wales or Mercia; he was defeated, and did not advance.²⁷ No other conflicts ensued. Arthur was content to repulse. This must have been because he wanted power to pursue. Arthur was, therefore, not the warrior of irresistible strength; he permitted Cerdic to retain his settlements in Wessex; and such an acquiescence accords with the Chronicle, which asserts, that

²⁶ This seems to be the battle mentioned by Gildas and Bede, which occurred when Gildas was forty-four years old.

²⁷ Bede's expressions taken from Gildas express the general truth of these conflicts. "Now the natives; now their enemies conquered, until the siege of the hills of Bath, when they (the Britons) did not give the least slaughter to their enemies," c. 16. p. 53.

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after many fierce conflicts, he conceded to the Saxon the counties of Southampton and Somerset.²⁸ The latter was however still contested.

How men-
tioned in
the Welsh
bards.

THIS state of moderate greatness suits the character, in which the Welsh bards exhibit Arthur. They commemorate him; but it is not with that excelling glory, with which he has been surrounded by subsequent traditions. On the contrary, Urien of Reged seems to have employed the harp more than Arthur. Llywarch the aged, who lived through the whole period of slaughter, and had been one of the guests and counsellors of Arthur²⁹, never displays him in transcendent majesty. In the battle of Llongborth, which Arthur directed, it was the valour of Geraint that arrested the bard's notice; and his elegy, though long, scarcely mentions the commander, whose merit, in the frenzy of later fables, clouds every other. As an effusion of real feeling, this poem may be supposed to possess less of flattery and more of truth in its panegyric. It speaks of Arthur with respect, but not with wonder. Arthur is simply mentioned as the commander and the conductor of the toil of war; but Geraint

²⁸ Rad. quoted by Polychronica, says, in quibusdam chronicis legitur, quod tandem Arthurus extædiatus, post 26 annum adventus Cerdici fidelitate sibi jurata dedit ei Hampshiram et Somersetham, p. 224. — The Chronicle of Ricardi Divisionensis, in MSS. at Cambridge, affirms the same. It is quoted by Langhorn, Chron. Rer. Anglorum, p. 70.

²⁹ Trioedd. 116. p. 74.

is profusely celebrated with dignified periphrasis.³⁰

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IN the same manner Arthur appears in the *Afallenau* of *Myrddin*; and in *Taliesin* he is mentioned as a character well known and revered³¹; but not idolised; yet he was then dead, and all the actions of his patriotism and valour had been performed. Not a single epithet is added, from which we can discern him to have been that whirlwind of war, which swept away in its course all the skill and armies of Europe. That he was a courageous warrior is unquestionable; but that he was the miraculous Mars of the British history, from whom kings and nations sunk in panic, is completely disproved by the temperate encomiums of his contemporary bards.

ONE fact is sufficient to refute all the hyperboles of *Jeffry*. Though Arthur lived and fought, yet the Anglo-Saxons were not driven from the island, but gradually advanced their conquest, with progressive dominion, whether he was alive or whether he was dead. Reflecting on this unquestionable fact, we may hesitate to believe that Arthur was victorious in all his battles³², because, if he wielded the whole

³⁰ As "the glory of Britain—the terrifier of the foe—the molester of the enemy—the great son of *Erbin*—the strenuous warrior of *Dyvnaint*." *Llywarch*, p. 3—7.

³² *Myrddin* styles him *modur tyrfa*, king of a multitude. *Afall*. 1 W. A. 153.

³¹ *Nennius*, c. 62., says this, "in omnibus bellis victor ex-

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force of Britain, and only fought to conquer, what rescued Cerdic, Ella, the son of Hengist, and the invaders of Essex and East-Anglia from absolute destruction?

THE Welsh triads notice many of Arthur's friends and warriors; and mention one stanza as his composition. But this must be mere tradition.

Sef ynt fy nhri chadfarchawg,
Mael hir, a Llyr Llyuddawg;
A cholofn Cymru Caradawg.³³

To me there are three heroes in battle;
Mael the tall, and Llyr with his army,
And Caradawg the pillar of the Cymry.

His death. ARTHUR perished at last ingloriously, in a civil feud with Medrawd his nephew, who is said to have engrossed the affections of Gwenhyfar, his wife. But as the blow of Arthur on Medrawd is mentioned as one of the most mischievous blows in Britain³⁴; this may have been the immediate cause of Medrawd's hostility.

titit." But the author quoted by Higden, p. 224., says more probably of Cerdic, who often fought with Arthur, "si semel vinceretur, alia vice acrior surrexit ad pugnam."—Gildas, s. 26. implies an alternation of victory previous to the battle of Bath.—The MS. Chron. Divis. cited by Langhorn, 70., affirms it.

³³ Trioedd 29. p. 62.

³⁴ Trioedd 51. p. 13.

THE character of Medrawd has been branded with much reproach by the Welsh, because their favourite Arthur perished in the war which he excited. But there is a triad, which records his gentleness, good nature, and engaging conversation; and declares that it was difficult to deny him any request.³⁵ He must have been powerfully supported, to have raised an army capable of confronting Arthur in the field. Maelgwn, who reigned in Gwynedd, seems to have been one of Medrawd's allies; for Gildas inculcates him for having destroyed the king his uncle, with his bravest soldiers.³⁶

THE conflict took place at Camlan, where both Arthur and Medrawd fell³⁷: Arthur, mortally wounded, was carried out of the field. From the coast of Cornwall he was conveyed into Somersetshire. Sailing along the shore they reached the Uzella, which they ascended, and the king was committed to the care of his friends in Glastonbury³⁸, but their skill could not avert the fatal hour.

THE death of Arthur was long concealed,

³⁵ Trioedd 83. p. 18.

³⁶ Gildas, p. 12.

³⁷ This battle is placed in 542, by the Annals in Wharton's *Anglia Sacra*, vol. ii. p. 648.; by many authors cited by Usher, *Ant.* p. 521.; and by Jeffry and the Welsh *Brut ab Arthur*.

³⁸ See Jeffry's curious poem, MSS. Cott. Lib. Vesp. E. 4. See also Giraldus *Spec. Eccles.* dist. ii. c. 9. cited apud Usher, p. 523.

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III.542.
His death
concealed.

and a wild tale was diffused among the populace, that he had withdrawn from the world into some magical region; from which at a future crisis he was to re-appear, and to lead the Cymry in triumph through the island. Why this fiction was invented, we may now in vain enquire. It could not repress the ambition of the Saxons, because the temporary absence of Arthur was sufficient to favour their wishes; and if his living authority could not prevent British insurrection, was it probable that his residence in another region would avail? Yet Taliesin industriously sang that Morgana promised, if he remained a long time with her, to heal his wounds; and it is notorious that the return of Arthur was a fond hope of the people for many ages. Perhaps it was an illusion devised to avert the popular vengeance from those who, by aiding Medrawd, had contributed to produce the lamented event³⁹; or perhaps some, affecting to reign in trust for Arthur, conciliated the public prejudice in favour of their government, by thus representing that they governed only for him.

His family. OF the family of Arthur we know little. We hear of Noe in Caermarthenshire, reputed to be his son; another son, Llechau, is celebrated as

³⁹ Matth. Westm. p. 192. declares that the king voluntarily concealed himself while dying, that his enemies might not triumph, nor his friends be molested.

an accomplished warrior.⁴⁰ His sister Anna married Llew, brother of the famous Urien, and son of Cynvarch; Medrawd was her ⁴¹ son. The marriage of Anna united the kings of the northern Britons in consanguinity with Arthur.

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BUT though the friends of Arthur concealed the place of his interment, a future age discovered it. In the year 1189, when romance had begun to magnify his fame, his body was diligently sought for in the abbey of Glastonbury. The circumstances attending this search give us the first clear and historical certainty about this celebrated man, and are therefore worth detailing. They have been transmitted to us by Giraldus Cambrensis, who saw both the bones and the inscription, as well as by a monk of the abbey; and the same facts are alluded to by William of Malmsbury, a contemporary, and by others.

His remains discovered in 1189.

THE substance of the account of Giraldus is this.⁴² Henry the Second, who twice visited Wales, had heard from an ancient British bard, that Arthur was interred at Glastonbury, and that some pyramids marked the place. The

⁴⁰ MSS. Vesp. A. 14. p. 57. Trioedd 10. p. 3.

⁴¹ See the genealogy in Mr. Owen's Life of Llywarch.

⁴² This account of Giraldus corresponds with that of the monk of Glastonbury, which Leland has extracted in his Assert. Art. p. 50.; and Usher in his Antiq. p. 117. Malmsbury more briefly alludes to it, De Ant. Glast.

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 542.

king communicated this to the abbot and monks of the monastery, with the additional information, that the body had been buried very deep to keep it from the Saxons; and that it would be found not in a stone tomb, but in a hollowed oak. There were two pyramids or pillars at that time standing in the cemetery of the abbey. They dug between these till they came to a leaden cross lying under a stone, which had this inscription, and which Giraldus says he saw and handled—"Hic jacet sepultus incytus Rex Arthurus in insula Avallonia."⁴³—Below this, at the depth of sixteen feet from the surface, a coffin of hollowed oak was found containing bones of an unusual size. The leg-bone was three fingers (probably in their breadth) longer than that of the tallest man then present. This man was pointed out to Giraldus. The skull was large, and showed the marks of ten wounds. Nine of these had concreted into the bony mass, but one had a cleft in it, and the opening still remained; apparently the mortal blow.⁴⁴

⁴³ A fac-simile of this inscription is given in Gibson's Camden, p. 66.; and in Whitaker's Manchester, part ii. Dr. Whitaker was told that the cross had then lately been in the possession of Mr. Chancellor Hughes, at Wells. The form of the letters suits the age of Arthur.

⁴⁴ Matthew Paris notices the discovery of the bones, but says that it was occasioned by their digging the grave of a monk, who had an earnest desire to be buried in that spot. It is not improbable that this may have been a further inducement with the convent to have the spot dug.

GIRALDUS says, in another place, that the bones of one of Arthur's wives were found there with his, but distinct, at the lower end. Her yellow hair lay apparently perfect in substance and colour, but on a monk's eagerly grasping and raising it up, it fell to dust.⁴⁵

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THE bones were removed into the great church at Glastonbury, and deposited in a magnificent shrine, which was afterwards placed, in obedience to the order of Edward I., before the high altar. He visited Glastonbury with his queen, in 1276, and had the shrine of Arthur opened to contemplate his remains. They were both so interested by the sight, that the king folded the bones of Arthur in a rich shroud, and the queen those of his wife; and replaced them reverentially in their tomb.⁴⁶

THE circumstances of Arthur's funeral could be known only from Welsh traditions. Giraldus has left us one of these: "Morgan, a noble lady, proprietor of this district and patroness of the Abbey, and related to Arthur, had the king carried, after the battle of Camlan, to the island called Glastonbury to heal his wounds."⁴⁷ The same facts are alluded to by Jeffry, in his elegant poem, which entitles him to more literary

⁴⁵ Girald. *Institutio Principis*. ap. *Lel.* 47. This work still remains in MS. in the British Museum.

⁴⁶ *Mon. Glast.* *Lel.* 55.

⁴⁷ *Gir. in Speculo Ecclesiastico*, MSS. *Brit. Mus.*; and *Ap. Lel.* 44.

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respect than his history, and which contains more of real British traditions.⁴⁸

THE pyramids or obelisks that are stated to have marked the place of Arthur's interment, long remained at Glastonbury. They had images and inscriptions, which have not yet been understood, but which do not seem to relate to Arthur.⁴⁹ A sword, fancied to have been his calibwino, was presented by Richard the First, as a valuable gift, to the king of Sicily.⁵⁰

⁴⁸ It is still in MSS. in the British Museum.

⁴⁹ On one of the sides of the pyramid that was twenty-six feet high, with five sides, was a figure in a pontifical dress: on the second side was a royal personage, with the letters Her, Sexi, Blisyer: on the third, Wemerest, Bantomp, Winewegn: the other sides had also inscriptions. The smaller pyramid was eighteen feet high, and had four sides with inscriptions. W. Malms. de Antiq. Glast. Gale, iii. p. 306., as collated in my copy by Hearne.

⁵⁰ Usher, p. 121. Having thus stated all the circumstances that we can collect of the authentic history of Arthur, we shall present the reader, in the Appendix, with the notices of him in the ancient Welsh bards, and in the Welsh Historical Triads, with some additional circumstances in the British romances concerning him. His traditional history is too curious to be allowed to pass into oblivion, but it is better to keep it distinct from his real life.

CHAP. IV.

Establishment of the ANGLO-SAXONS in EAST ANGLIA, MERCIA, and ESSEX.—Arrival of IDA in NORTHUMBERLAND.—Battles with the BRITONS.—Kingdoms of BERNICIA and DEIRA.

WHILE Cerdic and his son were conflicting with Arthur, and the other British kings and chiefs who opposed them in Hampshire and the adjoining regions, several adventurers from the nation of the Angles in Sleswick, arrived on the eastern coast of the island. The chronology of their invasions cannot be more definitely stated than by the date which an old chronicler has affixed to them, and which accords so well with the other facts on this subject, that it may be considered as intitled to our attention. Another more ancient has mentioned that many petty chiefs arrived in East Anglia and Mercia in the reign of Cerdic, and fought many battles with the natives; but as they formed no kingdom and were numerous, their names had not been preserved. The year in

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First arrivals in East Anglia.
527.

’ H. Huntingd. p. 313.

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Kingdom
of Essex
founded.
530.

which these invasions began to occur is placed by the other annalist in 527.²

CONTEMPORARY with these assailants, a body of Saxons planted themselves in Essex, and protected on the south by the kingdom of the Jutes in Kent, and on the north by the adventurers in East Anglia, they succeeded in founding a little kingdom, about 530³, which has little else to attract our notice, than that it gradually stretched itself into Middlesex and obtained the command of London, then but a flourishing town of trade, though destined in a subsequent age to become the metropolis of all the Jute, Saxon, and Angli kingdoms of the island.

IN this state of the contest between the British nation and their Saxon invaders, while the Britons yet masters of all the island, from the Avon to the Cornish promontory on the west, and to the Firth of Forth on the north, were resisting and arresting the progress of the son of Cerdic on the one hand, and the unrecorded adventurers in Norfolk and Suffolk on the other, the most formidable invasion occurred on the coast above the Humber, which the natives had yet been called upon to oppose. In 547, Ida

Ida arrives
in Berni-
cia.
547.

² Matt. Westm. p. 188.

³ The first king was Erkenwin, who died 587. Matt. Westm. p. 200.

Firth of Forth, or accompanied, a fleet of forty vessels of warriors, all, of the nation of the Angles. ⁴ Twelve sons were with him. ⁵ The chieftains associated with him, or who afterwards joined in his enterprise, appointed him their king. ⁶ Ida, like Hengist, Cerdic, and Ella, traced his pedigree to Woden, the great ancestor of the Anglo-Saxon chieftains, as well as those of Norway, Sweden, and Denmark.

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547.

THAT part of Britain, between the Humber and the Clyde, was occupied by Britons; but they were divided into many states. The part nearest the Humber, was called Deifyr by the ancient natives, which, after the Saxon conquest, was named Deira; and north of Deifyr was Bryneich, which became latinised into Bernicia. Deifyr and Bryneich had three sovereigns, whose names have descended to us: Gall, Dyvedel, and Ysgwnell.

State of
the North.

IN some part of the district, between the Humber and the Clyde, was a state called Reged, which Urien, the patron of Taliesin, governed. In the parts nearest the Clyde, there were three other sovereigns, Rhydderc

⁴ Flor. Wig. "In provincia Berniciorum." p. 218. So Nennius calls him the first king of Bernicia, p. 114.

⁵ We may record their names as specimens of their family appellations: Adda, Belric, Theodric, Ethelric, Theodhere, Osmer from his queens, and Occa, Ailric, Ecca, Oswald, Sogor, and Sogether. Most of these are significant words, or combinations of words in the Saxon language.

⁶ So Huntingdon states, p. 314.

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the Generous, Gwallog the son of Lleenog, and Morgant. Llywarch Hen also enjoyed a little principality in Argoed. Aneurin, the bard, was the chief of a district, called Gododin. And Mynnydawr ruled in a part near the friths at Eidyn, which has been conjectured to be the origin of Edinburgh, or the burgh of Edin. Cunedda was also a wledig, or sovereign, in some of these northern regions, who emigrated into North Wales; and Cau was another. All these, and some others, are mentioned in the Welsh remains; which prove that the north of Britain, like the south, was divided amongst many sovereignties: some of them of very inconsiderable size. This state of the country, at the time of the Anglo-Saxon invasion, must be always recollected, when the facility and permanency of the Saxon conquest are adverted to.⁷ From the Kymry, or Britons, having retained possession of much of this country, for some time after the Saxon invasions, a large portion of it was called Cumbria; which is the Latin name by which their states or kingdoms in these parts have been usually expressed. As the Saxon conquests spread, the extent of British Cumbria was diminished, and the most noted of the British race, who had any Cumbrian

⁷ See for these facts Nennius—Caradoc's Life of Gildas—The Welsh Triads—Aneurin's Gododin—Taliesin's Poems—Cotton. MSS. Vesp. A. 14—Llywarch Hen's Poems—Bodedd y Saint. 2 W. Arch.

kingdom in these parts, were the Ystrad-clwyd, who maintained what has been called the Strat Clyde kingdom. The word, Y-strad-clyd, literally imports the valley of the Clyde; and the region they occupied, was therefore about the Clyde. After enduring wars, with various fortune, with the Britons, the Dalriads, and the Piks, their little kingdom was destroyed in the close of the tenth century. Alclyde, which means the height of the Clyde, was the principal town of the Y-strad-clyde; and was in all likelihood the present Dunbarton. This circumstance increases the probability, that the Eiddyn, another town in these parts, which Mynyddawr governed at this period, was the town on the Forth, almost parallel with Alclyde, and which has long become illustrious, under the name of Edinburgh. Another British state between the Y-strad-clyde, and the Saxons, seems to have existed so late as the tenth century; as Eugenius, or Owen, king of the Cumbri, is then mentioned.⁸

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THE defence of the Britons, according to the poems which appear among the remains of their ancient poets, appears to have been peculiarly vigorous in these districts; and their warriors have received a liberal meed of praise, from the bards whom they patronised.

⁸ Mr. Pinkerton distinguishes the kingdom of Stratclyde from the kingdom of Cumbria, *Inq. Hist. Scot.* i. p. 60—99. But we must add to this opinion, the recollection that there were many British states at the time of Ida's invasion.

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 III.
 547.
 Urien of
 Reged.

OF these, Urien, the chief of Reged, has been most extolled. He was the son of Cynvarc, the Aged.⁹ Taliesin has addressed to him several poems, with warm panegyric; and alludes to him in others. In these he calls him the head of the people; the shield of warriors; the most generous of men; bounteous as the sea; the thunderbolt of the Cymry. He compares his onset to the rushing of the waves; and to the fiery meteors moving across the heavens.¹⁰ But though he notices him as engaged in many battles¹¹, he has only distinctly described the battle of Argoed Llwyfain, and the battle of Gwenystrad.

As Ida was the war-king, who led the Angles against the Britons in these parts, it was with his forces, that Urien and his sons and friends so fiercely combated. He is not named in the Welsh poetry; because they have chosen to stigmatise the invader by a reproachful epithet. They call him Flamddwyn¹², the flame-bearer, or destroyer; a term which implies the devasta-

⁹ Several triads mention him and his family, as also Llywarch Hen, and Taliesin.

¹⁰ See the Yspeil Taliesin, p. 57. Canu Urien Reged, p. 55.; and his other poems addressed to Urien.

¹¹ As in his Canu i Urien, p. 57.

¹² Flamddwyn is also mentioned in the triads; but it is for a misfortune which some ladies will not permit either the brave or the good to escape. His wife, Bun, is classed among the British women who were notorious for unchastity. Trioedd, p. 56. It would seem from this tradition that he had married a British lady.

tions that accompanied his progress. As the elegy of Llywarch Hen, on Urien, expresses that he conquered in the land of Bryneich, or Bernicia¹³; we must infer, that he was frequently successful against Ida; and two of his most fortunate battles appear to be those which Taliesin has selected for his praise.

THE bard states, that on a Saturday, the invaders under “the destroyer,” hastened with four divisions, to surround Goddeu and Reged, the seat of Urien’s government. They spread from Argoed to Arfynnydd, and demanded submission and hostages.

Battle of
Argoed
Llyvain.

OWEN, the son of Urien, and his friend Cenau, indignantly rejected the pacific proposal. Urien then indulged their ardour. He exclaimed,

Being assembled for our country,
Let us elevate our banners above the mountains;
And push forward our forces over the borders;
And lift our spears above the warriors’ heads;
And rush upon the Destroyer in his army;
And slay both him and his followers!

IMPRESSED with his patron’s valour, Taliesin declares, that when he was declining with age, he should be unable to meet death with smiles, unless he was praising Urien.¹⁴

¹³ Llywarch Hen, Welsh Arch. p. 104. Mr. Owen Pughe published a translation of this ancient bard, which, though wanting a little revisal, intitles him to the thanks of all the friends of British literature.

¹⁴ Taliesin, p. 53.

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III.

547.
Battle of
Gweny-
strad.

ANOTHER conflict with Ida, was at the mound of Gwenystrad, literally, "the pleasant valley." The Britons of Cattræth assembled round Urien, "the king of victorious battle." Taliesin, who was present in the struggle, thus describes it :

Neither the fields, nor the woods, gave safety to the foe,
When the shout of the Britons came.
Like a wave raging against the shore —
I saw the brave warriors in array ;
And after the morning, how mangled !
I saw the tumult of the perishing hosts ;
The blood springing forward and moistening the ground.
Gwenystrad was defended by a rampart :
Wearied, on the earth, no longer verdant,
I saw, at the pass of the ford,
The blood-stained men dropping their arms ;
Pale with terror ! —
I admired the brave chief of Reged ;
I saw his reddened brow,
When he rushed on his enemies at Llec gwen Calystan :
Like the bird of rage was his sword on their bucklers ;
It was wielded with deadly fate.

TALIESIN renews his wish not to die pleasantly, unless he was praising Urien.¹⁵

BESIDES the patriotic valour of Urien, which he lavishly praises with all the artifice, and sometimes with the exaggerations of poetry¹⁶;

¹⁵ Taliesin, p. 52.

¹⁶ One specimen may be added :

What noise is that ? Does the earth shake ?
Or is it the swelling sea that roars ?
If there be a sigh in the dingle ;
Is it not Urien who thrusts ?

Taliesin extols highly his liberality. This is the theme of several poems.¹⁷

CHAP.
IV.

547.
Urien
killed.

URIEN was also commemorated by his bardic friend, Llywarch Hen, who has left an elegy upon him. After bravely resisting the Saxons, it was the misfortune of Urien to be involved in one of those civil contests which were at this period the disgrace and ruin of the Britons. As he was besieging one of the descendants and successors of Ida, in Holy Island, he was slain by Llovan Lawdeffro, or Llovan with the detested hand, an emissary of Morgant, one of the chiefs of the Northern Britons.¹⁸ Llywarch's elegy celebrates the British king with much earnest sympathy, but in rude and warlike strains.¹⁹

If there be a sigh on the mountains ;
Is it not Urien who conquers ?
If there be a sigh on the slope of the hills ;
Is it not Urien who wounds ?
If there be a sigh of dismay ;
Is it not from the assault of Urien ?
There is no refuge from him ;
Nor will there be from famine,
To those who seek plunder near him !
His wrath is death !

Can. Urien, p. 56.

¹⁷ See the Dadolwch Urien, which is translated in the Vindication of the ancient British Poems, p. 244. See also the Songs to Urien in 1 Welsh Arch. p. 55.

¹⁸ Nenn. Gen. p. 117. Trioedd. 38. p. 9.

¹⁹ Marwnad Lly. Hen. W. A. p. 103—107. As Llywarch Hen is one of the British bards of the sixth century,

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III.

547.

His son
Owen.

OWEN, one of the sons of Urien, was also distinguished for his brave resistance to the

the genuineness of whose poems is strongly marked, I will translate some extracts from his Elegy on Urien of Reged. He begins with an abrupt address to his spear.

Let me rush forward, thou ashen piercer!
Fierce thine aspect in the conflict!
'Tis better to kill than to parley.

Let me rush forward, thou ashen piercer!
Bitter and sullen as the laugh of the sea
Was the bursting tumult of the battle,
Of Urien of Reged the vehement and stubborn.

An eagle to his foe in his thrust, brave as generous,
In the angry warfare, certain of victory
Was Urien, ardent in his grasp.

I bear by my side a head;
The head of Urien!
The courteous leader of his army;
But on his white bosom the raven is feeding.
He was a shield to his country;
His course was a wheel in battle.
Better to me would be his life than his mead:
He was a city to old age;
The head, the noblest pillar of Britain.

I bear a head that supported me!
Is there any known but he welcomed?
Woe to my hand!
Where is he that feasted me?

I bear a head from the mountain:
The lips foaming with blood.
Woe to Reged from this day.

Angles under Ida. Taliesin praises his liberality and valour; and says he chased his enemy,

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IV.

547.

My arm has not shrunk
But my breast is greatly troubled.
My heart! is it not broken?
The head I bear supported me.

The slender white body will be interred to-day,
Under earth and stones.
Woe to my hand!
The father of Owen is slain.—

Eurddyl will be joyless to-night.
Since the leader of armies is no more,
In Aber Lleu Urien fell.—

Dissevered is my lord:
Yet from his manly youth
The warriors loved not his resentment.
Many chiefs has he consumed.

The fiery breath of Urien has ceas'd.
I am wretched.
There is commotion in every district,
In search of Llovan with the detested hand.

Silent is the gale
But long wilt thou be heard.
Scarcely any deserve praise,
Since Urien is no more.

Many a dog for the hunt and ethereal hawk
Have been trained on this floor,
Before Erleon was shaken into ruins.

This hearth! no shout of heroes now adheres to it:
More usual on its floor
Was the mead; and the inebriated warriors.

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III.
547.

as a herd of wolves pursuing sheep.²⁰ In his Song to the Winds, the bard records Owen's successful defence of the flocks and cattle of his province; and also mentions his battles at the ford of Alclud, and other places. The poet's imagery is wild and dismal, like his subject. He describes the swords whirled round the faces of the combatants, and the blood staining their temples. "There was joy," he exclaims, "that day to the ravens, when men

This hearth! will not nettles now cover it?
While its defender lived,
More frequent was the tread of the petitioner.

The green sod will cover it now;
But when Owen and Elphin lived
Its cauldron seethed the prey.

This hearth! the mouldy fungus will hide it now.
More usual about its meals
Was the striking of the sword of the fierce warrior.

Thorns will now cover it.
More usual once was the mixture
Of Owen's friends in social harmony.

Ants will soon overrun it.
More frequent were the bright torches
And honest festivities.

Swine will henceforward dig the ground,
Where once the gladness of heroes
And the horn of the banquet went round:
It was the solace of the army and the path of melody.

²⁰ Marwnad Owain ap Urien Reged, Tal. 1 W. A. p. 59.

clamoured with the frowning countenance of battle. But the shield of Owen never receded."²¹ The elegy states, that by the sword of this warrior, Flamddwyn perished.²² Taliesin occasionally commemorates other British heroes; but as it would be useless to revive a catalogue of names, long since forgotten, they need not be enumerated here.

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IV.
547.

THAT conflict between the Saxons and Britons, which occupies the largest space in the ancient British poetry, is the battle or destruction of Cattraeth. It forms the subject of the Gododin of Aneurin²³, a poem much alluded to and venerated by the poets of Wales, and which has procured for him, among them, the title of the king of the bards. He was a chieftain in the northern part of the island, in the sixth century; and perished at last from the blow of an axe, inflicted by one Eiddyn, who has been

Battle of
Cattraeth.

²¹ Can y Gwynt, p. 38, 39.

²² Marwnad Owain, p. 59. Both the Saxon Chronicles, Flor. Wig. p. 218., and Nennius, p. 116., mention Ida to have reigned only twelve years. Yet Huntingdon calls him at his accession "juvenem nobilissimum," p. 314. The comparison of these authorities places Ida's death in the flower of his manhood; and this gives a countenance to the Welsh bard's assertion, that he perished in his conflicts with Owen of Reged.

²³ It is the first poem printed in the Archaiology of Wales. I printed a translation of the first seventy-three lines, in the "Vindication of the ancient British Poems," p. 214—220.

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III.

547.
The Gododin of
Aneurin.

therefore classed as one of the three foul assassins of Britain.²⁴

As it contains no regular narration of incident, and no introductory annunciation of its subject, but consists chiefly of stanzas but little connected, on the feats and praises of the chieftains whom it commemorates; and as it records places and British heroes, whose names, however notorious in their day, are not preserved elsewhere, it is difficult to say to what precise event or locality it actually applies. That the warriors mentioned were the contemporaries of Aneurin is clear, from its contents²⁵, but this is all that we can with certainty infer.

It has been usually supposed to record a battle, between the collected Britons of the north, under Mynyddawg of Eidyn, which has been assumed to be Edinburgh, and the Saxons of Ida, or his successor. The issue was calamitous to the Britons; for out of above 360, who

²⁴ "Tair anfad gyflafan ynys Prydain. Eiddyn mab Einygan a laddwys Aneurin Gwawdrydd mydeyrn beird." Triad 47. 2 Welsh Arch. p. 65., and see p. 9.

²⁵ Thus he says he saw what he describes:

"I saw the scene from the high land of Adoen.
I saw the men in complete order at dawn at Adoen.
And the head of Dyfnwal ravens were consuming."

Gweleis y dull o ben tir Adoen.
Gweleis y wyr tyll vawr gan u aur Adoen.
Aphen Dyvynaul vrych brein ae cnoyn.

God. W. A. p. 13.

wore the golden torques, the mark of their nobility, only three escaped, of whom the bard was one.²⁶ This unfortunate result is undeniably stated; and it is as manifestly imputed to the Britons having previously indulged in an excess of mead.

CHAP.
IV.
547.

A RECENT writer on Cambrian mythology, whose imagination has been as active as such an illusive subject could excite it to be, has strenuously urged, that the Gododin records the famous massacre of the British nobles by Hengist.²⁷ That it neither mentions Hengist nor Gwrtheyrn, has not appeared to him to be an

The new theory upon it.

²⁶ A stanza of the Gododin thus states the result :

“ The warriors went to Cattræth. They were famous.
Wine and mead, from gold, had been their liquors —
Three heroes, and three score, and three hundred,
With the golden torques.
Of those who hastened after the jovial excess,
There escaped only three from the power of the swords,
The two war-dogs, Aeron and Cynon Dayarawd,
And I from the flowing blood,
The reward of my blessed muse.”

Godod. p. 4.

²⁷ See Mythology and Rites of the British Druids, p. 318—384. Of its author, the Rev. Edward Davies, I wish to speak with more than mere respect, because his remarks on the ancient Welsh literature, in this work and in his Celtic researches, though displaying the same creative imagination, which pervades and injures Mr. Whitaker’s historical investigations, have yet in many parts thrown great light on the venerable remains of the British bards, and contributed to gain for them more attention than they have been accustomed to receive.

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objection.²⁸ He supports his opinion by an unusually free translation, and by a sanguine commentary.

THIS translation contains so much fancy, and is in parts so forcibly adapted to the conjecture, and the whole is removed so much from the plain literal sense, that if our opinion were to be formed only from the ingenious version, the new idea might be dismissed as the illusion of a warm imagination. But, after deliberating carefully on many passages in the poem, I am inclined to think, that it may relate to the same incident, which has become the subject of the tradition alluded to; although, if it has this reference, that incident cannot be attached to Hengist, and did not occur in the manner hinted by Nennius, and detailed by Jeffry.²⁹

²⁸ Mr. Davies thinks that he traces various allusions to them and to Ambrosius; but the same latitude of construction in this respect would almost make any poem mean any thing.

²⁹ The difference of opinion between Mr. Davies and all former readers of the Gododin, cannot be better stated than in his own words: "I also perceived, that the great catastrophe which the bard deploras, *was not*, as it has been generally represented, the fall of 360 nobles in the field of battle, to which they had rushed forth in a state of intoxication; *but*, the massacre of 360 unarmed British nobles, in time of peace, and at a feast, where they had been arranged promiscuously with armed Saxons," p. 321. On this I will only remark, that the former opinion is the manifest literal import of the poet's words. The new conjecture requires the ingenious author's commentary, as well as an adapted translation to make it at all probable.

THE prevailing subject of the poem, continually repeated in every second or third stanza, is the intoxication of the Britons, from some great feast of mead, previous to the battle.³⁰ So far the poem and the tradition correspond; and all the British nobles perished but three, another coincidence. But as Aneurin, according to the unvarying statement of the Welsh literature, lived in the early part of the sixth³¹ century, and was contemporary with Taliesin, who mentions him³²; and as the bard was himself one of

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IV.
547.

Its want
of founda-
tion.

³⁰ They went to Cattræth :
Loquacious were their hosts.
Pale mead had been their feast, and was their poison.
God. p. 2.

So many other passages :

Gwyr a æth Gattræth vedvæth vedwn. Ibid.

Med yvynt melyn melyn maglawr. Ibid.

Cyt yven vedd gloew wrth liw babir,
Cyt vei da ei vlas y gas bu hir. Ibid.

So the bard says he partook of the wine and mead there :

Yveis y win a med y Mordai. God. p. 4.

³¹ So Mr. Davies acknowledges, p. 317.; and adds, "Edward Llwyd refers the æra of the Gododin to the year 510, and this probably upon the authority of the ancient MS. which he quotes in the same passage," p. 321.

³² In his Anrec Urien, p. 51. In like manner Aneurin speaks of Taliesin :

I Aneurin will do
What is known to Taliesin,
The partaker of my mind. God. p. 7.

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the survivors of the conflict, and a captive from it ³³, it cannot have occurred till some time after Hengist had died. ³⁴ To this decisive evidence,

³³ Aneurin thus mentions his captivity :

In the earthy abode,
With the iron chain
About the top of my two knees ;
From the mead,
From the festive horns,
From the host at Cattraeth. \ God. p. 7.

³⁴ Mr. Davies escapes the difficulties of chronology by three large suppositions. First, he supposes, that though Hengist came in 449, yet that the reputed massacre did not occur till 472. But though Hengist was then alive, the Saxon Chronicle states, that he obtained his kingdom after a battle in 455 ; and that in 457, after another battle, the Britons abandoned Kent. Another battle, in which twelve British leaders fell, occurred in 465. After such transactions as these, such a confiding banquet was not likely to have occurred on the part of the Britons, nor was such a massacre wanted to give Hengist that kingdom, which he had both acquired and maintained. His second and third will best speak for themselves : “ There is no improbability in Aneurin’s having attended the feast, as a young bard, in 472, and his having bewailed the friends of his youth, *thirty-eight* years *afterwards*, when he had fallen into the hands of the foe, and was confined in a dreary dungeon,” p. 322. Yet according to Aneurin’s own expressions in the preceding note, the captivity seems to me to be clearly referred to the destruction at Cattraeth. His words are :

Yn y ty deyerin
Catuyn heyernin
Am benn vy deulin
O ved o vuelin
O Gattræth wnin.

Then follows the passage, in note 32., on himself and Taliesin.

from its chronology, may be added a remark, that although to the praise of his several heroes, or of their exploits, he annexes, almost invariably, a lamentation of their festive indulgence; yet this is not accompanied with any specific charge of treachery on the part of the Saxons.³⁵ If it related to the reported massacre, the natural process of the poet's mind would have been to have inveighed against the Saxons for their perfidy; instead of so continuously censuring the Britons for their inebriety. If Hengist had invited them to a banquet of peace and friendship, it was not merely natural, but it was even laudable, according to the customs of that age, that the festivity should advance to intoxication. As it is not likely that the bards ever witnessed a public banquet without this termination, it could not justly form, nor would have been made a subject of inculpation.

THAT the Gododin should commemorate so many British chiefs, Ceawg³⁶, Cynon, Madawg, Tulwylch, Mynnydawg, Cyvwylch, Caradawg,

³⁵ Mr. Davies believes he discerns such charges. But the supposed allusions are not direct, and do not seem to me to be the natural construction of the passages so applied.

³⁶ This hero, whose name begins four of the stanzas of the poem, and whose praise seems to be their import, has been converted by Mr. Davies, contrary to all former translations, into an epithet. But by the same mode of interpretation, when we meet with the names Hengist, Cicero, and Našo, we may, if we please, turn our Saxon ancestor into a war-horse; the Roman orator into a bean; and the poet of the metamorphoses into a nose.

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547.

Owen, Eidiol, Pereddur, and Aeddan; and yet not actually name either Gwrthyrn, Guortemir, or Ambrosius, cannot but strengthen the inference, that it has no concern with the latter; for why should some be mentioned directly and plainly, and others never named, but implied, as he thinks, by some periphrasis?

THE locality of the incident, alluded to in the poem, seems also, as far as it can be ascertained, to be inconsistent with the massacre imputed to Hengist. It fixes the scene at Cattræth, and it implies that the people of Deira and Bernicia were in the conflict.³⁷ Cattræth has been always placed in the northern districts. So has Eidyn, from which Mynnydawg came, whose courteousness is repeatedly praised in the poem, and whom in its natural construction it mentions as the commander of the British force. His host is also mentioned in the conflict, not as if he was feasting with a small retinue, but as his warlike tribe³⁸; and it is correspondent with

³⁷ Of the men of Dewyr and Bryneich :
The dreadful ones !
Twenty hundred perished in an hour.

O wyr Dewyr a Bryneich dychrawr
Ugeincant eu divant yn un awr. God. p. 2.

³⁸ The Gorgordd Mynnydawc mwyn vawr : “ the host of Mynnydawg the Courteous,” is mentioned in several passages : as

Rac Gorgordd Mynnydawc mwyn vawr. — Twice in p. 2.

this view that the Triads mention his host at the battle of Cattræth, as one of the three gallant hosts of Britain, because they followed their chiefs at their own charge.³⁹

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547.

THE natural import of the poem is, that the Britons had fought hastily on one of their festive days. And this leads us to infer, that they might have been surprised by an unexpected advance of the Saxon forces. That 360 nobles intoxicated at a previous banquet should have perished in this battle, and that 360 should be the number said to have been massacred by Hengist at his feast, are coincidences that lead the mind to believe there may be some connection between the two incidents. But every other circumstance is so unlike, that we may more reasonably suppose, that the actual event occurred as Aneurin has exhibited it; and that tradition has erroneously attached it to the first Saxon invader, and made the banquet and its calamitous consequences the result of a premeditated treachery.

He is also noticed in p. 10. and 11. The last is

Of the host of Mynnydawg there escaped
But one weapon.

Mr. Davies transforms this proper name into an epithet, implying mountain chief; and then supposes it to mean Vortigern, because North Wales is a mountainous region, and Vortigern was the lord of it, p. 322.

³⁹ See Triad 79.; 2 Welsh Arch. p. 69.; and Triad 36. p. 8.

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III.
547.

THE same conflict is alluded to in other poems; but its disastrous issue and the inebriety, not the Saxon perfidy, is the usual topic.⁴⁰ Even Golyddan, who mentions the massacre of Hengist, has no allusion to Cattraeth or Mynnydawg, nor gives any intimation that it relates to the subject of the Gododin.⁴¹

⁴⁰ It is thus alluded to in a poem printed in the Welsh Archaology, as a part of Taliesin's Dyhuddiant Elphin, though it obviously begins as that ends. Mr. Davies found it to be in one MS. appended to Aneurin's Gododin, Celt. Res. 574. The passage may be thus translated :

A year of sorrow
For the men of Cattraeth !
They nourished me.
Their steel blades ;
Their mead ;
Their violence ;
And their fetters. 1 W. Arch. p. 21.

In the Gorchan Cynvelyn, the incantation of Cynbelyn, it is thus mentioned, as if by Aneurin himself :

Three warriors, and three score, and three hundred,
Went to the tumult at Cattraeth.
Of those that hastened
To the bearers of the mead,
Except three, none returned.

Cynon and Cattraeth
With songs they preserve,
And me — for my blood they bewailed me —
The son of the omen fire,
They made a ransom,
Of pure gold, and steel, and silver. Ibid. p. 61.

⁴¹ The golden torques mentioned by Aneurin was then worn in Britain. " In 1692, an ancient golden torques was dug up near the castle of Harlech, in Merionethshire. It is

CHAP.
IV.

547.
Slow progress of the
Angles.

THE progress of the Angles in the north was slow and difficult. The Britons appear to have fought more obstinately in these parts than in any other. Three of their kings, besides Urien and his son, are named, Ryderthen, Guallawc, and Morcant⁴², as maintaining the struggle against the sons of Ida, and with alternate success. Sometimes the Britons, sometimes the Angles conquered. After one battle, the latter were driven into an adjoining island, and were for three days besieged there⁴³, till Urien, their pursuer, was assassinated, by an agent of Morcant, one of the British kings that had joined him in the attack on the invaders. The motive to this atrocious action was the military fame which Urien was acquiring.⁴⁴ The short reign

a wreathed bar of gold, or perhaps three or four rods jointly twisted, about four feet long, flexile, but naturally bending only one way in form of a hat-band; it is hooked at both ends; it is of a round form, about an inch in circumference, and weighs eight ounces." Gibson's Additions to Camden, p. 658. ed. 1695.—Bonduca wore one, Xiphelin. Epit. Dionis. p. 169. ed. H. S. 1591; and the Gauls used them, Livy, lib. xxxvi. c. 40. Gibson quotes a passage of Virgil, Æneid, lib. v. v. 559., which implies that the Trojan youth wore them.—Llywarch, p. 135., says, that his twenty-four sons were eudorchawg, or wearers of the golden torques, which, from the above description, we perceive was not a chain.

⁴² Nennius Geneal. p. 117.

⁴³ Nennius, p. 117.

⁴⁴ Nenn. p. 117. The Welsh Triads mention this murder in noticing the three foul assassins of Britain. "Llofan Llawddmo, who killed Urien the son of Cynfarch," Trioedd 38. 2 W. A. p. 9.

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III.

of Ida's six immediate successors, induce us to suppose them to have been shortened by the violent deaths of destructive warfare.⁴⁵

Ida's
death.
559.

THE death of Ida, in 559, produced a division of his associates. His son Adda succeeded; but one of his allied chieftains, also a descendant of Woden, quitted Bernicia, and sought with those who followed him a new fortune, by attacking the British kingdom of Deifyr, between the Tweed and the Humber. This chieftain was named Ella, and he succeeded in conquering this district, in which he raised the Angle kingdom of Deira, and reigned in it for thirty years.⁴⁶ Yet though able to force an establishment in this country, many years elapsed before it was completely subdued; for Elmet, which is a part of Yorkshire, was not conquered till the reign of his son, who expelled from it Certic, its British king.⁴⁷

Establish-
ment of
the oct-
archy.

ONE Jute, three Saxon, and three Angle kingdoms were thus established in Britain by the year 560: in Kent, Sussex, Wessex, Essex, East Anglia, Bernicia, and Deira. Another Angle-kingdom was about twenty-six years afterwards added in Mercia, which became in time more powerful and celebrated than any other,

⁴⁵ Thus his son Adda, his eldest son, reigned but seven years; Clappa, five; Theodulf, one; Freothulf, seven; Theodric, seven; and Ethelric, two. Flor. Wig. 221.

⁴⁶ Flor. Wig. 221. Sax. Ch. 20.

⁴⁷ Nenn. Geneal. p. 117.

except that of the West Saxons, who at last conquered it. This kingdom of Mercia made the eighth which these bold adventurers succeeded in founding. It was formed the latest of all. The first enterprises of the Angles against the district in which it was raised, were those of inferior chieftains, whose names have not survived their day; and it seems to have been at first considered as a part of Deira, or an appendage to it. Its foundation is dated in ⁴⁸ 586. But although Crida is named as its first sovereign, yet it was his grandson, Penda, who is represented as having first separated it from the dominion of the northern Angles. ⁴⁹

WHEN we contemplate the slow progress of the Saxon conquests, and the insulated settlements of the first adventurers, we can hardly repress our surprise, that any invader should have effected a permanent residence. Hengist was engaged in hostility for almost all his life; the safety of Ella in Sussex was little less precarious. The forces of either were so incomensurable with the numbers and bravery of the people they attacked, that nothing seems to have saved them from expulsion or annihila-

⁴⁸ Crida was the first Mercian sovereign, and grandfather to Penda; he began to reign, 586. 3 Gale Scriptores, 229. H. Hunt. 315. 2 Leland's Collectanea, 56., 1 ib. 258.— Leland, ib. i. 211., from an old chronicle, observes that the Trent divided Mercia into two kingdoms, the north and south.

⁴⁹ Nenn. Geneal. 117.

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III.

560.

tion, but the civil dissensions of the natives. Fallen into a number of petty states ⁵⁰, in actual warfare with each other, or separated by jealousy, Britain met the successive invaders with a local, not with a national force, and rarely with any combination. The selfish policy of its chiefs, often viewing with satisfaction the misfortunes of each other, facilitated the successes of the Saxon aggressions.

Frisians in
England.

ALTHOUGH the people, who invaded Britain, were principally, Saxons, Angles, and Jutes, yet as the Saxon confederation extended from the Baltic to the Rhine, if not to the Scheldt, we can easily accredit the intimations, which we occasionally meet with, that Frisians ⁵¹, and their neighbours were mixed with the Saxons. The Britons maintained a long, though a disorderly and ill-conducted struggle, and many fleets of victims must have been sacrificed, by their patriotic vengeance, before the several kingdoms were established. In such a succession of conflicts, the invading chiefs would gladly enlist every band of rovers, who offered; and, as in a future day, every coast of Scandinavia and the Baltic poured their warriors on England, so is it likely that, in the pre-

⁵⁰ Tota insula, diversis regibus divisa, subjacuit. Joannes Tinmuth ap Usher, 662.

⁵¹ Bede, lib. v. c. 10. Procop. lib. iv. p. 467. Colinus, ap Canneg. de Britten, p. 68.; and Ubb. Emm. p. 41.; and Spener, 361.

sent period, adventurers crowded from every neighbouring district.⁵²

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IV.
560.

IN this part of our subject we are walking over the country of the departed, whose memory has not been perpetuated by the commemorating heralds of their day. A barbarous age is unfriendly to human fame. When the clods of his hillock are scattered, or his funereal stones are thrown down, the glory of a savage perishes for ever. In after-ages, fancy labours to supply the loss, but her incongruities are visible; and may easily be separated.

OPPOSITE to the island of Northstrand, on the western shore of Sleswick, a small tract of land, dangerous from its vicinity to a turbulent sea, was in ancient times occupied by a colony of Frisians. They extended north from Husum for several miles along the sea-coast. In the middle of the district was the town Brested, surrounded by a rich soil, though sands extended beyond. It terminated about Langhorn. The people who dwelt on it were called Strand-frisii, and the tract was denominated Frisia Minor. The marshy soil was colonised by the natives of Friesland, in an age which has not

Strand-
frisii.

⁵² So Mascou also thinks, p. 527. Some of the Icelandic writings mention northern kings, who had dominions in Britain, in the sixth and seventh centuries. If they be not entirely fabulous, they may relate to some of these expeditions. On this period we may also recollect the life of the first Offa. See Matt. Paris. Vit. Offæ.

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III.

560.

been ascertained. Saxo speaks of Canute the Fifth's journey to it, and then describes it as rich in corn and cattle, and protected from the ocean by artificial mounds. It was a complete flat; the waters sometimes were terrible to it; fields were often burst, and carried off to another spot, leaving to their owner a watery lake. Fertility followed the inundation. The people were fierce, active, disdaining heavy armour, and expert with their missile weapons.⁵³

It is an opinion of Usher⁵⁴, that these Frisians, accompanied Hengist into England. To convert Hengist's Jutes into the Strandfrisii Jutes is an exertion of mere conjecture. These Frisii, as well as others from Friesland, may have joined in some of the expeditions, and this probability is all that can be admitted.

The settle-
ments of
the Jutes
and Anglo-
Saxons.

THE various parts of Britain, into which the Saxons and their confederates spread themselves, may be stated from the Irish primate's commentary on Bede's brief distinction, which forms the basis of all our reasonings on the subject.⁵⁵

⁵³ Pontanus, *Chrorograph.* 657. Saxo Grammaticus, lib. xiv. p. 260. Ed. Steph. and his *Prefatio*, p. 3. Frisia Major was not unlike it, as a low marshy soil, much exposed to the fury of the ocean. Saxo, lib. viii. p. 167.; and Steph. notes, 16.

⁵⁴ Usher, *Primord.* 397.

⁵⁵ Bede has thus placed them. The Jutes in Kent and the Isle of Wight. The Saxons in Essex, Sussex, and Wessex. The Angles, whose native country remained in

THE JUTES possessed Kent, the Isle of Wight, and that part of the coast of Hampshire which fronts it.

CHAP.
IV.
560.

THE SAXONS were distinguished, from their situation, into

South Saxons, who peopled Sussex.

East Saxons, who were in Essex, Middlesex, and the south part of Hertfordshire.

West Saxons, in Surrey, Hampshire (the scite of the Jutes excepted), Berks, Wilts, Dorset, Somerset, Devon, and that part of Cornwall which the Britons were unable to retain.

THE ANGLES were divided into

East Angles, in Norfolk, Suffolk, Cambridge, the Isle of Ely, and (it should seem) part of Bedfordshire.

Middle Angles, in Leicestershire, which appertained to Mercia.

The Mercians, divided by the Trent into

South Mercians, in the counties of Lincoln,

his time a desert, in East Anglia, Midland Anglia, Mercia, and all Northumbria, p. 52. Alfred, in his translation of the passage, makes no addition to this information. The people of Wessex were called Ge-wisi, in Bede's time and before, lib. iii. c. 7.

BOOK

III.

560.

Northampton, Rutland, Huntingdon, the north parts of Bedfordshire and Hertfordshire, Bucks, Oxfordshire, Gloucestershire, Warwickshire, Worcestershire, Herefordshire, Staffordshire, Shropshire.

North Mercians, in the counties of Chester, Derby, and Nottingham.

The Northumbrians, who were,

The Deiri, in Lancaster, York, Westmoreland, Cumberland, Durham.

The Bernicians, in Northumberland, and the south of Scotland, between the Tweed and the Firth of Forth.⁵⁶

⁵⁶ Usher, Primord. c. 12. p. 394. With this, Camden's idea may be compared; and for the sentiments of an ingenious modern on the Anglo-Saxon geography, see Dr. Whitaker's Hist. Manchester, lib. ii. c. 4. p. 88.

CHAP. V.

The History of the ANGLO-SAXON Octarchy, and its further Successes against the BRITONS, to the beginning of the Seventh Century.

THE exertions of the British against their invaders having thus failed, eight Anglo-Saxon governments were established in the island. This state of Britain has been improperly denominated the Saxon heptarchy.¹ When all the kingdoms were settled, they formed an octarchy. Ella, supporting his invasion in Sussex, like Hengist in Kent, made a Saxon duarchy before the year 500. When Cerdic erected the state of Wessex in 519, a triarchy appeared; East

CHAP.

V.

560.
An oct-
archy es-
tablished.

¹ Although most of our ancient annalists and modern historians have retained the word heptarchy, yet one old chronicler, I perceive, has more critically said, "Provincia Britonum, quæ modo Anglia nominatur, Saxonum temporibus in octo regna divisa fuerit." Th. Rudborne's Hist. Major. Winton. I Anglia Sacra, 187. — Matth. Westm. 198. as correctly states the Anglo-Saxon kingdoms to have been eight. He names the eight kings who reigned in 586, p. 200.

The word heptarchy came to be used from the habit of mentioning the two kingdoms of Deira and Bernicia, under the appellation of Northumbria. But though they were united under one sovereign, yet, as they became consolidated, Essex, Kent, or Sussex, ceased to be separate and independent kingdoms; so that the term was still improper.

BOOK
III.

560.

Anglia made it a tetrarchy; Essex a pentarchy. The success of Ida, after 547, having established a sovereignty of Angles in Bernicia, the island beheld an hexarchy. When the northern Ella penetrated, in 560, southward of the Tees, his kingdom of Deira produced an heptarchy. In 586, the Angles branching from Deira into the regions south of the Humber, the state of Mercia completed an Anglo-Saxon octarchy. As the Anglo-Saxons warred with each other, sometimes one state was for a time absorbed by another; sometimes, after an interval, it emerged again. If that term ought to be used which expresses the complete establishment of the Anglo-Saxons, it should be octarchy; if not, then the denomination must vary as the tide of conquest fluctuated. If the collective governments are to be denominated from the nations who peopled them, as these were three, the general term should be triarchy; but it is obvious, that octarchy is the appellation that best suits the historical truth.

It was in the slow progression which has been stated that the Anglo-Saxons possessed themselves of the different districts of the island. The Britons, with all the faults of their mode of defence, yielded no part till it had been dearly purchased; and almost a century and a half passed away from the first arrival of Hengist to the full establishment of the octarchy. We cannot state in what year each British principality

was destroyed, or each county subdued; but we have seen that, from the sea coasts where they landed, the invaders had always to fight their way with pertinacity, and difficulty, to the inland provinces.

CHAP.
V.
560.

BUT the Anglo-Saxons, as they advanced, did not, as some have fancied, exterminate the Britons; though many devastations must have accompanied their progress. The fierce warriors of Germany wanted husbandmen, artisans, and menials for domestic purposes. There can be no doubt that the majority of the British population was preserved to be useful to their conquerors. But the latter imposed their own names on every district, place, and boundary; and spread exclusively their own language in the parts which they occupied. It is however true, that some Britons disdained the Saxon yoke, and emigrated to other countries. Armorica, or Bretagne, was the refuge to many. From others, Cornwall and Wales received a large accession of population; and some are even said to have visited Holland.²

² H. Canegieter, in his Dissertation de Brittenburgo, Hag. Co. 1734, has particularly examined this point. His decision is that Brittenburg was named from the Britons, but was built by the Romans. He prefers, to the assertion of Gerbrandus, that the Britons fled from the Saxons to Holland, and built Catwych on the Rhine, the opinion of Colinus, the ancient monastical poet, who admits that they visited and ravaged it, but affirms that they did not settle.

BOOK
III.

560.
Restoration of the
Britons
predicted.

THE most indignant of the Cymry retired into Wales. There, the bards, fugitives like the rest, consoled the expatriated Britons with the hope that the day would afterwards arrive when they should have their full revenge, by driving out the Saxon hordes. Not only Taliesin sung this animating prediction³; Myrddin also promised the Britons that they should again be led by their majestic chief, and be

³ A serpent with chains,
Towering and plundering,
With armed wings
 From Germania;
This will overrun
All Loegria and Brydon,
From the land of the Lochlin sea
 To the Severn.

After mentioning that the Britons will be exiles and prisoners to Saxony, he adds,

 Their lord they shall praise,
 Their language preserve,
 Their country lose
 Except wild Wales,
Till the destined period of their triumph revolves,
 Then the Britons will obtain
 The crown of their land,
 And the strange people
 Will vanish away.

He concludes with declaring that Michael has predicted the future happiness of Britain. Taliesin, p. 94.

Gildas, p. 8., states, that the Saxons had a prophecy that they should ravage Britain 150 years, and enjoy it 150. The limitation has rather a Cambrian aspect.

again victorious. He boldly announced, that in this happy day should be restored to every one his own; that then the horns of gladness should proclaim the song of peace, the serene days of Cambrian happiness.⁴ The anticipation of this blissful æra gave rapture to the Cymry, even in their stony paradise of Wales.⁵ The proud invaders mocked the vaunting prophecy, and, to render it nugatory, they unpeopled some of their native coasts on the Baltic⁶, and filled Britain with an active and hardy race, whose augmenting population and persevering valour at length carried the hated Saxon sceptre even to the remotest corners of venerated Anglesey. But up to the reign of Alfred, and even afterwards, the Britons still maintained their own kingdoms in Cornwall and part of Devonshire, and in that portion of the north which composed the Stratclyde district. It was not till Athelstan that they finally lost Exeter.

⁴ Myrddhin's *Afallenau*, p. 153. Golyddan, in his *Arymes Prydein vawr*, endeavours to inspire his countrymen by a similar prediction. The first part is a review of the transactions between Hengist and the Britons. It is in the *Welsh Archaology*, vol. i. p. 156—159.

⁵ These epithets are Welsh. Stony Wales is a phrase of Taliesin, and Llywarch denominates Powys "the paradise of the Cymry," p. 119.

⁶ Bede affirms the complete emigration of the Angles; he says, their country "ab eo tempore usque hodie manere desertus," lib. i. c. 15. To the like purpose Nennius, "ita ut insulas de quibus venerant absque habitatore relinquerunt," c. 37.

BOOK
III.
571.

THE Britons long after Arthur's death maintained their patriotic struggle against the kingdom of Wessex. They fought, though unsuccessfully, at Bedford, against the brother of Ceawlin, as we have noticed before. The Anglo-Saxon, in marching back to Wessex, through the districts yet in the hands of the natives, took Lygeanburh, Aylesbury, Bensington, and Ensham.⁷ Six years afterwards, the Britons again resisted the progressive ambition of the Saxons. An important battle occurred between them at Derham, in Gloucestershire, in which some of the kings of Wales appear to have confederated against the invaders; for three British sovereigns, Conmail, Condidan, and Farinmail fell in the conflict⁸: two of these seem to be the princes lamented by Llywarch Hen in one of his elegies⁹: the last was king

⁷ Sax. Ch. 22. Fl. Wig. 222. Ethelw. 834.

⁸ Sax. Ch. 22. Fl. Wig. 223. Ethelw. 835.

⁹ His Marwnad Cynddylan, the son of Cyndrwyn. It begins energetically:

Stand out, ye virgins,
And behold the habitation of Cynddylan.
The palace of Pengwern:
Is it not in flames?
Woe to the young who wish for social bonds.

One tree with the woodbine round it
Perhaps may escape.
What God wills; be it done.

of Monmouthshire.¹⁰ The capture of three cities, then of considerable note among the Britons, as they are now to us, Gloucester, Cirencester, and Bath, were the fruits of the Saxon victory.¹¹

CHAP.
V.
571.

Cynddylan!

Thy heart is like the wintry ice.

Twrch pierced thee through the head.

Thou gavest the ale of Tren. W. Arch. p. 107.

The venerable bard proceeds with his panegyrical apostrophes to his deceased friend, calling him the bright pillar of his country; the sagacious in thought; with the heart of a hawk, of a greyhound, of a wild boar; and daring as a wolf tracing the fallen carcass. See it translated by Mr. Owen Pugh, p. 71—105. It contains some beautiful passages of natural pathos, which shall be given in the appendix on the Welsh literature.

He also commemorates Caranmael, apparently the Saxon Conmail.

I heard from the meadow the clattering of shields.

The city confines not the mighty.

The best of men was Caranmael. W. A. p. 112.

He also laments the fall of Freuer.

Is it not the death of Freuer.

That separates me this night?

Fatal end of social comfort!

It breaks my sleep. I weep at the dawn.

W. A. p. 110.

¹⁰ I do not know that the Freuer of Llyward means the same person as Farinmail; but it is likely that this was the Fernvail who was then reigning in Gwent or Monmouthshire. See Regis. Landew, quoted by Langhorn in his useful chronicle, p. 115.

¹¹ Ethelwerd calls these cities, *urbes eorum clariores*, p. 835. Huntingdon's epithet is *excellētissimas*, p. 315.

BOOK
III.
571.

SEVEN years afterwards, we read of Ceawlin pursuing hostilities against the Britons on the Severn. A bloody contest occurred at Frithern. The Britons fought with earnest resolution, and for some time with unusual success. The brother of the West-Saxon King was slain, and his forces gave way. But Ceawlin rallied his countrymen, and, after great slaughter, obtained the victory. The issue was as decisive as it had been long doubtful; and many towns were added to Wessex, and a vast booty divided among the conquerors.¹² The Britons, with undismayed perseverance, fought again seven years afterwards, at Wanborough, and appear to have obtained a complete victory.¹³ There were probably many efforts of minor importance made by the Britons which the Saxon chroniclers have not noticed.¹⁴

¹² Flor. 224. Hunt. 315. M. Westm. omits the ultimate success of Ceawlin, and states it as a British victory, p. 198. Soon after this contest, Langhorn quotes Io. Salisb. Polyc. v. c. 17, to say that "paulo post Anglorum introitum impositum fuisse Angliæ nomen." Langhorn has here departed from his usual accuracy. The passage of our elegant monk is lib. vi. c. 17. p. 197., and merely mentions that "ab inventu Saxonum in insulam appellatur Anglia." These words determine no chronology like paulo post. They express only one of the consequences of the Saxon invasion, without marking the precise time of the change of name.

¹³ The brief intimation of the Saxon Chronicle, p. 22., is more fully expressed in Hunt. 315.; and Ethelwerd ascribes to this battle the expulsion of Ceawlin from his throne, p. 835.

¹⁴ Thus Meigant, the British bard of the seventh century, mentions an expedition of the British chief Morial:

C H A P.
V.

560.
The An-
glo-Sax-
ons war
with each
other.

BUT as soon as the Anglo-Saxon kings had so far subdued the Britons, as to be in no general danger from their hostility, and to feel their strength in the growing population of their provinces, and in the habitual submission of the natives, their propensity to war, and their avarice of power, excited them to turn their arms upon each other.

568.
Ethelbert
invades
Ceawlin.

It was the impatience of a young mind to distinguish itself, which thus began a new series of wars that lasted till Egbert. The attacks and successes of the West Saxons and the South Saxons had turned off from Kent the direction of British hostility. Left at leisure for the indulgence of youthful turbulence, Ethelbert, the fourth successor of Hengist, at the age of sixteen, presumed to invade Ceawlin, the king of Wessex. This action seems to have been intemperate. Ceawlin had displayed both talent and resources for war, and Kent never attained the territorial extent or power of Wessex. But it is probable, that the Anglo-Saxons knew nothing as yet of the geography or comparative strength of their respective kingdoms. The issue of this contest taught Kent to understand better its true position in the political scale of the octarchy. Ceawlin collected his troops,

Pacing to combat, a great booty
Before Caer Lwydgoed, has not Morial taken
Fifteen hundred cattle and the head of Gwrial?

1 W. Ar. p. 160.

BOOK

III.

568.

defeated Ethelbert at Wimbleton, and threatened the Kentish Jutes with the subjection which they had armed to impose.¹⁵ This is remarked to have been the first battle that occurred between the Anglo-Saxon sovereigns.¹⁶

584.

CEAWLIN soon imitated, but with more success from his superior means, the ambition of Ethelbert. On the death of its sovereign, Cissa, he obtained the kingdom of Sussex. By annexing it to West Saxony, he changed the Saxon octarchy into a temporary heptarchy.

Ceawlin's
death.

DREADED for his power and ambition, Ceawlin now preponderated over the other Saxon monarchs¹⁷; but his prosperity changed before

¹⁵ Sax. Chron. p. 21. Flor. Wigorn. 222. Malmsbury attributes the aggression to Ethelbert's desire of engrossing *præ antiquitate familiæ primas partes sibi*, p. 12.

¹⁶ Hunt. 315. About this time, in 573, the Saxons obtained a settlement in France. They were placed in the Armorican region after their irruption, in *finibus Bajocassium et Namnetensium*. Bouquet's *recueil des historiens des Gaules*, vol. ii. p. 250.—Hence Gregory of Tours calls them *Saxones Bajocassos*, lib. v. c. 10. It is curious that they were sent against the British settlers in Gaul, who defeated them. Gregory, lib. v. c. 27. Their district, Charles the Bald, in his *Laws apud Silvacum*, calls *Linguam Saxoniam*. Bouquet, p. 250.

¹⁷ Bede, lib. ii. c. 5. He was the second Saxon prince so distinguished.—Matt. West. says generally, "*magnificatum est nomen ejus vehementer*," p. 197.—Langhorn fancied that he was the Gormund, whom the Britons mention with horror. Chron. Reg. Angliæ, 123. This Gormund, by some styled king of the Africans, by others a pirate of Norway or Ireland, is fabled to have invaded the Britons with 166,000 Africans. Rad. dic. 559., 3 Gale, and Jeffry, 12. 2. Alanus de Insulis, lib. i. p. 25., gives him 360,000.

his death. His nephew, Ceolric, allied with the Cymry and the Scoti against him; and all the valour and conduct of Ceawlin, could not rescue him from a defeat, in the thirty-third year of his reign, at Wodnesbeorg, in Wilts, the mound of Woden already alluded to.¹⁸ His death soon followed, and the unnatural kinsman succeeded to the crown he had usurped. He enjoyed it during a short reign of five years, and Ceolwulf acceded.

THE disaster of Ceawlin gave safety to Kent. Ethelbert preserved his authority in that kingdom, and at length succeeded to that insulary predominance among the Anglo-Saxon kings, which they called the Bretwalda, or the ruler of Britain.¹⁹ Whether this was a mere title as-

¹⁸ Sax. Chron. 22. Ceola, as Flor. Wig., 225. names him, was son of Cuthulf. Ethelwerd, 835. — This village stands upon the remarkable ditch called Wansdike, which Camden thought a Saxon work to divide Mercia from Wessex, and which others have supposed to have been a defence against the incursions of the Britons.

¹⁹ Bede, lib. ii. c. 5., names him as the third qui imperavit all the provinces south of the Humber. Malmsbury amplifies this into "omnes nationes Anglorum præter Northanhimbros continuis victoriis domitas sub jugum traxit," p. 10. — The Saxon Chron. calls him one of the seven bretwaldas who preceded Egbert. The proper force of this word *bretwalda* cannot imply conquest, because Ella the First is not said to have conquered Hengist or Cerdic; nor did the other *bretwaldas* conquer the other Saxon kingdoms. The Anglo-Saxon sovereigns, to whom Bede gives this title in succession, are Ella, of Sussex; Ceawlin, of Wessex; Ethelbert, of Kent; Redwald, of East Anglia; Edwin, Oswald, and Oswy, of Northumbria; and see Hunt. 314.

BOOK
III.

591.

sumed by Hengist, and afterwards by Ella, and continued by the most successful Anglo-Saxon prince of his day, or conceded in any national council of all the Anglo-Saxons; or ambitiously assumed by the Saxon king that most felt and pressed his temporary power; whether it was an imitation of the British unbennaeth, or a continuation of the Saxon custom of electing a war-cyning, cannot now be ascertained.

603.
Successes
of Ethel-
frith.

WHILE Ceolwulf was governing Wessex, Ethelfrith, the grandson of Ida, reigned in Bernicia, and attacked the Britons with vehemence and perseverance. None peopled more districts of the ancient Cymry with Angles, or more enslaved them with tributary services.²⁰ It is probable that he extended his conquests to the Trent. Alarmed by his progress, Aidan advanced with a great army of Britons either from Scotland, or those who in the Cumbrian or Strat-clyde kingdoms, and their vicinity, still preserved their independence, to repress him. The Angles met him at Degsastan; a furious battle ensued, which the determination of the combatants made very deadly. The Britons fought both with conduct and courage, and the brother of Ethelfrith perished, with all his followers. At length the Scottish Britons gave way, and were destroyed with such slaughter, that the king, with but few attendants, escaped.²¹ They had not,

²⁰ Hunt. 315.

²¹ Bede, lib. i. c. 34. Sax. Chron. 24.—The position of

up to the time of Bede, ventured to molest the
Angles again.

CHAP.
V.
605.

THE colonists of Sussex, endeavouring to throw off the yoke of Ceolwulf, the West Saxon king, who is mentioned as always engaged in quarrels with the Angles, Britons, Picts, or Scots, ventured on a conflict with him, which, disastrous to both armies, was most fatal to the assertors of their independence.²²

THE Bernician conqueror, Ethelfrith, renewed his war with the Cymry. He reached Chester, through a course of victory. Apart from the forces of the Welsh, assembled under Brocmail, king of Powys, he perceived the monks of Bangor, twelve hundred in number, offering prayers for the success of their countrymen: "If they are praying against us," he exclaimed, "they are fighting against us;" and he ordered them to be first attacked: they were²³ destroyed; and, appalled by their fate, the courage of Brocmail wavered, and he fled from the field in-

607.
or
612.

this, as of most of the Saxon battles, is disputed. Dalston, near Carlisle, and Dawston, near Jedbrough, has each its advocate.

²² H. Hunt. 316. Sax. Chron. p. 25.

²³ The chronology of this battle is disputed. The Saxon Chronicle dates it in 607, p. 25. Flor. Wig. 603. The Annals of Ulster in 612. Matt. West. in 603, p. 204. The ancient Welsh chronologer, in the Cambrian Reg. for 1796, places it in 602, and fourteen years before the battle of Meigen, p. 313. Bede says, that Austin had been jam multo ante tempore ad cælestia regna sublato, lib. ii. c. 2.; but Austin died in 605.

BOOK
III.
607.
Bangor
destroyed.

dismay.²⁴ Thus abandoned by their leader, his army soon gave way, and Ethelfrith obtained a decisive conquest. Ancient Bangor itself soon fell into his hands, and was ²⁵demolished; the noble monastery was levelled to the earth; its library, which is mentioned as a large one, the collection of ages, the repository of the most precious monuments of the ancient Britons, was consumed ²⁶; half ruined walls, gates, and rubbish, were all that remained of the magnificent edifice.²⁷ We may presume that the ad-

²⁴ Brocmail was one of the patrons of Taliesin, who commemorates this struggle.

I saw the oppression of the tumult; the wrath and tribulation;
The blades gleaming on the bright helmets;
The battle against the Lord of Fame in the dales of Hafren;
Against Brocvail of Powys, who loved my muse.

Taliesin, p. 66.

²⁵ Ancient Bangor was about eight miles distant from Chester. Caius de Antiq. Cantab. lib. i. ap. Usher, 133.—Leland says, “the cumpace of the abbay was as of a wauclid toune, and yet remaineth the name of a gate caullid Porth Hogan by north, and the name of another, port Clays by south.—Dee syns chaunging the bottom rennith now thorough the mydle betwyxt thes two gates, one being a mile dim from the other.” Itiner. vol. v. p. 26.

²⁶ Humph. Lhuyd asserts this. Comm. Frag. Brit. Description. 58., and Giraldus Cambrensis declares that Chester also was destroyed. De illaud. Walliæ, c. 7. And it is not likely that a rude Anglo-Saxon warrior would take any care to preserve British MSS. This destruction was an irreparable loss to the ancient British antiquities.

²⁷ Malmesbury, 19.—In the Triads Bangor is paralleled with the isle of Avællon, and Caer Caradog, for possessing

dition of Cheshire to Bernicia was the consequence of the victory.

CHAP.
V.

610.
Tewdric
defeats
Ceol-
wulph.

BUT amidst their misfortunes, the Cymry sometimes triumphed. Ceolwulph from Wessex advanced upon them, not merely to the Severn, but crossed it into the province of Glamorgan. Affrighted at his force, the inhabitants hastened to Tewdric their former king, who had quitted his dignity in behalf of his son Mowric, to lead a solitary life among the beautiful rocks and woodlands of Tintern. They solicited him to re-assume the military command, in which he had never known disgrace, if he sympathised in the welfare of his countrymen or his son. The royal hermit beheld the dreaded Saxons on the Wye, but the remembrance of his own achievements inspired him with hope. He put on his forsaken armour, conducted the tumult of battle with his former skill, and drove the invaders over the Severn. A mortal wound in the head arrested him in the full enjoyment of his glory, and he breathed his last wishes for his country's safety at the confluence of the Severn and the Wye. The local appellation Mathern, the abbreviation of Merthyr Teudric²⁸, pointed out his remains to the sympathy of posterity: in the

2400 religious. The Bangor of modern note is a city built by Maelgo on the Meneath, near Anglesey, Joh. Rossius, ap. Usher, 133.

²⁸ The martyr Tewdric. Usher quotes the Register of Landaff for this conflict, p. 562.—Langhorn. Chron. p. 148.

BOOK III.
 610. sixteenth century his body was found unconsumed, and the fatal blow on his head was visible.²⁹

Distress of
the Welsh.

THE condition of the Britons at this juncture was becoming more distressful and degrading. Driven out of their ancient country, they had retired to those parts of the island, which, by mountains, woods, marshes, and rivers, were most secluded from the rest; yet in this retreat they lived with their hands against every ³⁰man, and every man's hand against them; they were the common butt of enterprise to the Angles of Bernicia, and Deira, and Mercia; to the Saxons of Wessex, and to the Gwiddelians of Ireland; and they were always as eager to assail as to defend. The wild prophecies of enthusiasts, who mistook hope for inspiration, having promised to them, in no long period, the enjoyment of the soil from which they had been exiled, produced a perpetual appetite for war. Their independent sovereignties, fed by their hostile ambition the flames of domestic quarrels, and accelerated the ruin of their independence. But yet, under all these disadvantages, they maintained the unequal conflict against the Anglo-Saxons with wonderful bravery, and did not lose the sovereignty of their country until

²⁹ Godwin præsul. ap. Usher, 563. In the chancel of Mathern church an epitaph mentions that he lies there entombed. Williams's Monmouthshire, App. No. 17.

³⁰ Matt. West. paints this forcibly, p. 198. and 199.

the improvements of their conquerors made the conquest a blessing. C H A P.
V.

CYNEGILS with the West Saxons again assailed some branches of the Britons. If Bampton in Devonshire be the place which the Saxon annalist denominates Beamdune, the princes of Cornwall were the objects of attack. When the armies met, Cynegils surprised the Britons by drawing up his forces into an arrangement which was not common to that age. This display and the sight of the battle-axes, which the Saxons were brandishing, affected them with a sudden panic, and they quitted the field early, with the loss of above two thousand men.³¹ 614.
Cynegils' victory.

³¹ Hunt. 316. Sax. Chron. 25. Camden supposes the place to have been Bindon in Dorsetshire, 1 Gough's ed. 44. The editor mentions favourably the opinion of Gibson, which is in the text, *ib.* p. 50.

CHAP. VI.

*The Introduction of Christianity among the
ANGLO-SAXONS, in KENT and ESSEX.—Ethel-
bert's Reign in KENT.*

BOOK
III.

THE history of the Anglo-Saxons has, thus far, been the history of fierce, barbaric tribes; full of high courage, excited spirit, persevering resolution, great activity, and some military skill, but with minds which, although abounding with talent and love of enterprise, and inventive of political institutions, well adapted to their civil position and necessities, were void of all lettered cultivation; unused to the social sympathies, and averse from the intellectual refinements, of which they were naturally capable. These great blessings of human life were introduced into the island, with that peculiar form of Christianity, which the benevolent feelings and religious enthusiasm of Pope Gregory, deservedly, with all his imperfections, surnamed the Great, conveyed into England by his missionary Augustin. This great mental and moral, we may add from some of its results, political revolution, was

suggested and accomplished by a train of coincidences, which deserve to be recollected.

THE Roman papacy had felt the advantage, to itself, of the conversion of the Gothic nations; and Gregory, in succeeding to that dignity, would have imbibed a disposition to promote the same religious policy, if his own earnest belief in Christianity had not led him to befriend it. But the Anglo-Saxons were not the only nation of Europe that were then pagans. All Germany, and all the nations from the Rhine to the Frozen Ocean, and all the Slavonian tribes, were of this description. England, which Rome had long before amused itself with describing, as cut off from the whole world, and as approaching the frozen and half-fabled Thule, was so remote, and, by its Saxon conquerors, had been so separated from any connection with the civilised regions, that it seemed to be the country least adapted to interest him. But an accidental circumstance, which does credit to his heart, had turned the current of Gregory's feelings towards our island, before he had reached the pontifical honours.

It was then the practice of Europe to make use of slaves, and to buy and sell them; and this traffic was carried on, even in the western capital of the Christian church. Passing through the market at Rome, the white skins, the flowing locks, and beautiful countenances of some

BOOK
III.

youths who were standing there for sale, interested Gregory's sensibility.¹

To his enquiries from what country they had been brought the answer was, from Britain, whose inhabitants were all of that fair complexion. Were they Pagans or Christians? was his next question: a proof not only of his ignorance of the state of England, but also, that it had up to that time occupied no part of his attention. But thus brought as it were to a personal knowledge of it, by these few representatives of its inhabitants, he exclaimed, on hearing that they were still idolaters, with a deep sigh: "What a pity, that such a beauteous frontispiece should possess a mind so void of internal graces!" The name of their nation being mentioned to him to be Angles, his ear caught the verbal coincidence. The benevolent wish for their improvement darted into his mind, and he expressed his own feelings, and excited those of his auditors by remarking: "It suits them

¹ The chronicler of St. Augustin's monastery at Canterbury, W. Thorn, mentions that these were three boys: "Videt in foro Romano tres pueros Anglios," Decem Script. p.1757. In the Anglo-Saxon homily on Gregory's birth-day, published by Mrs. Elstob, it is stated that English merchants had carried them to Rome, and that the practice was continuing. "Tha zelamp het æt sumum fæle swa swa gyt for oþr ðeðh, thæt Engliſce cýthmen bpohton heopa pape to Romana byrið. 7 Gregorius eode be thære swæc to tham Engliſcum mannum heopa thiſz ſceapriſende. Tha zeſeah he betpuxt tham þapum cypcepihtas zeſette. Tha þæron hwiſeð licha-man 7 fæzreſ 7 þlitan man 7 æthelice zeſeahode, p. 11.

well: they have angel faces, and ought to be the co-heirs of the angels in heaven." A purer philanthropy perhaps never breathed from the human heart, than in these sudden effusions of Gregory's. That their provincial country Deiri, should resemble the words *De ira*, seemed to his simple mind to imply, that they ought to be plucked from the wrath of God; and when he heard that their king's name was called *Ella*, the consonancy of its sound, with the idea then floating in his mind, completed the impression of the whole scene. His whole enthusiasm burst out. "Hallelujah! the praise of the creating Deity must be sung in these ²regions." This succession of coincidences, though but verbal, affected his mind with a permanent impression of the most benevolent nature. He went immediately to the then pope, and prayed him to send some missionaries to convert the English nation, and offered himself for the service. His petition was refused, but the project never left his mind, till he was enabled by his own efforts to accomplish it. As *Ella* died in 589, this incident must have occurred before this year.

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² Bede, *Hist. lib.ii. c.1. p.78.* This incident was probably in Gregory's mind, when he wrote this passage in his moral exposition of *Job*. "Ecce lingua Britannia, quæ nil aliud noverat, quam barbarum fremdere, jamdudum in divinis laudibus Hebræum cepit, Halleluia, resonare," *lib. xxvi. c.6. p.688. ed. Paris. 1640.*

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592.

IN 592, Gregory became pope, and four years afterwards he attempted to execute his philanthropic purpose. He selected a monk named Augustin, as the fittest for the chief of the mission, and added some other monks of congenial feelings to assist it. They set out on their journey, but the dread of encountering a nation so ferocious, as the Saxons had from their successes the character of being, and their ignorance of their language, overcame both their resolution and their zeal. They stopped, began their return to Rome, and sent Augustin back to solicit Gregory not to insist on their pursuing an enterprise so dangerous and so little likely to be availing.³

GREGORY prevailed on Augustin to resume the mission, and answered the entreaties of the rest by a short but impressive letter. He remarked to them that it was more disgraceful to abandon an undertaking once begun, than to have at first declined it. That as the work was good, and would receive the Divine aid, they ought to pursue it. He reminded them of the glory that would recompense their sufferings in another world, and he appointed Augustin their abbot, and commanded their obedience to his directions, that the little community might have an effective governor.⁴ He wrote also to the bishop of Arles, recommending this band

³ Bede, lib. i. c. 23. p. 59.

⁴ Ibid.

of religious adventurers to his friendship and assistance. He addressed letters to other prelates in France to the same purport. He requested the patronage of the Frankish kings to their undertaking; and also endeavoured to interest Brunecilda, one of their queens, to befriend it. The missionaries were forty in number.⁵

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BUT to which kingdom of the octarchy should they first apply? a natural circumstance led them to Kent.

ETHELBERT, who had begun his reign with the inauspicious attack on Wessex, had been afterwards so harassed by others of the Saxon kings, that it was with difficulty he preserved his own dominions from subjection.⁶ Adversity and danger had made him wiser. His future measures were more prosperous, and he became the Brætwalda of the Saxon octarchy, and predominated over it as far north as the Humber.

THE circumstance auspicious to Augustin's mission, was Ethelbert's marriage with Bertha, a Frankish princess. She had been educated to be a Christian, and she had stipulated for the right of pursuing her own religion after her ⁷marriage.

⁵ These letters of Gregory are printed amid his very multifarious correspondence, which are classed in twelve books, and occupy the fourth volume of his works. Dr. Smith has selected those which concern this mission, in the appendix to his Bede, No. 6.; and Mrs. Elstob has translated them in her appendix, p. 7, &c.

⁶ Malmsb. p. 10. ⁷ Bede, lib. i. c. 25. Hunting. 321.

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To Kent and to this queen, Augustin proceeded with his companions, with interpreters whom the king of the Franks had provided.

AUGUSTIN sent one of these to Ethelbert, to announce that he came from Rome, and had brought with him a messenger, who promised to those that obeyed him, everlasting joys in heaven, and a kingdom that should never end. The king, whom the conduct of his queen had dispossessed of all virulence against Christianity, ordered them to remain in Thanet, where they had landed, supplied with every necessary, till he had determined what he should do with them.

597. INTERESTED by their arrival, the queen was not likely to be inactive. But the freedom of all the Anglo-Saxon tribes, and the power of their witena-gemots, as well as the opposing influence of the Saxon priests, occasioned Ethelbert to pause. After a few days' deliberation, he went into the island and appointed a conference. He sat in the open air, 'fearful lest, if he received them in a house, he should be exposed to the power of their magic if they used any. They came with a simple but impressive ceremony. They advanced in an orderly procession, preceded by a silver cross, as their standard, and carrying also a painted portrait of our Saviour, and chanting their litany as they approached. The king commanded them to sit down, and to him and his earls, who accom-

panied them, they disclosed their ⁸ mission. Ethelbert answered with a steady and not unfriendly judgment. "Your words and promises are fair, but they are new and uncertain. I cannot therefore abandon the rites, which, in common with all the nations of the Angles, I have hitherto observed. But as you have come so far to communicate to us what you believe to be true, and the most excellent, we will not molest you. We will receive you hospitably, and supply you with what you need. Nor do we forbid any one to join your society whom you can persuade to prefer it." He gave them a mansion in Canterbury, his metropolis, for their residence, and allowed them to preach as they pleased.⁹

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⁸ Bede, lib. i. c. 25. p. 61. The homily briefly states the address of Augustin in these words: "Hu þe miðþeoþra hælenð mið hīr azenþe tþropange tþīrne ꝛylðīzan miððanearþe alýrþe ꝛ zeleaꝝfullum mannum heoꝝena ꝛiceꝝ inꝛæþ zeoþnoðe," p. 34. The substance of the sermon is given at length by Joscelyn, *Angl. Sac.* vol. ii. p. 59.; and a translation of it in *Elstob*, p. 33.

⁹ The text is from Bede, p. 61. But Alfred's Saxon of this speech perhaps exhibits most exactly the actual words of Ethelbert: "Fægeþe woꝛð tþīr ꝛýnð and zehat the zebrohton ꝛ uꝝ ꝛæczath. Ac foꝛþon hī niþe ꝛýnðon and uncuthe, ne mazon þe nu zýc tha zethaꝝizean tha þe foꝛlætan tha þīran the þe lanzeþe tīde mið ealle Anzel theode heolðan. Ac foꝛþon the ze feoꝛpan hīðeꝛ æltheodīze coman and thæꝛ the me zethuht and zesaꝛen iꝝ tha tþing tha the foꝛth and betꝛt zelyꝝðon, tha ze eac ꝛꝛýlce ꝛýllabon uꝝ tha zemænꝛuman, ne ꝛýllath þe foꝛðon eoꝛ heꝛize beon: Ac þe ꝛillath eoꝛ ꝛꝛemꝛumlice on zæꝛtlicþneꝛre onꝛon and eoꝛ andlýꝛne

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THEY entered the city singing the litanies, which they had found to be interesting to the populace. They distinguished themselves by prayers, vigils, and fastings, which excited the admiration of those who visited them; and their discourses pleased many. On the east side of the city, a church had been built, during the residence of the Romans, dedicated to St. Martin, which the queen had used as her oratory. Here they sang, prayed, performed their mass, and preached till they made several converts, whom they baptised. The impression spread, till at length the king was affected, and became himself a Christian.¹⁰ In no part of the world has Christianity been introduced in a manner more suitable to its benevolent character.

THE peculiar form of this religion, which Gregory and Augustin thus introduced, was of course that system which Rome then professed. It was the best system which had been recognised at Rome; and it could not be better than that age, or the preceding times were capable of receiving or framing. It was a compound of doctrines, ritual, discipline, and polity, derived partly from the Scriptures, partly from tradition, partly from the decisions and orders of

ŷýllan and eorpe thearfe forðŷfan. Ne pe eop beperiath tha ze ealle tha the ze mazon thuph eorpe lape to eorper zeleafan æferŷnyffe zecheode and zecyrrne, p. 487.

¹⁰ Bede, c. 26.

former councils and popes, and partly from popular customs and superstitions, which had been permitted to intermix themselves. But such as it was, it was the most useful form that either its teachers or the then intellect of the world could furnish. Nor is it clear that its new converts would have relished or understood any purer system. The papal clergy were then the most enlightened portion of the western world; and the system which they preferred must have been superior to any that the barbaric judgment could have provided.

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THE pope continued his attentions to his infant church. He sent Augustin the pall, the little addition to his dress which marked the dignity of an archbishop, with a letter of instructions on the formation of the English hierarchy, with several MSS. of books¹¹, eccle-

¹¹ Bede, c. 29. p. 70. Wanley has given a catalogue of the books sent by Gregory. These were, 1st. A Bible, adorned with some leaves of a purple and rose colour, in two volumes, which was extant in the time of James the First. 2d. The Psalter of St. Augustin, with the Creed, Pater Noster, and several Latin hymns. 3d. Two copies of the Gospels, with the ten Canons of Eusebius prefixed; one of which Elstob believed to be in the Bodleian library, and the other at Cambridge, p. 42. 4th. Another Psalter with hymns. 5th. A volume containing legends on the sufferings of the apostles, with a picture of our Saviour in silver, in a posture of blessing. 6th. Another volume on the martyrs, which had on the outside a glory, silver gilt, set round with crystals and beryls. 7th. An Exposition of the Epistles and Gospels, which had on the cover a large beryl surrounded with crystals. Augustin also brought Gregory's

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siastical vessels, vestments, and ¹² ornaments, and several religious persons to assist him, who were afterwards active in the conversion of the rest of the island. Augustin restored from its ruins another British church at Canterbury, which had been built in the Roman times, and began the erection of a monastery.¹³ The king sanctioned and assisted him in all that he did; and afterwards became distinguished as the author of the first written Saxon laws, which have descended to us, or which are known to have been established;—an important national benefit, for which he may have been indebted to his Christian teachers, as there is no evidence that the Saxons wrote any compositions before. Gregory sent into the island “many manuscripts,” and thus began its intellectual as well as religious education.¹⁴

504.

SEVEN years after Augustin’s successful exertions in Kent, he appointed two of the persons that arrived last from Rome, Mellitus and Justus, to the episcopal dignity, and directed them to the kingdom of Essex. Sabert, the son of Ethel-

Pastoral Care, which Alfred translated. See Elstob, p. 39—43., and Wanley, 172., whose description is taken from Thomas de Elmham, a monk of Augustine’s abbey, in the time of Henry the Fifth. See also Cave, Hist. Lit. p. 431.

¹² A list of the vestments, vessels, relics, &c., sent by Gregory is added to Elstob, from Wanley’s communication, App. 34—40.

¹³ Bede, lib. i. c. 33.

¹⁴ Bede, lib. i. c. 29.

bert's sister was then reigning. The new religion was favourably received; and Ethelbert, to whose superior power the little state was subject, began the erection of St. Paul's church at London, its metropolis.¹⁵

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604.

AUGUSTIN did not long live to contemplate the great advantages which he had introduced into England. He died the year of his mission into Essex. Ethelbert survived him eleven years. His son Eadbald restored the Saxon paganism in Kent, and drove out the Christian ecclesiastics. The three sons of Sabert imitated him in Essex. But this persecution was of a short duration. A simple contrivance of Laurence, the successor of Augustin, affected the mind of Eadbald with alarm. He appeared before the king, bleeding from severe stripes; and boldly declared that he had received them in the night from St. Peter, because he was meditating his departure from the island. The idea was exactly level with the king's intellect and superstition. A strong sensation of fear that the same discipline might be inflicted, by the same invisible hand, on himself, changed his feelings, and he became a zealous friend to the new faith. The exiled bishops were recalled, and the old Saxon rites were abolished for ever in Kent and Essex.¹⁶

LAURENCE enjoyed his triumph but two years;

¹⁵ Bede, lib. ii. c. 3.

¹⁶ Ibid. c. 5, 6.

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and, on his death, Mellitus, who had converted Essex, received his dignity: a man of noble family, and of such an active spirit, that the gout, with which he was severely afflicted, was no impediment to his unabated exertions for the mental and moral improvement of the Saxon nation. All these early prelates enjoyed their rank but for a brief period. In five years he died, and Justus, his friend and companion from Rome, was made his successor.¹⁷ As Gregory had chosen the men who were best adapted to accomplish his purpose, it is probable that those he selected were advanced in life.

¹⁷ Bede, lib. ii. c. 7, 8.

CHAP. VII.

Expedition of the EAST ANGLIANS to the RHINE.

—EDWIN'S *Asylum in EAST ANGLIA.*—REDWALD'S *Defeat of ETHELFRITH.*—EDWIN'S *Reign in NORTHUMBRIA, and the Introduction of Christianity into that Province.*

THE kingdom of East-Anglia becomes remarkable by an incident which Procopius has preserved, and which occurred in the sixth century. It exhibits the adventuring spirit of our early Saxon princes.

BETWEEN the Rhine and the Northern Ocean, the Varni inhabited.¹ Their king solicited a princess of East Anglia for his son, and the hand of the lady was promised. On his deathbed it occurred to him, that an alliance with the Franks, his neighbours, would be more profitable to his people than the friendship of the Angles, who were separated from the Varni by the sea. In obedience to the political expediency, Radiger, the prince, married his father's

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Expedition of the East Anglians to the continent.
534—547.

¹ The editor of the great collection des Historiens des Gaules, Paris, 1741, remarks (referring to Valesius), that Procopius erred when he placed the Varni on the right bank of the Rhine, and that he is more credible when he places them nearer the Danes, vol. ii. p. 42.

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widow, his step-mother, because she was sister of Theodebert the Franc. The rejected East Anglian would not brook the indignity; she demanded revenge for the slight, because in the estimation of her countrymen the purity of female chastity was sullied if the maiden once wooed was not wedded. Her brother and the East Anglian warriors thought her quarrel just; a large fleet sailed from England under her auspices, and landed on the Rhine. A part of the army encamped round her; the rest, with one of her brothers, defeated the Varni, and penetrated the country. Radiger fled. The Angles returned to the lady, glorying in their victory. She received them with disdain. They had done nothing, as they had not brought Radiger to her feet. Again her selected champions sallied forth, and Radiger at last was taken in a wood. The captive entered her tent, to receive his doom. But the heart of the East Anglian was still his own. He pleaded his father's commands, and the solicitations of his chiefs. The conquering beauty smiled forgiveness. To accept her hand, and to dismiss her rival, was the only punishment she awarded. Joyfully the prince obeyed, and the sister of Theodebert was repudiated.²

² Procopius Goth. Hist. lib. iv. p. 468—471. Gibbon places this incident between 534 and 547, which were the extreme terms of the reign of Theodebert, vol. iii. c. 38. p. 627.

THIS event is the only one in the history of East Anglia which can interest our notice until the reign of Redwald. Before this prince it had arrogated no dominating precedence in England. The intemperate ambition of Ethelfrith propelled it into consequence. This king of the Northumbrian Angles, dissatisfied with his inherited Bernicia, and his trophies in Scotland and Wales, invaded Deira, to which Edwin the son of Ella, at the age of three years, had succeeded; and by expelling the little infant, converted the Saxon states in England into an hexarchy. Edwin was carried to North Wales, and was generously educated by Cadvan.³

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617.

Ethelfrith
seizes De-
ira.

As Edwin grew up he was compelled to leave Wales; and for many years wandered about in secret, through various provinces, to escape the unceasing pursuit of Ethelfrith. Reaching East Anglia, he went to the court of Redwald, and avowing himself, besought his hospitable protection. Redwald received him kindly, and promised what he asked. Impatient that Edwin should be alive, Ethelfrith sent repeated messengers, with presents to the East Anglian sovereign, requiring him to surrender the youth, and adding menaces if he refused. Redwald remembered the unvarying successes of Ethelfrith, and fearful of encountering his hostility, promised either the death or the surrender of

Edwin in
East An-
glia.

³ Alured Beverl. lib. vi. p. 90. Redwald was son of Titel, and grandson of Uffa, Fl. Wig. 233.

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Edwin. A friend to the young exile discovered his intentions, and counselled him to fly. But Edwin, weary of living like a fugitive, replied, "I cannot do this. I have made a compact with Redwald, and I will not be the first to break it, while he has done me no evil, nor has yet discovered any enmity. If I am to perish, he that betrays or destroys me will be disgraced, not myself. And whither should I fly, who have been wandering already so long, through so many provinces of Britain, without a shelter? How can I escape elsewhere the toils of my persecutor?" His friend left him. Edwin remained sitting before the palace, reflecting on his misfortunes and darkening projects. In this anxious state night approached, and he believed he saw an unknown person advance to him, who promised him present deliverance and great future prosperity, if he should listen to what would be afterwards taught him. The vision laid his hand on his head, and, adjuring him to remember this interview, disappeared⁴; or rather Edwin waked. But he had a more substantial friend than the apparition of a dream.

Redwald
protects
him, and
defeats
Ethelfrith.

THE queen of Redwald secretly pleaded for the youthful exile, and with noble sentiments: "A king should not sell a distressed friend, nor violate his faith for gold: no ornament is so ennobling as good faith." Interested by her in-

⁴ Bede, lib. ii. c. 12.

tercession, and inspired with her fortitude, Redwald resolved to keep sacred the duties of hospitality; and Edwin was informed by his watchful, though unknown, friend of the generous determination.

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THE preparations of Ethelfrith, disappointed of his prey, compelled him to arm; Redwald acted with judicious vigour; and he attacked Ethelfrith, before he had collected all his troops, on the east bank of the Idel in Nottinghamshire.⁵ The Northumbrian king, by his experienced valour and veteran soldiers, supplied the disparity of his troops, and balanced the contest. The East Anglians advanced in three divisions; one of these, Rainer, the son of Redwald, led. The ancient fortune of Ethelfrith befriended him; he attacked this wing, and the prince and his warriors were destroyed. This disaster only stimulated Redwald to more determined exertions; he still outnumbered his opponent, and his other divisions were firm. Ethelfrith, unused to such resistance, and impatient for the event, rushed on the East Anglians with a dangerous impetuosity. His friends did not follow his injudicious courage; he was separated from them, and perished among the swords of the surrounding East Anglians.⁶ Edwin also signalised himself. Redwald not only re-instated him in Deira, but

Ethelfrith falls.

Edwin restored.

⁵ Bede, lib. ii. c. 12.

⁶ Hunting. lib. ii. p. 316. Sax. Chron. 27.

BOOK III. enabled him to subject Bernicia to his power. Thus the hexarchy continued. The sons of the slain usurper fled into Scotland⁷, where they imbibed Christianity. Redwald ascended to the national pre-eminence which Ella; Ceawlin, and Ethelbert had possessed under the title of the Bretwalda; and, on his death, it was assumed by Edwin.⁸

617. THE three brothers who governed Essex perished in a conflict with the West⁹ Saxons. Redwald was succeeded in East Anglia by Eorpwald. Redwald, during a visit to Ethelbert in Kent, had adopted Christianity for his religion; but returning to his own country, his wife and the East Anglian priests opposing his impressions, he attempted to unite it with the Saxon idolatry. He built an altar to Christ in the same temple where the sacrifices to Odin were performed.¹⁰ But even this strange combination of worship had the effect of drawing the attention of his East Anglians to the Christian faith.

THE vicissitudes of Edwin's life had indued his mind with a contemplative temper, which made him more intellectual than any of the

⁷ Sax. Chron. 27. Bede, lib. iii. c. 1. Polychron. 3 Gale, 229.

⁸ Bede, lib. ii. c. 5.

⁹ Bede, *ibid.* Flor. Wig. 231.

¹⁰ Bede, lib. ii. c. 15. This altar, Bede says, lasted to the time of Aldulf, the king of East Anglia, his contemporary, who mentioned that he had seen it when a boy.

Anglo-Saxon kings that had preceded him, and which fitted him for the reception of Christianity. His progress towards this revolution of mind was gradual, and the steps have been clearly narrated by his countryman Bede.

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623.

HE solicited in marriage Tata Edilberga, the daughter of Ethelbert in Kent. Her brother, who had abandoned his idolatry, objected to her alliance with a worshipper of Odin. Edwin promised that he would not interfere with her religion, but would allow the free exercise of it both to herself and her friends. He also intimated that if, on the examination of it by his wise men, it was found to be more holy and worthier of God than his native faith, he might himself adopt it. The Saxon princess became his wife, and Paulinus, one of those whom Gregory had last selected to assist Augustin, went with her as her priest and ¹¹ bishop.

THE first care of Paulinus was to prevent herself and the noble persons in her train from relapsing into their idolatry. His next to convert some of the natives; but they were impenetrable to his exertions. Odin continued still to be their favourite.

625.

AT this period the life of Edwin was attacked by an assassin. Cwichhelm, the pagan king of Wessex, commissioned one of his subjects to visit Edwin's court, and watch his opportunity

¹¹ Bede, lib. ii. c. 9.

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to stab him with a poisoned dagger. The wretch reached the royal residence on the Derwent, and introduced himself as a messenger from his king. Edwin was then about to be made a father by his queen. The name of Cwichhelm procured an introduction, and his intended assassin entered. He had abilities and firmness sufficient to begin the delivery of a fictitious message, when suddenly starting up, he clenched his weapon and rushed upon the king. The attack was so sudden that Edwin was off his guard and defenceless; but a thegn to whom he was greatly attached, Lilla, was near him; he saw the rising dagger and Edwin's danger; he had no shield; but with the impulse of a generous heart he threw himself before his king, and received in his own body the blow which it was impossible to avert. So vehement was the stroke that it went through Lilla and slightly wounded the king. The swords of the attendants were instantly drawn upon the murderer; but he stood on his defence, and was not hewn down till he had stabbed another knight with the weapon which he had withdrawn from his first victim's ¹²body.

ON this same night his queen was delivered of her daughter Eanfleda. The king thanked his idols for her birth; and when Paulinus directed his attention to the Christian Saviour,

¹² Bede, lib. ii. c. 9. Fl. Wig. 232.

Edwin, like Clovis, who had established in France the kingdom of the Franks, promised that he would adopt the faith he recommended, if heaven should give victory to his arms against the king, who had sent the assassin to destroy him. As a pledge of his own determination to fulfil this engagement, he consented to the baptism of the new-born babe. Eleven others of the household at the same time received the Christian rite.¹³

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625.

EDWIN assembled his forces and advanced against Cwichhelm. His expedition was successful. But on his return from his victory into Northumbria¹⁴, he delayed to embrace the new religion. He had become dissatisfied with his idols, but he was of that class of mind which requires the conviction of its reason before it decides on its belief. He conferred long and anxiously with Paulinus on the subject, and with his wisest nobles. He was seen frequently sitting alone discussing with himself what he ought to do, and to which religion he should adhere.¹⁵ In these deliberations a letter reached him from Pope Boniface, exhorting him to abandon useless and insensible idols, who of themselves could not even change their locality, but if not moved by others, must, like a stone, remain for ever where they were. The pontiff told him

Introduc-
tion of
Christi-
anity into
Northum-
bria.

¹³ Bede, lib. ii. c. 9. Sax. Chron. 27.

¹⁴ Sax. Chron. 28.

¹⁵ Bede, lib. ii. c. 9.

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he had a living spirit within him, of which they were destitute, which would survive the dissolution of his body; and added, "Come then to the knowledge of him who has created you; who has breathed into you this spirit of life; and who has sent his son to redeem you from sin and every evil power; and to reward you with all the blessings of his heavenly world."¹⁶

BONIFACE at the same time sent an epistle to his queen, reminding her of the duty of interesting her husband in Christianity; and urging her to soften his prepossessions against it, and to impress upon his senses the excellence of the faith she had adopted, and the admirable nature of its future rewards.¹⁷

THESE letters were received and considered; but Paulinus found that the loftiness of the king's mind, and the natural pride of the Anglo-Saxon nation, could not be easily brought to stoop to the humility and gentleness of the Christian precepts.¹⁸ In this juncture he appears to have come to the knowledge of the king's dream at the court of Redwald, and he made an ingenious use of it.

THE vision at its departure was said to have laid its right hand on the king's head, and to have exclaimed: "When this sign is repeated, remember this conference, and perform your promise of obeying what will then be disclosed to you."

¹⁶ Bede, lib. ii. c. 10. ¹⁷ Ibid. c. 11. ¹⁸ Ibid. c. 12.

PAULINUS, without appearing to have had any previous knowledge of this dream, one day entered the king's apartment as he was pursuing his meditations on the opposing religions; and advancing with a solemn air, imitated the action of the imaginary figure, and placed his right hand on his sovereign's head, at the same time asking him if he remembered that sign.

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THE king's sensibility was instantly affected. His dream and promise rushed upon his mind. He did not pause to consider that Paulinus might, from his queen or his intimate friends, have become acquainted with his own account of his believed vision. All seemed supernatural, and Paulinus to be the actual vision that had addressed him. He threw himself at the bishop's feet, who, pursuing the impression which he had excited, raised him, and exhorted him to lose no time to fulfil his thrice-repeated engagement; and reminded him that this alone would deliver him from the eternal evils of disobedience.¹⁹

THE king now seriously affected by the important question, summoned his witena-gemot, that, if they participated in his feelings, all might be baptised together. When they met, he proposed the new worship for the subject of their deliberations, and required each to express his feelings without reserve.

COIFI, the high priest of their idols, as the

¹⁹ Bede, lib. ii. c. 12.

BOOK first in rank, addressed; and unless the coarseness of his mind was that of the country, must have surprised the king. His speech, from the singularity of the criterion by which he governed the faint moral feeling he possessed, deserves a literal translation. “ You see, O king! what is now preached to us. I declare to you most truly what I have most certainly experienced, that the religion which we have hitherto professed contains no virtue at all, and as little utility. No one of all your court has been more attentive than I have been to the worship of our gods; and yet many have received far richer benefits, far greater honours, and have prospered more in all that men transact or pursue than I have. But if these gods had been of any real worth, would they not in preference have assisted me who have never neglected them? If then, on due enquiry, you shall perceive that these new things which are preached to us will be better and more efficacious, let us hasten to adopt them without any delay.”

THIS effusion of self-interest would lead one to suspect that the effects of the Anglo-Saxon conquest of Romanised and Christianised Britain, and of the civilisation, luxuries, and mental cultivation which it had, to a certain extent, exhibited to the Saxon eye, had already shaken their attachment to the rude superstitions of their ancestors; or the high priest of their national deities would not have so feelingly expa-

tiated on his comparative neglect. This circumstance will contribute to account for the ease with which Christianity was established in the island.

C H A P.
VII.
625.

THE next speaker discovered a mind unusually enlarged for a people hitherto so unaccustomed to intellectual investigations.

“THE present life of man, O king! seems to me, if compared with that after-period which is so uncertain to us, to resemble a scene at one of your wintry feasts. As you are sitting with your ealdormen and thegns about you, the fire blazing in the center, and the whole hall cheered by its warmth; and while storms of rain and snow are raging without, a little sparrow flies in at one door, roams around our festive meeting, and passes out at some other entrance. While it is among us, it feels not the wintry tempest. It enjoys the short comfort and serenity of its transient stay; but then plunging into the winter from which it had flown, it disappears from our eyes. Such is here the life of man. It acts and thinks before us; but, as of what preceded its appearance among us, we are ignorant, so are we of all that is destined to come afterwards. If, then, on this momentous future, this new doctrine reveals any thing more certain or more reasonable, it is in my opinion entitled to our acquiescence.”²⁰

²⁰ Bede, lib. ii. c. 13. Alfred's translation of this interesting speech presents it to us as near to its original form

BOOK

III.

625.

THE other witeana and the royal counsellors exhibited similar dispositions. Coifi desired to hear from Paulinus an exposition of the Deity. The bishop obeyed, and the Angle priest exclaimed, “Formerly I understood nothing that I worshipped. The more I contemplated our idolatry, the less truth I found in it. But this new system I adopt without hesitation, for truth shines around it, and presents to us the gifts of eternal life and blessedness. Let us then, O king! immediately anathematise and burn the temples and altars which we have so uselessly venerated.” On this bold exhortation he was asked who would be the first to profane the idols and their altars, and the inclosures with which they were surrounded. The zealous convert answered, “I will: as I have led the way in adoring them through my folly, I will

as we can now obtain it. “Thýȝlic me is ȝeƿeƿen, Cýning, thiȝ andƿarðe hiȝ manna on eorþan, to riȝmetenýȝȝe tħæfe tide the is uncuth is, ȝƿa ȝelic, ȝƿa thu æt ȝƿæƿendum riȝte mid tħinum ealdorƿannum ȝ theȝnum on ƿinter tide ȝ ȝý ȝýr onæled, ȝ ðin heall ȝeƿýrmed. ȝ hit ƿine ȝ ȝnipe ȝ ȝtýrune ute. Cume ðonne an Speappa ȝ hræðlice þ̅ hiȝ ðurh fleo ȝ cume ðurh oþre ðuru in; ðurh oþre ut ȝeƿite. þ̅æt he on ða tid ðe he inne biȝ, ne biȝ hȝmed mid þ̅ý ȝtorune ðæs ƿinteres. ac þ̅ biȝ an eazan brýhtum ȝ þ̅ læȝte fæc. ac he ȝona of ƿinter a ƿinter eft cýmeþ. Sƿa ðonne ðis monna hiȝ to medmýclum fæce ætýreth. hiȝæt ðær foƿe-zange. oþþe hiȝæt ðær æƿteȝfýlȝe ƿe ne cunnon. Forþon ȝif þ̅eoȝ nipe læri oꝛihc cuplicre ȝ ȝeƿiſenlicre hȝunge. heo ðær ƿȝrthe is þ̅ ƿe ðære fȝylȝean.” P. 516.

give the example of destroying them in obedience to that wisdom which I have now received from the true God." He requested of the king weapons and a war-horse. It was a maxim of their ancient religion, that no priest should carry arms, or ride on any horse but a mare;—an interesting rule, to separate the ministers of their religion from the ferocity of war. The priest girded on a sword, and, brandishing a spear, mounted the king's horse, and rode to the idol-temple. The people, without, thought him mad. He hurled his spear against the temple to profane it, and then commanded his companions to destroy all the building and its surrounding inclosures. The scene of this event was a little to the east of York, beyond the river Derwent, at a place, in Bede's time, called Godmunddingaham.²¹

EDWIN and his nobility were soon afterwards baptised, in the eleventh year of his reign. In 632, he persuaded Eorpwald of East Anglia, the son of Redwald, to imitate his example. Sigebert, the brother and successor of Eorpwald, not only increased the diffusion of Christianity in East Anglia, but applied so closely to the study of it as to be called by the Chronicler, "Most Learned."²²

628.

²¹ Bede, c. 13. It is still called Godmundham, or the home of the mund, or protection, of the gods.

²² Doctissimus. Flor. Wig. 233, 234.

BOOK
III.628.
Edwin's
police.

EDWIN reached the summit of human prosperity: a considerable part of Wales submitted to his power, and the Menavian islands; and he was the first of the Angles that subdued or defeated all the Anglo-Saxon kingdoms but Kent.²³ The internal police which prevailed through his dominions was so vigilant, that it became an aphorism to say, that a woman with her new-born infant might walk from sea to sea without fear of insult. As in those days travelling was difficult and tedious, and no places existed for the entertainment of guests, it was an important and kind convenience to his people, that he caused stakes to be fixed in the highways where he had seen a clear spring, with brazen dishes chained to them, to refresh the weary sojourner, whose fatigues Edwin had himself experienced. In another reign these would have been placed only to have been taken away; but such was the dread of his enquiring justice, or such the general affection for his virtues, that no man misused them. It is remarked by Bede, as an instance of his dignity and power, that his banner was borne before

²³ Flor. Wig. 233. Sax. Chron. 27. Bede, ii. c. 9. and 16. The Menavian islands were Eubonia and Mona, or Man and Anglesey.—Bede, c. 9., states that Anglesey contained 960 hydes or families, and Man 300. The fertility of Anglesey occasioned the proverb, *Mon mam Cymry*; Mona the mother of Wales. Pryse's Pref. to Wynne's *Caradoc*.—The king of Gwynedd had his royal seat in it at *Aberfraw*, which is now a small village. Camb. Reg. 1796, p. 402.

him whenever he rode out, either in peace or war. When he walked abroad, the tufa preceded him.²⁴

CHAP.
VII.
628.

FOR seventeen years he reigned victorious over his enemies, and making his subjects happy. But Edwin, with all his merit, was an imperfect character. He had admitted Christianity to his belief, but he was forty-three years old before he had adopted it. His mind and temper had therefore been formed into other habits before he allowed the new faith to affect him. He was still the Saxon warrior, and partook of the fate which so many experienced from their martial character. Five years had not elapsed after his conversion before his reign was ended violently; and the disaster resulted from his ambition. The tender years of his life had been cherished by the father of Cadwallon, the sovereign of North Wales; but when Edwin had obtained the sceptre of Ethelfrith, he waged furious war with the son of his host. We know neither what had caused him, when young, to leave his asylum in Wales, nor what occasioned now the hostility between him and Cadwallon. But as the Welsh king invaded

His prosperity and its change.

His conduct to Cadwallon and Wales.

²⁴ We know, from a passage of Vegetius, corrected by Lipsius, that the tufa was one of the Roman ensigns; and we are informed by Isidorus, that Augustus introduced a globe upon a spear among his signa, to denote a subjected world. Lipsius is of opinion that this was the tufa alluded to by Bede.—*De Militia Romana*, lib. iv. c. 5. p. 169. ed. Antwerp, 1598.

BOOK
III.

628.

Edwin, we may presume him to have been the aggressor. Edwin defeated Cadwallon, who had penetrated to Widdrington, about eight miles north of Morpeth.²⁵ It is with regret we read that he was not satisfied with defensive war, and did not forbear to use the rights of victory against his early friend and protector. He obeyed his resentment or his ambition in preference to his gratitude. He pursued Cadwallon into Wales, and chased him into Ireland.²⁶ So severely did he exercise his advantages, that the British Triads characterise him as one of the three plagues which befel the Isle of Anglesey.²⁷

633.

Cadwallon
and Penda
unite.

FOR a few years his authority continued over Gwynedd. But this apparent triumph only flattered him into ruin. Cadwallon besought

²⁵ Jeffry's account of the quarrel is, that Edwin wished to wear his crown independently of the Welsh prince, who was advised to insist on his subjection, and threatened to cut off his head if he dared to crown it, lib. xii. c. 2, 3.

²⁶ The 34th Triad states, that Cadwallon and his family lived seven years in Ireland, p. 7. — Jeffry annexes a pretty nurse tale to Cadwallon's exile. Sailing to Armorica, he was driven by a tempest on the island of Garnereia; the loss of his companions affected him to sickness; for three days he refused food, on the fourth he asked for venison; a day's search discovered none. To save his king, Brian cut an ample piece out of his own thigh, roasted it on a spit, and presented it to the king as genuine venison. It was greedily devoured. The wind changed, they got safe to Armorica, and Brian afterwards killed the second-sighted magician of Edwin, lib. xii. c. 4. and 7.

²⁷ Matt. West. 224. in his *Combustis Urbibus et Colonis destructis*, explains the direful scourge.

the aid of Penda, the Mercian king, who armed in his cause with all the activity of youth. The confederated kings met Edwin in Hatfield Chace in Yorkshire, on the twelfth of October. As Mercia until that time had been obscure and tranquil, and an appendage to his kingdom of Deira, Edwin had no reason to apprehend any danger from this union. But the end of all battles is uncertain: the death of a commander; the mistake of a movement; a sudden unforeseen attack on some part; a skilful, even at times an accidental, evolution, has frequently made both talent and numbers unavailing. The detail of this conflict has not been transmitted, but its issue was calamitous to Edwin. He fell in his forty-eighth year, with one of his children; and most of his army perished.²⁸

CHAP.
VII.

653.

Edwin's
fate.

THE victors ravaged Northumbria; the hoary Penda exercised peculiar cruelty on the Christian inhabitants. Consternation overspread the

²⁸ Osfrid fell before his father. Bede, lib. ii. c. 20. Sax. Chron. 29. Gibson and Carte place the battle in Hatfield Chace. Langhorn prefers Hethfield in Derbyshire, near Cheshire, 176.; others more absurdly have glanced on Hatfield in Herts. Near the Yorkshire town many intrenchments are to be seen. I will not aver that rats shun the town, or that the sparrows are displeased with Lindham in the moors below it. Gibson's Add. to Camden, 725.—The men of Powys so distinguished themselves in this battle, that they obtained from Cadwallon a boon of fourteen privileges. The Welsh call the scene of conflict Meigen. Cynddelw, cited in Owen's Llywarch, p. 117.

BOOK
III.
633.

country. The royal widow fled in terror, under the protection of Paulinus, and a valiant soldier, with some of her children, to her kinsman in Kent.²⁹

Cadwallon's successes.

ON Edwin's death, the ancient divisions of Northumbria again prevailed, and an heptarchy re-appeared. His cousin Osric, the grandson of Ella, succeeded to Deira; and Eanfrid, the long exiled son of Ethelfrith, to Bernicia: both restored paganism, though Osric had been baptised. The Welsh king Cadwallon, full of projects of revenge against the nation of the Angles, continued his war. Osric rashly ventured to besiege him in a strong town³⁰, but an unexpected sally of Cadwallon destroyed the king of Deira. For a year the victor desolated Northumbria: his success struck Eanfrid with terror, and his panic hurried him to his fate.

²⁹ Eadbald received them honourably, and made Paulinus bishop of Rochester. Bede, lib. ii. c. 20. Sax. Chron. 29. He gave her the villam maximam Lininge (Liming) cum omnibus adjacentibus, in which she built a monastery. Hugo. Candid. Cænob. Burg. Hist. p. 37. ed Sparke. She exhibited a novelty to the English, which produced serious consequences. She took the veil. Smith's Notes on Bede, 101. The hospitality of Eadbald seems not to have been unchequered; her apprehension of him and Oswald induced her to send her children to France, to Dagobert, their relation. Bede, c. 20.

³⁰ Bede, lib. iii. c. 1. The town was a municipium, and was therefore in all probability York. Smith's Notes on Bede, 103.

He went with twelve soldiers to sue peace of the Welshman. Notwithstanding the sacred purpose of his visit, he was put to death.

CHAP.

VII.

633.

THE swords of Cadwallon and his army seemed the agents, destined to fulfil their cherished prophecy. The fate of the Anglo-Saxons was now about to arrive; three of their kings had been already offered up to the shades of the injured Cymry; an Arthur had revived in Cadwallon. — But the lying prophecies of hope, and human augury, have been the experience and the complaint of ages, and are never more fallacious than in ambition and war.

TRIUMPHANT with the fame of fourteen great battles and sixty skirmishes³¹, Cadwallon despised Oswald, the brother and successor of Eanfrid, who rallied the Bernician forces, and attempted to become the deliverer of his country. With humble confidence the royal youth committed his cause to the arbitration of Providence³², and calmly awaited the decision on the banks of the Denise.³³ There, Cadwallon

634.

Oswald defeats him.

³¹ Llywarch Hen. p. 111.

³² The piety of Oswald previous to the battle is expressed by Bede. To his arrayed army he loudly exclaimed: "Let us kneel to the omnipotent Lord, the existing and the true, and unite to implore his protection against a fierce and arrogant enemy. He knows that we have undertaken a just war for the safety of our people." — The army obeyed the royal mandate, lib. iii. c. 2.

³³ Camden places this battle at Dilston, formerly Devil-

BOOK III. and the flower of his army were ³⁴destroyed.
 634. The return of the Cymry to their ancient country
 never became probable again. ³⁵

ston, on a small brook which empties into the Tine, 854., Gib. ed.—Smith, with greater probability marks Erringburn as the rivulet on which Cadwallon perished, and the fields either of Cockley, Hallington, or Bingfield, as the scene of conflict. App. to Bede, 721. The Angles called it Hefenfield, which name, according to tradition, Bingfield bore.

³⁴ Although Jeffry admits Oswald to have conquered at Havenfield, yet he has sent Penda to be the person defeated there; and instead of suffering his Cadwallon to perish, inflames him with rage at the disaster, and dispatches him like lightning in chase of Oswald, whom he permits Penda to kill; Cadwallon then became possessed of all Britain, lib. xii. c. 10, 11. Such is his history!

³⁵ The ancient bard Llywarch Hen composed in his old age an elegy on Cadwallon, whose death he lived to witness; and thus speaks of his friend:

Fourteen great battles he fought
 For Britain, the most beautiful:
 And sixty skirmishes.

Of Lloegyr (England)
 The scourge and the oppressor,
 His hand was open;
 Honour flowed from it.

Cadwallon encamped on the Yddon,
 The fierce affliction of his foes.
 The lion, prosperous against the Saxons.

Cadwallon in his fame encamped
 On the top of Mount Digoll:
 Seven months, and seven skirmishes daily.

He led the hand of slaughter in the breach ;
Eagerly he pursued the conflict ;
Stubborn in an hundred battles,
A hundred castles he threw down.

C H A P.
VII.



He made the eagles full ;
Violent his wrath in the gash ;
As the water flows from the fountain,
So will our sorrow through the lingering day,
For Cadwallon !

Welsh Arch. i. p. 121.; and Owen's Llywarch,
p. 111—117.

CHAP. VIII.

*The Reign, Actions, and Death of PENDA.—
History of the ANGLO-SAXON Octarchy to the
Accession of ALFRED of NORTHUMBRIA.*

BOOK
III.

A. D.
627—684.
Rise of
Penda.

ABOUT this time the kingdom of Mercia was not only distinctly formed, but, by the extraordinary ability of one man, was at the same time raised to a greater eminence in the Saxon octarchy than any of its preceding kings, even those who had become Bretwaldas, had actually obtained. This man was Penda, who, though not classed among the Bretwaldas, would, if victory over the other Anglo-Saxon states had given the dignity, have possessed it more rightfully than any other. It has been mentioned that several petty adventurers of the Angles had successively penetrated into the inland districts, which were comprised in the kingdom of Mercia, and established settlements among the Britons in these regions. In 586, one of them, named Crida, also a descendant of Woden, began to attain a regal pre-eminence¹; but as

¹ Crida is the first Mercian chief that is mentioned in the documents which remain to us, with the title of king. He began to reign in 586. 3 Gale Script. p. 229. Hunt. 315. Lel. Collect. ii. p. 56. Ibid. i. p. 258. Leland from an old

we may infer from an intimation of Nennius, that Penda first separated Mercia from the kingdom of the northern Angles, it must have been in subordination to the kingdom of Deira, which formed its northern frontier.² In 627, Penda, the grandson of Crida, succeeded to the crown at that age when men are usually more disposed to ease than activity. He was fifty years old before he became the king of Mercia, and he reigned thirty years³; but it was to the terror and destruction of several of the other Anglo-Saxon kings. Mercia had neither displayed power nor ability before his accession; but Penda's military talents and uncommon vigour speedily raised it to a decided and overwhelming preponderance. In the year after he attained the crown, we find him in a battle with Cynegils, and his son Cwichelm, in Wessex, at Cirencester. The conflict was undecided during the whole day, and in the ensuing morning the war was ended by a treaty.⁴ Five years afterwards,

chronicle observes, vol. i. p. 211., that the Trent divided Mercia into two kingdoms, the north and the south.

² Nennius, p. 117. "Penda primus seperavit regnum Merciorum a regno Nordorum." Ceorl acceded between Crida and Penda. Rad. Polych. p. 229. It was Ceorl's daughter Quenburga that Edwin married in his exile, Bede, lib. ii. c. 14.

³ Flor. Wig. dates his accession in 627, p. 232. Penda was the eleventh descendant from Woden, by his son Wihtlæg, *ibid.* and Hunt. 316.

⁴ Hunt. 316. Sax. Chron. 29. The pacification is mentioned by Flor. Wig. 233.; and Matt. West. 217.

BOOK
III.
634.

at the age of sixty, he joined Cadwallon, and defeated Edwin of Northumbria, in that battle in which this prince was slain.⁵

Oswald
reigns in
Northum-
bria.

THE piety of Oswald was sincere, and influenced his conduct; he obtained a bishop from Icolm-kill to instruct his rude subjects; and he earnestly laboured to advance their moral tuition. His own example strengthened his recommendations on that essential duty, without which all human talents, and all human aggrandisement, are unavailing decorations. In the festival of Easter a silver dish was laid before him, full of dainties; while the blessing was about to be pronounced, the servant appointed to relieve the poor, informed the king that the street was crowded with the needy, soliciting alms. Struck by the contrast, that while he was feasting with luxury, many of his subjects, beings of feelings, desires, and necessities like his own, were struggling with poverty; remembering the benevolent precepts of Christianity, and obeying the impulse of a kind temper, he ordered the food, untouched, to be given to the supplicants, and the silver dish to be divided among them.⁶ The beggar for one instant participated in the enjoyments of a king, and rank was, in that fierce and proud day, admonished

⁵ See before, p. 357.

⁶ Bede, lib. iii. c. 6. Oswald was *Nepos Edwini regis ex sorore Acha.* *ibid.*—As he united Deira and Bernicia, the Saxon states formed, during his reign, an hexarchy.

to look with compassion on the misery which surrounds it.

C H A P.
VIII.

634.

OSWALD had the satisfaction of perceiving the blessings of Christianity diffused into Wessex. A spirit so lowly and so charitable as his own, must have powerfully felt the beauties of its benign morality. He stood sponsor for Cynegils, who received baptism. The nation followed the example of the king.⁷

WHILE Oswald was benefiting his age by a display of those gentle virtues which above all others are fitted to ameliorate the human character, the Mercian king was preparing to attack him. His invasion of Northumbria was fatal to the less warlike Oswald, who fell at Oswestry in Shropshire, in the thirty-eighth year of his age, and the ninth of his reign. Oswald breathed his last sigh in prayer for his friends.⁸

642.
Slain by
Penda.

As ferocious as he was daring and restless, Penda caused the head and limbs of Oswald to be severed from his body, and exposed on stakes.⁹ He proceeded through Northumbria with devastations, and finding himself unable to carry the royal city of Bebbanburh by storm, he resolved to destroy it by fire. He demolished

Penda at-
tacks Beb-
banburh.

⁷ Bede, lib. iii. c. 7.

⁸ Bede, lib. iii. c. 9.

⁹ Bede, lib. ii. c. 12. Oswy, his successor, removed and interred them, *ibid.* But the Saxon Chronicler mentions that his hands were at Bebbanburh in his time, p. 31. They were kept as relics.

BOOK
III.

642.

all the villages in its vicinity, and encompassing the place with a great quantity of the wood and thatch of the ruins, he surrounded the city with flames. But the wind, which was raising the fiery shower above the city walls, suddenly shifted. The element of destruction, most fatal to man, was driven back from its expected prey on those who had let it loose, and the sanguinary besiegers, in panic or in prudence, abandoned the place.¹⁰ The Northumbrians afterwards made Oswy, the brother of Oswald, their king.

643.

PENDA'S next warfare was against Wessex. Cenwalh, the son of Cynegils, had offended him by repudiating his sister. He invaded and expelled him; and Cenwalh was an exile in Wessex for three years, before he could regain his crown.¹¹

Destroys
the kings
of East
Anglia.

IN the year after Oswald's death, the victorious Penda turned his arms against East Anglia, then in a state of unambitious and inoffensive tranquillity. But this disposition only tempted the ambition of the Mercian. In this country, Sigebert had succeeded the son of Redwald, whom at one time fearing, he had fled into France for safety, and there became a Christian, and attached himself to study. Attaining the crown of East Anglia, he established that school in his dominions, which has not only the distinction of being the first, after that at

¹⁰ Bede, lib. iii. c. 16.

¹¹ Bede, lib. iii. c. 7. Flor. Wig. 237. Sax. Chron. 32.

Canterbury, which the Anglo-Saxons established to teach reading and the literature to which it leads, but also of being supposed to have formed the original germ of the university of Cambridge.¹² Sigebert built also a monastery; and preferring devotion, letters, and tranquillity, to state, he resigned his crown to his kinsman Ecgric, who was reigning in a part of East Anglia, assumed the tonsure, and retired into the monastery which he had founded. On Penda's invasion, the East Anglians, fearful lest their reigning monarch should be unequal to repel his superior numbers, drew Sigebert by force from his monastery, and compelled him to head their army, from a belief that it would prosper under the guidance of so good a man. He led them to the shock, but disclaim-

¹² Bede's account is, that desiring to imitate what he had seen well arranged in Gaul, he instituted, with the help of Felix from Kent, a school in which youth should be instructed in letters. Felix gave him teachers and masters from Kent, lib. iii. c. 18. Dr. Smith has given a copious essay on the question, whether this was the foundation of the university at Cambridge, and preceded that of Oxford in antiquity. He considers himself to have shown "feliciter," that the school of Sigebert was planted at Cambridge; but admits that the posterior account, which Peter Blessensis has left of Joffrid's teaching near Cambridge, after the Norman conquest, is an "objectio validissima," which can hardly be answered. On the whole, he thinks, that if he has not identified the Cambridge university with the school of Sigebert, he has at least shown, that the fables about Alfred's founding Oxford are to be entirely rejected. App. No. 14. p. 721—740.

BOOK
III.

643.

ing all weapons of destruction, he used only a wand of command. His skill was excelled by the veteran ability of Penda. Both the East-Anglian princes fell, and their army was dispersed.¹³

654.

THE ambition and the successes of Penda were not yet terminated. In 654, he marched into East Anglia, against Anna, the successor of Sigebert and Ecgric, and destroyed¹⁴ him. His crime was unpardonable in the eyes of Penda. He had hospitably received Cenwalch.¹⁵

Oswy.

IN that warlike age, when every man was a soldier, no conquest was permanent, no victor secure. Penda lived to exhibit an instance of this truth. When Oswy assumed the government of Bernicia on the death of Oswald, he placed Oswin, son of Osric, the kinsman of the applauded Edwin, over Deira. Oswin, of a tall and graceful stature, distinguished himself for his humanity and generosity, but could not allay the jealousy of Oswy, who soon became eager to destroy the image he had set up.

¹³ Bede, lib. iii. c. 18.

¹⁴ Flor. Wig. 240. Sax. Chron. 23. Anna was the son of Eni, of royal descent. His brother Adelhere acceded on Anna's fall; but in his second year was slain by the army of Oswy. The third brother, Edewold, a pious prince, succeeded. On his death, Adulph, the son of Anna, was crowned. Hist. Elien. MSS. Cott. Lib. Nero. A. 15.; and 1 Dugdale, 88.

¹⁵ Bede, lib. iii. cap. 18. and c. 7.

Oswin shrunk from a martial conflict, and concealed himself, with one faithful soldier, Tondhere, his foster-brother, in the house of earl Hunwald, his assured friend. This man betrayed him to Oswy, and suffered him to be murdered.¹⁶ Oswin had given to his betrayer the possessions he enjoyed. The soldiers of Oswy, whom he guided, entered the house in the night. Tondhere offered himself to their fury, to save his lord and friend; but had only the consolation to perish with him.¹⁷

C H A P.
VIII.
564.

Oswin
killed.

Oswy was, however, destined to free the Anglo-Saxon octarchy from Penda. When this aged tyrant was preparing to invade his dominions, he sued long and earnestly for peace in vain. At the age of eighty, the pagan chief, encouraged by his preceding successes, still courted the chances and the tumult of battle. Rejecting the negotiations repeatedly offered, he hastened, with the veterans whom he had long trained, to add Oswy to the five monarchs whose funeral honours recorded him as their destroyer. With trembling anxiety Oswy met him, with his son Alfred, and a much inferior force; but the battle is not always given to the strong, nor the race to the swift. Penda had filled up the measure of his iniquities, and Providence released the country from a ruler, whose appetite for destruction age could not

655.

¹⁶ Bede, lib. iii. c. 14.

¹⁷ Dugd. Mon. i. 333.

BOOK
III.655.
Penda's
fate.

diminish. He rushed into the battle with Oswy confident of victory, but the issue was unexpectedly disastrous to him. Penda, with thirty commanders, perished before the enemy, whose greatest strength they had subdued, and whose present feebleness they despised. The plains of Yorkshire witnessed the emancipation of England.¹⁸ Oidilwald, the son of Oswald, was with the forces of Penda, but not desirous to assist him. When the battle began, he withdrew from the conflict, and waited calmly for the event in a distant position. This secession may have produced a panic among the troops of Penda, or by occupying the jealous attention of part of them, diminished the number which acted against Oswy. The principal leaders of the Mercians fell in defending Penda, and the country happening to be overflowed, more perished by the waters than by the sword.

By the death of Oswin the hexarchy returned; by the death of Penda a pentarchy appeared; for the kingdom of Mercia was so weakened by the result of this battle, that it fell immediately into the power of Oswy, who conquered also part of Scotland.

PENDA, during his life, had appointed one of his sons, Peada, to be king of that part of his do-

¹⁸ Sax. Chron. 33. Bede, lib. iii. c. 24. Winwidfield, near Leeds, was the theatre of the conflict. Camden, Gib. 711.—Bede does not explicitly assert that Penda had three times the number of forces, but that it was so reported.

minions and conquests which were called Middle Angles; a youth of royal demeanour and great merit. Peada had visited Oswy in Northumbria, and solicited his daughter, Alchfleda, in marriage. To renounce his idols and embrace Christianity was made the condition of her hand. As his father was such a determined supporter of the ancient Saxon superstition, and was of a character so stern, the princess must have inspired her suitor with an ardent affection to have made him balance on the subject. Peada submitted to hear the Christian preachers; and their three great topics, the resurrection, the hope of future immortality, and the promise of a heavenly kingdom, inclined him to adopt the religion which revealed them. The persuasions of Alfred, the eldest and intelligent brother of the princess, who had married his sister Cyneburga, completed the impression. He decided to embrace Christianity, even though Alchfleda should be refused to him. He was baptised with all his earls and knights, who had attended him, and with their families, and took four priests home with him to instruct his people.¹⁹ The Saxon mind appears to have then reached that state of activity and judgment, which had become dissatisfied with its irrational idolatry, and was thus become fitted

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Peada introduces
Christianity into
Mercia.

¹⁹ Bede, lib. iii. c. 21. The names of the four priests were, Cidd, Adda, Betti, and Diuna. The three first were Angles, the last an Irishman, *ibid.*

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to receive the belief of Christianity, as soon as they were influenced to attend steadily to its interesting and enlightening truths. The exertions of the ecclesiastics were successful. Every day, many Mercians, both nobles and laity, became converted.

THE mind of Penda himself seemed at last to lessen its aversion to the new faith. He allowed it to be preached in his own dominions to those who chose to hear it; and he took a fair distinction on the subject. He permitted them to believe, if they practised what they were taught. He is stated to have hated and despised those who adopted Christianity, but did not perform its injunctions; exclaiming that those miserable creatures were worthy only of contempt, who would not obey the God in whom they believed. This important revolution of opinions occurred to Mercia about two years before Penda's death.²⁰ His character was violent and ambitious, but his mind was strong, decided, and of a superior energy. If literature and Christianity had improved it, his talents would have placed him high among the most applauded of the Anglo-Saxon kings.

PENDA'S death led to the complete conversion of Mercia. Oswy, after his victory, reigned three years over it, and gave to his son-in-law Peada the sovereignty of the Southern Mercians,

²⁰ Bede, lib. iii. c. 21.

whom the Trent divided from the Northern. To read that Mercia beyond the Trent contained but seven thousand families, and in its other part only five thousand ²¹, leads us to the opinion, that its successes under Penda had not arisen from the numbers of its population, but rather from his great military abilities and powerful capacity. From his reign it advanced with a steady and rapid progress. Christianity spread through it with great celerity after Penda's death. Its two first bishops were Irishmen; and the third, though born an Angle, was educated in Ireland.

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IN the spring after his father's death, Peada, was assassinated at his Easter festival; and, with the report preserved by the chroniclers, that it was from the treachery of his ²² queen. Another tradition, but of slender authority, ascribes it to the arts of her mother, who was still a pagan. ²³ It may have arisen from the

His assassination.

²¹ Bede, lib. iii. c. 24.

²² So Bede, c. 24.; Sax. Chron. 33.; and Malmsb. p. 27. It is not uninteresting to read how characteristically an ancient monk expresses the incident. "The enemy of the human race instigated against him *that nature*, by which he deprived us of the joys of Paradise; to wit, his wife Alflæda, who betrayed and slew him." Hug. Cand. p. 4. The Norman Rhimed Chronicle also ascribes the crime to the queen:

Alfred la reine engine taunt doluersment,
Ke ele sun barun tuat par graunt traisement.

Ed. Sparke, 243.

²³ Speed quotes Rob. Swapham to this effect, but I have not

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resentments of those who lamented the fall of the ancient idolatry, which Peada had first subverted in Mercia. He had laid the foundation of the celebrated monastery at Peterborough before he fell, which his brother completed.²⁴

THE chieftains of Mercia had submitted to the Northumbrian king with an impatient reluctance. They concealed Wulfhere, another of Penda's children, among themselves, till a fit occasion arose of using his name and rights: and after Peada's death, three of them placed Wulfhere at their head, assembled in arms, disclaimed the authority of Oswy, expelled his officers, and made their young leader their king. They succeeded in establishing the independence of their country.²⁵

Cenwalch
in Wessex.

WESSEX now began to emerge into activity and power. Her king, Cenwalch, defeated the Britons, who had imagined, that, after his defeat by Penda, he would prove an easy²⁶ conquest. Pen in Somersetshire was the place of their conflict: the Britons attacked with an impetuosity

met with the passage. The Register of Peterborough, Ap. Dugd. i. p. 63., uses the phrase, *indigna et immatura morte*, without designating the person, whom Ingulf also omits. Huntingdon has merely, *ipso occiso*, p. 317.

²⁴ Chron. Petrib. p. 1. It was called *Medeshamstede*, because there was a well there named *Medes-wel*. Sax. Chron. 33.

²⁵ Bede, lib. iii. c. 24.

²⁶ Huntingdon, lib. ii. p. 317., *et facta est super progeniem Bruti plaga insanabilis in die illa*. Ib.

that was at first successful, but at length were defeated, and chased, with a slaughter from which they never recovered, to Pedridan on the Parret.²⁷ This locality would seem to intimate, that it was the Britons of Cornwall and Devonshire who had principally invaded. Animated by this success, Cenwalch sought to revenge on Mercia and Wulfhere the disgrace which he had suffered from his father. A struggle ensued, in which, after some reverses, the Mercians prevailed, and part of Wessex was subjected to the authority of the Mercian king.²⁸

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ESSEX about this period restored Christianity,

²⁷ “ Et persecuti sunt eos usque ad locum qui Pederydan nuncupatur.” Ethelwerd, p. 836. — So the Saxon Chronicle, *hy geflymde oth Pedridan*, p. 39. — There is a place on the Parret, in Somersetshire, the entrance of which was called Pedridan muth, perhaps the Aber Peryddon of Gollyddan.

²⁸ Matt. West. 216. — The issue of this battle has been differently stated. Ethelwerd, 837., makes Cenwalch take Wulfhere prisoner at *Æscesdun*, or Aston, near Wallingford, in Berks. — The Saxon Chron. 39., and Flor. Wigorn. 241., as far as they express themselves, imply the contrary. — Malmsh. says, the Mercian was at first graviter afflictus by the loss, but afterwards avenged himself, p. 27. — The expressions of Bede, that Wulfhere gave the Isle of Wight and a province in West Saxony to the king of Sussex in one part of his life, lib. iv. c. 13., and that Cenwalch, during Wulfhere's life, was gravissimis regni sui damnis sæpissime ab hostibus adflictus, lib. iii. c. 7., fully countenance the idea, that if Cenwalch at first prevailed, the ultimate triumphs were enjoyed by Wulfhere.

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659.
Essex re-
stores
Christia-
nity.

through the instrumentality of Oswy. Sigebert his king came frequently into Northumbria, and Oswy used to reason with him, that those things could not be gods which the hands of men had made; that wood and stone could not be the materials of which Deity subsisted: these were destroyed by the axe and by fire, or were often subjected to the vilest occasions. As Sigebert admitted these obvious truths, Oswy described the real object of human worship to be, that Eternal and Almighty being, to us invisible, and in majesty incomprehensible; yet who had deigned to create the heavens, and the earth, and the human race; who governs what he framed, and will judge the world with parental equity. His everlasting seat was not in perishing metals, but in the heavens; in those regions where he had promised to give endless recompense to those who would study and do the will of their Lord and Maker. The frequent discussion of these topics at length conquered the resisting minds of Sigebert and his friends. After consulting together, they abandoned their idolatry; and the king adopted the Christian faith as the religion of Essex.²⁹

SUSSEX embraced the opportunity of Cenwalch's exile to terminate its subordination to Wessex. In 645 Penda had expelled Cenwalch from Wessex; and in 648 we find Edilwalch

²⁹ Bede, lib. iii. c. 22. This was in 653

commencing his reign as king of Sussex.³⁰ He submitted to the predominance and courted the friendship of Wulfhere; and in 661 received the Isle of Wight, and the Meanwara district in Hampshire, part of the spoils of Wessex, from the bounty of his conqueror. Sussex at this period contained seven thousand families, but remained attached to its idol worship. But Wulfhere persuaded Edilwald to be baptised; and by the exertions of Wilfrid, the bishop most distinguished in his day, the little kingdom, about A. D. 688, exchanged its paganism for Christianity.³¹ Essex also submitted afterwards to Wulfhere³², who became now the most important of the Anglo-Saxon sovereigns, though he is not mentioned with the title of

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³⁰ Matt. West. p. 224. mentions the expulsion of Cenwalch. So Floren. Wig. p. 237.—In 648 the exiled monarch returned, Flor. Wig. 238. — In 661, Matt. West places the 13th year of Aethelwald's reign in Sussex, p. 232.

³¹ Bede, lib. iv. c. 13. Sax. Chron. p. 39. The annotator on Bede remarks, that the memorial of this province remains still in the names of the hundreds of Meansbrough, Eastmean, Westmean, and Mansbridge, Smith's Bede, p. 155.

³² Bede, lib. iii. c. 30.—Hugo Candidus names Sigher as the king of Sussex subdued by Wulfhere. Cœnob. Burg. Hist. p. 7. and 8.—This is a misnomer. Sigher reigned with Sebbi in Essex at this period. That Surrey was also in subjection to Wulfhere, appears from a charter in the register of Chertsey Abbey, in which Frithwald, the founder, styles himself "Provinciae Surrianorum subregulus regis Wifarii Mercianorum." This was in '666. MSS. Cotton. Lib. Vitel. A. 13. This Frithwald is called King.

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Bretwalda, which seems to have been discontinued after this period. Perhaps the conjecture on this dignity which would come nearest the truth, would be, that it was the walda or ruler of the Saxon kingdoms against the Britons, while the latter maintained the struggle for the possession of the country: a species of Agamemnon against the general enemy, not a title of dignity or power against each other. If so, it would be but the war-king of the Saxons in Britain, against its native chiefs.

670.
Oswy's
death.

Oswy is ranked by Bede, the seventh, as Oswald had been the sixth, of the kings who preponderated in the Anglo-Saxon octarchy.³³ He died in this year.³⁴ His greatest action was the deliverance of the Anglo-Saxons from the oppressions of Penda; he also subdued the Picts and Scots; but the fate of the amiable Oswin, whom he destroyed, shades his memory with a cloud.³⁵ Alfred, his eldest son, who had assisted to gain the laurels of his fame in the field of Winwid, was rejected from the succession, for his illegitimacy, and the younger Ecgfrid

³³ Bede, lib. ii. c. 5. Sax. Chron. p. 7.

³⁴ Sax. Chron. 40. Chron. Abb. Petri de Burgo, p. 2.

³⁵ If Oswin's character has not been too favourably drawn, his death was a great loss to his contemporaries. His tall and handsome person was adorned by a disposition uncommon in his age; affatu jucundus, moribus civilis, omnibus manu largus, regum humilimus, amabilis omnibus. Flor. Wig. 237. To the same purport Bede, lib. iii. c. 14., and Matt. West. 224.

was placed over the united kingdoms of Northumbria.³⁶

ON the death of Cenwalch, his widow, Saxburga, assumed the sceptre of Wessex. She wielded it with courage and intelligence; she augmented her army with new levies, and encouraged her veterans. The submissive were rewarded by her clemency; to the enemy a firm countenance was displayed³⁷; but the proud barbarians of Wessex disdained even a government of wisdom in the form of a woman³⁸; and for ten years the nobles shared the government. In the first part of this interval, Æscuin, son of Cenfusus, a prevailing noble, descended from Cerdic, is mentioned to have ruled.³⁹ He led

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672.
Saxburga.

674.
Æscuin.

³⁶ *Reprobato notho—factione optimatum quamquam senior*, Malms. 20, 21.—Ecgfrid had resided as a hostage with the Mercian queen at the time of Penda's fall. Bede, lib. iii. c. 24.

³⁷ Malms. 14. She reigned for one year. Sax. Chron. 41.

³⁸ “*Indignantibus regni magnatibus expulsa est a regno, nolentibus sub sexu fœmineo militare.*” Matt. West. 236.

³⁹ There is a seeming contradiction on this point between Bede and the Saxon Chronicle. Bede, lib. iii. c. 12. says, that after Cenwalch's death, *acceperunt subreguli regnum gentis, et divisum inter se tenuerunt annis circiter decem.*—Flor. Wig. 246. mentions this passage, but mentions also the opposite account of the *Anglica Chronica*. The Saxon Chronicle, after Saxburga's year, places Æscuin in 674, and Kentwin in 676, both within the ten years of Bede, p. 41. 44. I cannot reject the evidence of Bede, who was born at this time. Perhaps Æscuin and Kentwin were the most powerful of the nobles, and being of the race of Cerdic, enjoyed the supremacy. Ina's charter authenticates Kent-

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674.

a powerful force against Wulfhere, the king of Mercia; a battle, in which the mutual destruction was more conspicuous than the decision, ensued at Bedwin in Wilts. It is worth our while, says the moralizing historian, to observe how contemptible are the glorious wars and noble achievements of the great. Both these contending kings, whose vanity and pomp hurled thousands of their fellow-creatures to their graves, scarcely survived the battle a year.⁴⁰ Within a few months Wulfhere died of a natural disease; and in 676 Æscuin followed. Kentwin is denominated his⁴¹ successor, and Ethelred, the surviving son of Penda, acceded to the crown of Mercia, and ravaged Kent.⁴²

Kentwin.

Ecgfrid of Northumbria.

ECGFRID, who was governing in Northumbria, had repulsed, with great slaughter, an invasion of the Picts. Their general, Bernhaeth, fell, and the corpses of his followers stopped the current of the river which flowed near the scene of⁴³ ruin.

win's reign. See it in Malmsb. de Ant. Glast. 3 Gale, 311. Alfred, in his Chronological Fragment, inserted in his Bede, mentions both Æscuin and Kentwin. Walker's *Elfled. Mag. App.* p. 199.

⁴⁰ H. Hunting. p. 318. Sax. Chron. 45.

⁴¹ Sax. Chron. 44. Ethelwerd, 837.

⁴² Sax. Chron. 44. The Chronicon of Peterborough dates the invasion of Kent in 677. p. 3.

⁴³ Malmsb. Gest. Pontif. lib. iii. p. 261. Eddius fills two rivers with the bodies, over which the victors passed *siccis pedibus*. Vit. Wilf. c. 19. p. 61. ed. Gale.

In 679 Ecgfrid invaded Mercia, though Ethelred had married his sister. The Mercians met him on the Trent, and, in the first battle, his brother Ælfrin fell. More calamitous warfare impended from the exasperation of the combatants, when the aged Theodore interposed. His function of archbishop derived new weight from his character, and he established a pacification between the related combatants. A pecuniary mulct compensated for the fate of Ælfrin, and the retaliation in human blood was ⁴⁴ prevented.

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674.

A DESTRUCTIVE pestilence began to spread through Britain, from its southern provinces to the northern regions, and equally afflicted Ireland, in 664. ⁴⁵ The calamity extended to Wales, and many of the natives emigrated to Bretagne. Cadwaladyr, the son of Cadwallon, accompanied them. He was kindly received by one of the Breton kings, and partook of his hospitality, till devotion or an aversion to the military vicissitudes of the day, induced him to abandon his royal dignity in Wales, and to visit Rome. He was the last of the Cymry who pretended to the sovereignty of the island. ⁴⁶

664.
A pesti-
lence.

⁴⁴ Bede, lib. iv. c. 21. Malmsb. 20. 28. Sax. Chron. 44. Ecgfrid had conquered Lincolnshire from Wulfhere before Ethelred's accession, Bede, lib. ii. c. 12.

⁴⁵ Bede, lib. iii. c. 27.

⁴⁶ Jeffry, Brit. Hist. lib. xii. c. 17, 18. This work and the Brut. Tysilio and Brut. G. ab Arthur end here. The death of Cadwaladyr is the termination of those British Chronicles, which contain the fabled history of Arthur and

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674.

681.

698.

WHEN Cadwaladyr died at Rome, Alan, the king of Bretagne, sent his son Ivor, and his nephew, Inyr, with a powerful fleet, to regain the crown which Cadwaladyr had abandoned or lost. Ivor was at first so successful, that he defeated the Saxons, and took Cornwall, Devonshire, and Somersetshire. But Kentwin met him with the West Saxon power, and, chasing him to the sea, again disappointed the hopes of the Cymry.⁴⁷ Rodri Maelwynawc assumed the pennaduriaeth, or sovereignty of the Cymry, on Ivor's departure for Rome.⁴⁸

his predecessors; and they close analogously to their general character; for the voice of an angel is made use of to deter Cadwaladyr from returning to Britain. The reason added for the celestial interference is, because the Deity did not choose that the Britons should reign in the island before the time predicted by Merlin. The same voice ordered him to Rome, and promised that his countrymen should, from the merit of their faith, again recover the island, when the time foretold was arrived!! Jeffry, lib. xii. c. 17. Brut. Tys., and Brut. Arth. p. 386.

⁴⁷ Brut. y Saeson and the Brut. y Tywysoglon, p. 468—470. Sax. Chron. 45. Wynne's History of Wales is not a translation of Caradoc. It is composed from his work, with many additions badly put together.

⁴⁸ Brut. y Tywys, p. 471. Mr. Owen's biographical notice of Cadwaladyr may be read as a good summary of the chief incidents that concern this celebrated Welsh prince. Cadwaladyr, son of Cadwallon ab cadwan succeeded to the nominal sovereignty of Britain, in the year 660. Disheartened at the progress of the Saxons, he went to Rome in 686, and died in 703. With him the title of king of the Britains ceased, and such parts as were not conquered by the Saxons were governed by different chiefs, as Stratclyde, Cornwall,

THE restless Ecgfrid soon turned his arms upon Ireland. This nation, although by some of its tribes occasionally at variance with the Welsh, had always continued in strict amity with the English⁴⁹; but this peaceful forbearance was no protection from the avarice of power. Their country was miserably ravaged by Beorht, the Northumbrian general; the lands of Bregb were plundered, and many churches and monasteries were destroyed. The islanders defended their domestic lares with valour, and the Angles retreated.

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Ecgfrid
invades
Ireland.

IT is at this period that Ireland appears to have been conspicuous for the literature of some of her monastic seminaries. Bede states, that many of the noble and middle classes of the English left their country, and went to Ireland, either to study the Scriptures or to pass a more virtuous life. Some connected themselves with the monasteries, and preferred passing from the abode of

and Wales. In the Triads he is styled one of the three princes who wore the golden bands, being emblems of supreme authority, which were worn round the neck, arms, and knees. He was also called one of the three blessed kings, on account of the protection and support afforded by him to the fugitive Christians, who were dispossessed by the Saxons. There is a church dedicated to him in Mona, and another in Denbighshire, Camb. Biog. p. 34.

⁴⁹ Bede characterises the Irish as a people *innociam et nationi Anglorum semper amicissimam*, lib. iv. c. 26.—Malmsbury describes them as a *genus hominum innocens, genuina simplicitate, nil unquam mali moliens*, p. 20.

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one master to that of another, applying themselves to reading. The Irish received them all most hospitably, supplied them with food without any recompense, and gave them books to read, and gratuitous tuition.⁵⁰

Slain
against the
Picts.

IN the next year, Ecgfrid invaded the Picts with the same purpose of depredation; but a feigned flight of the natives seduced him into a defile. At Drumnechtan the fierce assault of patriotism was made, and Ecgfrid perished with most of his troops.⁵¹ The body of Ecgfrid was taken to Icolmkill, or the celebrated isle of St. Columba, and buried there.⁵²

THIS disastrous expedition humbled the power of Northumbria.⁵³ The Irish and Scotch im-

⁵⁰ Bede, lib. iii. c. 27. He mentions two of these monasteries by name, Paegnalaech and Rathmelsigi. The studies pursued in Ireland about this time are implied rather than expressed, in the tumid and not easily comprehensible epistle of Aldhelm, to be the geometrical and grammatical arts, logic, rhetoric, and the Scriptures. I can hardly guess what he means by his "bis ternasque omissas physicæ artes machinas." Ush. Syll. p. 39.

⁵¹ Bede, lib. iv. c. 26. The annals of Ulster thus mention his death: "Battle of Drumnechtan, on the 20th May, where Ecgfred M'Offa was killed with a vast number of his men. He burnt Tula-aman Duinolla." Ant. Celt. Nor. p. 59.

⁵² Sun. Dun. p. 5. calls the place of battle Nechtonesmere, which corresponds with the Drumnechtan of the Irish Chronicle.

⁵³ Thirteen years afterwards, Beorht, endeavouring to revenge the calamity by another invasion, also perished, Bede, lib. v. p. 24. — Ann. Ulst. 59. Sax. Chr. 49. Hunting. 337.

mediately disclaimed its predominance, and some of the Welsh princes obtained their independence. This kingdom, which in the hands of Ethelfrid, Edwin, and Oswy, had menaced the others with subjection, was formidable to its contemporaries no more. The kings of Wessex and Mercia obscured it by their superior power, and it precipitated its own fall by incessant usurpations and civil wars.⁵⁴

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⁵⁴ Bede remarks the fines angustiores of Northumbria after Ecgfrid, lib. iv. c. 26. It is about this time that the authentic chronicles of the Welsh begin. Four of them are printed in the Welsh Archaeology, vol. ii. The Brut y Tywysogion begins with the year 680, and ends about 1280, p. 390—467. This is printed from the Red Book of Hergest. The Brut y Saeson, which is in the Cotton Library, begins, after a short introduction, in 683, and in 1197. Another copy of the Brut y Tywysogion, printed from MSS. in Wales, begins 660, and ends 1196. Some extracts are also printed from another Chronicle, called from the name of a former transcriber, Brut Jeuan Brechfa, beginning 686. These last three Chronicles occupy from p. 468. to p. 582. These Chronicles refer to Caradoc of Llancarvan, who lived in the twelfth century, as their author. As they contain facts and dates not always the same in all, it is not probable that Caradoc wrote them all. Their variations seem to have arisen from the imitations or additions of the ancient transcribers, who have brought them down below the times of Caradoc. Their general character is that of plain simple chronicles, in an humble, artless style, but seldom correct in their chronology. They scarcely ever agree with the Saxon dates.

CHAP. IX.

Reign of ALFRED of NORTHUMBRIA and his Successors.—History of WESSEX to the Death of INA.

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684—728.
Alfred of
Northumbria.

THE important improvements which always occur to a nation when its sovereign is attached to literature, give peculiar consequence to the reign of Alfred, who succeeded his brother Ecgfrid in Northumbria. He was the eldest, but not the legitimate, son of Oswy, and was therefore prevented by the nobles of his country from ascending the throne, to which they elected his younger brother. This exclusion kept him several years from the royal dignity, but was beneficial both to his understanding and his heart. His name alone would interest us, as the precursor of the greater sovereign, his namesake; but the similarity of his intellectual taste and temper, with the pursuits and sentiments of the celebrated Alfred of Wessex, makes his character still more interesting. We cannot avoid remembering the lives and pursuits of those eminent men whose names we may happen to hear; and as Alfred of Northumbria appears in Bede as the first literary king among the Anglo-Saxons, we may reasonably suppose,

that his example and reputation had no small influence, in suggesting the love of study, and exerting the emulation of the distinguished son of Ethelwulf.

ALFRED, of Northumbria, whom Eddius distinguishes by the epithet of the most wise, had been educated by the celebrated ¹ Wilfrid. He had governed Deira under his father Oswy, and had contributed to the defeat of Penda. He had cultivated a friendship with Peada, and had married his sister; and by inspiring Peada with a favourable impression of Christianity, had occasioned its establishment in Mercia.²

REJECTED by the great from the crown of his father, he did not attempt to raise the sword of military competition against his brother: he submitted to the decision of the Northumbrian Witena, and retired contentedly to a private life. Learned ecclesiastics from Ireland had given to his father and country what intellectual information they had acquired. The larger tuition of Wilfrid, who had visited Rome, and studied in France³, had inspired him with a

¹ Bede, lib. iii. c. 25. He remunerated his preceptor by a bishopric, in the second year of his reign. Ibid. lib. v. c. 19.—Eddius Vit. Wilf. c. 43.—The Saxon MS. in the Cotton. Library, Vesp. D. 14. p. 132. spells the name Alfred. Bede calls him Alfridus.

² Bede, lib. iii. c. 21. c. 24. He reigned under his father. —Eddius, c. 7. c. 10. So Bede implies, c. 25.

³ Bede, lib. iii. c. 25.

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fondness for knowledge which now became his happiness. He devoted himself to piety and literature, and voluntarily retired into Ireland, that he might pursue his unambitious studies.⁴ For fifteen years he enjoyed a life of philosophic tranquillity and progressive improvement. The books revered by the Christians engrossed so much of his attention, that one of the epithets applied to him was, “most learned in the Scriptures.”⁵

HE exhibited to the world this example of contented privacy till the death of Ecgfrid raised him to the throne without a crime. The catastrophe of his brother had taught most impressively the folly of military ambition, and the national as well as personal comforts of the peaceful and intellectual virtues. He governed the kingdom, to which he was now invited, with the same virtue with which he had resigned it; he derived his happiness from the quiet and en-

⁴ “In insulis Scotorum ob studium literarum exulabat—in regionibus Scotorum lectioni operam dabat—ipse ob amorem sapientiæ spontaneum passus exilium.” Bede Vita S. Cudbercti, c. 24.—“In Hyberniam seu vi seu indignatione secesserat, ibi et ab odio germani tutus, et magno otio literis imbutus, omni philosophia composuerat animum.” Malmsbury, 21.—Viro undecumque doctissimo. Bede, Hist. lib. v. c. 12.—Rex sapientissimus. Eddius Vit. Wilf. c. 43.—The wise king of the Saxons. Annals Ulster, p. 60.

⁵ Bede, Hist. Abbat. Wiremuth. p. 300.—Aicuin describes him thus: Qui sacris fuerat studiis imbutus ab annis ætatis primæ, valido sermone sophista acer et ingenio, idem rex simul atque magister. De Pont. 718.

joyments of his people⁶; he encouraged literature, received with kindness the Asiatic travels of Arculfus, who had visited Greece, Syria, and Egypt, and which had been written by Adamnan, liberally rewarded the author, and by his bounty caused the composition to be imparted to others.⁷

CHAP.
IX.

684.
Encourages literature.

THE love of Alfred for knowledge became known beyond the precincts of Northumbria, and attracted the attention of the celebrated Aldhelm. The subjects chosen by the West-Saxon scholar, for the entertainment of the king, show the extent of the royal attainments. "On the number seven; collections from the flowers of the Bible, and the tenets of philosophers; on the nature of insensible things; and on the prosody and metre of poetry."⁸

YET, though attached to the studies of the

⁶ "Per decem et novem annos summa pace et gaudio provinciæ præfuit: nihil unquam præter in persecutione magni Wilfridi quod livor edax digne carpere posset admittens." Malms. 21. Alcuin, p. 722.

⁷ Bede, lib. v. c. 15. Bede calls the book *De locis sanctis* multis utillimum. Arculfus surveyed Jerusalem, Palestine, Damascus, Constantinople, Alexandria, and the Archipelago. Returning home, he was driven by a tempest on Britain; Adamnan received him, listened eagerly to his conversations, and immediately committed them to writing. Bede, *ibid.* This work of Adamnan is apud Mabillon, Act. Ben. Sæc. iii. part ii. p. 502. There is a tract of Bede, *De locis sanctis*, taken from this of Adamnan, printed p. 315. of Smith's edition.

⁸ Malmsb. Pontif. p. 342.

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 684.

clergy, he was not their indiscriminating instrument. He had made his early instructor, Wilfrid, a bishop; but when, in his opinion, that prelate was unduly pressing points, however conscientiously, which he disapproved of, he remained immoveable in what he thought was right, and Wilfrid quitted his ⁹ dominions. We cannot now fairly judge of the subjects of their difference. They were on ecclesiastical privileges; but as Wilfrid, though an able man, was of an ambitious character, inclining to turbulence, and fond of domination, it is probable that Alfred was not unduly maintaining the fair liberty of his own judgment. The value of perseverance in any opinion depends upon its wisdom; but the principle, in men of his character, is always that of well-meaning rectitude.

THE Pope, John VII., afterwards interfered, by a letter to Alfred, rather dictatorial.¹⁰ And Wilfrid, from the Mercian court, to which he had retired, sent an abbot and another with the pope's letters and his own further expostulations. Alfred at first received them austerely. His manner was afterwards softened, but his purpose continued firm. His final answer was courteous, but decisive.

“ My venerable brothers :— Ask of me what-

⁹ See Eddius, Vit. Wilf. c. 44—46.

¹⁰ Eddius, c. 81. It was addressed also to Ethelred of Mercia.

ever things are necessary to your own comfort, and I will grant them, as proofs of my great respect for you; but from this day make no solicitations in behalf of Wilfrid your lord. What my royal predecessors, and the archbishop sent formerly from Rome, with almost all the prelates of Britain, thought fit to order, I will never change, while I live; whatever writings you may bring me from the apostolic seat, as you choose to call it.”¹¹

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IX.
684.

ALFRED adhered with temperate firmness to his determination. The urgencies of the pope and Wilfrid could not shake it. He reigned over the province, which his knowledge enlightened, and his virtues cherished, for nineteen years. Sickness then fell upon him. In his last hours he was disturbed by the apprehension that he might have acted wrong in resisting the applications of the pope and prelate; but his speech failed him for several days before his death. When he expired, one Eadwulf assumed the sceptre, to whom Wilfrid began a journey with hopes of a friendly reception; but Eadwulf sent him this message:—“ I swear, by my salvation, that unless he depart in six days from my kingdom, both he and all that I find with him shall perish.” Wilfrid stopped his progress; but he had with him the effective means of retorting the menace. Osred the son

¹¹ Eddius, c. 61.

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 684.

of Alfred had joined him, and in two months was established in Northumbria, and Eadwulf expelled.¹²

THE effect of Alfred's reign and habits in this province became visible in Ceolwulf, who soon succeeded to his throne. This prince, who acceded in 731, was the patron to whom Bede addressed his ecclesiastical history of the English nation. In the dedication, the venerable father of the Anglo-Saxon learning says, that it was this king's delight not only to hear the Scriptures read, but to be well acquainted with the deeds and sayings of his illustrious predecessors. From this feeling he had desired Bede to compose his history. But the flame which Alfred had kindled in his dominions was soon afterwards quenched there by the sanguinary civil contests that succeeded. It burnt, however, with a cheering influence in the other provinces of the octarchy. Bede and Alcuin may be considered as two of the valuable minds which it had excited.

Ceadwalla. IN the year of Ecgfrid's destruction, Ceadwalla began to contend for the throne of Wessex: he was descended from Cerdic, through Ceawlin and his son Cutha.¹³ His

¹² Eddius, c. 57.

¹³ Sax. Chron. 45. Malmesbury, in his *Life of Aldhelm*, p. 11. Wharton's *Ang. Sac.* 2., or 3 Gale, 346., says that Kentwin, morbo et senio gravis, appointed Cadwalla his successor; but as Kentwin only reigned nine years, the addition of *senio gravis* can hardly be correct.

youth was of great promise, and he suffered no opportunity of exerting his warlike talents to occur unimproved. Banished from his country by the factious chiefs who governed it, he was assiduous to assemble from it a military force, and he succeeded in drawing the youth of Wessex to his standard.¹⁴ In Selsey he obtained money and horses from Wilfrid, the bishop¹⁵, and directed his first onset on the king of Sussex, whom he surprised and destroyed, and whose kingdom he desolated. The royal generals, who had been warring in Kent, returned, and expelled the invader¹⁶, who profited by his expulsion to secure to himself the crown of Wessex. This accession of strength he wielded triumphantly against Sussex, which lost its defenders, and yielded to the fortune of his arms.¹⁷ Ceadwalla also captured the Isle of Wight; but stained his prosperity with cruelty.¹⁸

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684.

For two years, Ceadwalla and his brother Mollo plundered Kent, which had been harassed

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¹⁴ Malmsbury, p. 14.

¹⁵ Malmsb. De Gest. Pontif. lib. iii. p. 265.

¹⁶ Bede. lib. iv. c. 15. Flor. Wig. 255.

¹⁷ Bede, ib. Flor. Wig. 255. Langhorn Chron. 241, 242. Sussex is said by Bede to have contained the land of 7000 families, lib. iv. c. 13.

¹⁸ During this conquest he formed the inhuman project of destroying its inhabitants, and of re-peopling it from his own province. Bede, lib. iv. c. 15.

B O O K

III.

686.

Mollo's ca-
tastrophe.

by Sussex, and weakened by incapable ¹⁹rulers. The natives viewed the spoilers for some time with fruitless indignation. Town after town was ravaged. Rousing themselves at last, the men of Kent collected into a competent body, and attacked them with auspicious valour. Mollo, with twelve soldiers, was surprised in a cottage. The invaded people brutally surrounded them with flames, and they were reduced to ashes.²⁰

IN obeying the impulse of a headlong wrath, the Kentish men forgot that cruelty makes even the injured odious, and justifies punishment; it much oftener stimulates revenge than deters it. The brother of Mollo was on the throne of Wessex, and in the following year spread a torrent of vindictive calamities through Kent, which it mourned in all its districts.²¹

THE Roman missionaries and the ecclesiastics whom they educated, had not only succeeded in establishing Christianity in England, but they raised so strong a feeling of piety in some of its Anglo-Saxon sovereigns, as to lead them to renounce the world. It was not only the widowed

¹⁹ Hunting. lib. iv. p. 335. Malmsbury mentions the civil wars, which also afflicted Kent, lib. i. p. 11. In the preceding year, pestilentia depopulata est Britannia. Chron. Petri de Burgo, p. 4.

²⁰ Malmsbury, p. 11. Sax. Chron. p. 46. Huntingdon, p. 336. W. Thorn, in his Chronica, places the catastrophe at Canterbury, p. 1770. x Script.

²¹ Sax. Chron. 46. Hunting. 336.

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IX.
686.

queen of Edwin, who gave the first precedent of an Anglo-Saxon lady of that rank taking the veil²²; nor Oswy devoting his daughter Elfreda to a convent²³, who exhibited this religious zeal; but several of the sovereigns themselves, from its impulse, abandoned their thrones. Thus, in 688, Ceadwalla travelled to Rome as on a pilgrimage of piety, where he was baptised by the pope, and died, before he was thirty, in the following week.²⁴ Thus also some years afterwards, in 709, two other Anglo-Saxon kings, Cenred of Mercia, and Offa of Essex, probably affected by the example of Ceadwalla, quitted that dignity which so many myriads covet, went to Rome, and became monks there.²⁵ And thus, also, at no long interval, a greater sovereign than either, Ina of Wessex, obeyed the same impression, took the same journey, and found his grave in the same venerated city. Offa is described as a most amiable youth, who was induced to abdicate his power from the purest motives of devotion. It is remarked by an old chronicler, that the examples of these two kings produced a thousand imitations.²⁶

Ceadwalla's death.

²² Smith's Bede, p. 101. note.

²³ Bede, lib. iii. c. 29.

²⁴ Sax. Chron. 46. Bede, lib. v. c. 7. Sergius gave him the name of Peter. An epitaph in Latin verse was inscribed on his tomb, which Bede quotes.

²⁵ Bede, lib. v. c. 19.

²⁶ Hunt. 337.

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III.

688.

Ina's ac-
cession.

INA succeeded Ceadwalla in Wessex. He was the son of Cenred, who was the nephew of Cynegils.²⁷ His father was living at the period of his accession.

THE Saxon octarchy, amidst all its vicissitudes, presented in one province or the other an uninterrupted succession of great men. From Hengist to Egbert, talents were never wanting on some of the Anglo-Saxon thrones. The direction of the royal capacity varied; in some kings valour, in others military conduct; in some piety, in some learning, in some legislative wisdom, predominated. The result was, that the Anglo-Saxons, though fluctuating in the prosperity of their several districts, yet, considered as a nation, went on rapidly improving in civilisation and power.

His laws.

MUCH of the fame of Ina has been gained by his legislation. He published a collection of laws which yet remains²⁸, and he deserves the gratitude of mankind in common with every other law-giver. Whoever applies himself to mark the useful limits of human action, to set boundaries to individual selfishness, to establish the provisions of justice in defence of the weak or injured, and to rescue the criminal from

²⁷ Sax. Chron. 47. Bede, lib. v. c. 7.

²⁸ Wilkins's *Leges Saxonicae*, p. 14—27. The first paragraph of these announces his father Cenred as one of the counsellors by whose advice he promulgated them.

punishments of caprice or favour, is a character intitled to the veneration of mankind. A declamation against laws is a satire upon wisdom the most benevolent. Laws must partake of the ignorance and spirit of the age which gave them birth. An Ina must legislate as an Ina, and for the people of an Ina. If the subsequent improvements of mankind discover that prior regulations have been defective, succeeding legislators will correct those provisions, which the progress of society has made obsolete or improper. What they may devise, their posterity, who will have changed into new beings, may mould into a fitter correspondence with their own necessities; but to abolish all laws, because laws are not all perfect, would be to unchain the tiger passions of mankind, and to convert society into an African desert, or a Cytherean brothel.

THE wrath of the West Saxons for the fate of Mollo had not relented. With inhumanity, as great as that which they professed to chastise, they continued to desolate Kent. At length, their hostilities were appeased by the homicidal mulct of thirty thousand marks of ²⁹gold. Wihtred, from the line of Ethelbert, had ob-

CHAP.
IX.

688.

694.
Kent de-
vastated.

²⁹ Sax. Chron. 47, 48. Malmsbury, 14. Others make the payment smaller, as Polychronicon, p. 243., 3000 pounds. Flor. Wig. p. 260., 3750 pounds. Wihtred, unable to resist Ina, proposed the expiatory fine. Huntingd. 337.

BOOK
III.

697.
Mercians
destroy
their
queen.

tained the crown of Kent, and terminated the miseries which the people had suffered from the invasion and a turbulent inter-regnum.³⁰

THE Mercian nobility displayed the ferocity of the age, in destroying Ostrida, the wife of Ethelred, their reigning king.³¹ The cause of her fate is not known. The reason adduced by Langhorn³², that her sister had murdered Peada, is unlikely, because this event had occurred near forty years before. Ethelred exhibited another instance of the spirit of religion among the Anglo-Saxon kings. He voluntarily descended from the throne, to become monk and abbot of Bardney³³; he was succeeded by his nephew, Cenred.³⁴

704.

OSRED the son of Alfred, and but eight years old at his father's death, had been besieged by the usurper Eadulf already noticed, with his guardian Berthfrid, in Bebbanburh, the metropolis of this northern kingdom.³⁵ After their

³⁰ Sax. Chron. 48. Huntingd. 337.

³¹ Bede, lib. v. c. ult. Sax. Chron. 49. Flor. Wig. 260. Matt. West. 250. She was sister to Ecgfrid, and daughter of Oswy. I observe her name signed to a charter of Peterborough monastery in 680. 1 Dugd. Monast. 67. Ego Ostrich regina Ethelredi.

³² Chron. Reg. Angl. p. 256.

³³ In this capacity he died in 716. Chron. Petri de Burgo, 6.

³⁴ Malmsbury, 28.

³⁵ Malmsb. de Pontif. lib. iii. p. 268. Eddius Vit. Wilf. c. 57. p. 85. Hoveden describes Bebbanburh to have been a city munitissima non admodum magna. sed quasi duorum

deliverance and the dethronement of the usurping competitor, Berthfrid, the protecting præfect of Northumbria, defeated the Picts between Hæfe and Cære, in the field of Manan. Finguin M^c Delaroith perished in the ³⁶ battle. It is not stated who commanded the Picts, but Nectan, or Naiton, was king of this people at this period. ³⁷

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IX.
709.

INA continued to reign prosperously. He waged war with Geraint, the British king of Cornwall. Amid the first charges, Higbald, a Saxon leader, fell; but at last the Britons ³⁸ fled.

710.
Ina defeats
Geraint,

vel trium agrorum spatium, habens unum introitum cavatum, et gradibus miro modo exaltatum. On the top of the mountain was the church. Annal. pars prior, 403. The city was built by Ida.

³⁶ Sax. Chron. 50. Flor. Wig. 264. Bede, lib. v. c. 24., dates it 711. Gibson, in his Appendix to the Chronicle, conjectures that Hæfe and Cære were Carehouse and Heefeld, a little beyond the wall, p. 18. "710. Slaughter of the Picts in the field of Manan, among the Saxons, where Finguin M^c Delaroith perished." Annals of Ulster, p. 60.

³⁷ Nectan, in the Annals of Ulster, p. 60. In 716 he drove the family of Iona beyond Drum-albin, *ibid.* p. 60. In 725 he was put in chains by king Drust, *ibid.* p. 61. Bede, lib. v. c. 21., calls him Naiton, and mentions his changing the time of Easter to the Roman period, which the Annals of Ulster place in 715, p. 60.

³⁸ Sax. Chron. 50. Hunting. 337. Flor. Wig. 264. This Geraint was the third of that name in Cornwall. Owen's Llywarch, p. 3. Aldhelm addressed to him a letter on the British celebration of Easter, which is among the epistles of Boniface. Biblioth. Magna Pat. v. 16. p. 65. ep. 44. In this he styles Geraint, domino gloriosissimo occidentalis regni scepra gubernanti. Geruntio regi.

BOOK
III.715.
and Ceol-
red.

Ina also prosecuted a war with Ceolred, who had succeeded his cousin Cenred in Mercia. At Wodnesbury they met; the slaughter of the battle was great; the event was no advantage to either.³⁹

716. CEOLRED, king of Mercia⁴⁰, was succeeded by Ethelbald, who possessed the crown for forty-one years. In this year Osred of Northumbria, the eldest son of Alfred, was destroyed at the lake of Windamere by his revolting kinsmen⁴¹, one of whom, Coenred, the son of Cuthwin, succeeded⁴²; but he fell from the agitated throne two years afterwards, and Osric, another son of the learned Alfred, took his place.⁴³

Inigils, the
ancestor of
Egbert.

IN 718, Inigils, the brother of Ina, died. Though no achievement of greatness is attached to his name in history, yet the events of the

³⁹ Sax. Chron. 50. Hunt. 338.

⁴⁰ Unless we interpret the account, given by Boniface, of Ceolred's dying conversation with the devil, who came for him in the middle of a feast, (Malmsb. 28.) as a sudden incidence of insanity, the missionary of Germany is at variance with Huntingdon, who says of Ceolred, that patriæ et avitæ virtutis hæres clarissime rexit, p. 337.

⁴¹ Malmsb. 21. Huntingd. 338. Bede, lib. v. c. 24. Sax. Chron. 51. Osred has received the lash of Boniface. Malmsb. 28.—Malmsbury complains of him, p. 21.

⁴² Bede, lib. v. c. 22. Flor. Wig. 266.

⁴³ Bede, lib. v. c. 23. Simeon Dunel. p. 7. The expressions of Malmsbury imply that Osric assisted to procure his brother Osred's death: he says of Kenred and Osric, domini sui occisi sanguineu luentes fædo exitu auras pol- luere, p. 21.

future time have given it importance. He was the ancestor from whom Egbert and Alfred, and the following Saxon monarchs of England, deduced their descent.⁴⁴

CHAP.
IX.
718.

INA rebuilt the abbey of Glastonbury at the request of Aldhelm. It had been utterly destroyed, but he erected it with magnificence, and it lasted until the Danish ravages.⁴⁵ The insurrection of pretenders disturbed the close of Ina's reign: but he attacked and destroyed Cynewulf Ætheling; and in the next year his queen besieged another, Ealdbryht, in Taunton, a castle which the king had built to defend that part of his dominions, and in which the rebel had taken his post of enmity. She levelled it to the ground, and Ealdbryht withdrew into Sussex. Ina directed his forces against this province, and three years afterwards slew his competitor.⁴⁶

Ina builds Glastonbury abbey.

721.

AFTER a fortunate reign of thirty-seven years, the king imitated the custom which had become so remarkable among the Anglo-Saxon kings, and laid down his dignity. His queen had long exhorted him, as his age advanced, to retire from the concerns of the world; but the charms

His queen advises his abdication.

⁴⁴ Sax. Chron. 51. Asser. p. 3. Abb. Rieval, 350.

⁴⁵ Bromton, p. 758. He founded the great church of Glastonbury pro anima propinqui ejus Mollonis. See his charters to it. 1 Dugdale, Monast. 12, 13. Malmsb. de Ant. Glast. 3 Gale, 309. 311. His other gifts to it were magnificent.

⁴⁶ Sax. Chron. 52. Hunt. 338. Flor. Wig. 268.

BOOK
III.

721.

of habitual power for some time defeated her eloquence. One day, as she travelled with the king to one of his rural mansions, where a splendid feast was prepared with all the pomp and bustle of royal luxury, she seized the occasion of converting it to a moral lecture on her favourite theme. They left the place after the repast, and a rustic by her orders, in their absence, scattered the festive hall with filth and rubbish, and placed a swinish litter on the couch where he had reposed. Before they had advanced two miles on their road, she desired to return, and Ina courteously complied with her request; but when he entered the hall of his festivity, and saw the disgusting change, he contemplated it with silent astonishment and displeasure, till informed that the queen had directed it: he demanded from her an explanation of the strange mystery. She smiled, and answered: "My lord and husband! this is not indeed the noisy hilarity of yesterday: here are no brilliant hangings, no flattery, and no parasites: here are no tables weighed down with silver vessels: no exquisite delicacies to delight the palate: all these are gone like the smoke and wind. Have they not already passed away into nothingness? And should we not feel alarmed who covet them so much, because we shall be as transient? Are not all such things, are not we ourselves like a river, hurrying, heedless and headlong, to the dark ocean of illimitable

time? Unhappy must we be if we let them absorb our minds. Think, I entreat you, how disgusting those things become of which we have been so enamoured. See to what filthy objects we are attached. In these loathsome relics we may see what our pampered bodies will become. Ah! let us reflect, that the greater we have been, and the more powerful we are now, the more alarmed should be our solicitude, for the greater will be the punishment of our misconduct.”⁴⁷

CHAP.
IX.
721.

THE singularity of the incident had its full impression on the mind of Ina: he resigned his crown to his kinsman, and, imitating what all ranks were then emulous to do, he travelled to Rome.⁴⁸ He founded there a Saxon school, for the instruction of his countrymen who chose to be educated at Rome, and he added a church for their service, and the convenience of their burial. To support this, and to provide a subsistence for the English who should dwell there, he imposed the payment of a penny on every family, which was denominated Romescot. It was sent to the papal see.⁴⁹ Ina studiously avoided all pomp in his voluntary humiliation.

Ina goes
to Rome.

⁴⁷ Malmsbury, p. 15.

⁴⁸ Bede, lib. v. c. 7. Sax. Chron. 52. Flor. Wig. 269. M. West. 265. Bede says of Ina's journey, that it was what in these times plures de gente Anglorum, nobiles, ignobiles, laici, clerici, viri ac feminae, certatim facere consuerunt.

⁴⁹ Matt. West. 265.

BOOK

III.

721.

He cut off his hair, put on a plebeian dress, and lived with his queen a private and retired life, even seeking support by the labour of his hands, till he died there.⁵⁰

THE mutations of the octarchy for the last century had been generally from an heptarchy to an hexarchy; at the period of Ina's death it was an hexarchy, because Wessex had absorbed Sussex, and Deira and Bernicia were amalgamated into Northumbria. This restless province was then governed by Osric, who left the kingdom to Ceolwulf, the brother of Cenred, whom he had destroyed⁵¹, and the friend and patron of Bede. In Mercia, Ethelbald, a descendant of Wybba, reigned.⁵² In Essex, Suebricht had governed alone since his brother Offa went to Rome.⁵³ In Kent, Eadbert had

731.
The Anglo-Saxon
kings at
this period.
716—756.

⁵⁰ Dug. Monast. i. p. 14. 32. Malm. Pont. 313. Alcuin mentions him by the name of In :

“ Quem clamant IN, incerto cognomine, gentes.”

Oper. p. 1676.

⁵¹ Flor. Wig. 269. Malmsb. 21. Ceolwulf submitted to the tonsure in 737, and Eadbert succeeded. Smith's Bede, p. 224. Ceolwulf was descended from Oega, one of the sons of Ida. Sim. Dun. p. 7. Bede in one line expresses the vicissitudes of Ceolwulf, and the state of the country, captus et adtonsus et remissus in regnum, lib. v. c. ult.

⁵² Sax. Chron. 51. 59. Bede, lib. v. c. 24. He was the son of Alwion. Ing. 33.

⁵³ By mistake, Langhorn, 281., and Rapin, place Selred on the throne of Essex. Malmsb. 35.; Flor. Wig. 273.; and Al. Beverl. 85., led them into the error. We learn from Huntingdon, that Selred was king of East Anglia, p. 339.,

ascended the throne of Wihtred, whose laws remain to us.⁵⁴ In East Anglia, Aldulphus was succeeded by Selred; on his death, Alphuald, for a short time, inherited the sceptre.⁵⁵

C H A P.
IX.

725.

747.

whom the Chronicle of Mailros supports. Suebricht or Sueabred was king of Essex, and died 738. Mailros, p. 136. Sim. Dunelm. 100.- A charter of his, dated 704, is in Smith's Appendix to Bede, p. 749. In another he signs with Sebbi and Sighear, *ib.* p. 748. Swithred reigned in Essex 758, Sim. Dun. 275.

⁵⁴ After a reign of thirty-four years and a half, Wihtred died in 725, and left Edilberct, Eadbert, and Alric his heirs. Bede, lib. v. c. 23. Eadbert reigned until 748. Sax. Chron. 56. or 749. Mailros, p. 137. Ethelbert until 760. Sax. Chron. 60. when the surviving brother, Alric, succeeded, Malmsbury, p. 11. After this period we find three kings again in Kent signing charters contemporaneously; as in 762 Sigiraed and Eadbert appear, in one charter, as kings of Kent; and in another, Eardulf; and in 765 Egebert signs a charter with the same title. Thorpe, Reg. Roffens. p. 16. So many kings, in so small a province as Kent, strikingly illustrate the gavel-kind tenure of lands which still prevails there.

⁵⁵ In the synod at Hatfield in 680, Aldulph was present. This was the seventeenth year of his reign. Bede, lib. iv. c. 17., and the Ely History, MSS. Cott. Nero, A.15., state Aldulph to have been reigning in 679. The Chronicle of Mailros accurately places Selred after him, who died 747. I Gale Script. 137. Alphuald, the successor of Selred, died 749. *ibid.* Humbean and Albert divided the kingdom afterwards, *ibid.* Sim. Dun. 103. M. West names them Beorna and Ethelbert, p. 273. Bromton, p. 749. Flor. Wig. places Beorn in 758, p. 275. I hope these few last notes correctly state a very troublesome chronology.

CHAP. X.

The History of the Octarchy, from the Death of INA to the Accession of EGBERT, in the Year 800.

BOOK
III.

728.
Æthel-
heard in
Wessex.

ÆTHELHEARD, the kinsman of Ina, and a descendant of Cerdic, obtained the crown of West Saxony.¹ Oswald, also sprung from the founder of Wessex, at first opposed his pretensions, but discovering the inferiority of his forces, abandoned the contest.² The

¹ Sax. Chron. 52. Flor. Wig. 269. Ran. Higd. Chron. Petri de Burgo, p. 6. gives this date, which Ethelwerd, p. 837., also sanctions. Matt. West. p. 266. has 727, yet the expressions of Bede, a contemporary, imply the year 725. Smith's ed. p. 188, note.—A passage of Malmsbury, in his *Antiq. Glast. Eccles.* p. 312. promises to reconcile the contradictions. It states that Ina went twice to Rome. “Eodem anno quo idem rex Romam personaliter adiit, privilegium apostolico signaculo corroboratum in redeundo Glastoniam apportavit. Et postea iterum cum Ethelburga regina sua, instinctu ejusdem, Roman abiit.”—Bede may have dated his first peregrination; the others his last.

² *Huntingd.* 338. In the charter of Ina, transcribed by Malmsbury, *Antiq. Glast.* p. 312., Ethelheard signs *frater reginæ*. Oswald was the son of Ethelbald, of the race of Cerdic, through Cealwin and Cuthwin. Flor. Wig. 269. Sax. Chron. 53. The plural expression of Bede, taken in its natural force, seems to express that Ina left his crown to Oswald, as well as Ethelheard, “*ipse relicto regno ac juvenioribus commendato,*” *lib. v. c. 7.*

king invaded Devonshire, and was extending the ravages into Cornwall, when the Britons, under Rodri Malwynawc, vanquished him at Heilyn, in Cornwall. At Garth Maelawch, in North Wales, and at Pencoet, in Glamorgan-shire, the Cymry also triumphed.³ On Æthelheard's death, Cuthred, his kinsman, succeeded him.⁴

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X.

728.

THE king of Mercia at this period, Ethelbald, was a man of elegant stature, a powerful frame, a warlike and imperious spirit. Persecuted in his youth by the king he had succeeded, and to whom he had been dangerous, he owed his safety to the secrecy of his retreat. Here the pious Guthlac endeavoured to moralise his mind, and, in gratitude to the friend of his adversity, Ethelbald constructed the monastery of Croyland over his tomb.⁵ The military abi-

Ethelbald
in Mercia.

³ Brut y Saeson, and Brut y Tywysogion, 471, 472.

⁴ Sax. Chron. 55. The Chronicle of Mailros, a document valuable for its general accuracy, countenances Bede's date of Æthelheard's reign; it says, that in 740, after a reign of fourteen years, he died. 1 Gale's Rer. Angl. Script. p. 136.

⁵ Ingulf. p. 2—4. To sustain the stony mass an immense quantity of wooden piles was driven into the marsh; and hard earth was brought in boats nine miles, to assist in making the foundation. There is a MS. life of Guthlac, in the Cotton Library, Vesp. D. 21., in Saxon, by a monk named Alfric, and addressed to Alfwold, king of East Anglia. His beginning will show the respectful style used by the clergy to the sovereigns at that time. "Uþum þealde ðenðe þiht zelyþendum, a þopolð a þopolð minum þam leo-

B O O K
III.

728.

Wars with
the Welsh.743.
Defeats
them.

lities of this Mercian king, procured him the same predominance over the other Anglo-Saxon kingdoms which Egbert afterwards acquired. He subdued them all up to the Humber; and afterwards, in 737, invaded and conquered Northumbria.⁶ The Welsh next attracted his ambition; and, to annex the pleasant region between the Severn and the Wye to his Mercian territories, he entered Wales with a powerful army. At Carno, a mountain in Monmouthshire, the Britons checked his progress in a severe battle, and drove him over the Wye with great loss.⁷ But he afterwards marched another army against the Britons, in conjunction with Cuthred, who had succeeded Æthelheard in Wessex. The great superiority of the Saxon forces obtained a decisive victory at Ddefawdan. After much plunder, the victors retired.⁸

THE friendship between Ethelbald and Cuthred was not lasting. Cuthred wished to emancipate himself from the power of the Mercian, who, to keep Wessex in subjection, fomented its civil distractions. The son of Cuthred gave

perſtan hlaforðe, ofep ealle oðre men eopðlice Kýningar, Alþpold Earc Angla Kýning, mid rihte ec mid ge-þurenum rice healbenð." MSS. *ibid.*

⁶ Hunt. lib. iv. p. 339, 340. Sax. Chron. 54.

⁷ Brut y Tywysogion, p. 472.

⁸ Brut y Tywysogion, p. 472. Flor. Wig. 272. Sax. Chron. 55. Mailros, p. 136., and Matt. West. 271. date the event in 744.

him this advantage. This impetuous youth attempted to depose his father, but perished in the guilty struggle.⁹ Two years after, Cuthred suppressed a dangerous rebellion of Edelhun, one of his chieftains, whose extraordinary valour would have conquered the superior numbers of the king, if in the hour of victory a wound had not disabled him.¹⁰

C H A P.

X.

748.

Suppresses
arebellion.

CUTHRED now presuming his power to be equal to the effort, disclaimed the intolerable exactions of Ethelbald, and resolved to procure the independence of Wessex, or to perish in the contest. At Burford in Oxfordshire, the rival princes met. Cuthred was assisted by the brave Edelhun, who had now become a loyal subject; Ethelbald displayed the forces of Kent, East Anglia, and Essex, in joint array with his Mercians. Edelhun, advancing beyond his line, pierced the golden dragon¹¹, the splendid banner of Mercia, and, animated by his intrepidity, the West Saxons poured the shout of battle, and rushed to the charge. The chronicler describes with unusual warmth a conflict terrible to both

War be-
tween Cu-
thred and
Ethelbald.
752.

⁹ Sax. Chron. 55. Mailros, 137. Huntingdon, 341. His expression, that Ethelbald affixit eum nunc seditionibus nunc bellis, implies that the insurrection was fostered by Mercia.

¹⁰ Hunt. 341. Sax. Chron. 56. Flor. Wig. 273.

¹¹ The ancient Wittichind describes the Saxon standard on the continent, as a representation of a lion and a dragon with an eagle flying above; intended to be symbols of their bravery, prudence, and rapidity, Hist. Sax. p. 6.

B O O K

III.

752.

armies. Ambition inflamed the friends of Mercia. The horrors of subjection made Wessex desperate. Slaughter followed the sword of Edelhun, and Ethelbald raged like a resistless fire. Their mutual fury brought the general and the king into personal collision; each collected his full vigour, and struck at the other with a power and determination that menaced destruction in every blow: but the king of Mercia at last discerned the superiority of his antagonist, and preferring safety to glory, he gave to his yet struggling army the first example of an hasty flight.¹²

THE event of this conflict rescued Wessex from the yoke of Mercia, and established the foundation of that predominance which was afterwards improved into the conquest of the island. Cuthred again successfully invaded the country of the Welsh.¹³

755.

Cuthred
attacks the
Welsh.

Sigebyrht
succeeds.

IN 754, Cuthred died, leaving Wessex in a state of progress towards that superiority which, under the reign of Egbert, it finally attained. Sigebyrht succeeded¹⁴; his reign was

¹² Huntingdon has preserved the circumstances of the battle, p. 341. It is also mentioned in Sax. Chron. 56. Flor. Wig. p. 273. Mailros dates it, as it does the events of this period, a year later, p. 137. A stone coffin was found near Burford, in December 1814.

¹³ Sax. Chron. 56. Mailros, 137. The British Chronicles state a battle at Henford about this time, in South Wales, where the Cymry triumphed. Brut y Tywys. 473.

¹⁴ Flor. Wig. 273. Sax. Chron. 56. Cant-wara-burh, Canterbury, was burnt this year.

short, arrogant, and tyrannical; he perverted the laws to his convenience, or presumptuously violated them. When Cumbra, the noblest of his earls, obeyed the solicitations of the people, and intimated their complaints to the king, he was arbitrarily put to death, and the grievances were multiplied. The nobles and the people assembled; after a careful deliberation, Sigebyrht was deposed from his authority by an unanimous decision, and Cynewulf, a youth of the royal blood, was elected in his place. Deserted by all, the deposed king fled into the wood of Anderida; a swine-herd of the murdered Cumbra discovered him in his hiding place, and immediately slew him.¹⁵

CHAP.
X.

753.

Is deposed, and Cynewulf chosen.

THE long reign of Ethelbald, at one period so successful, terminated in calamity. His defeat by Wessex was never retrieved, and he perished at last by civil insurrection; by the same means of evil with which he had endeavoured to oppress Cuthred. At Seggeswold the fatal battle ensued, for which he was not prepared, and Ethelbald fell, either by assassination or in the general slaughter. Bernred, who headed the rebellion, attempted to invest himself with the robes of royalty; but the nomination of Ethelbald was supported by the nobles of Mercia, and the young prince, Offa, who has acquired such celebrity, and who was

755.
Ethelbald perishes.

Offa made king.

¹⁵ Hunt. 341, 342. Malmsb. 15. Mailros, 137. Ethelwerd names the place of his death Pryfetesfleodan, p. 838.

BOOK
III.
755.

descended from Eoppa, the brother of Penda, was placed upon the throne.¹⁶ Bernred did not survive the year.¹⁷

The revolutions of
Northumbria.
731.

WE may pause a moment to cast a rapid glance on Northumbria. Ceolwulf, the friend of Bede, had acceded to the united kingdoms; but so perilous was the regal dignity in this perturbed kingdom, that he voluntarily abandoned the disquieting crown, and sought the tranquillity of the cloister.¹⁸

737.

¹⁶ Ingulf, p. 5. Mailros, 137. Matt. West. p. 274. apparently misconceiving a passage of Huntingdon, p. 341. erroneously makes Ethelbald to have fallen against Cuthred, whom he represents to have survived him. The monk of Croyland enables us to rectify the mistake, and is supported by Malmsb. 28., and by the Sax. Chron. p. 56., and Flor. Wig. p. 273., who place the decease of Cuthred a year before Ethelbald's. Bede implies, that Ethelbald perished by assassination, lib. v. c. ult.

¹⁷ That Bernred died this year has been disputed. Malmsb. p. 28.; Alur. Beverl. 87.; Ingulf. 5. The biographer of Offa, p. 11.; Flor. Wig. 274.; Ethelward, 839. affirm or imply it. On the other hand, Matt. West. p. 274.; Sax. Chron. 59.; Bromton, 776.; and some others, state Bernred's expulsion only; and Matt. West. 277. makes him to perish by fire in the year 769, after having burnt the town of Catterick. But the Chronicle of Mailros, which, p. 137., mentions the attempt on the Mercian crown, by Beornred, calls the person, who caused and perished in the fire of Catterick, Earnredus, p. 138. Hence it is not certain that they were the same persons, and if not, the aufugavit of the one side is not sufficiently explicit to disprove the death stated on the other.

¹⁸ Huntingdon, p. 340., paints strongly the apprehensions of Ceolwulf: "Ipse horribilibus curis necis, et proditiōis, et multimodæ calamitatis, intus cruciebatur, et animo et cor-

CHAP.
X.
755.

EADBERT succeeded. His kingdom, left unprotected by his march against the Picts, suffered from an invasion of the Mercian Ethelbald; but he afterwards enlarged his dominions¹⁹, and had the ability to maintain himself in his crown for twenty-one years; but religious impressions then came upon him, and he assumed the religious life.²⁰ He was the eighth Anglo-Saxon king who had exchanged the crown for the cowl. But on his abdication all the fruits of the wise example and useful reign of Alfred seemed to vanish in the turbulent activity of the excited mind of the country taking now a mischievous direction: the turbulence of civil murder again broke loose. In the first year of his accession, his son Osulf perished from domestic treachery, and Moll Edelwold ventured to accept the crown.²¹ In his third year, his life and honours were fiercely assaulted by one of his leaders, Oswin, whom he slew at Edwinescliffe. At no long interval afterwards the tomb

757.

pore decoquebatur." Bede remarks that an excessive drought destroyed the fertility of this year, lib. v. c. ult.

¹⁹ Hunt. p. 340. Sax. Chron. p. 54. Bede, lib. v. c. ult. Sim. Dun. 11.

²⁰ Hunt. 342. Sax. Chron. 59. Chron. Petrib. 8. Huntingdon ascribes Eadbert's retreat to the impression made upon his mind by the violent deaths of Ethelbald and Sigebert, contrasted with the peaceful exit of Ceolwulf.

²¹ Bede says he was a sua plebe electus; and adds, that in his second year a great mortality took place, and lasted for two years. The dysentery was the principal malady, lib. v. c. ult.

BOOK
III.

765.

774.

779.

788.

received him, and Alred, of the race of ²² Ida, was elevated to the crown. After a few years he was driven out, and Ethelred, the son of Moll, was chosen in his stead.²³ In his third year, this king fraudulently procured the death of two of his generals by the instrumentality of two others. In the very next year, these men rebelled against himself, destroyed in two successive attacks others of his commanders, and expelled him from his kingdom.²⁴ Alfwold obtained it; but such was the spirit of the country, that in the following year two chieftains raised an army, seized the king's ealdorman, Beorn, and his justiciary, and burnt them to ashes, because, in the estimation of the rebels, their administration of justice had been too ²⁵ severe. Alfwold, to whom a chronicle applies the epithet, "King of the innocent," was treacherously killed by his patrician, Sigan; and Osred, his kinsman, son of Alred, acceded. In the next year he was betrayed and driven out, and Ethelred, the

²² By his son Edric, Sim. Dun. 11. Two letters of Alred to Lullus, a French bishop, are extant, Mag. Bibl. 16. 88. and apud Du Chesne, Hist. Franc. vol. ii. p. 854. In the one he desires the bishop's assistance in establishing an amity with Charlemagne; the other is a letter of civility from Alred and his queen, Osgeotha, to Lullus, congratulating him on his arrival from a long journey.

²³ Chr. Mailros, 137, 138. Hunt. 342. Sax. Chron. 60, 61. Matt. West. 276. 278.

²⁴ Mailros, 138.

²⁵ Mailros, 139. Hunt. 343. Sax. Chron. 62.

son of Moll, was recalled.²⁶ But as adversity, though it corrects many dispositions into virtue, yet sometimes only exasperates the stubborn, so it appears to have rather increased than diminished the obduracy of Ethelred. In the year of his restoration, he left Eardulf weltering in his blood at the gate of a monastery; and in the following year he dragged Elf and Elwin, the children of Alfwold, from York, and slew them. Osred, who had been deposed, attempted to recover the crown; his army deserted him, he fell into the hands of Ethelred, and perished. This prince now endeavoured, by a marriage with the daughter of Offa, to secure his authority, and for this purpose he repudiated his previous wife. But his policy and his murders were equally vain. Whoever, by an example of cruelty, lessens the public horror at deeds of blood, diminishes his own safety, and gives popularity to his own assassination. In the fourth year of Ethelred's restoration, his sub-

CHAP.

X.

788.

792.

²⁶ Mailros, 139. Hunt. 343. Chron. Pet. 10. Rich. Hag. 298. Saxon Chron. 64. Osred took refuge in the Isle of Man, Sim. Dun. 12. Alcuin addressed to Ethelred, or, as he spells the name, Edelred, a letter of strong moral exhortation, which is still in existence. He reminds him how many of his predecessors had perished, propter injustitias et rapinas et immunditias vitæ. He intreats his people to be at peace between themselves, and to be faithful to their lord, that, by their concord, the kingdom might be extended, quod sæpe per discordiam minui solebat. Alcuini Opera, p. 1537. ed. Paris, 1617.

BOOK
 III.
 792.

jects, whom he had assisted to brutalize, destroyed him, and set up Osbald. After a reign of twenty-seven days, they deposed Osbald, and he obtained security in the cloister.²⁷ Eardulf, who had been recovered from his assassination by the charity of the monks, who found him apparently lifeless near their cloister, had fled to Charlemagne, and visited Rome. The emperor of the West, in conjunction with the papal legate, assisted him in his efforts to regain his kingdom: and he was crowned in 794. Before four years elapsed, they who had murdered Ethelred, revolted from Eardulf; and under their leader, Wada, endeavoured to destroy him. The sword of the king prevailed, and the rebels fled.²⁸ Here for a while we will quit this region of civil discord. Happy is the country in which the regal office is not elective, nor the right of succession permitted to be questionable! An hereditary monarchy, though, like all human institutions, it has its inconveniences, yet has not been the contrivance of childish thinkers or half-way politicians; it was the benevolent invention of human wisdom, pro-

²⁷ Mailros, 139.

²⁸ Ann. Franc. ap. Du Chesne, vol. ii. p. 45. Mailros, 140. Huntingdon might well say, "*Gens Anglorum naturaliter dura est et superba, et ideo bellis intestinis incessanter attrita.*" Alcuin displays the angry feelings of Charlemagne at this repetition of ferocity in Northumbria; he styled them a nation perfidam et perversam, pejorem paganis. Malmsb. 26.

fitting from the most disastrous experience. No contests have been more baneful to human life and happiness, than those which have sprung from the uncertain right of accession, and from the practicability of attaining power by violence. It was a noble effort of advancing civilization, which strove to annihilate the evil, by accustoming mankind to revere as sacred the laws of hereditary succession.

OFFA, who had obtained with violence the throne of Mercia ²⁹, displayed talents, and enjoyed a prosperity, which have made his name illustrious. His youth has been fabulously represented as distinguished by a wonderful transformation, from a miserable child, afflicted with imperfections in his speech, and the most important senses of the intellect, the sight and hearing, into an elegant frame, adorned with every human accomplishment. ³⁰ His monastic

Traditions concerning Offa and his queen.

²⁹ Bede's expression, concerning the accession of Offa, is, that having driven out Bernred, he sought the kingdom with a blood-stained sword, lib. v. c. ult. An epithet so marking, as sanguinolento, from a contemporary, implies that Offa's reign commenced with human slaughter.

³⁰ Vita Offæ secundi, added to Watts's edition of Matthew Paris, p. 10.—The author of it was some monk of St. Alban's; he makes Offa's real name Pineredus. The name Offa was derived from a king, whom he calls Offa primus, the son of Warmund, who had similar defects, and a cure as miraculous. His editor believes that this Offa primus never existed but in his page. I have however discovered him in Saxo-Grammaticus. Saxo says, Warmund, the 17th king of Denmark, had in his age a son named Uffo, who excelled his coëvals in

BOOK
III.
792.

panegyrist has also bequeathed to his queen, Drida, or Cynedrida, a series of adventures scarcely probable, and which have the aspect of having been invented, in order to impute to her, more plausibly, the crime which has stained the memory of Offa for ever.³¹ When he had enjoyed his throne many years, he began to covet an augmentation of dominion. Some of his attacks were against the Northumbrians³², and the Hestingi.³³ He invaded Kent, and a great

Offa's
wars.

774.

his person, but who was thought weak in mind, and never spoke till the king of Saxony endangered his father, &c. 59—65.

³¹ The account is, that the lady was allied to the French king, but for some crime was adjudged to die. Respect for majesty saved her from the ordeals of iron and fire. She was committed to the chances of the sea in an open boat, with little food; the stormy ocean threw her on the coast of Wales, and she was conducted to Offa. A plaintive story interested his compassion, and he recommended her to the protection of his mother. Her charms or her wiles animated his pity into love, and she became his wife. *Vita Offæ*, p. 12.

³² Bromton, x *Script.* p. 776. puts the Northumbri first; but *Huntingdon*, 343., places them after his other conquests. So *Matt. West.* 275. and *Hoveden*, 409.

³³ *Mailros*, p. 138. *Hoveden*, 403. *Sim. Dun.* 107.—The situation of these people is contested. Mr. Watts thinks them of Hastings, one of the Cinque Ports. *Langhorn*, p. 29., believes the word to have meant east men, and to have alluded to the east part of Northumbria.—*Alford*, in his annals, settles the question. A charter in *Dublet* fixes them in *Sussex*. Offa by this confirms a grant of land, in the neighbourhood of Hastings, to the abbey of *St. Denis*; and styles *Bertwald* the proprietor of *Hastings* and *Pevensey*, his *fidelis*.

slaughter ensued at Otford, in which Offa triumphed, and Kent submitted to the power of Mercia.³⁴ Afterwards he measured his strength with the king of Wessex, at Bensington, and established his great power by defeating Cynewulf, and subjecting part of his dominions.³⁵

THE conquests of Offa have not been transmitted to us in accurate detail; but the celebrity which he attained, and the blood which his contemporary, Alcuin, attests him to have shed, imply many warlike and not rightful exertions.³⁶ The prerogatives which he exercised, confirm the traditions of his power. He founded the abbey at St. Alban's, and the abbey of Bath; and made gifts of land to Canterbury, and other places, far beyond the limits of his inherited domains.³⁷

OFFA is distinguished above the other Anglo-Saxon kings who had preceded him in the otarchy, by commencing an intercourse with the Continent. He had a correspondence with

Corresponds with Charlemagne.

³⁴ Mailros, 138. Sax. Chron. 61. Vit. Offæ, p. 15.

³⁵ Sax. Chron. 61. M. West. 279.

³⁶ Alcuin, the preceptor of Charlemagne, speaking of the immature fate of Offa's son, mentions, that pater suus pro confirmatione regni ejus multum sanguinem effudit. Ap. Malmsb. de Gest. p. 33.

³⁷ Matt. West. 284. Dugdale Monasticon, i. p. 19. 62. 177. 184. Matt. West. p. 288. enumerates twenty-three counties which Offa governed. Amongst these, the districts of East Anglia, Essex, and part of Wessex and Northumbria, are recited.

BOOK
III.
777.

Charlemagne, which does credit to the Frankish sovereign and to himself. In one letter, Charlemagne communicates to him with perceptible exultation his success in procuring the continental Saxons to adopt Christianity. In another the Frankish emperor promises security to all pilgrims, and his especial protection and legal interference to all commercial adventurers, on their paying the requisite duties. He greets Offa with expressions of friendship, and sends him a belt, an Hungarian sword, and two silken cloaks.³⁸

³⁸ Du Chesne Scrip. Fr. vol. ii. p. 620. Malmsb. 32. In the second volume of Du Chesne's *Hist. Franc. Scriptores*, p. 686. is another letter from Charlemagne to Offa. The king states the *guilty* conduct of a *Presbyter et Scottus*, who had eaten meat in Lent. The king mentions that the clergy in France, for want of full evidence, had declined to pass sentence upon him; and adds that, as he could not remain where he was, from the *infamy* of the thing, and lest the sacerdotal honour should be thought by the ignorant vulgar to be tarnished, and lest others should be induced to violate the sacred fast, Charlemagne thought it fittest to send him to abide the judgment of his bishop.

Another monument of their intercourse exists in a letter from Charlemagne to the archbishop Athilhard, whom Alcuin styles, the primate of Canterbury. In this letter the humanity of Charlemagne is nobly distinguished. It is in behalf of some exiles, for whom he entreats the prelate to intercede with Offa, that they may have leave to return to their country in peace, and secured from the oppression of injustice. He says, their lord, Vinhrinsgstan, was dead, who he thinks would have proved faithful to his lord, if he might have remained in his country. "To escape the peril of death, he fled to us, but was always ready to purge himself from all infidelity. We kept him with us not from enmity, but with the hope of producing a reconciliation.

A DISCORD of some moment interrupted this amity. All intercourse between the two countries was reciprocally interdicted³⁹; but the quarrel is not stated to have lasted long. Offa had also a quarrel with the pope.

CHAP.
X.
777.

THE wars of Offa with the Britons were at first to his disadvantage. Some branches of the Cymry penetrated in an incursion into Mercia. Their united attack drove the English from the Severn; they frequently repeated their devastations. Offa collected in greater number the forces of the Anglo-Saxons, and marched into Wales. The Britons, unable to withstand him, quitted the open country between the Severn and the Wye, and withdrew to their mountains. Impregnable among these natural fortresses, they awaited the return of the invaders, and

Offa's wars
with the
Britons.

As to these his followers, if you can obtain their peace, let them remain in the country. But," adds this humane king, "if my brother answers harshly about them, send them to us uninjured. It is better to travel than to perish; it is better to serve in another country than to die at home. But I trust to the goodness of my brother, if you strongly intercede for them, that he may receive them kindly for love of us, or rather for the love of Christ."

The delicacy of this application is peculiar. He does not write to Offa, because he will not compromise his own dignity by subjecting it to a refusal, nor appear to dictate to another prince; he employs an honoured minister of peace; he applies to Offa the tender epithet of my brother; and he makes a denial almost impossible, by the disinterested humanity which he intends to show them, if Offa should be inexorable. 2 Du Chesne, p. 678.

³⁹ Alcuin ap. Malmsb. 32.

BOOK
III.
777.

His Dyke.

then sallied out in new aggressions. To terminate these wasteful incursions, Offa annexed the eastern regions of Wales, as far as the Wye, to Mercia, planted them with Anglo-Saxons, and separated them from the Britons by a large trench and rampart, extending from the æstuary of the Dee to the mouth of the Wye.⁴⁰ It was carried through marshes, and over mountains and rivers, for an hundred miles, and was long celebrated under the name of Claudh Offa, or Offa's Dyke.⁴¹ Its remains and direction are yet visible.⁴² It was used for ages afterwards, as the boundary which determined the confines of England and Wales; a boundary jealously guarded with the most rigorous penalties.⁴³

OFFA'S desire of reading is mentioned by Alcuin.⁴⁴

⁴⁰ Brut y Tywys. p. 473. Brut y Saeson, p. 474. Asser, de Gestis Elfredi, 10. Sim. Dunelm. p. 118. After these events the princes of Powys moved their royal seat from Pengwern, or Shrewsbury, to Mathraval in Montgomeryshire. Where the royal castle of Mathraval stood, a small farm-house is the only building visible now.

⁴¹ Lhwyd Comment. Brit. Descript. 42.—Almost all the cities and towns on its eastern side “in ton vel ham finientia habent.” Ibid.

⁴² See Gibson's Camden, p. 587.

⁴³ Jo. Sarisb. Polycrat. in his De nugis curialium, lib. vi. p. 184.

⁴⁴ Alcuin in a letter to him says, “It greatly pleases me that you have such an intention to read; that the light of wisdom may shine in your kingdom which is now extinguished in many places.” He adds some good moral advice. Alc. Op. p. 1554.

THE basest action of Offa was the murder of Ethelbert, king of East Anglia.

CHAP.
X.

At the close of Offa's reign, Ethelbert possessed the crown of East Anglia, a peaceful and intelligent prince, in the bloom of youth and beauty, interesting in his manners, and virtuous in his disposition. Invited or welcomed by Offa ⁴⁵, he went to Mercia, for the purpose of receiving the hand of Etheldritha, the daughter of the Mercian king. He travelled with a splendid retinue. Offa received him with that distinction which was due to the allotted husband of his daughter. But before the marriage was completed, Ethelbert was assassinated, and the father of his beloved commanded the murder. Though Offa had pledged his protection, had received the king of East Anglia as his guest, had introduced him to his daughter as her approved husband, and the nuptial feast had began, Offa is represented as having procured his assassination. ⁴⁶ The favourable moment of annexing

777.
Offa's
murder of
Ethelbert.

⁴⁵ The welcome is affirmed by all. The invitation by Malmsbury, 29., and the author of the Life of Offa, p. 23., and Hen. Silgrave, MSS. Cott. Cleop. A. 12.

⁴⁶ That Offa commanded the murder is expressly asserted by Ethelwerd, 840.; Hoveden, 410.; Huntingdon, 344.; Sax. Chron. 65.; Flor. Wig. 281.; Malmsb. de Pont. 287.; Bromton, 749.; Higden, 251.; Rad. Dicet. 446.; and Asseri Annal. 154. Their uniting evidence does away the attempt of Matt. West. p. 283. and the fabulous monk of St. Alban's, in Vita Offæ, p. 23., who want to fix it solely on the queen.— Both these apologists admit that Offa immediately seized

BOOK
III.
777.

East Anglia to Mercia was a temptation which overpowered the feelings of the father and the man. The friends of Ethelbert fled in consternation. Offa invaded his dominions, and East Anglia was added to his conquests.

Calamities
of Offa's
family.

DID such a complication of crimes benefit the perpetrator? Before two years elapsed, he sunk from his empire to his grave. Remorse embittered all the interval. His widowed daughter abandoned his court, fled into the marshes of Croyland, and pined away her life in mourning solitude⁴⁷; his queen, the evil counsellor of his ambition, perished miserably⁴⁸; the husband of another of his daughters was cut off in the same year with himself⁴⁹; the other, who married Brihtric, died a martyr to vice and penury the most extreme, scorned and abhorred⁵⁰; his son Ecgfrid, who succeeded him, was permitted to exist only 141 days⁵¹; and thus the race of Offa disappeared for ever.

794.

East Anglia; and such an action, after such a catastrophe, is among the most forcible evidences of his guilt and its motive.

⁴⁷ Ingulf. 7. Bromton, 752. Vit. Offæ, p. 24.

⁴⁸ Vit. Offæ, p. 25.

⁴⁹ Ethelred, the son of Moll.

⁵⁰ See further, note 58.

⁵¹ Bromton, 754. Hunt. 344. Ingulf. 6. Offa went to Rome before his death, and extended to his own dominions the liberality of Ina, called Romescot. It was with strict truth that the friend of the great Alfred mentions Offa with the epithet "universis circa se regibus et regionibus finitimis formidolosus rex." Asser de Reb. Gest. Elfredi, p. 10.

DURING the reign of Offa, the sceptre of Wessex had been swayed, since 755, by Cynewulf. He warred with the Britons successfully⁵², and met Offa in the disastrous conflict at Bensington. After a reign of many years, he fell a victim to revenge and desperation. He endeavoured to expel Cyneheard, the brother of the deposed Sigebyrht; a suspicion that he was meditating retaliation, occasioned the⁵³ attempt. Cyneheard determined to prevent the blow; he watched the unguarded moment when the king with a few attendants visited a lady at Merton in Surrey; he collected about eighty desperadoes, hastened to the place, and surrounded the chamber to which the king had retired, before his friends were aware of his danger. The king quitted the apartment, and vigorously defended himself; he beheld Cyneheard, and, rushing forward, severely wounded him; but no courage could prevail against such numbers. Cynewulf was slain. Roused by the clamour of the struggle, his thanes hurried to the conflict. Safety and wealth were offered to them by the assassins; but no bribes could repress their loyal

CHAP.
X.

Cynewulf
of Wessex
assassinated.
784.

⁵² Flor. Wig. 274. Sax. Chron. 57. Of Cornwall, I presume; for in his charter to the monastery at Wells, dated 766, he adduces among his motives to the donation *pro aliqua vexatione inimicorum nostrorum Cornubiorum gentis*. See it ap. Dugd. i. 186.

⁵³ Matt. West. 280. This author states, that Cyneheard had been banished.

BOOK
III.

784.

The murderers
punished.

indignation; and they fell nobly by their master's side; one British hostage only escaped, desperately wounded. In the morning, the dismal tidings had circulated; and the great officers of the royal household, Osric, the friend, and Weverth, the faithful minister of Cynewulf, with their attendants rode to the town. Cynewulf lavished both promises and presents, if they would assist him to obtain the crown. The disinterested thanes disdained the favours of a murderer, forced an entrance with their battle-axes, and a deadly contest ensued, in which the guilty perished.⁵⁴

Brihtric
succeeds.
787.
Danes first
land in
England.

THIS melancholy catastrophe produced the dignity of Brihtric. He was of the race of Cerdic⁵⁵, and married Eadburga, the daughter of Offa. The year of his accession was distinguished as that in which the Danes are recorded by the Anglo-Saxon writers to have first landed on the English shore. The gerefa of the place went out to see the strangers, who had arrived with three vessels, and was instantly⁵⁶ killed. Their incursion was repeated on other parts of the island.

Vices of
the Queen
Eadburga.

THE wife of Brihtric, or Beorhtric, is expressed by Asser to have imitated the tyranny of her father, Offa; to have hated all to whom

⁵⁴ Sax. Chron. 59. 63. Flor. Wig. 278. Hunt. 343.

⁵⁵ Sax. Chron. 63.

⁵⁶ Sax. Chron. 64.; Flor. Wig. 280.; and see Ethelwerd.

her husband was attached, and to have done whatever was odious to mankind. She became familiar with crimes which the gentleness of female nature never perpetrates till its moral sentiments have been erased. She accused to the king whomsoever her caprice disliked, and thus deprived them of life or power. When he refused the gratification to her malice, she used the secret poison.

C H A P.

X.

787.

To one youth the king was so attached, that her arts were fruitlessly exerted to procure his disgrace. She mingled for him a poisoned cup. It was the destiny of Brihtric, that, by accident, he should drink the contents. Thus punished for his unjust compliances with the malignancy of Eadburga, he expired as well as the ⁵⁷ youth, and was succeeded by Egbert.

She poi-
sons Brih-
tric.

DRIVEN out of Wessex, the wretched woman sailed with great treasures to France, and presented herself to Charlemagne. With splendid presents she stood before the throne: "Choose, Eadburga," said the king, "which you prefer, me or my son."—"Your son," was her answer, "because he is youngest." The monarch tauntingly assured her, that if she had selected

She es-
capes to
France.

⁵⁷ Asser relates these incidents from the communications of his illustrious master: "Quod a domino meo Ælfredo Angulsaxonum rege veredico, etiam sæpe mihi referente audivi," p. 10. The Saxon Chronicle mentions Worr as the ealdorman who died with Brihtric, p. 68. Brihtric was buried in Tewksbury. Chron. de Tewksb. MSS. Cott. Cleop. c. 3.

BOOK
III.

787.

Her miser-
able end.

him, he should have transferred her to his son; but that as her election had been otherwise, she should have neither. He gave her what he thought better suited her immorality, the habit and discipline of a cloister; but even in this retreat she indulged her depravity, and was turned out of the society. In poverty and miserable vice she dragged on a loathed existence, and at last, accompanied by a little girl, she begged her daily bread at Pavia; and closed an abandoned life by a deplorable death.⁵⁸

⁵⁸ Asser says he had this fact from many who had seen her, p. 12.—In 798, London was burnt, with many of its inhabitants. Chron. Pet. 10.

CHAP. XI.

The Reigns of EGBERT and ETHELWULF.

EGBERT was the son of Alcmund, or Ethel-
 mund, the great grandson of Inigils, the
 brother of Ina. Alcmund was left early in his
 mother's care, and his sisters were sent into
 Saxony for their education, where they became
 religious.¹ Egbert received the instruction of
 the times, and his talents gave splendor to his
 youth. When Brihtric became king of Wessex,
 the popularity of Egbert excited his mistrust,
 and he projected his destruction. To avert
 the danger, Egbert fled to Offa. The messen-
 gers of Brihtric followed him; and, to debar
 the young exile from the friendship of Mercia,
 they solicited for their master the daughter of
 Offa. Eadburga was betrothed to Brihtric, and

CHAP.
 XI.

Egbert's
 ancestors.

¹ Wallingford, 3 Gale, 531. See Thorn. 2.; x Scrip. 2211.; and 3 Lel. 55. The Saxon Chronicle makes the father of Egbert king of Kent, p. 63.; and Higden entitles him *sub reguli*, p. 252. So Rudborne. The eldest sons of the kings of Wessex seem, at this period, to have been ways appointed kings of Kent, until the reign of Alfred.

BOOK
III.

787.
Egbert's
retreat
with Char-
lemagne.

Egbert sailed to the coast of France, where he greatly improved his mind.²

IT was after 787, that he left Offa for the court of Charlemagne. This indefatigable monarch, whom Europe every year beheld in a new part of its varied climate, pouring his disciplined warriors on the powerful savage tribes, which swarmed between the German Ocean and the mouth of the Danube, in the year 788 marched against the Sclavonians on the Baltic. Scarce had they submitted, but the Huns were invading him, and he was also summoned towards Naples by the hostilities of the eastern empire. He subdued the Avarians and the Huns, the modern Austrians and Hungarians. When Saxony revolted, he determined to extirpate the most hostile of its confederation. The fate of 30,000 men evinced the dreadful execution of his determination.

795.

ON his return from this expedition, he passed his winter at Aix-la-Chapelle, a place with which he was much delighted. In the subsequent years we find him at Paderborn, afterwards traversing the French coasts, visiting the diet at Mentz, and, in the year 800, marching into Italy through Suabia and Friuli. We may reasonably suppose that Egbert attended him in some of these expeditions, and that great activity, enlargement, and information of mind,

² Malms. lib. ii. c. 1. p. 36. Hen. Silgrave, Cott. MSS. p. 12.

was acquired by the Anglo-Saxon prince during his asylum with the Frankish sovereign. Thus Egbert's exile and adversity became beneficial both to himself and to the country, which he was soon called to govern.

CHAP.
XI.
795.

It was in the year 800 that Egbert was summoned out of the French empire to the throne of England. As he was the only descendant of Cerdic that was in existence³, his accession was highly popular in Wessex.

800.
Egbert returns to England.

At the period of his accession, the island, though nominally under an hexarchy, was fast verging into a triarchy. The petty powers of Kent, Essex, and East Anglia, had already become the satellites of Mercia; Northumbria, occupied in producing and destroying a succession of usurpers and turbulent nobles, had ceased to molest her neighbours; Wessex had enlarged herself by the incorporation of Sussex; its population and wealth multiplied under the peaceable administration of Brihtric, and a series of able sovereigns had reduced the nobles of the land to an useful subordination. The force of Wessex was therefore a well organised concentration of various powers, ready to operate with all their energies for any great purpose to which they should be summoned.

State of England.

At this crisis Egbert acceded. The friendship of Charlemagne had educated him to the

³ Malsbury, lib. i. c. 2. p. 16.

BOOK
III.
800.

arts of empire; and the studies cultivated at the Frankish court, had excited his mind, and polished his manners. ⁴ From the example of the French emperor he learnt the difficult policy of governing, with vigour and prudence, the discordant members of a great body politic. The character of Charlemagne was a mixture of cultivated intellect and barbarism, which was likely to have interested and improved the mind of Egbert; and in the wars of the Franks he must have imbibed a military knowledge superior to that of every Anglo-Saxon competitor.

His mild government completed the attachment of his subjects, and the tranquillity of the first years of his reign fostered his growing strength.

Kenwulf
in Mercia.

FOR the first nineteen years of Egbert's reign, Kenwulf continued to sit on the throne of Mercia. He had subdued Kent, and ruled Mercia and its appendages, with an ability which suspended the ambition of the West-Saxon king. Kenwulf is mentioned with applause for his peacefulness, piety, and justice. ⁵ His ability was known to his contemporaries, and secured his repose.

⁴ Malsbury says of the Franks, "This nation, from the activity of its powers and the urbanity of its manners, was decidedly the prince of all the western states;" he mentions that Egbert regnandi disciplinam a Francis acciperit, and that with them aciem mentis expediret et mores longè a gentilitia barbarie alienos indueret. lib. ii. c. 1. p. 36.

⁵ Ingulf. Hist. p. 6. rex justissimus. Chron. Pet. 10.

It was on the inferior Britons of the West, that Egbert first tried the efficacy of his military strength. He penetrated successfully into Devonshire and Cornwall; resistance was in vain; and he ravaged, unchecked, from the East to the West.⁶

CHAP.
XI.

815.
Egbert de-
feats the
Western
Britons.

THE path to his greatness was laid open to Egbert by the death of Kenwulf.⁷ The wisdom of this king had completed the efforts of Offa for the power of Mercia; and if his successors had been of equal energy, Wessex might not at this period have become its superior.

819.
Kenwulf's
death.

BUT to such a degree of strength had these rival states respectively attained, that it was obvious a serious competition must soon arise for one to be sovereign of the whole. The humiliation of the other powers increased the rivalry of these. Two neighbouring co-equals in power cannot long exist in amity together, because man is too much a being of hope and envy, and too little appreciates tranquillity and content. By its political power, Mercia promised to win in the approaching race of supremacy; but Wessex was rising so fast into importance, that nothing less than a continuation of able government in Mercia could suppress its competition. Both had reached that point of power, at which the state that was first

Rivalry of
Wessex
and Mer-
cia.

⁶ Sax. Chron. 69. Flor. Wig. 285. Malmsb. 36. Ethelw. 840. In the year 816, the English school at Rome was burnt. Flor. Wig. 285.

⁷ Ingulf. 7.

B O O K

III.

819.

disquieted by the evils of a weak administration would inevitably fall under the pressure of the other.

EGBERT and Kenwulf governed their several kingdoms with such steady capacity, that, during their co-existence, the balance was not determined. If Kenwulf had been the survivor, and minors or incapable men, harassed by factious chiefs, had succeeded to the throne of Egbert, then Mercia would have acquired the monarchy of England; but the coveted distinction was allotted to Wessex, and the causes powerful enough to reduce a nation, were suffered to operate in Mercia.

819.
The son of
Kenwulf
murdered.

KENWULF left his son, Kinelm, a child of seven years of age, the heir to his crown, under the tutelage of his marriageable daughters. The eldest of these, Windreda, hopeful of acquiring a permanent authority, resolved on her brother's death. He was carried by his foster-father, under pretence of hunting, into a wood, and there murdered. Her crime failed to profit her.

Ceolwulf.

Her uncle, Ceolwulf, took the crown; in his second year he was driven out by Beornwulf.⁸

Beorn-
wulf, a
weak
prince.

THESE distractions checked Mercia in her career of dignity. Beornwulf became by his usurpation rather the king of his party than sovereign of the united population of his territory. He had acquired his throne by violence;

⁸ Ingulf. 7. Flor. Wig. 286.

CHAP.

XI.

819.

yet if his skill had been equal to the crisis, he might have consolidated his power; but he is characterised as a fool, rich and powerful, though of no regal ancestry.⁹ With giddy precipitancy he plunged into a personal competition with Egbert, and linked the fate of Mercia in his own.¹⁰

823.
Beornwulf
makes war
on Egbert.

It was in 823 that Beornwulf rushed to that collision, which the wary Egbert seems to have been reluctant to hazard. The twenty-three years' forbearance of the West Saxon prince indicates no inordinate ambition; but the hostilities of Beornwulf roused him into activity. At Wilton the competition between the two states was decided.¹¹ The superior strength of the forces of Mercia was balanced by the skill of Egbert. A furious battle ensued, which the rival armies maintained with great obstinacy; but at length Egbert conquered with great slaughter, and Beornwulf fled in irremediable confusion.

Egbert's
victory.

⁹ Ingulf. 7. A Bernulpho quodam fatuoso et divitiis ac potentia pollenti, in nullo que lineam regalem contingente expulsus est.

¹⁰ In 823, a battle occurred at Gafelford, or Camelford, in Cornwall. Sax. Chron. 70. Flor. Wig. 287. The men of Devonshire are particularised as the combatants who conflicted with the Cornish Britons. The pieces of armour, rings, and brass-furniture for horses, dug up here, and the local tradition of a bloody battle, may be collateral evidences of this struggle; but they are also claimed by Leland as the attestations of the celebrated fight of Camlan, which he places on this spot. Whether Egbert or his generals commanded against the Britons, is not decisively ascertained.

¹¹ Sax. Chron. 70. Flor. Wig. 287. Hunt. 344.

BOOK
III.

823.
Subdues
Kent and
Essex.

EGBERT derived from his victory all the consequences of which it was so fruitful: he beheld the favourable moment for breaking the power of Mercia for ever, and he seized it with avidity. He dispatched his son, Ethelwulf, and the warlike bishop and able statesman, Ealstan, with a competent army, into Kent, who drove the petty sovereign that had ruled there, the dependent of Mercia, over the Thames¹²; and then Kent, and its neighbour, Essex, became for ever united to the crown of Wessex.

Incites the
East Anglians
against
Mercia.

EGBERT pursued his scheme of aggrandisement with careful policy. He forebore to invade Mercia; for though it had been defeated, it abounded yet with courageous soldiery; and Egbert seems to have been cautious of putting too much into hazard. Instead of attacking Beornwulf in Mercia, Egbert fomented the discontent with which the East Anglians endured the Mercian yoke; by promise of support he excited East Anglia to revolt, and thus engaged his rival in a new warfare.¹³

825.
Mercia's
disasters.

BEORNWULF went in anger to chastise the East Anglians. His incapacity again disgraced him

¹² Sax. Chron. 70. Wallingf. 534. Hunt. 345. Flor. Wig. 287. The year 824 is remarked by continental annalists to have had a winter so extremely severe, that not only animals, but many of the human race, perished in the excessive cold. See Annal. Fuldenses. 6 Bouquet's Recueil, p. 208. The annals add a description of a huge stone which fell from the air!

¹³ Ingulf. 7.

with a defeat: he fell in the contest¹⁴; and was succeeded by Ludecan, who again led the forces of Mercia against East Anglia; but he was as unfortunate as his predecessor, and found a grave where he had hoped for empire. Wiglaf, the governor or prince of Worcestershire, succeeded.¹⁵

CHAP.
XI.
825.

THE views of Egbert were now accomplished. An important passage of Ingulfus pours light on the policy of Egbert. He says that the two usurpers, Beornwulf and Ludecan, by their imprudence destroyed all the military strength of Mercia, which had been most numerous and victorious.¹⁶ For this event Egbert seems to have waited; and as soon as he found that Mercia had exhausted herself against others, his caution was thrown aside, and his officers marched his army immediately into Mercia. Wiglaf, attacked before he could recruit his forces, fled from his new dominion, and concealed himself from the eager searches of Egbert in the monastery of Croyland. That interesting character, Ethelburga, widowed in the hour of the marriage-feast by her father Offa's crime, sheltered the fugitive prince in her respected cell.¹⁷ How painfully must she

Egbert
invades
Mercia.

¹⁴ Ingulf. 7. Chron. Petr. 12. ¹⁵ Ibid.

¹⁶ Regno vehementer oppresso, totam militiam ejus, quæ quondam plurima extiterat, et victoriosissima, sua imprudentia perdiderat. Ing. 7.

¹⁷ Ing. 7.

B O O K
III.

827.
Wiglaf
submits to
him.

have moralised on the deed which had not only destroyed her happiness, but had contributed in its consequences to the ruin of Mercia!

THE negotiations of the venerable abbot of Croyland preserved Wiglaf, but completed the inevitable degradation of Mercia. Egbert agreed to the king's continuing on the throne as the tributary vassal of Wessex. The expressions of Wiglaf, in the charter of Croyland, six years after this pacification, are, "I have procured it to be confirmed by my lord, Egbert, king of Wessex, and his son."—"In the presence of my lords, Egbert and Athelwulph."¹⁸—The payment of the tribute is attested by ¹⁹Ingulf. The submission of East Anglia was consequential to the humiliation of Mercia.

Egbert
invades
Northum-
bria.

NORTHUMBRIA had not yet felt his power. Eardulf, whom we left reigning at the beginning of this the ninth century, had assumed a hostile posture against Kenwulf of Mercia, but the clergy interposed, and procured a reconciliation.²⁰ In 806, Eardulf was driven out, and the province continued without a king for a long time.²¹ Alfwold is mentioned afterwards, as a fleeting monarch of two years; and Eanred,

¹⁸ Per dominum meum Egbertum regem West Saxonie et Athelwulphum filium ejus illud obtinui confirmari. Ing. 9. — In presentia dominorum meorum Egberti regis West Saxonie et Athelwulphi filii ejus. Ing. 10.

¹⁹ Promissa tributi annualis pensione. Ing. 8.

²⁰ Sim. Dunelm. de Gestis Reg. Angl. 117.

²¹ Chron. Mailros, 141.

the son of Eardulf, then succeeded for thirty-three years, and transmitted it to his son.²² It was against Eanred that Egbert marched, after the conquest of Mercia. The Northumbrian prince was too prudent to engage his turbulent and exhausted kingdom in a war with Egbert: he felt the imperious necessity, and obeyed it. At Dore, beyond the Humber, he met the West-Saxon prince, and amicably acknowledged his superiority.²³

C H A P.
XI.
827.

THE Anglo-Saxon octarchy thus subdued, he turned the tide of conquest towards Wales. With a numerous army he penetrated to Snowdon, the Parnassus of the Cambrian bards. The same successes attended his arms in North Wales, and he penetrated to Denbighshire, and from thence to Anglesey.²⁴ He appointed his son Ethelwulf king of Kent.²⁵

Its sub-
mission.

828.
Wales
overrun.

THE only enemy that baffled the genius of Egbert was the Danes, who continued their depredations; and probably under the command of that celebrated sea-king, Ragnar Lodbrog, whose actions will be more distinctly considered.²⁶ They ravaged the Isle of Sheppey,

832.
The Danes
invade
Egbert.

²² Sim. Dunelm. de Dunel. Eccles. 13.

²³ Sax. Chron. 71. Flor. Wig. 288.

²⁴ Brut y Saeson, 475. Brut y Tywysog. 392. Sax. Chron. 72. Ethelwerd, 841.

²⁵ So he says in a charter at Rochester, dated "Ethelwulph, quem regem constituemus in Cantia." Thorpe, Reg. Ref. p. 22.

²⁶ See the next book, ch. 3.

BOOK
III.

855.

and in the next year defeated Egbert at Charmouth, in Dorsetshire.²⁷ This disaster, perhaps, occasioned that council which Wiglaf, in his charter to Croyland, mentions to have met this year at London, for the purpose of deliberating on the Danish depredations.²⁸ The efficacy of the measures adopted by the council appeared at Hengston Hill, in Cornwall. The Danes landed in this part of the island, and the Cornish Britons, from fear, or voluntary policy, entered into offensive alliance with them against Egbert. The king of Wessex defeated their combined forces with great slaughter.²⁹

856.
Egbert's
death.

AFTER a reign of prosperity seldom rivalled, Egbert died, full of glory.³⁰ He had made all the Anglo-Saxon kingdoms subordinate to his own; but the tale, that he assembled the Anglo-Saxon states, and, abolishing the distinction of Saxons and Angles, and all provincial appel-

²⁷ Sax. Chron. 72.

²⁸ Ingulf. 10. (Ubi omnes congregati fuimus pro concilio capiendi contra Danicos piratas littora Angliæ assidue infestantes.)

²⁹ Sax. Chron. 72.

³⁰ Sax. Chron. 73. Flor. Wig. 291. Higden, 253. Chron. Petri de Burgo, 13. The Chronicle of Mailros says in 838, p. 142. The Asserii Annales, 839, p. 155. Wallingford, 837, p. 531. On the 26th January, in the year 839, an unusual inundation of the sea devastated all Frisia, so that it was almost on a level with the copious masses of sands, called there Dunos (Downs). Animals, men, and houses, were destroyed by the waters. The number of the inhabitants known to have perished in the deluge, was 2437. Annal. Bertiniani. 6 Bouquet's Recueil.

lations, commanded the island to be called England, and procured himself to be crowned and intitled king of England, seems not to be entitled to our belief.³¹

CHAP.
XI.
836.

³¹ I was induced, as early as I began this work, to doubt this popular tale, by observing these circumstances:—1. That although if such an act had taken place, the legal title of Egbert and his successors would have been *rex Anglorum*; yet that neither he nor his successors, till after Alfred, ever used it. In his charters Ethelwulf always signs king of the West Saxons; so do his three sons; so Alfred; and in his will he says, I, Alfred, of the West Saxons, king. Asser, the friend of this king, styles Ethelwulf and his three sons always kings of the West Saxons, p. 6—21. It is with Alfred that he begins to use a different title; he names him *Angul Saxonum rex*.—2. Egbert did not establish the monarchy of England: he asserted the predominance of Wessex over the others, whom he defeated or made tributary, but he did not incorporate East Anglia, Mercia, or Northumbria. It was the Danish sword which destroyed these kingdoms, and thereby made Alfred the monarch of the Saxons; accordingly, Alfred is called *primus monarcha* by some; but, in strict truth, the monarchy of England must not even be attributed to him, because Danish sovereigns divided the island with him. It was Athelstan who destroyed the Danish sovereignty, who may, with the greatest propriety, be entitled *primus monarcha Anglorum*, and accordingly Alured of Beverly so intimates him, p. 93. *Totius Angliæ monarchiam primus Anglo-Saxonum obtinuit Edelstanus*.—3. The important incidents of the coronation, and change of name, are not mentioned by the best writers. The Saxon Chronicle, Florence of Worcester, Asser, Ethelwerd, Ingulf, Huntingdon, Hoveden, Bromton, Malmsbury, the Chronicle of Mailros, of Peterborough, and Matthew of Westminster, say nothing about it.—4. Why should Egbert, a Saxon, have given the Angles a preference in the royal title? The fact seems to be, that the people of the provinces colonised by the Angles, had been long called *Angli*. Bede and Boniface,

BOOK

III.

856.

As the new enemies from the Baltic, who had begun to appear in England, for the first time, at the end of the eighth and in the ninth centuries, were not duly noticed by our historians before the publication of this work, it will be necessary, for the more perfect understanding of the events which they caused, to take a review of the political state of Scandinavia, and of its customs at this period.

in the century before Egbert, so call them. There is, however, one charter that makes an exception to my first remark. In one of those at Rochester he is called rex Anglorum. Thorpe, p. 22. Yet his son Ethelwulf does not continue the title, but uses that of occidentalium Saxonum, p. 23; which proves that if the other charter with the Anglorum be a genuine one, and this phrase furnishes an objection to its authenticity, yet that this word could not have arisen from any legal change of title, or his son would have continued it.

BOOK IV.

CHAP. I.

The Political State of NORWAY, SWEDEN, and DENMARK, in the Eighth Century.

ALTHOUGH popular language, seldom accurate, has given the denomination of Danes, to the invaders of England, they were composed of the nations who lived in the regions now known by the general appellations of Sweden and Norway, as well as of the inhabitants of Zealand and Jutland. Of these, the Swedes were the earliest civilised, and seem to have first abandoned the system of maritime piracy. The Norwegians continued their aggressions, though at long intervals, to the year wherein this history ends. The Danes, who headed the most terrible of the invasions, were also the most successful. Under Sweyn, Canute, and his children, they obtained the government of Britain.

CHAP.
I.

THE general aspect of the north, in the eighth century, was remarkable for two peculiarities, which were fitted to produce an age of piracy. These were, the numerous petty kings who

BOOK
IV.State of
Norway.

ruled in its various regions, and the sea-kings who swarmed upon the ocean.

NORWAY, whose broken coast stretches along a tumultuous ocean, from the rocks of the Baltic into the arctic circle, was the most sterile of all the regions of the north. Its rugged mountains, and intolerable cold, were unfriendly to agricultural cultivation; but they nurtured a hardy and vigorous race, who, possessing no luxuries, feared no invasion, but poured their fleets on other coasts, to seize the superfluities which happier climates produced.¹ The navigator whom Alfred consulted and employed, describes this region, which he calls North-manna land, as very long and very small. "All that man may use for pasture or plough lieth against the sea; and even this is in some places very rocky. Wild moors lie against the east, and along the inhabited lands. In these moors the finnas dwell. The cultivated land is broadest towards the east, but becomes continually smaller as it stretches towards the north."² Ohthere added, that the "moors were in some places so broad, that a man would be two weeks in travelling over them; in others but six³ days."

¹ Adam Bremen. *Historia Ecclesiastica*, lib. iv. c. 96. p. 71. ed. Lindenbrog. Franc. 1630.

² See Ohthere's narration, inserted by Alfred in his Saxon translation of Orosius, p. 24. ed. Lond. 1773. The land subjected to human culture, he describes as about 60 miles broad in the eastward, about 30 in the middle, and northward, where smallest, it might be three miles to the moors. *Ibid.*

³ Ohthere, *ibid.*

FROM these descriptions we may remark, that the natural state of the country favoured maritime depredations. The population was along the sea. The natives were hardy, and their subsistence scanty. Compelled by their penury, they roamed largely abroad, and returned, when plunder had enriched them.⁴

NORWAY, in the eighth century, was divided among numerous sovereignties, called fylki, which an Icelandic Saga defines to have been a province which could furnish twelve ships, containing each sixty or seventy well armed⁵ men. Sometimes every fylki had an independent king. Sometimes more than one were under the same ruler.⁶ The chorographical description of Norway enumerates twenty-two of these fylki, besides the fylki of Trondheim, which contained eight more.⁷ The number of sovereignties probably varied according to the ambition and success of the several chiefs. The Hervarar Saga mentions, that at one period there were twelve kingdoms in Norway.⁸ In the ninth

⁴ Adam Brem. p. 71.

⁵ Olaf Tryggva-son's Saga, c. 41. Stephanus says, that the ancient Danes used the word fylki to signify a province now called Læn; but so populous as to furnish an army. In each of these a sovereign governed. Note in Saxon. Gram. p. 118. ed. Hafn. 1644.

⁶ Olaf's Saga, p. 97.

⁷ Stephanus recapitulates them, p. 118.

⁸ C. 18. p. 221. This Saga, whose author is unknown, is a kind of Icelandic Epopea. The original was published with a vernacular translation and Latin notes, by Verelius, in

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IV.

century they were very numerous. Snorre, the very ancient and most valuable historiographer of Norway⁹, brings all the fylki kings to our view, in his history of Harald Harfragre, the descendant of a petty prince in the southern parts of Scandinavia, who acceded in ¹⁰862. Harald swore to subdue all these little sovereigns, as Gormo had already conquered those of Denmark, and Eric those of Sweden. He accomplished his vow. By his first efforts he destroyed the kings who governed in the eight fylki of Trondheim, and reduced these fylki under his dominion.¹¹ The rest of his life was chiefly occupied by his wars with the other. The struggle ended in his uniting them all under one monarchy.¹²

1672. The last edition is valuable for its Latin version; but it has omitted, I think, with a diminution of its utility, and with injustice to Verelius, his learned notes. Some might have been retrenched, but the great body of them ought not to have been characterised as “non momentosæ.”

⁹ Snorre Sturleson was born at Hvam, in West Iceland, 1178. In 1213 he was made supreme judge of Iceland. He was a poet as well as an historian. His moral character was not so distinguished as his genius. He was killed at Reickholt, in his sixty-third year. See his life, prefixed to Schöning's edition of his *Heimskringla*, or *Historia Regum Norvegorum*. Havn. 1777.

¹⁰ *Annales Islandici vetustissimi*, 2 Langbeck's *Script. Dan.* p. 186.

¹¹ Snorre, *Haralld's Saga*, c. 8. p. 81.

¹² See Snorre, *Haralld's Saga*, p. 83—112. The last chapters of the *Ynglinga Saga* are on the immediate ancestors of Harald, who sprang from the *Ynglingi* of Upsal.

SKIPTED by the Alps of Norway, Sweden was distinguished for its fertility, wealth, and commerce.¹³ It population was numerous, warlike, and hospitable.¹⁴ The name of Sweden, though now applied to the whole region governed by the Swedish monarch, was in ancient times restricted to the territory about Upsal.¹⁵ Before the eighth century, it contained many provincial sovereigns, called Herads Konungr, of whom the king of Upsal was the chief. As cultivation spread, and deserts were converted into fields, new kingdoms rose.¹⁶ Nineteen of these puny kingdoms are enumerated.¹⁷ The king of Upsal, subjecting these inferior rulers, received the denomination of Thiod Kongr.¹⁸ Ingialld,

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I.

State of
Sweden.

¹³ Adam Brem. 68. Rembert, who obtained the archbishopric of Hamburg in 865, has left us some valuable expressions about Birca, which he calls the port of Sweden. He says, *Ibi multi essent negotiatores divites et abundantia totius boni atque pecunia thesaurorum multa. Vita Anfgar. l Langb. 459.*

¹⁴ Adam Brem. p. 68. He says, the Swedes not only thought it a disgrace to refuse hospitality to the traveller, but they contended for the honour of entertaining him. *Ibid.* The Swedes had as many wives as they could maintain. *Ibid.*

¹⁵ Snorre calls this part Swithiod. He places here the Ynglingi, whose succession Ivar Vidfadme disturbed. Adam Brem. also distinguishes Suedia from the adjoining provinces of Gothland, p. 68.

¹⁶ Snorre, Ynglinga Saga, c. 40. p. 48.

¹⁷ In Messenii Scand. Illust. i. p. 7.

¹⁸ Verelius in Got. et Rol. p. 87. I observe in Snorre, that the ancient title of the kings of Sweden was Drottmar (lord). Dyggvi was first saluted Konungur (king), c. 20.

BOOK
IV.

who perished in the invasion of Ivar Vidfadne, destroyed by treachery twelve of the petty kings.¹⁹ The king of Upsal received tribute from the rest, who were thence denominated Skatte Kongar, tributary kings.²⁰ But these subordinate rulers sometimes amassed so much wealth by piracy, as to be more powerful than the superior lord.²¹ Sweden had not a very extensive population, till after the beginning of the eighth century: in the preceding age it was so full of woods and deserts, that it required many days' journey to pass over them. The father of Ingialld exerted himself to convert many forests and heaths into arable²² land. He made roads through parts which no human foot had explored, and, by his wise industry, great extents of country were adorned for the first time by the cottages, corn, and people of a flourishing cultivation.²³ This continent was,

p. 24. His mother was the daughter of Dan the Magnificent, a quo Danie ortum est nomen, *ibid.* Snorre says, the Swedes call him their drottinn, who takes the skattgiafr, the tribute from them. c. 11. p. 15.

¹⁹ Snorre, *Yngl.* c. 43. p. 53.

²⁰ Peringskiold *Monum. Upl.* 10. He calls the kings of Upsal Enwalds, or Ofwer Konungar. The arms of Upland were a golden apple, or globe, surrounded with a belt, in allusion to the monarchy. *Ibid.*

²¹ Verelius *Got. et Rolf.* 75.

²² Snorre, *Ynglinga Saga*, c. 37. p. 45.

²³ Snorre, p. 45. Loccenius, with truer chronology than others, places Aunund immediately before the father of Ragnar Lodbrog. *Hist. Suec.* p. 41.

however, still so little peopled, that Olaf, the son of Ingialld, flying from Ivar, in the eighth century, found the country from the west of the kingdom of Upsal, to the Vener lake, an uninhabited forest. By the axe and by fire, he cleared the regions about the river, which runs into the lake; and the province and kingdom of Vermaland, under his auspices arose.²⁴ It was not until the ninth century, that Jamtia and Helsingia, the two northern provinces of Sweden, received a permanent colony. Men, flying from the tyranny of the preponderant sovereign, levelled the woods, and spread themselves over the district.²⁵ It seems to have been general throughout the North, that the interior parts of every country were wild solitudes. The sea-coasts were peopled; but as the natives undervalued agriculture, the adventurous spirits plunged into piracy, and the rest, addicted to hunting and pasturage, made few efforts to remove the frightful forests and extensive marshes which every where forbad their occupation.²⁶ Sweden was for a long

²⁴ Snorre, Yng. c. 46. p. 55.

²⁵ Snorre gives the history of these colonisations in his *Saga Hakonar Goda*, c. 14. p. 137. Verelius cites the *Olaf Saga* on the same fact, in *Goth. et Rolf.* p. 15.

²⁶ Verelius, *Goth. et Rolf.* 13. Hence the *Suerris-Saga* says, that travelling was very difficult, because on the melting of the ice and snows upon the rivers and lakes, the road must then be taken through pools, marshes, and trackless woods. Verel. *ib.* p. 14.

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time a favourite prey to the pirates of Denmark and the Baltic.²⁷ In the eighth century, the Upsal kingdom was conquered by Ivar Vidfadme, the little potentate of Scania, whose father was one of the chiefs destroyed by Ingialld.²⁸ Upsal afterwards continued to increase in its power and preponderance.

State of
Denmark.

THE country of the Danes was composed of islands, which an unquiet ocean separated, and of the peninsula Jutland, which is almost insulated by its numerous bays. Of the Danish islands, Fionia was remarkable for its Odinsee, the place in Denmark to which Odin went out of Saxony, after his reputed emigration from the Tanais.²⁹ It became a great city. The

²⁷ Snorre, p. 43, 44.

²⁸ Ibid. p. 53.

²⁹ Ibid. p. 9. Odins-ey means Odin's island. Odin afterwards moved into Sweden, built a temple, and founded a city at Sigtun. Ibid. He is usually placed before the Christian æra; but the Saxon Genealogies make him above 200 or 300 years more recent. These are entitled to much notice, because the Saxon annals are far more accurate and precise than the Northern. They were also committed much earlier to writing. These make Cerdic, in 495, the ninth descendant from Odin, (Sax. Chron. 15.) Ida, in 547, the tenth, (Ibid. 19.) Ella, in 560, the eleventh, (p. 20.) If we reckon each generation at twenty-five years, as a fair average, then, according to Cerdic's genealogy, Odin will be placed 270 after Christ; according to Ida's 290, A. C.; according to Ella's 285, A. C. This position of Odin, by the Saxon chroniclers, has sometimes suggested to me the probability, that Odin's famous emigration from the Euxine, was no other than the daring voyage of the Franks from the Euxine, which occurred between 270 and 280, A. C., and which is

island was very fertile, but its coasts were full of pirates.³⁰

CHAP.
I.

ZEALAND was distinguished amidst the other isles for its magnitude, and its ancient metropolis, Lethra, whose sovereign was superior to the other kings who governed in the various provinces of the Danes.³¹ Jutland, which extended from the Angles to the Sound, constituted a principal part of the Danish strength. Its soil was sterile, but the country upon the rivers was cultivated, and the most frequented cities were on the arms of the sea, which ran into it. The rest was made up of vast solitudes and briny marshes, like all the north in this savage and calamitous period. It abounded with uninhabited forests, which concurred with the fens to keep the interior unpeopled. Hence

stated before, p. 160. It is a coincidence, that Snorre places his first conquests in Saxony; for the Franks landed about Frisia, and immediately after that, the sea was covered with Frankish and Saxon pirates. Odin is also said by the Northern traditions to have fled from the Romans; but no other flight than the Frankish voyage is noticed by the Latin writers. The Saxon piracies show, that the Frankish voyage gave a new impulse to society in the north.

³⁰ Adam Brem. 64.

³¹ On Lethra and its topography, see Stephanus in Sax. p. 74. It was in the middle of the island, not far from Roschild. Sveno, who lived in 1186, says, that this famous city had in his time so declined, that inter abjectissima ferme vix colitur. Hist. Reg. Dan. 1 Langb. 45. Roschild became afterwards the metropolis.

BOOK IV. the maritime coasts, though full of incessant danger, from the pirates, were the parts frequented.³²

THE Danes also occupied Scania, on the Scandinavian continent. It was their richest province.³³ This peninsula was almost an island; a tract of land, composed of deep forests and rugged mountains, divided it from Gothland.³⁴ It produced Ivar, the king whose invasion destroyed the dynasty of the Ynglingi at Upsal, and who occupied part of³⁵ England. Saxo mentions Hallandia and Blekingia as Danish possessions.³⁶

WULFSTAN, a navigator with whom Alfred conversed about the north-eastern countries of the Baltic, enumerated the isles of Langoland, Leland, Falster, and Sconey, as belonging at that period to Denemearca.³⁷ The German chronicles at this time generally mean Jutland when they speak of Denmark, but the isles

³² Adam Brem. 63. Jutland was anciently called Reidgotaland. Torfæus, Series Reg. Dan. 86, 87. The rest of Denmark was called Eygotaland, the insular Gothland. Ibid. 83. 87.

³³ Knytlinga Saga. Worm. Mon. Dan. App. p. 35.

³⁴ Adam, 64. In his time it had become very opulent.

³⁵ Snorre, p. 53, 54.

³⁶ In his preface, he mentions the rock in Blekingia, so famous for its surprising inscriptions. He says, lib. vii. p. 138., Harald Hyldetand, as a monument to his father, caused his actions to be described on it. Wormius relates what remains of it. Monum. Dan. p. 221.

³⁷ Alfred's Orosius, p. 25.

seem to have always formed an important part of the Danish population.³⁸

CHAP.
I.

DENMARK was anciently possessed by many contemporary kings. The Knytlinga Saga, after enumerating the districts which Denmark contained in the time of Canute, adds, that although then under one sovereign, they had been formerly divided into many³⁹ kingdoms. According to this document, Jutland contained five of these Konga-ryki, at Sleswick, Ripen, Arhusen, Wiburg, and Hording.⁴⁰ The islands, and the continental provinces of Scania and Hallandia, had also their respective sovereigns, among whom the king of Lethra appears the most ancient and the most powerful.⁴¹ These petty kings were styled Fylki Kongr, people,

³⁸ They were anciently called Witahedh, or Vitaslett. Verelius, Hist. Suio-Goth. 16. Peter Olaus says, that the name Dania primo et principaliter, comprehended the islands. Chron. 1 Langb. 83.

³⁹ Knytlinga Saga. Wormius, App. 36.

⁴⁰ In Canute's time the proportionate importance of these provinces may be inferred from the war-ships they furnished to the king. Heida bay, containing 350 kyrckna or parishes, provided 130 ships. Ripen, 324 parishes, 110 or 120 ships. Arhusen, 210 parishes, 90 ships. Wiburg, 250 parishes, 100 ships. Hording, 160 parishes, 50 ships. Fionia, 300 parishes, 100 ships. Zealand, 309 churches, 120 ships. Scania, 353 churches, 150 ships. Worm. p. 34, 35.

⁴¹ Snorre generally calls the Danish kings, kings of Hleidra, as p. 9. 17. 41. 43. &c. Stephanius says, ab hac Lethra Daniæ reges in antiquissimis monumentis semper nominantur Kongar aff Ledru, p. 74.

BOOK or provincial kings.⁴² Ambition, before the
 IV. eighth century, had diminished the number of
 the rival thrones. Two monopolised Jutland; Fionia, Seeland, and Scania, had each⁴³ another. This number also lessened; and at the period of their first aggression on England, the Danish royalty was confined to a king in Jutland, and one over the isles. Soon afterwards one monarcha commanded the whole. Gormo Grandævus, who lived in the end of the ninth century, is stated to have destroyed the other reguli.⁴⁴

IN speaking of kings and kingdoms, we use words of swelling sound, and magnificent import. Splendour, extensive dominion, pomp, power, and venerated dignity, are the majestic images which arise in our minds when we hear of thrones. But we must dismiss from our thoughts the fascinating appendages to modern royalty, when we contemplate the petty sovereigns of the North. Some of their kingdoms may have equalled an English county in extent, but many would have been rivalled by our hundreds. Seated in their rural halls, with a small band of followers scattered about, these

⁴² Stephan. p. 103. Verelius informs us, that fylking is an embodied army, fylke a province furnishing a fylking, and fylke king its sovereign. In Got. et Rol. p. 27.

⁴³ Anon. Roskild. Chron. 1 Langb. 374. To the same purpose Stephanius, p. 103.

⁴⁴ Torfæus Hist. Norv. i. p. 410. Snorre intimates as much. Harald's Saga, c. 3. p. 78.

northern fylki kings were often victims to pirates who assailed them. They had neither castles, cities, nor defensive fortifications.⁴⁵ Even the Thiod-Kongr, the preponderant ruler, sometimes fell before one of his inferiors whom plunder had enriched.⁴⁶

C H A P.
I.

THE more settled kings of Denmark became known more distinctly to us in the time of Charlemagne. During his life, Godfrid reigned in Jutland, who had subdued the Frisians, and also the Obotriti and a part of the Slavi. He threatened Charlemagne with war. He was succeeded by Hemming, his cousin, who made peace with the Frankish monarch, and the Eyder was established as their common boundary. On Hemming's death, the Danish sovereignty was contested between Sigefrid and Ring, in whose warfare 11,000 men with both the competitors perished.

⁴⁵ We have a remarkable instance of this in Birca, the port and chief commercial emporium of Sweden. Rembert, who lived about 865, states this Birca to have been so defenceless, that on the approach of the Danes, the people fled from it to a neighbouring civitatem. This civitas was also non multum firma. They offered 120 pounds of silver to save Birca. *Ans. vita*, p. 460. 1 Langb.

⁴⁶ Verelius in *Hervarar Saga*, 142.

CHAP. II.

The Sea-Kings and Vikingr of the North.

BOOK
IV.

The sea-
kings.

WHEN we review these kings and sub-kings of the North, we behold only a part of its political situation. There were also sovereigns who possessed neither country nor regular subjects, and yet filled the regions adjacent with blood and misery. The sea-kings of the North were a race of beings whom Europe beheld with horror. Without a yard of territorial property, without any towns, or visible nation¹, with no wealth but their ships, no force but their crews, and no hope but from their swords, the sea-kings swarmed upon the boisterous ocean, and plundered in every district they could approach. Never to sleep under a smoky roof, nor to indulge in the cheerful cup over a hearth², were the boasts of these watery sovereigns, who not only flourished in the plun-

¹ Multi enim reges hinc fuere maritimi (Sæ-konungar) qui maximis quidem copiis sed nulli præerant regioni. Snorre, Yngl. Saga, c. 34. p. 43. Multi insuper qui nec ditiones nec subditos habebant sed piratica tantum et latrociniis opes quærebant, Wiik-kungar et Naak-kungar, i. e. reges maritimi dicebantur. Verelius, Hist. Suio-Gott. p. 6.

² Snorre, p. 43.

der of the sea and its shores, but who sometimes amassed so much booty, and enlisted so many followers, as to be able to assault provinces for permanent conquest. Thus Haki and Hagbard were sea-kings; their reputation induced many bands of rovers to join their fortunes. They attacked the king of Upsal, whom Haki defeated and succeeded.³ Some years afterwards, the sons of Yngvi, who had become sea-kings, and lived wholly in their war-ships, roamed the ocean in search of adventures. They encountered the king of Haley-ia, and hanged him. They also assaulted Haki, and overpowered him.⁴ Solvi was a sea-king, and infested the eastern regions of the Baltic with his depredations. He suddenly landed in Sweden in the night, surrounded the house where the king of Upsal was sleeping, and, applying firebrands, reduced all who were in it to ashes.⁵ Such was the generous warfare of these royal pirates.

It is declared to have been a law or custom in the North, that one of the male children should be selected to remain at home, to inherit the government. The rest were exiled to the ocean, to wield their sceptres amid the turbu-

³ Snorre, Yngling. c. 25. p. 30, 31.

⁴ Snorre, p. 31, 32. The practice of hanging the chief they overpowered, seems to have furnished their scalds with some gloomy wit. One of them calls the tree from which the king was suspended, *the horse of Sigar*. Ibid. 31.

⁵ Snorre, p. 43.

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lent waters.⁶ The consent of the northern societies entitled all men of royal descent, who assumed piracy as a profession, to enjoy the name of kings, though they possessed no territory.⁷ Hence the sea-kings were the kinsmen of the land-sovereigns. While the eldest son ascended the paternal throne, the rest of the family hastened, like petty Neptunes, to establish their kingdoms in the waves⁸; and, if any of the fylki-kongr, or thiod-kongr, were expelled their inheritance by others, they also sought a continuance of their dignity upon the ocean.⁹ When the younger branches of a reigning dynasty were about to become sea-kings, the ships and their requisite equipments were furnished as a patrimonial right, and perhaps as a political convenience.

WHEN we recollect the numerous potentates of Scandinavia, and their general fecundity, we

⁶ Mæssenius Scand. i. p. 4.; and see Wallingford, 533.

⁷ Olaf. Trygg. Saga ap. Bartholin. antiq. Dan. 446. Snorre has given a particular instance of this. Saga af Olafi, Hinom. Helga, c. 4. Wormius recognises the same custom. Mon. Dan. 269.

⁸ See Verelius, Hist. Suio-G. p. 6. Pontanus, Hist. Dan. p. 87. Stephanius in Sax. p. 152. Thus a grandson of the famous Ragnar Lodbrog was a sea-king, while his brother succeeded to the crown of Sweden. Filii Biornis jarnsidæ fuere Eirikus et Refillus, hic erat Herkongr oc Sækongr. Hervarar Saga, 225.

⁹ Thus Gudrum: ab eo regno pulsus piratico more vixit, 1 Langb. 480. Thus also Biorn, 2. l. 10. 89.

may expect that the ocean swarmed with sea-kings. Such was their number, that one Danish sovereign is mentioned by Saxo to have destroyed seventy of the honourable but direful race.¹⁰ Their rank and successes always secured to them abundant crews, and the mischief they perpetrated must have been immense.¹¹ These sea-kings were also called Her-kongr.

THE sea-kings had the name of honour, but they were only a portion of those pirates, or vikingr, who in the ninth century were covering the ocean. Not only the children of the kings, but every man of importance, equipped ships, and roamed the seas to acquire property by force.¹² At the age of twelve, the sons of the great were in action under military¹³ tutors.

Northern
piracy.

¹⁰ Saxo Gramm. lib. vii. p. 142.

¹¹ Snorre has recorded the sufferings of Sweden in his Ynglinga Saga; and the famous inscription on the lapis Tirstedensis, given by Wormius, Monum. 267., and commented on by Bartholin, 438., records the memory of Frotho, a vikingr terrible to the Swedes, 443. The ancient Sveno Aggonis mentions the extensive depredations of Helghi, a rex maris, Hist. Dan. 1 Langb. 44. And the Nornagesti Historia in one instance exhibits a volume of such incidents. "Hi regulos permultos subjugaverant, pugnatores fortissimoe interfecerant, urbesque incendio deleverant ac in Hispania et Gallia immensam stragem ediderant." Ap. Torfæus, Series Reg. Dan. 384.

¹² Snorre, Saga, Olafi Helga, c. 192. p. 315.

¹³ Snorre furnishes us with a fact of this kind: "quo tempore primum navem bellicam adscendit Olafus Haraldsi filius XII annos natus erat." His mother appointed Ranius,

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Piracy was not only the most honourable occupation, and the best harvest of wealth, it was not only consecrated to public emulation by the illustrious who pursued it¹⁴, but no one was esteemed noble, no one was respected, who did not return in the winter to his home with ships laden with booty.¹⁵ The spoil consisted of every necessary of life, clothes, domestic utensils, cattle, which they killed and prepared on the shores they ravaged, slaves, and other property.¹⁶ It is not surprising that while this spirit prevailed, every country abounded in deserts.

So reputable was the pursuit, that parents were even anxious to compel their children into the dangerous and malevolent occupation. It is asserted in an Icelandic Saga, that parents would not suffer the wealth they had gained by

who had been his foster-father, and had been often in warlike expeditions, the commander of the forces, atque Olafi curatorem. Saga, af. Olafi Helga, c. 2. p. 3.

¹⁴ The northern writers attest the *glory* which accompanied piracy. See Bartholin, 437. Verelius in Hervarar Saga, 47. Wormius, Mon. Dan. 269. Bartholin quotes the Vatzdæla, which says, Mos erat magnorum virorum regum vel comitum, æqualium nostrorum, ut piraticæ incumberent, opes ac gloriam sibi acquirentes, p. 438.

¹⁵ Stephanus in Sax. p. 69.

¹⁶ Thus Eystein, king of Upsal, pirated in Vaurnia prædas ibi agit vestes, alias que res pretiosas nec non colonorum utensilia rapiens, pecoraque in littore mactans, quo facto domum reversi sunt. Snorre, Yngling. Saga, c. 51. p. 58. So Adils plundered in Saxland, and got many captives. Ibid. c. 32. p. 40.

it to be inherited by their offspring. It is mentioned to have been their practice to command their gold, silver, and other property to be buried with them, that their offspring might be driven by necessity to engage in the conflicts, and to participate the glory of maritime ¹⁷ piracy. Inherited property was despised. That affluence only was esteemed which danger had ¹⁸ endeared. It was therefore well said of the Northmen by one of their contemporaries, that they sought their food by their sails, and *inhabited* the sea.¹⁹

EVEN the regular land-kings addicted themselves to piracy.²⁰ It was the general amusement of their summer months: hence almost every king commemorated by Snorre is displayed as assaulting other provinces, or as suffering invasions in his own.²¹ With strange infatuation, the population of the day welcomed the successful vikingr with the loudest acclamations; although, from the prevalence of the practice, domestic misery became the general lot. The victors of one day were the victims in the next; and he who was consigning without pity the women and children of other families to the

¹⁷ Vatzdæla ap. Barth. 438.

¹⁸ Ibid.

¹⁹ Nigellus, who lived about 826, has left a poem on the baptism of Harald, in which he says,

“ Ipse quidem populus late pernotus habetur,

Lintre dapes quærit, incolitatque mare.” 1 Langb. 400.

²⁰ Verel. in Got. et Rol. p. 75.

²¹ Yngl. c. 26. p. 31, 32. 40. Hence Snorre marks the autumn as the season of their return.

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grave or to famine, must have often found on his return but the ashes of his paternal habitation, and the corpses of those he loved.

THE name by which the pirates were at first distinguished was *Vikingr*, which perhaps originally meant kings of the bays.²² It was in bays that they ambushed, to dart upon the passing voyager. The recesses of the shores afforded them a station of safety as to the perils of the ocean, and of advantage as to their pursuit. Our bolder navigation, which selects in preference the middle of the ocean, was then unusual. The ancient merchants coasted wherever they could, and therefore naturally frequented bays in the progress of their voyage. In hopes of prey, the bays were also full of pirates, ever ready to dart upon their object.²³

THESE fierce bands of robbers appear to have been kept in amity with each other by studied equality. It was a law, that the drinking vessel should pass round the whole crew, as they sat, with undistinguished regularity.²⁴ Their method of fighting was the offspring of their fearless

²² Wormius says, *viig* means a bay. *Mon. Dan.* 269.; and Bartholin favours the derivation, 446.

²³ Wormius, 269. And see the dissertation annexed to the *Gunnlaugi Saga*, 303.

²⁴ Snorre, *Yngl. Saga*, c. 41. p. 50. This custom is stated to have prevailed among the predatory Britons; “*circa modium cerevisiæ ordinatim in modum circuli, illud circumdando discubuerunt.*” *Vita Cadoci*, MSS. Cotton Library, Vesp. A. 14.

courage; they lashed their ships together, and from the prows rushed to mutual battle.²⁵

CHAP.
II.

THE ferocity and useless cruelty of this race of beings almost transcend belief. The piracy of the vikings, who were also called ²⁶hernadi, was an exhibition of every species of barbarity. Besides the savage food of raw flesh and ²⁷blood, which, however, the Greenlanders of our times are stated to have used, as also the ²⁸Abyssinians, to tear the infant from the mother's breast, and to toss it on their lances from one to ²⁹another,

²⁵ Snorre, Haralld's Saga, c. 11. p. 85.

²⁶ These words were at first promiscuously used. The *Brandkrossa thetti*, and the *Svarfdalensium historia*, cited by the editors of the *Gunnlaugi Saga*, p. 305., evince that they had some difference of meaning, but I do not think we understand the distinction. They who are curious may read the dissertation above quoted, p. 305.

²⁷ See the *Saga Gothrici et Rolfi*, and also the *Helgaquida* of *Sæmund*, in *Barthol.* 456. One of the laws of *Hialmar* mentioned in the *Orvar Oddz Sagu*, was, *ne crudam carnem comederent*. *Ibid.*

²⁸ The Greenlanders eat raw flesh, and drink the reindeer's hot blood. 2 *Crantz*, 28. See *Bruce's life*, p. cvii. 2d edition.

²⁹ This is stated by the English annalists, as *Osborn*, in his *life of Elphegus*, 2 *Langb.* p. 444. *Matt. Westm.* p. 388, and *Henry of Huntingdon*, lib. v. p. 347. After citing these, *Bartholin* records from the *Landnamâ*, the name of the man who abolished the horrid custom. The *Landnamâ* says, "*Olverus Barnakall celebris incola Norvegiæ, validus fuit pirata, ille infantes ab unius hastæ mucrone in aliam projici, passus non est, quod piratis tunc familiare erat; ideoque Barnakall (infantum præsidium vel multos habens infantes) cognominatus est.*" *Bartholin*, p. 457.

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is stated in several books to have been the custom of many of these pirates, from which, though at a late period, their civilising chiefs at last alienated them. It was a consistency of character in such men to despise tears and mourning so much, that they would never weep for their deceased relations.³⁰

ONE branch of the vikingr is said to have cultivated paroxysms of brutal insanity, and they who experienced them were revered. These were the Berserkir³¹, whom many authors describe. These men, when a conflict impended, or a great undertaking was to be commenced, abandoned all rationality upon system; they studied to resemble wolves or maddening dogs; they bit their shields; they howled like tremendous beasts³²; they threw off covering;

³⁰ Adam Brem. states this fact of the Danes, p. 64.

³¹ The berserkir were at first lionoured. The *Hervarar Saga* applies the name to the sons of Arngrim as a matter of reputation. *Omnes magni berserkir fuere*, p. 15. Snorre, in mentioning one who fought with Harald Harfragre, calls him a berserkr mikill, a mighty berserkir. *Haralld's Saga*, c. 19. p. 94. The scald Hornklofi says, *fremuere berserki, bellum eis erat circa præcordia*, p. 95. In another place Snorre says, Haralld filled his ship with his attendants and berserkir; he says the station of the berserkir was near the prow, *ibid.* p. 82.; he mentions them also, 69. It was in allusion to their ferocity, that the Harbarz lioth of Sæmund applies the name berserkir to signify giants. *Edda Sæmundar*, p. 107.

³² *Hervar. Saga*, p. 35. Saxo describes the berserkir fury minutely twice in his seventh book, p. 123, 124. Torfæus also, in *Hrolfi kraka*, p. 49. mentions them.

they excited themselves to a strength which has been compared to that of bears, and then rushed to every crime and horror which the most frantic enthusiasm could perpetrate.³³ This fury was an artifice of battle like the Indian war-whoop. Its object was to intimidate the enemy. It is attested that the unnatural excitation was, as might be expected, always followed by a complete debility.³⁴ It was originally practised by Odin.³⁵ They who used it, often joined in companies.³⁶ The furor Berserkicus, as mind and morals improved, was at length felt to be horrible. It changed from a distinction to a reproach³⁷, and was prohibited by penal³⁸ laws. The name at last became execrable.

WHEN we consider the calamities, which the

³³ Annotatio de Berserkir added to Kristni Saga, p. 142. See the Eyrbyggia Saga, *ibid.* p. 143. So the Egills Saga, *ap.* Bartholin, p. 346.

³⁴ Herverar Saga, p. 27. So the Egills Saga. Bartholin, p. 346.

³⁵ Snorre, Ynglinga, c. vi. p. 11. In the Havamal of Sæmund, Odin boasts of it as a magical trick. See the ode in Barthol. 347.

³⁶ So they appear in the Herverar Saga.

³⁷ Thus the Vatzdæla. Thorus furore Berserkico nonnunquam corripiebatur, quod in tali viro probrum ducebatur, neque enim illud ipsi gloriosum erat. Barthol. 345. This man is made to say of himself, that it disgraced him, and he asks advice how to overcome it. *Ibid.* 346.

³⁸ The code of Icelandic law says, "furore berserkico si quis grassetur, relegatione puniatur." Ann. Kristni Saga, p. 142. So the Grettis Saga mentions of Eric the earl of Norway, omnes Berserkos Norvegia exulare jussit, *ibid.* 142.

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course of nature every where mixes with the happiness of man, we should, from theory, expect a general union of sentiment and wisdom to mitigate the evils which none can avoid. Experience however shows our species to have been engaged at all times, in exasperating every natural affliction, by the addition of those which human agency can create. Mankind appear from history to have been always attacking each other, without the provocation of personal injury. If civilisation, science, and Christianity have not allayed the spirit of political ambition, nor subdued the love of warlike glory, we cannot be surprised that the untaught Northmen delighted in the depredations to which they were educated, from which they derived honour and fame, and by which they subsisted. Pity and benevolence are the children of our disciplined reason and augmented felicity. They are little known to our species in those ages, when general misery licenses and produces the most tyrannical selfishness. Hence the berserkir, the vikingr, or the sea-king, felt no remorse at the sight of human wretchedness. Familiar with misery from their infancy, taught to value peaceful society but as a rich harvest easier to be pillaged, knowing no glory but from the destruction of their fellow-creatures, all their habits, all their feelings, all their reasonings were ferocious; they sailed from country to country, to desolate its agriculture, and not merely to plunder, but to murder or

enslave its inhabitants. Thus they landed in Gothia. The natives endeavoured to escape. The invaders pursued with the flame and sword.³⁹ Thus in Sweden, part of the inhabitants they massacre, and part they make captive; but the fields were ravaged far and wide with fire.⁴⁰ The same miseries proclaimed their triumphs in Wendila. The flame and sword were unsparing assailants, and villages were converted into uninhabited deserts.⁴¹ Thus at Paris, they impaled 111 of their captives, crucified many others on houses and trees, and slew numbers in the villages and fields.⁴² In war they seemed to have reckoned cruelty a circumstance of triumph; for the sea-king and the vikingr even hung the chiefs of their own order on their defeat.⁴³ And yet from the descendants of these men some of the noblest people in Europe have originated.

³⁹ Snorre, *Ynglinga Saga*, c. xxi. p. 24.

⁴⁰ Snorre, c. xxxi. p. 39.

⁴¹ *Ibid.*

⁴² Du Chesne, *Hist. Francorum Script.* vol. ii. p. 655. The annals which he edited abound with such incidents.

⁴³ There are many instances of this in Snorre, p. 31. 33. 44, &c. also in the *Hervarar Saga*, and others.

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Comparison between the Histories of SAXO-GRAMMATICUS and SNORRE.—The first Aggression of the Northmen on the ANGLO-SAXONS.—And the Rise, Actions, and Death of RAGNAR LODBROG.

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SUCH was the dismal state of society in the North. For a long time the miseries of this system were limited to the Baltic. After the colonisation of England had freed the Germanic and British ocean from Saxon piracy, Europe was blessed with almost three centuries of tranquillity. One Danish rover is stated to have wandered to the Maese¹ in the beginning of the sixth century; but the enterprise was unfortunate. Other Danes are mentioned as acting with the Saxons against the Franks. But after this century², we hear no more of Danes for above two hundred years.

¹ Gregory of Tours, who lived in 573, the oldest author extant who mentions the Danes, narrates this expedition, lib. iii. c. 3. p. 53. Corpus Franc. Hist. ed. Hanov. 1613.

² Venantius Fortunatus, who lived 565, mentions them as defeated by the kings of the Franks, lib. viii. c. 1. p. 822. and his lines to the Dux Lupus (lib. vi.) imply that the Danes and Saxons had invaded the country near Bourdeaux. This was probably some ebullition of the Anglo-Saxon expeditions against Britain.

BUT some of the historians of the North pretend that the Danes visited England and Europe in a much earlier period. Are these entitled to our belief?

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SAXO-GRAMMATICUS, who died 1204³, has left us a history which has delighted both taste and learning⁴, by its elegance and vigour; and which, considering his age and country, is surprising for its power of composition. He conducts the Danes into Britain long before the Christian æra. According to his narration, Frotho the first, his ninth king of Denmark⁵, Amleth, whose memory our Shakespeare has⁶ preserved, Fridlevus, the twenty-third king of Saxo⁷, and

³ Stephan. prolog. p. 22.

⁴ Erasmus has honoured Saxo with a panegyric which every historian must covet; "qui suæ gentis historiam splendide magnificeque contexit. Probo vividum et ardens ingenium, orationem nusquam remissam aut dormitantem; tam miram verborum copiam, sententias crebras, et figurarum admirabilem varietatem, ut satis admirari nequeam, unde illa ætate, homini dano, tanta vis eloquendi suppetiverit." Dial. Ciceron. ap. Stephan. p. 33. And yet a more correct taste would suggest that his work is rather an oration than a history. Though some parts are happy, it is in general either tumid and exaggerated, or losing, or clouding, the specific fact in declamatory generalities. It wants that exact taste for truth, as well as for patient comparison of antiquarian documents, which the history of such a period peculiarly required.

⁵ Hist. Dan. lib. ii. p. 25.

⁶ Hist. Dan. lib. iii. p. 56, 57. The speech of Amleth to the people, after destroying Fengo, is an exertion of eloquence very creditable to the genius of Saxo, p. 54, 55.

⁷ Hist. Dan. 67.

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Frotho, the next sovereign⁸, fought, and with one exception obtained splendid victories in Britain, previous to the appearance of the Christian legislator. Twelve reigns afterwards, he states that Harald Hyldetand invaded England, and conquered the king of Northumbria.⁹

SOME documents for his history Saxo may have derived from poems of the ancient scalds, from inscriptions on stones and rocks, from an inspection (yet how imperfect!) of the Icelandic authors, and from the narrations of his¹⁰ friend. We may even grant to him, that such men as he enumerates, such actions as he so eloquently describes, and such poems as he so diffusely translates¹¹, once appeared; but the chronology and succession into which he arranges them are unquestionably false. The boasted fountains of the history of the ancient Scandinavians¹², their

⁸ Hist. Dan. 95. Saxo places the birth of Christ immediately after. Ibid.

⁹ Hist. Dan. 137.

¹⁰ Saxo mentions these authorities in his preface, p. 2. and the curious will be pleased to read Stephanius's notes upon it.

¹¹ We have a striking proof how much Saxo has amplified the barren songs of the scalds, and therefore how little to be relied on for precision in his poetical and elegant dialogue between Hialto and his friend Biarco, whom he roused to the defence of his endangered king. Forgetful of the emergency, Saxo prolongs it to six folio pages. Stephanius has cited part of the concise and energetic original, p. 82. which discovers the historian's exuberance.

¹² Torfæus mentions these in the prolegomena to his History of Norway, and in his Series Regum Dan. 50—53. They are also remarked by Bartholin, lib. i. c. 9.

memorial stones, and funereal runæ¹³, the inscribed rings of their shields, the woven figures of their tapestry, their storied walls, their lettered seats and beds, their narrative wood, their recollected poetry, and their inherited traditions, may have given to history the names of many warriors, and have transmitted to posterity the fame of many battles, but no dates accompanied the memorials; even the geography of the incidents was very rarely noted. Hence, however numerous may have been the preserved memoranda, their arrangement and appropriation were left to the mercy of literary fancy or of national conceit.

SAXO unfortunately emulated the fame of Livy, instead of becoming the Pausanias of Scandinavia; and instead of patiently compiling and recording his materials in the humble style or form in which he found them, which would have been an invaluable present to us, has shaped them into a most confused, unwarranted, and fabulous chronology. The whole of his first eight books, all his history anteceding Ragnar Lodbrog, can as little claim the attention of the historian, as the British history of Jeffry, or the Swedish history of Johannes Magnus. It is indeed superfluous, if we recollect the Roman

¹³ Wormius has given us the inscriptions found in Denmark in his *Monumenta Danica*; and Peringskiöld copies many out of Sweden in his *Monumenta Ullerakarensia*, 321—349., and in his *Monumentum Sveo-Goth*, 177—306. See also Verelius's *manuductio*, and others.

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history, to argue against a work which pretends to give to Denmark a throned existence, a regular government, and a tissue of orderly and splendid history for twenty-four royal accessions before the birth of Christ. Saxo, on whose history many others were formerly built, refers to the Icelandic writers¹⁴; but this only increases our depreciation of his narratives, for they are at irreconcilable variance with all his history before the ninth century.¹⁵

THE Icelandic writers, Torfæus, their able champion, divides into four kinds: the allegorical, the fabulous, the mixed, and the authentic.¹⁶

OF the authentic, the only one extant who attempts a history much earlier¹⁷ than the times

¹⁴ Though he applauds them in his preface, and even says, “*quorum thesaurus historicarum rerum pignoribus re- fertos curiosius consulens, haud parvam præsentis operis partem ex eorum relationis imitatione contexui; nec arbitros habere contempsi, quos tanta vetustatis peritia callere cog- novi;*” notwithstanding this, it may be fairly doubted if he knew much of them.

¹⁵ Torfæus says justly of Saxo, that he has placed some kings before Christ, who flourished long after him; that he has made others kings of Denmark, who belonged to other regions, and has raised some to the supreme throne of Den- mark, who were but tributary *reguli*. *Series Regum Dan.* p. 219.

¹⁶ See his discriminated catalogue of the Icelandic writings in his *Series Regum Dan.* p. 3—12.

¹⁷ There are Icelandic writers extant more ancient than Snorre, as Ara Frode, born 1068; his contemporary, Semund, the author of the ancient Edda; Eiric, who about 1161 wrote

of Harald Harfragre, is Snorre, the son of Sturla, who has given us as faithful a compilation of northern history as his means and age permitted. Beginning with Odin, the common ancestor of the Scandinavian, Danish, and Saxon nations, as Hercules was of the Grecian royal dynasties, he first gives the history of the Ynglingi kings at Upsal, and the life of Halfdan Svarte, the father of Harald. He then continues the history of Norway to his own time.

SNORRE incidentally mentions the Danish kings of Lethra¹⁸, and he clashes irreconcilably with Saxo, always in the chronology and successions, and sometimes in the incidents.¹⁹ As far as the internal characters of authenticity can decide the competition between him and Saxo, he has every superiority, and no rational antiquary will now dispute it. His narratives, though sprinkled with a few fables²⁰, are very short, consistent, and unadorned; they display the genuine costume of the time: the quotations

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on the sons of Harald Gillius; Charles, an abbot, in 1169., whose history of king Swerrer remains; and Oddus, author of the Saga of Olave Tryggvason; but these are on later subjects. Torfæus, *prolegomena Hist. Norv.*

¹⁸ P. 24. 34. 37. 39. 41. 43. 54. 69, 70: 77.

¹⁹ To give only one instance; Saxo places Helghi and his son Rolf Krake eleven reigns before Christ. Snorre says, Rolf fell in the reign of Eystein, p. 43., the third king before Ingialld, who lived in the seventh century of the Christian era.

²⁰ As in p. 9, 10. 24. and 34.

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from the scalds are given literally, no chronology is marked, and his arrangement does not carry up his actors to any extravagant antiquity.²¹ It is in his work, if in any of the northern ancient documents, we shall find some true information of the earliest attacks of the Northmen on Britain.

THE first king whom Snorre mentions to have had dominion in England, is Ivar Vidfadme, a king of Scania, who conquered Upsal. His words are "Ivar Vidfadme subjected to him all Sweden, all Denmark, great part of Saxony,

²¹ He gives thirty-two reigns between Odin and Harald Harfragre. Almost all the kings perished violently; therefore the average of their reigns cannot exceed twenty years. This computation would place Odin about 220 years after Christ. Nothing can show more strongly what little support the songs of the scalds can give to the remote periods of northern antiquity, than the fact that the scald Thiodolfr, on whom Snorre bases his history before Harald Harfragre, and whom he therefore quotes twenty-six times, lived in the days of Harald, or about the year 900. We find him, p. 115., singing in the last days of Harald, who died 936. Excepting Brage Gamle, who is once quoted on Odin, p. 9., and Eywindr, who lived after Thiodolfr, and who is adduced twice, p. 13. 31., no other scald is referred to. The poems of the scalds may be good authority for incidents near their own times, but can be only deemed mere popular traditions as to the earlier history of a barbarous people. Snorre's other authorities are genealogies and individual narratives. See his preface. But the Icelandic genealogies are often contradictory. Their most veracious writers are rather the faithful recorders of traditions, usually true in substance, but as usually inaccurate, than the selecting or critical compilers of authentic history.

all Austurrikia, and the fifth part of ²² England. But no English chronicler notices such a person or such an event. Our ancient annalists expressly mark the year 787 as the date of the first aggressions of the Northmen on ²³ England, which is subsequent to the reign of Ivar. If, therefore, he conquered or plundered any where in Britain, it must have been in Scotland, of whose early history we have no correct information ²⁴, and whose coasts were most likely to be the first attacked.

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BUT from the state and habits of the natives of Scandinavia and the Baltic, which have been described, we might have expected that the result would have been, that mutual destruction and desolation, which would in time have con-

²² Snorre Yngl. Saga, c. xlv. p. 54. This part of England the Herverar Saga marks to be Northumbria; and gives the same dominion to his grandson Haralld Hylдетand, c. xix. p. 223.

²³ Sax. Chron. 64.; Fl. Wig. 280.; Ethelw. 839.; Malm. 16.; Hunt. 343.; Matt. West. 282., and several others. The annals of Ulster do not mention their attacks on Ireland earlier; but from this period incessantly.

²⁴ The northern literati place Ivar at the end of the sixth century. If this were just chronology, he might have been one of the adventurers that came among the Angles into Northumbria or Mercia.

As the Angles and Jutes came from the Danish provinces of Sleswick and Jutland, their ancient memorials might have, not unfairly, pretended to conquests in Britain. But from a critical comparison of some of the most authentic of the ancient Icelandic authorities, I am satisfied that Ivar Vidfadne has been placed above a century too early.

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sumed themselves and unpeopled the north. Europe had then no reason to apprehend any mischief from such men, because Charlemagne had just raised a formidable Frankish empire, Egbert had consolidated the Anglo-Saxon power, and it was the interest of the new monarchies that were absorbing their own little sovereignties to extinguish such a restless race. But such are the unexpected directions which the course of human agency frequently takes, that at this very period those dreadful hurricanes of war and desolation began to arise in the north, which afflicted all the maritime regions of Europe with a succession of calamities for above a century. As it exhibits a curious picture of human nature, in its more savage energies, and is immediately connected with the romantic, and yet authentic, history of one man, whose transactions have not before been introduced into our annals, Ragnar Lodbrog, it is important to take an enlarged but calm review of the causes that produced this direction, and gave such an effect to his peculiar position and singular propensities.

IN every country whose inhabitants have passed from their nomadic or wandering condition into a settled state, the cultivated lands become gradually the property of a portion only of the community. Their first occupiers or partitioners transmit them to their descendants; while the rest of society, as it multiplies, must,

until commerce and the arts open new sources of employment and acquisitions, either serve the proprietary body as vassals and retainers, more or less dignified by office, title, or birth; or as labourers more or less servile; or they must float loosely in life without an adequate provision for their desires or necessities. This unprovided class soon arises as population increases, and augments with its increase. When the subdivisions of trade and manufactures occur, large portions of the unprovided are absorbed by them; but still many remain, in every age and country, from the rudest to the most civilised, who form a body of men disposed to be restless, migratory, enterprising, and ready for every new adventure, or impression, which the flowing accidents of time, or the rise of bold and active original characters can present to them. This class pursues the progress of society in all its stages, feeds or occasions all its wars, seditions, colonies, and migrations, and has repeatedly shaken the happiness of the more civilised nations.

It seems not to be the want of actual food on the earth which creates this unprovided body; for there is not sufficient evidence that nature has, in any period, produced less food than the existing population needed. The more population tends to press upon the quantity of subsistence in any country, the more it also tends to increase it. As the pressure begins,

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the activity and ingenuity of mankind are roused to provide for it. The powers of nature have hitherto answered to their call, and rewarded their exertions with the requisite supply. Hence increased productibility has always accompanied increased population, and still attends it: nor have we yet approached, nor probably shall we ever reach the period when the fertility of the earth and the ingenuity of man shall fail to be equal to the subsistence that is needed. New means have always hitherto unfolded to meet new exigencies. In the case of the Northmen, it is remarkable that although every act of plunder was also an act of ravage, and more of the necessaries and conveniences of life were destroyed by their depredations than were either carried off or consumed; yet the numbers of both the plunderers and plundered increased till they formed well-peopled and prosperous communities.

THIS unprovided class arises from the impossibility of having any system of property without it. These systems have increased population, civilisation, general prosperity, and individual comfort; but they are always multiplying the number of those, who either form no part of the proprietary body, or whose individual portions are inferior to the demands of their habits, their passions, or their necessities. To equalise all property, would not destroy the evil, unless wisdom and virtue could be made equally com-

mon. Society at this moment presents us, in every part of Europe, with a large unprovided population. A similar class existed, though under different habits, in the ninth century, all round the Baltic and North Sea; and it was from this body of men that the sea-kings and vikingr principally emerged.

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THIS unprovided population consisted and consists, not of the poor only, but also of many from the wealthier classes of every state. In every age, some portions of the families of all the rich and great have been as unable to continue the state and enjoyment of their relations, and of their own earlier days, as the meaner conditions of life to attain them. The one become the leaders of the other, and both alike desire adventures and employments, by which they can attain the property, the luxuries, or the distinctions which they covet.

IN the fifth and sixth centuries, the Anglo-Saxons of this class poured themselves on Britain, and the numerous petty sovereignties in Norway, Sweden, and the Danish isles, seem to have arisen from the same source. Adventurers, seeking their fortune, appear to have landed from time to time on various parts of the uninhabited regions and islands of Scandinavia, with little bands of inferior companies; and as their posterity multiplied, levelled the forests, drained the marshes, and cultivated the earth: then humble kingdoms, jarlls, and nobility appeared.

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But the same result, in time, pursued them here which had driven them hither. All the lands they could subject to human culture became appropriated; claims of individual property became fastened on the parts which were left untilled; and unprovided population increased in each, who had to look elsewhere for the rank and comforts which the rest inherited.

AT the close of the eighth and beginning of the ninth century, the unprovided population of the north was in full activity among their little kingdoms and jarldoms in every part of the Baltic. The acquisition of property by violence was their object, the sea their road to it, the sword their instrument, and all the settled habitations which they could reach, master, or surprise, were the theatres of their enterprise. The invention of the term sea-king satisfied the ambition of their highest-born chieftains; and the spoil obtained by their depredations, and the energies necessary to be exerted to make the expeditions successful, gratified their associates.

BUT the vicinity of their domestic homes for a long time circumscribed the sphere of their exertions. There is not sufficient evidence that they had advanced beyond the Baltic, till that individual to whom we have already alluded, Ragnar Lodbrog, had been expelled by Harald from his insular kingdom; and becoming himself a sea-king, led his fleet of depredators suc-

cessively to Friesland, Flanders, the British islands, and to France. CHAP.
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WE do not know enough of the incidents of his youth to delineate the gradual formation of Ragnar's peculiar character; but we can trace some of the circumstances that favoured the new habit which he either began or the most powerfully promoted. His father, Sigurd, was a Norwegian, who had married the Danish princess, daughter of the king of the chief Danish island.²⁶ His spirit of adventure had therefore an encouraging example in his father's elevation. But that father had been opposed by the king of Jutland in a battle in which nearly eleven thousand men and both the chieftains perished.²⁷ On this fatal result the contending partisans compromised their quarrel by raising the sons of their several leaders to their fathers' thrones. Ragnar was made king of the isles, and Harald of the Danish territory in Jutland. But this arrangement was too pacific to last long in such a turbulent age; and the friends of Harald were found to be numerous enough to enable him to expel Ragnar from his sea-girt kingdom. This warrior, in all the pride and activity of his youth, was driven with all his followers to seek that provision and distinction on the ocean, and by their swords, which

²⁶ See Snorre states.

²⁷ Ad. Brem. Alb. Stad. and Aimonius.

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IF Ragnar had been a common-minded man he would have been but a common plunderer, and have soon fallen in the usual violent deaths of battle or punishment which most pirates at last undergo. But Denmark was, from its contiguity to the Frankish kingdom and to the improving continental Saxons, the most civilised country of the barbaric north. Its monarchy was also beginning to arise. Its small kingdoms having been subdued or absorbed into two, and these, from their increasing power and dignity, being more cultivated than formerly, Ragnar Lodbrog, before he became a sea-king, had obtained the greatest advantages of education which the Baltic at that time afforded. Son of an enterprising Norwegian and of a Danish princess, he thus united in himself all the improvements which Norway and Denmark could then confer. His great natural talents thus assisted, he entered upon his new profession with a distinction which led to great exploits. The actual enjoyment of a previous kingdom fixed large objects of ambition in his mind; gave him at his outset an impressive and dignified character, and connected him with more numerous and powerful friends and followers than any ordinary vikingr could influence or command. The insular nature of the territory over which he had reigned favoured his enterprises, and he soon became

formidable enough to compel his land-rival to implore the succours of the Frankish empire. CHAP.
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BUT this event became only another impulse to the new direction which Ragnar was insensibly giving to all the population about him. That the Franks should presume to interfere in behalf of his enemy, was an affront that fixed in his heart an indignant resolution to avenge himself on them. This vindictive feeling led him out of the Baltic to France itself; and though he could not dethrone his competitor at home, he had followers enough to penetrate to the walls of Paris, and to afflict France, in its then quarrelling state, with the most calamitous depredations. The personal fame which he gained by these distant expeditions was an impressive appeal to the vanity and emulation of all the northern youth; and his booty tempted the most selfish to join his fleets or to imitate his adventures.

ABOUT the same period a king of Norway, Harald Harfagre, unintentionally contributed to give the unprovided population and ambitious youth of that country the same external direction and a new impulse to pursue it. He also began the system of subduing in Norway all its petty sovereignties, and of extirpating piracy within his dominions. Nothing then remained in Norway for those who had not lands or property, but to seek them elsewhere. Bands of adventurers now arose from hence, who were

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resolved to obtain subsistence, plunder, fame, or settlement in other countries by their swords. And one of these, under the command of Hrolfr or Rollo, after harassing France with desolation, extorted from its sovereign the province of Normandy.

FROM the operation of these circumstances as they successively occurred, distant expeditions, for temporary plunder, vindictive retaliations, or military colonisation, became from the end of the eighth century the regular habits of the active population of the north. We have mentioned that in 787 the fierce visitors first appeared in England. By the year 800, they had begun to molest the Franks²⁸; and before the death of Charlemagne, which occurred in 814, they had even reached the Mediterranean.

HE was at dinner in the city of Narbonne when their ships came in sight. By the construction of the vessels and the agility of their mariners, he knew they were not merchants. He rose from the table and went to the eastern window of the mansion to contemplate them. His tears fell as he gazed: "I fear not," he exclaimed, "that they can injure me; but I weep that they should dare, in my life-time, to approach my coasts. I foresee the misery they will bring on my descendants."²⁹

²⁸ So the ancient Saxon Latin versifier states. Hist. Franc. Du Chesne, ii. p. 164.

²⁹ The Monk of St. Gall has transmitted to us this incident in his work, de Reb. Car. Magn. ii. p. 130.

To protect his empire from their assaults, he caused ships to be built against them on the rivers which, from Gaul, and Germany disembogue their waters into the Northern³⁰ Ocean. In every harbour, and at the mouth of every stream which it was possible for them to ascend, he established stations and garrisons to preserve the endangered country. Kept off by his active genius, they seldom molested the peace of his dominions.

His son Louis attempted the policy of converting the north; he invited all such vikings as approached his coast to accept of the sacred baptism. As he was careful that the initiated should leave his court laden with presents, it is not surprising that they came in haste to be baptised. A surly exclamation of a converted chieftain revealed the sincerity of the new Christians and the utility of the project. At one paschal solemnity, the pretended penitents were so numerous, that white dresses could not be procured for all the pagans; some linen of the clergy was cut up and sewed together, and a garment thus made was given to a northern leader. The son of Odin frowned with disdain. "This is the *twentieth* time that I have come to be washed, and I have hitherto always re-

³⁰ Eginhard p. 8. Meyer, in his Annals of Flanders, mentions that the emperor stayed some time at Ghent, on account of the ships which he had ordered to be built there against the Northmen.

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ceived the best white dresses; this vile apparel is fit only for a herdsman; if I can have no better garment, I disclaim your Christianity.”³¹

THE civil wars of the children of Louis favoured the subsequent aggressions of the vikings.³² The Frankish princes sent an embassy, in 847, to the king of the Northmen, to desire peace, and to announce their³³ union. But such an embassy was as useless as it would have been to have petitioned any single wind not to blow. Every habitable district was a nursery of pirates; and to obtain the forbearance of one leader, was to ensure a rich harvest for the rest. This effect seems to have been experienced; for in this same year we read of their attacks on Brittany, Aquitain, and Bourdeaux, as well as on Dorestadt and the Batavian island. In Aquitain they ravaged successfully; “because,” says Ademar, “the chiefs were destroying each other in their warfare, and because the people had no fleet to protect their coasts.” The list of districts which they afflicted is very copious.³⁴ They also attacked Spain near Cadiz, fought three battles with the Moors, and, when Abderrahman provided a fleet to oppose them, they left the country, full of plunder.³⁵

³¹ Sax. Gall. p. 134.

³² See Chron. Fontanell. and the Ann. Bertinin. and Frag. Hist. Brit. in Bouquet's Recueil, v. 7.

³³ Miroi ap. Deplom. vol. i. p. 23.

³⁴ See 1 Langb. 534.

³⁵ Mariana.

OF all the sea-kings and vikingr who roamed the ocean in the ninth century, the man whose life and death had the most disastrous effects on England was Ragnar Lodbrog, whose quida or death-song, has been long venerated for its antiquity, and celebrated for its genius.³⁶ The learned of the North have usually quoted it as his own composition³⁷, although one would ascribe it to his wife, who was also a famous scald or poetess.³⁸ It is one of the most ancient pieces of northern literature; expresses exactly the manners of those times; and, compared with the other histories and traditions that have been preserved concerning him, will be found to contain the most simple, probable, and consistent incidents. As his death, the approach of which it ends with intimating, was the cause of that disastrous invasion which shook Alfred from his throne, it merits the consideration of the English reader, in those parts which concern the British islands.

RAGNAR is not mentioned by name in the Saxon annalists; because, while they com-
me-

³⁶ The most complete edition for the use of the English reader of the Lodbrokar Quida is that edited by Johnstone in 1782. But as his English translation is not a literal one, a more exact version is attempted of the passages quoted in the text.

³⁷ As Wormius, Bartholin, Stephanius, and others. It was not uncommon in the north for their kings to celebrate their own actions.

³⁸ So Torfæus intimates.

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morate the invasions of the Northmen during his life, they seldom notice the commander. But the Frankish chronicles expressly mention him in that aggression in 845, in which he even penetrated as far up the Seine as Paris. He began by ravaging the isles of the sea; thence proceeded to Rouen, and finding no effective resistance, he left his ships, and his warriors spread over the country. Invited onward by the general consternation, they advanced to Paris on Easter-Eve. The next day they entered the city, and found it deserted by its inhabitants. They destroyed the monastery of St. Germain's, when a present from the king of seven thousand pounds induced them to desist from their ravages.³⁹ The attacks of his son Biorn, in 843, are also recorded.⁴⁰ His name of Lothbroc occurs in our chroniclers at his death; but they were ignorant of his true history, which is stated in none of our old documents, except in the ancient Anglo-Norman poem of Denis Pyramis.⁴¹ His death, as justly

³⁹ Chron. Fontanel.; 7 Bouq. p.41.; Chron. Vezel. p.271. Mirac, Racher. p.361.; and Aimonius, p. 350. Pet. Olaus, 1 Langb. 109. See also Ann. Bertin and Amm. Mirac, S. Germ.

⁴⁰ Frag. Hist. Brit. 7 Bouq. p. 46. The chronicles which mention Biorn's expeditions are very numerous. See Pontop. Gest. Dan.

⁴¹ It is so extraordinary to find this in an Anglo-Norman rhimer's work, that I quote the passage in the original, as it has never been observed or printed before. He is here called Lothbroc, and his three sons, Yngar, Hulbe, and Berin, for Inguar, Ubba, and Beorn.

stated in the Icelandic remains, happened in Northumbria. In opposition to his wife Aslauga's counsel he built two ships of a size which the North had never beheld before; he filled them with soldiers, and sailed along the Scottish coast to England, which he selected to be the theatre of his exertions.⁴² The triumphs of these royal pirates had been obtained by the celerity of their retreats, as well as the vigour of their attacks. It was not their competency to overcome the force which any country could embody against them, that made them so successful; but their ability in their light ships of attacking before it could be collected, or of

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Cil Lothebroc e ses treis fiz
 Furent de tute gent haiz;
 Kar uthlages furent en mer;
 Unques ne fuierent de rober.
 Tuz jurs vesquirent de rapine;
 Tere ne cuntree veisine
 N'est pres d'els ou il a larun,
 N'ensent feit envasiun.
 De ceo furent si enrichez,
 Amuntez et amanantez.
 Qu'il aveient grant annee
 De gent; e mult grant assemble:
 Qu'il aveient en lur companye
 Kant erronent oth lur navye.
 Destrut en aveient meint pais;
 Meint poeple destrut et occis:
 Nule contree lez la mer
 Ne seput d'els ja garder.

Den. Pyr. MSS. Domit. xi. p. 12.

⁴² 2 Langb. 227. Torfæus, Hist. Norv.

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cluding it when too formidable. These spacious ships tended to deprive Ragnar of this advantage and thereby produced his fate.

Too large for the ignorant navigation of that period, these vessels were soon wrecked on the English shore. Thrown on the coast of enemies, without means of return, Ragnar had no choice but to dare his fortune, which his pride also counselled. He moved forward as soon as he got to the shore, to plunder and ravage, either disdaining to recollect that his small band would soon be confronted by superior strength, or hoping to deter any hostility by the boldness of his measures.

ELLA, at that time, was king of Deira, and with the force of his kingdom marched up to the fearless vikings; a fierce, though unequal conflict ensued. Ragnar, clothed in the garments which he had received from his beloved Aslauga, at their parting, four times pierced the ranks of Ella, but his friends fell one by one around him, and he at last was taken prisoner alive.

ELLA obeyed the impulse of barbarian resentment, and doomed his illustrious prisoner to perish with lingering pain in a dungeon, stung by venomous snakes.⁴³

⁴³ 2 Langb. 277. Saxo has been thought to place Ella in Ireland, but whoever reads the pages 176, 177, carefully, will see that he speaks of England. The Icelandic authors unanimously station him in Northumbria. This fact ascertains the

THE *Quida* celebrates the depredations of Ragnar on various countries, from the Baltic to England, and on Flanders. It presents to us a view of one of the dreadful states of society in which our species have lived. Every incident is triumphantly described with the imagery of death, and the revolting circumstances attending human slaughter, are recollected with exultation. Such were the people for whom the author composed this death-song, that, not content with equalling the pleasures of war to social festivity, and with remembering, without remorse, its destruction of youthful happiness⁴⁴; he even extols it as rivalling one of the sweetest hours of life; "Was it not like that hour when my bright bride I seated by me on the couch?"⁴⁵ What must have been the characters and the trans-

time of Ragnar's death; for Ella usurped the Northumbrian crown in 862, and perished 867; therefore between these years Ragnar must have expired. The English chroniclers acknowledge that Lodbrog was killed in England; but so imperfectly was the Northumbrian history known to them, that for the true history of Ragnar's fate, they substitute two contradictory tales. See *Matt. West.* 314—316. and *Bromton*, 802.

⁴⁴ "Delightful was the work at Sky, as when the damsels bring the wine." *St.* 18. "Pleasant was it at Ila's Straits, as when the wine-bearing Nioruns hand the warm streams."

"In the morning I saw struck down
The fair-hair'd woer of the maiden,
And him whose converse was so sweet to the widow."

St. 19.

⁴⁵ Stanza 13, and see Stanza 24.

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actions of that nation in which the converse and sympathy of love were felt to be *but* as charming as a battle!

WE may concede to the historical traditions of the North, and to the chroniclers of other nations, that Ragnar Lodbrog depredated with success on various parts of Europe, on the British islands, on Sweden, Norway, and the coasts round the Baltic.⁴⁶ We may admit that he was one of those men whose lives become models to their contemporaries, and that his activity and genius were fitted to give celebrity to bloodshed, and dignity to plunder. "Fifty and one times," as his *Quida* asserts, "his messenger, the spear, may have announced the distant enterprise." But it would be an extravagant aggrandisement of his fame, to attribute to him all the horrors which Northern piracy poured upon Europe in the first part of the ninth century. It is indeed a coincidence with his life, that till he lived, few and rare were the aggressions of the sea-king and the vikingr, beyond the northern Hellespont.⁴⁷ But though he gave to the storm of

⁴⁶ We may refer to Saxo, l. ix. p. 169. 177. with Stephanius's notes; to the Icelandic fragment, in 2 Langb. 270. 280; to the Ragnar Saga; and to Torfæus, in his *Series Dan.* and his *Hist. Norveg.* for the northern account of the particular transactions of Ragnar. Johannes Magnus, and Loccenius, also mention his history.

⁴⁷ The Baltic is called by some the Hellespont; as by Hevelius, in the *Dedic.* to his *Selenographia*. The use of this word has, I think, sometimes misled Northern authors

depredation a new direction, yet when he had once burst beyond the precincts of the Baltic; when he had once crossed new oceans, and thrown the beam of glory round his course, we may believe that adventurers swarmed from every coast, eager to track his way. It is certain that after his life, new heroes appeared every year, and the seas were burthened with ever-succeeding fleets of such greedy and ruthless savages.

It was the lot of Ragnar to have a numerous posterity⁴⁸, and all his passions were infused into his children, whom he educated to be sea-king's like himself. But as our history is concerned with his English exploits only, we will state them from his *Quida*, in its own language, and in the succession in which they are there placed.

THE *Quida* begins with Ragnar's attempt on Gothland, by which he obtained his wife Thora. This expedition, and others in Eyrá-sound, or the Baltic; at the mouth of the Dwina; at Helsingia, in the bay of Finland; and against Herauthr, his wife's father; at Scarpey, in Norway; at Ullar Akri, near Upsal; at the Indoro Isles, in the bay of Drontheim; and on the island of Bornholm, occupy the first nine stanzas. After these exploits, the sea-king comes nearer to the

to carry some of their heroes towards the Euxine, the Helle'spont of Hómer.

⁴⁸ According to Saxo, he had ten sons by his three wives, p. 169, 170. 172. The Ragnar Saga, ap. Torfæus, 346, 347. gives their mothers differently from Saxo.

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British shores, and begins his southern ravages with an attack on Flanders. This is followed by a bold invasion of England, in which he boasts of the death of the Anglo-Saxon Walthiofr.

We hewed with our swords —
 Hundreds, I declare, lay
 Round the horses of the Island-rocks,
 At the English promontory.
 We sailed to the battle
 Six days before the hosts fell.
 We chanted the mass of the spears
 With the uprising sun.
 Destiny was with our swords:
 Walthiofr fell in the tumult.⁴⁹

CONFLICTS at Perth, and on the Orkneys, are then exultingly sung: another occurs afterwards in England.

Hard came the storm on the shield
 Till they fell prone to the earth
 On Northumbria's land.
 On that morning was there
 Any need for men to stimulate
 The sport of Hilda, where the sharp
 Lightnings bit the helmed skull?
 Was it not as when the young widow
 On my seat of pre-eminence I saluted.⁵⁰

EXPLOITS at the Hebrides; in Ireland; at another coast, where “the thorn of the sheath glided to the heart of Agnar,” his son; at the Isle of Sky; and in the bay of Ila, on the Scottish coast, are triumphantly narrated. Another

⁴⁹ Lod. Quid. St. 11. John. p. 14.

⁵⁰ St. 15. p. 18.

stanza follows, which seems to make Lindisfarne the locality of the battle :

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We had the music of swords in the morning
For our sport at Lindis-eyri
With three kingly heroes.
Many fell into the jaws of the wolf ;
The hawk plucked the flesh with the wild beasts ;
Few ought therefore to rejoice
That they came safe from the battle.
Ira's blood into the sea
Profusely fell ; into the clear wave. ⁵¹

HE next records his expedition on the British isle of Anglesey :

The swords bit the shields ;
Red with gold resounded
The steel on the clothes of Hilda.
They shall see on Aungol's Eyri,
In the ages hereafter,
How we to the appointed play
Of heroes advanced.
Red were on the distant cape
The flying dragons of the river that gave wounds. ⁵²

AFTER TWO stanzas of eulogy on battles, he begins to commemorate his disastrous change of fortunes, and avows that it was unexpected to him :

It seems to me, from experience,
That we follow the decrees of the fates.
Few escape the statutes of the natal goddesses.
Never did I believe that from Ella
The end of my life would come,
When I strewed the bloody slaughter,

⁵¹ St. 20. p. 21.

⁵² St. 21. p. 21.

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And urged my planks on the lakes.
Largely we feasted the beasts of prey
Along the bays of Scotland. ⁵³

BUT he consoles himself with his belief in his pagan mythology :

It delights me continually
That the seats of Baldor's father
I know are strewed for guests.
We shall drink ale immediately
From the large hollowed skulls.
Youths grieve not at death
In the mansions of dread Fiolner.
I come not with the words of fear
Into the hall of Vithris. ⁵⁴

HE animates his spirit as the adders sting him, with the remembrance of his children, as if he anticipated their fierce revenge for his sufferings :

Here would for me
All the sons of Aslauga, ⁵⁵

⁵³ St. 24. p. 28.

⁵⁴ St. 25. p. 28.

⁵⁵ We have a specimen of the traditions of the Norwegians concerning this lady, in Torfæus. He says that in Spangareid, an isthmus in Norway, the greatest part of her history remains uncorrupted. The people of this region relate from the accounts of their ancestors, that a golden harp came on shore in a small bay near them, in which was found a little girl. She was brought up; afterwards kept sheep; became famed for her beauty; married a Danish king, and was called Otlauga. They show a hill, called Otlauga's hill. The bay is named Gull-Siken, or golden bay; and the stream near this is called Kraaka-becker, or the rivulet of Kraaka. Torf. ser. Reg. p. 35. Kraaka was one of this lady's names.

The bright brands of Hilda awake
 If they knew but the danger
 Of our encounter.
 What a number of snakes
 Full of venom strike me !
 I gained a true mother for my children,
 That they might have brave hearts.⁵⁶

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 III.

His strength decreases as he sings : he feels advancing death, yet seems to catch a gleam of pleasure from the hopes of the vengeance which his children will inflict :

It flows to my inheritance ;
 Grim dangers surround me from the adder ;
 Vipers dwell in the palace of my heart —
 We hope that soon the staff
 Of Vithris will stand in Ella's breast.
 My sons must swell
 That their father has been thus conquered.
 Must not the valiant youths
 Forsake their repose for us.⁵⁷

THE recollection of his own exploits gives a momentary impulse of new vigour, and the number announces the ferocious activity of his sea-king life :

Fifty and one times have I
 Call'd the people to the appointed battles
 By the warning-spear-messenger.
 Little do I believe that of men
 There will be any
 King, more famous than ourself.
 When young I grasped and reddened my spear.
 The Æsir must invite us ;
 I will die without a groan.⁵⁸

⁵⁶ St. 26. p. 30.

⁵⁷ St. 27. p. 30.

⁵⁸ St. 28. p. 32.

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As the fatal instant presses on, he rouses himself to expire with those marks of exultation which it was the boast of this fierce race to exhibit :

We desire this end.
The Disir goddesses invite me home.
As if from the hall of him rejoicing in spoils,
From Odin, sent to me.
Glad shall I with the Asæ
Drink ale in my lofty seat.
The hours of my life glide away
But laughing I will die.⁵⁹

THE sovereign that arose with sufficient ability to meet and change the crisis which these new habits of the Scandinavian nations were bringing on Europe, was Alfred the Great, the son of Ethelwulph, and grandson of Egbert.

⁵⁹ St. 29. p. 32. Torfæus supposes two other Lodbrog. I am not sure that he is not dividing the same person into three parts. But it is clear that the Ragnar Lodbrog, the subject of the Quida, is the person whom Ella of Northumbria destroyed between 862 and 867, and whose children, in revenge, executed that invasion which destroyed the octarchy of England, and dethroned Alfred for a time.

CHAP. IV.

The Reign of ETHELWULPH.—Invasion of the Northmen.—Birth of ALFRED the Great.—His Travels.—ETHELWULPH's deposition.

THE death of Egbert, in 836, checked for a while the ascendancy of the West Saxon power, because his sceptre descended to an inferior hand in his son Ethelwulph. This prince, who from the failure of other issue became his successor, was then a monk. Educated in the earlier part of his life by Helmstan the bishop of Winchester, he had shared at first in his father's warlike toils. In 823, he had marched with Alstan into Kent after the defeat of Mercia, and was appointed by his father king of that country¹, but the passive timidity of his disposition alienated him from an ambitious life, and he returned to his preceptor, who recommended him to the care of Swithin, a prior of the monastery at Winchester. From Swithin the prince received not only instruction, but

CHAP.
IV.

836—856.
Ethel-
wulph's
education.

¹ There is a charter of Egbert, dated 823, in which he says of Ethelwulph, "quem regem constituimus in Cantia." Thorpe, Reg. Roff. p. 22.

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IV. } also the monastic habit, and by his first master was appointed a sub-deacon.²

THE quiet seclusion which Ethelwulph's slow capacity and meek temper coveted, was not refused to him by Egbert, because another son promised to perpetuate his lineage.³ But life is a mysterious gift, which vanishes at the will of other agencies, whose operations we cannot trace, whose power we cannot limit. The destined heir of Egbert's dignity was in the tomb before his father, and this catastrophe invested Ethelwulph with an importance which his natural character could never have obtained. He became what Egbert had been, the only existing descendant of Cerdic, the revered ancestor of the West Saxon princes. This casualty made the accession of Ethelwulph an object of popular desire; but though sovereigns had often at will descended from the throne to the cloister, it was less easy to quit the cloister for the throne. The papal dispensation was first wanted to release Ethelwulph from his sacerdotal engage-

² Rudborne Hist. Mag. Winton. lib. iii. c. 1. p. 199., published in Wharton's *Anglia Sacra*, vol. i.—Malmesbury Pontif. p. 242. Wallingf. 532. No good document authorises us to say that he was made a bishop.

³ The expressions of the chroniclers are in general mere negatives, implying that Egbert left no other heir; but the extract which Leland has translated, ex *Chronico quodam Vilodunensi Anglicis rithmis scripto*, explicitly says, *Atwulphus rex Egberti filius secundus*. *Collectanea*, vol. iii. p. 219.

ment; on its arrival he assumed the crown of Egbert.⁴

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His indolent, mild, and weak mind⁵ was not adequate to the exigencies of the time, but he enjoyed the great advantage which was capable of counteracting the ill effects of his inability, a wise and vigorous minister. Alstan, the bishop of Sherborne, had possessed the favour of Egbert, and on his death became the political and military tutor of Ethelwulph: he was powerful, warlike, and intelligent. He had the good and rare fortune to enjoy his preferments for fifty years. He endeavoured to rouse the king to those exertions which his dignity made a duty. He provided supplies for his exchequer, and he laboured to organise a military force. His wise measures, though sometimes baffled by an incompetent execution, and by the suddenness of aggressions, which no vigilance could prevent, had the general success of punishing many insults, and of preserving the country from a permanent conquest.⁶

⁴ Wallingford, 532. The name of this king has been disfigured by that variety of orthography which prevailed at this time, and often confuses history. Ethelwulphus, Ethulfus, Athulfus, Adulfus, Aithulfus, Adhelwlfus, Athelwlfus, Atwulfus.

⁵ Malmsbury's expressions are, *natura lenis et qui sub quiete degere quam multis provinciis imperitare mallet—crassioris et hebetis ingenii*, p. 37.—*mansuetoris ingenii—segnem*, p. 247.

⁶ Though Alstan had stripped his monastery of some of its advantages, our William, in his history, p. 37. and his

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NOTHING is more curious nor more interesting in history than to remark that when great political exigencies evolve, which threaten to shake the foundations of civil society, they are usually as much distinguished by the rise of sublime characters with genius and ability sufficient to check the progress of the evil, and even to convert its disasters to benevolent issues. One of these extraordinary persons was Alfred the Great, and, considered with regard to the time of his appearance, the great ends which he achieved, and the difficulties under which he formed himself, no historical character can more justly claim our attention and admiration than our venerated king.

ETHELWULPH had married Osberga, the daughter of Oslac, a man mentioned with an epithet of celebrity, and the king's cup-bearer. Oslac had sprung from the chieftain, who, in the time of Cerdic, had obtained the Isle of Wight.⁷ After three elder sons, Osberga was delivered of Alfred, at Wantage, in Berkshire.⁸ She is highly extolled for her piety and understanding; but the

Alfred's
birth.
849.

Gest. pont. 247. commemorates him with an encomium which is liberal and strongly featured.

⁷ Asser de rebus gestis Ælfredi, p. 4. ed. Ox. 1722. Oslac was alive at his grandson's birth; for he signed a charter as the ambassador of Ethelwulph, which the king of Mercia gave to Croyland in 851. Ingulf. p. 15.

⁸ Asser, p. 3. adds, that the country was called Berroc scire a berroc silva ubi buxus abundantissime nascitur.

education of Alfred must have lost the benefit of her talents, because his father married another lady before the sixth year of his childhood had expired. She is said to have given him to Swithin, the preceptor of his father, to be taught.⁹ The bishop may have nurtured or infused that habitual piety for which Alfred was remarkable; but was unquestionably unfit for the office of literary tutor, as Alfred passed his childhood without knowing how to read.

CHAP.
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849.

THEIR successes in France, having enlarged the horizon of the Northmen's ambition, every new aggression on England became more formidable than the preceding. - In 851, they first ventured to winter in the Isle of ¹⁰ Thanet. This was a new æra in their habits. Their ancient custom had been to pirate abroad in the summer, but to return with the autumn. But Ragnar's success in France had increased their daring, and enlarged their views. They had now formed the daring project of remaining in the countries which they insulted.

⁹ Rudborne Hist. mag. p. 207. There is a beautiful MS. on St. Swithin, written by Lantfredus in the tenth century, in the British Museum. Bib. Reg. xv. c. 7. But it contains an account of his miracles only, to justify his canonisation in the reign of Edgar. One part is a curious Latin alphabetical or acrostic hymn.

¹⁰ Sax. Chron. 74. Asser, p. 5. places the winter residence in Shepey Isle; but the printed Chronicle dates their first wintering in Shepey in 854. The MSS. Sax. Chron. Tib. B. 4. has 855.

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852.

IN the spring they attempted against the Anglo-Saxons the most serious invasion which England had yet experienced. Their numbers, perhaps the result of a confederation, were superior to any preceding attack. They entered the Thames with 350 ships, plundered Canterbury and London, and marched into Mercia. The names of all their chieftains are not mentioned; but as Ragnar Lodbrog was now in full activity, he may have led or aided the invaders.

MERCIA had been governed by Wihtlaf till 838. His son and wife reached the tomb before him, and he buried them by the side of Etheldritha, the daughter of Offa. She had sheltered him from the pursuit of Egbert, and his grateful feelings were so ardent, that when he heard of her death, his grief confined him to his bed, and it was with difficulty afterwards that he was withdrawn from her grave. His brother Bertulph succeeded, and signalised his reign by favouring the assassination of his brother's grandson; his own son was the murderer; love of power was the cause. Bertulph was king of Mercia, when the Northern warriors entered his dominions¹¹; he endeavoured to repel them, but was defeated.¹²

THE Northmen after this victory turned southward and entered Surry. The West-Saxons collected under Ethelwulph and his son Ethelbald,

¹¹ Ingulf. 11. Sax. Chron. 74. Mr. Hume erroneously says that Brictric governed Mercia at this period, p. 71.

¹² Sax. Chron. 74. Flor. Wig. 295,

and at Aclea, a field of oaks, the two nations met, and a battle ensued, which the desperate courage of both armies made long and very deadly. It was not until the greatest part of the invaders had perished, that they lost their ground. The English at last triumphed: the battle was so destructive, that Asser, who lived in the period when the Northmen maintained the most furious contests, yet attests that so great a slaughter of the invaders had never been known before that day, or during his experience since.¹³

THE earl of Devonshire had already defeated them at Wenbury in that county, and Æthelstan, the subordinate king of Kent, with the earl Ealhere, had enjoyed a similar success at Sandwich, where nine of their ships were taken.¹⁴

¹³ Asser, p. 6. Voltaire has strangely confounded this invasion with that against Ethelred, above a century later. He says, "On pretend qu'en 852, ils remonterent la Tamise avec trois cens voiles. Les Anglais ne se defendirent mieux que les Francs. Ils payerent comme eux leurs vainqueurs. Un roi nomme *Ethelbert* suivit le malheureux exemple de Charles le chauve. Il donna de l'argent. Essai sur les mœurs. Oeuvres completees," t. 16. p. 472. ed. 1785. In his previous paragraphs, he confounds the Britons with the English. "Les Anglais, — ils n'étaient échappés du joug des Romains que pour tomber sous celui de ces Saxons." *Ib.*

¹⁴ Asser, p. 6. Sax. Chron. 74. There is some confusion about Ethelstan; by three authors (Huntingd. 345., Mailros, 142., and Hoveden, 412.) he is styled the brother of Ethelwulph. But Flor. Wig. 291., Ethelwerd, 841., Malmesbury, 37., and the printed Saxon Chronicle, make him the son. The MSS. Saxon Chronicle, in the Cotton Library,

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THE Mercian succession of sovereigns was now drawing to its close. Beortulf was succeeded in 852, by Burrhed the last king of Mercia, who in the next year requested the assistance of Ethelwulph against the Britons of Wales.¹⁵ Burrhed had already fought a battle, in which Merfyn Frych, the British king, fell, and was succeeded by Roderic, who has obtained in Welsh history the epithet of Mawr, or the Great.¹⁶ But an epithet like this rather expresses the feelings of his countrymen, than the merit of his character. It may be just in provincial history as long as that exists in its local seclusion; but the force of the expression vanishes when the person it accompanies is

Tib. B. 4. differs from the printed one, for it calls him the son of Egbert. It says, “*ƿenz Ethelpulf hƿr ƿunu to West Seaxna ƿice; and Ethelƿtan hƿr otheƿr ƿunu, ƿenz to Cantƿara ƿice, and to Suthƿizean, and to Suthreaxna ƿice,*” p. 30. Matt. West. 301., and Rudborne, 201., make him Ethelwulph’s illegitimate son. Asser’s testimony, p. 6. would decide that he was the son of Ethelwulph; but that these descriptive words are wanting in the Cotton MSS. of his book. Bromton says, Ethelwulph had a son, Athelstan; but that he died in *annis adolescentiæ suæ*, 802. Malmesbury states, that Ethelwulph gave to him the provinces which Egbert had conquered, 37. Ethelstan is mentioned by Fordun to have perished in a battle against the Picts, lib. iv. c. 14. p. 666. In 850 he signed a charter as king of Kent. Thorpe, Reg. Roff. p. 23. Dr. Whitaker supposes him to have been St. Neot.

¹⁵ Asser, 6.

¹⁶ Wynne’s Hist. p. 27.

brought forward into more general history in an enlightened age. He who was great in his little circle or ruder times, becomes then diminutive and obscure; and it is almost ludicrous to apply one of the most splendid symbols of recorded merit, to actions so inconsiderable, and to characters so ambiguous as a petty Welsh prince. The grand epithets of history should be reserved for those who can abide a comparison with the illustrious of every age, like the lofty mountains of nature, which, whether existing in Italy, in Tartary, or Chili, are admired for their sublimity by every spectator, and in every period.

RODERIC endured the invasion of Ethelwulph and Burrhed, who penetrated with victorious ravages to Anglesey.¹⁷ Ethelwulph gave his daughter Ethelswitha in marriage to the Mercian, and the nuptial solemnities were celebrated royally at Chippenham.¹⁸

855.

THE vikingr appeared again in Thanet. Ealhere, with the armed men of Kent, and Huda, with those of Surry, overwhelmed the invaders with the first fury of their battle; but the conflict was obstinately renewed, the English chiefs fell, and after many of both armies had been

¹⁷ Wynne, 27. Asser, 7. Sax. Chron. 75.

¹⁸ Asser, 7. Matt. West. 305. Burrhed therefore became Alfred's brother-in-law. Voltaire calls him inaccurately his uncle. Comme Burrhed son oncle, p. 473.

BOOK

IV.

853.
Alfred
sent to
Rome.

slain or drowned, the pirates obtained the victory.¹⁹

IN the fifth year of Alfred's age, his father, although he had three elder sons, seems to have formed an idea of making him his successor. This intention is inferred from the facts that Ethelwulph sent him at this time to Rome, with a great train of nobility and others; and that the pope anointed him king, at the request of his father.²⁰

At Rome
again in
855.

It is expressly affirmed, that the king loved Alfred better than his other sons.²¹ When the king went to Rome himself, two years afterwards, he took Alfred with him, because he loved him with superior affection.²² The presumption that he intended to make Alfred his successor, therefore, agrees with the fact of his paternal partiality. It is warranted by the de-

¹⁹ Asser, 7. Ragnar's Quida mentions one of his exploits at an English promontory, where the English noble Walthiofr fell. See before, note 45.

²⁰ So Florence, 296.; Sim. Dun. 139.; Rad. diceto. 450.; Chron. Mailros, 142.; Matt. West. 307.; and Cron. Joan. Taxton, MSS. Cotton. Lib. Julius, A.1., affirm. As St. Neot the son or brother of Ethelwulph went, about this period, seven times to Rome, his journies or his advice may have had some connection with this project.

²¹ Cum communi et ingenti patris sui et matris amore supra omnes fratres suos. Asser, 15., Matt. West. 307., Sim. Dun. 141., Flor. Wig. 297. express the same fact.

²² Filium suum Ælfredum iterum in eandem viam secum ducens eo quod, illum plus ceteris filiis suis diligebat. Asser, p. 8.

claration of Matthew of Westminster, that one of the causes of the rebellion which followed against Ethelwulph was, that he had caused Alfred to be crowned, thereby, as it were, excluding his other children from the chance of succession.²³

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IV.
855.

IN Alfred's journey through France, he was very hospitably treated by Bertinus and Grimbold.²⁴ When Alfred arrived in the course of nature at the royal dignity, he remembered Grimbold's services and talents, requited them by a steady friendship, and obtained from them an important intellectual benefit.

IN 855, Ethelwulph, with the sanction of his *witena gemot*, made that donation to the church which is usually construed to be the grant of its tithes. But on reading carefully the obscure words of the three copies of this charter, which three succeeding chroniclers have left us, it will appear that it cannot have been the original grant of the tithes of all England. These words imply either that it was a liberation of the land which the clergy had before been in possession of, from all the services and payments to which the Anglo-Saxon lands were generally liable²⁵, or that it was an additional gift of land,

²³ *Causa autem bifaria erat, una quod filium juniorem Ælfredum quasi aliis a sorte regni exclusis, in regem Romæ fecerat coronari. Matt. West. p. 308.*

²⁴ *Vita Grimboldi. Lel. Collect. i. p. 18.*

²⁵ Ingulf, Malmsbury, and Matt. West. profess to give copies of the charter. The king, (in Ingulf's copy,) after re-

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IV.
855.

not of tithes, either of the king's private patrimony, or of some other which is not explained. The reason for the gift which is added in the charter strengthens the first supposition²⁶; but

citing the depredations of the Northmen, adds, with some confusion of grammar and style, "Wherefore I Ethelwulph, king of the West Saxons, with the advice of my bishops and princes, affirming a salutary counsel, and uniform remedy, we have consented that I should adjudge some hereditary portion of land to all degrees *before possessing it*, whether male or female servants of God, serving him, or poor laymen; always the tenth mansion: where that may be the least, then the tenth part of all goods should be given in perpetual freedom to the church, so that it may be safe and protected from all secular services and royal contributions greater or smaller, or taxations which we call wynterden; and that it may be free from all things; and without the military expedition, building of bridges, and constructions of fortresses." Ing. Hist. p. 17. Malmsbury's copy corresponds with this; but for "then the tenth part of all goods," it has "yet the tenth part," omitting the words, "of all goods," and changing "tum" into "tamen." p. 41. Matt. West. p. 306. gives it a different aspect: he makes it like an absolute hereditary gift, but converts the general term "land," used by the others, into "my land." Thus "I grant some portion of *my* land to be *possessed in perpetual right*, to wit, the tenth part of *my* land, that it may be free from all offices, and secular services, and royal tributes," &c. adding the same reason as above. The natural force of Matthew's words limits the lands given, to the king's own lands, which were only a small part of the kingdom, but gives a proprietary right more expressly than the others. I think there is no reason to believe that tithes were then first granted, but that this charter was meant to have the operation mentioned in the text.

²⁶ "That they may more diligently pour forth their prayers to God for us without ceasing, as we have *alleviated*

the terms used to express the persons to whom the benefit was granted seem to confine it to monastical persons.²⁷ But whatever was its original meaning, the clergy in after-ages interpreted it to mean a distinct and formal grant of the tithes of the whole kingdom.²⁸

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IV.
855.

their servitude in some part, ' eorum servitutum in aliqua parte levigamus.'" Ing. p.17. Malmsb. 41. An alleviation of services is not a grant of tithes.

²⁷ The words in Ingulf are, "famulis et famulabus Dei, Deo servientibus sive laicis miseris." In Malmsbury the same, omitting the epithet "miseris." Famulabus cannot apply to rectors or curates; famulis et famulabus Dei, mean usually monks and nuns. The copy of Matthew of Westminster, for these words, substitutes "Deo et beatæ Mariæ, et omnibus sanctis." But Matthew wrote in the latter end of the thirteenth century. Ingulf's copy is above two centuries more ancient than his.

²⁸ So Ingulf, and Malmsbury, and others state it; but all classes of men who have obtained a grant by deed, try to extend its meaning as far for their own benefit as the construction of the words can be carried. The law itself looks only at the sense of the words used. Asser's opinion of its import would be very valuable if it was clearly given: because, as a contemporary, we should gain from him the meaning given to it at its first publication. If his first sentence stood alone, it would confirm our first construction; but his rhetorical after-phrase, adds something, which, if it means any thing more, I do not understand it. The passage stands thus: "He liberated the tenth part of all his kingdom from every royal service and contribution, and in an everlasting instrument in the cross of Christ for the redemption of his soul, and of his predecessors, he immolated to the triune Deity." I do not see that these latter words increase the meaning of the first, which express only a liberation from burthens. They seem to add that he offered this liberation as a sacrifice to the Deity.

BOOK
IV.

855.
Ethel-
wulf's do-
nation of
the tenths.

HE went afterwards to Rome himself with great magnificence, accompanied by ²⁹ Alfred, who was entering his seventh year. As the expeditions of the great to Rome were in those days usually by land, Ethelwulf went first into France, where Charles, the French king, received him with honour and royal liberality, and caused him to be conducted through his dominions with every respectful attention.³⁰

His pre-
sents to
the pope.

THE presents which the West-Saxon king carried to the pope were peculiarly splendid. A crown of pure gold, weighing four pounds, two golden vessels, called Baucas, a sword adorned with pure gold, two golden images, four Saxon dishes of silver gilt, besides valuable dresses, are enumerated by his contemporary, Anastasius. The king also gave a donative of gold to all the Roman clergy and nobles, and silver to the people.³¹

ETHELWULPH continued a year at Rome, and rebuilt the Saxon school which Ina had founded.³² By the carelessness of its English inha-

²⁹ Asser, 9.

³⁰ Annales Bertiniani in Bouquet's recueil, tom. vii. p. 71.

³¹ Anastasius Bibliothecarius de vitis Pontif. vol. i. p. 403. ed. Rome, 1718.

³² Rudborne, 202. Anastasius describes it as an habitation: quæ in eorum lingua burgus dicitur, p. 317. The place where it was situated, was called the Saxon-street, Saxonom vicum. Anast. 363. This school was much attended to by the Anglo-Saxon nobles and sovereigns.

bitants, it had been set on fire the preceding year, and was burnt to ashes.³³ One act which he did at Rome evinces his patriotism and influence, and entitles him to honourable remembrance. He saw that the public penitents and exiles were bound with iron, and he obtained an order from the pope that no Englishman, out of his country, should be put into bonds for penance.³⁴

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IV.
855.

IN his way through France, he discovered that senility gave no exemption from love. In July he sued for an alliance with Judith, the daughter of Charles, and in October was married to her by Hincmar. He admitted her to share in the royal dignity, and the diadem was placed on her head. Presents worthy of the high characters concerned were mutually given, and Ethelwulf took shipping for England.³⁵

856.
His marriage with
Judith.

Few marriages of our sovereigns have been more important in their consequences to the reputation and happiness of England than this, which at the time might have appeared censurable from the disparity of the ages of the parties, and from our aversion to see the hoary head imitating the youthful bridegroom. It was this lady who began the education of Alfred; and to

³³ Anastasius, p. 317.

³⁴ Rudborne, 202.

³⁵ Annales Bertiniani, p. 72.—Asser, 8. The ceremony used at the coronation of Judith yet exists, and may be seen in Du Chesne's Hist. Franc. vol. ii. p. 423.

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IV.

her therefore may be traced all his literary acquisitions.

856.

The revolt
of Wessex.

BUT the connubial felicity of Ethelwulf was interrupted by intelligence of a successful conspiracy against his power, which menaced him with deposition and exile. It was conducted by Alstan, the bishop to whom he owed all his prosperity; and Ethelbald, the eldest of the legitimate princes, was placed at the head. The earl of Somerset participated in the rebellion. The principal object was to defeat the plans of Ethelwulf in favour of Alfred, and to invest Ethelbald with the crown.³⁶ The popular reason was, the elevation of his new wife to the dignity of queen. The crimes of Eadburga had incited the Anglo-Saxon nation to forbid the wife of any other of their kings to be crowned.³⁷ Ethelwulf's visit to Rome without having resigned his crown may have begun the discontent. Two of the preceding sovereigns of Wessex who had taken this step, Cadwalla and Ina, had first abdicated the throne, though Offa retained it during his journey. But Ethelwulf had been in the

³⁶ Matt. West. 308. Rudborne also states, that some write, quod filii insurrexerunt contra patrem propter invidiam quod frater minimus, viz. Alfredus ante omnes inunctus erat in regem jussione paterna, p. 201.

³⁷ Asser, 10, 11. See before, p. 427. This degradation of their sovereign's queen was contrary, says Asser, to the custom of all the German nations.

church, and had not the warlike character of Offa to impress or satisfy his thanes and eorls. For him therefore to pursue the steps that were so like a re-assumption of his early ecclesiastical character may have dissatisfied the fierce Anglo-Saxons, who thought little of religion until some event roused them to renounce the world altogether.

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IV.
856.

IN Selwood Forest the revolters first assembled in strength. The king's absence favoured the scheme; and as his devotion to the Roman see, combined with the prospect of a strippling's succession, to the prejudice of brothers, who to priority of birth added maturity of age, may have diminished the general loyalty; so the circumstances of his marriage concurred, fortunately for the conspirators, to complete his unpopularity. When Ethelwulf returned, he found the combination too powerful to be resisted; but the nobles of all Wessex would not permit him to be absolutely dethroned; they promoted an accommodation between the two parties, on the plan, that Ethelbald should be put in possession of West Saxony, the best portion of the monarchy³⁸, and that Ethelwulf should be contented with the eastern districts which Ethelstan had enjoyed. The king, averse

His deposition.

³⁸ Asser, 9. He remarks that occidentales pars Saxonix semper orientali principalior est, *ibid.*

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IV.

856.

to war, and perhaps intimidated by the strength of his opponents, submitted to the proposition.³⁹

³⁹ There is a complimentary letter of Lupus, a French abbot, to Ethelwulf, still existing, soliciting him to be at the expense of covering the church of his monastery with lead. In this he speaks of the good opinion which had spread of Ethelwulf's government, and of the reputation he had acquired by his exertions against the enemies of Christianity, alluding to his victories over the Northmen. Epist. Lupi Bib. Mag. vol. iii. p. 625.

APPENDIX.

THE MANNERS OF THE SAXONS IN THEIR PAGAN STATE.

CHAP. I.

The Character and Persons of the most ancient SAXONS.

WE may now pause to consider the most prominent features of the Saxons before they established themselves in Britain. C H A P.
I.

THE Anglo-Saxons came to England from the Germanic continent; and above a century had elapsed from their first settlements before they received those improvements and changes which followed the introduction of the Christian system. These circumstances make it necessary to exhibit them as they were in their continental and pagan state, before they are delineated with the features, and in the dress of Christianity.

It would be extremely desirable to give a complete portrait of our ancestors in their uncivilised state; but this is an epocha in the history of the human mind which in former times seldom interested any one, and has not been faithfully detailed. Hence on this subject curiosity must submit to be disappointed. The converted Anglo-Saxon remembered the practices of his

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I.

idolatrous ancestors with too much abhorrence, to record them for the notice of future ages; and as we have no Runic spells to call the pagan warrior from his grave, we can only see him in those imperfect sketches, which patient industry may collect from the passages scattered in the works, which time has spared.

THE character of the ancient Saxons displayed the qualities of fearless, active, and successful pirates. It is not merely the Spanish churchman ¹ Orosius, who remarks them as dreadful for their courage and agility, but the emperor Julian, who had lived among barbarians, and who had fought with some Saxon tribes, denotes them as distinguished amongst their neighbours for vehemence and valour.² Zosimus, their contemporary, expresses the general feeling of his age when he ranks them as superior to others in energy, strength, and warlike fortitude.³

THEIR ferocious⁴ qualities were nourished by the habit of indiscriminate depredation. It was from the cruelty and destructiveness, as well as from the suddenness of their incursions, that they were dreaded more than any other people. Like the Danes and Norwegians, their successors and assailants, they desolated where they plundered with the sword and flame.⁵

It was consistency in such men to be inattentive to

¹ Orosius, lib. vii. c. 32.

² Julian Imp. Orat. de laud. Const. p. 116.

³ Zosimus, lib. iii. p. 147. ed. Ox.

⁴ Salvian says, gens Saxonum fera est, de Gub. Dei, lib. iv. V. Fortunatus calls them "aspera gens, vivens quasi more ferino," 8 Mag. Bib. 787.; and Sidonius has the strong expression of "omni hosti truculentior," lib. viii. c. 7. Even in the eighth century the Saxons on the continent are described by Eginhard as "natura feroces," p. 4.

⁵ Amm. Marcell. lib. xxviii. c. 3.

danger. They launched their predatory vessels, and suffered the wind to blow them to any foreign coast, indifferent whether the result was a depredation unresisted, or the deathful conflict. Such was their cupidity, or their brutal hardihood, that they often preferred embarking in the tempest which might shipwreck them, because at such a season their victims would be more unguarded. Their warfare did not originate from the more generous, or the more pardonable of man's evil passions. It was the offspring of the basest. Their swords were not unsheathed by ambition or resentment, The love of plunder and of cruelty was their favourite habit; and hence they attacked, indifferently, every coast which they could reach.⁶

INLAND provinces were not protected from their invasion. From ignorance, necessity, or policy, they traversed the ocean in boats, framed of osiers, and covered with skins sewed together; and such was their skill, or their prodigality of life, that in these they sported in the tempests of the German Ocean.⁷

IT is possible that men who had seen the vessels in which the Francs had escaped from the Pontus, and who had been twice instructed by Imperial usurpers in the naval art, might have constructed more important war ships, if their judgment had approved. Although their isles, and their maritime provinces of Ditmarsia and Stormaria, were barren of wood, yet Holsatia abounded with it; and if their defective land-carriage

⁶ Amm. Marcell. lib. xxviii. c. 3., xxvii. c. 8. Sid. Apoll.

⁷ That this ocean was anciently dangerous from its tempests, Boniface, the self-devoted missionary of Germany, often states: *periculosum est navigantibus*, p. 52. *Germanici tempestatibus maris undique quassantibus fatigati senis miserere*, p. 59. vol. xvi. Bib. Mag. Patrum.

CHAP. prevented the frequency of this supply, the Elbe was at
 I. hand to float down inexhaustible stores from the im-
 mense forests of Germany.

THEY may have preferred their light skiffs⁸, from an experience of their superior utility. When their fatal incursions had incited the Romans to fortify and to garrison the frontier of Britain and Gaul, the Saxons directed their enmity against the inland regions. For their peculiar vessels no coast was too shallow, no river too small; they dared to ascend the streams for eighty or an hundred miles; and if other plunder invited, or danger pressed, they carried their vessels from one river to another, and thus escaped with facility from the most superior foe.⁹

OF the Saxons, an author of the fifth century says to a friend who was opposed to them, “ You see as many piratical leaders as you behold rowers, for they all command, obey, teach, and learn the art of pillage. Hence, after your greatest caution, still greater care is requisite. This enemy is fiercer than any other; if you be unguarded, they attack; if prepared, they elude you. They despise the opposing, and destroy the unwary; if they pursue, they overtake; if they fly, they escape. Shipwrecks discipline them, not deter; they do not merely know, they are familiar with all the dangers of the sea; a tempest gives them security and success, for it divests the meditated land of the apprehension of a descent. In the midst of waves and threatening rocks

⁸ On the vessels of the Saxons, see Du Bos, *Hist. Crit. de la Mon. de France*, i. p. 150.—*Mioparō quasi minimus paro; idem et carabus. Est parva scapha ex vimine facta quæ contexta crudo corio genus navigii præbet. Isidorus Orig. lib. xix. c. 1.*

⁹ See Du Bos, 149. 2 Gibbon, 524.

they rejoice at their peril, because they hope to surprise." ¹⁰

As their naval expeditions, though often wildly daring, were much governed by the policy of surprise, so their land incursions were sometimes conducted with all the craft of robbers. "Dispersed into many bodies," says Zosimus, of one of their confederates, "they plundered by night, and when day appeared, they concealed themselves in the woods, feasting on the booty they had gained." ¹¹ They are, however, seldom mentioned by the historians of the fourth and fifth centuries without some epithets which express a superiority over other men in their achievements or their courage.

THE ferocity of the Saxon character would seem to suit better the dark and melancholy physiognomies of Asia and Africa, than the fair, pleasing, and blue-eyed countenances by which our ancestors are ¹² described. But though nature had supplied them with the germs of those amiable qualities which have become the national character of their descendants, their direful customs, their acquired passions, and barbarous education, perverted every good propensity. So ductile is the human capacity, that there is no colour, climate, or constitution, which governs the moral character so permanently as the good or evil habits and discipline to which it is subjected. An incident mentioned by Symmachus shows that they had a pride of mind which could

¹⁰ Sid. Apoll. Epist. vi. lib. 8.

¹¹ Zosimus, lib. iii. p. 149. This tribe whom he calls Quadi, Marcellinus, lib. xvii. c. 8., more correctly names Chamavi. These robbers were destroyed by one Chariette, a Franc, who organised some corps on the same plan.

¹² Sidon. Apoll. lib. viii. ep. 9. Bede, lib. ii. c. 1. The expressions applied by Tacitus to all the German nations are, "truces, et cerulei oculi."

CHAP.

I.

not endure disgrace. He says that twenty-nine Saxons strangled themselves to avoid being brought into a theatre for a gladiatorial show.¹³

THEIR persons were of the largest size. On the continent they were so proud of their forms and their descent, and so anxious to perpetuate them, that they were averse to marriages with other nations.¹⁴ Hence the colour of the hair of their males is mentioned as uniform. In the fourth century they cut their hair so close to the skin, that the appearance of the head was diminished and the face enlarged.¹⁵ In the following ages, their hair behind is mentioned as diffused upon their shoulders¹⁶; and an ancient Saxon law punished the man who seized another by the hair.¹⁷

IN their dress, their loose linen vests were adorned with trimming, woven in different colours.¹⁸ Their external garment was the sagum, or cloak¹⁹, and they had

¹³ Ep. xlvi. lib. 2. p. 90.

¹⁴ Meginh. ib. ap. Lang. Script. Dan. tom. ii. p. 39. Wittichind, p. 5. Tacitus had expressed the same of all the German tribes.

¹⁵ Cujus vertices extimas per oras
Non contenta suos tenere morsus
Aretat lamina marginem comarum
Et sic crinibus ad cutem recisis
Deerescit caput, additurque vultus.

Sid. Ap.

¹⁶ Wittichind, p. 5.

¹⁷ 1 Linden. Codex Legum, p. 474.

¹⁸ Paul. Warnefrid de Gest. Langob. lib. iv. c. 23. p. 838. Grot. ed. The vest is mentioned in the old Saxon law, p. 474., and their idol, Crodnus, had one.—Fabric. Hist. Sax. tom. i. p. 61.

¹⁹ Wittichind, p. 5.; and see Lindenbrog Glossary, Voc. Sagum, and Weiss. The curious may see a description of the dress of a Franc in the Monk of St. Gall's life of Charlemagne, and of a Longobard in P. Warnefridus, lib. iv. c. 23.

shoes. Their females had gowns, and several ornaments for the arms, hands, and neck.²⁰

THE Saxons who invaded Thuringia in the sixth century, are described by Wittichind as leaning on small shields, with long lances, and with great knives, or crooked swords, by their sides.²¹ Fabricius, an author of the sixteenth century, saw in an ancient picture of a Saxon, a sword bent into a semilunar shape.²² He adds, that their shields were suspended by chains, that their horsemen used long iron sledge hammers²³, and that their armour was heavy. I have not met with the documents from which he took these circumstances.

²⁰ One is called in the old Anglian law the Rhedo, to the stealing of which the same penalty was attached as to stealing six sows with pig. The mother, in the same law, might at her death leave to her son, land, slaves, and money; to her daughter, the ornaments of the neck; id est, murænas (*necklaces*), nuscas, monilia (*collars*), inares (*ear-rings*), vestes, armillas (*bracelets*), vel quidquid ornamenti proprii videbatur habuisse. 1 Lindenb. p. 484.

²¹ Wittichind, 5. As Tacitus remarks that the Germans seldom had swords, and more generally javelins, there is some plausibility in the derivation of the Saxon name from their sachs, or peculiar swords. The Cimbri on the contrary had great and long swords, according to Plutarch, in his Life of Marius.

²² Fabric. i. p. 66.

²³ The favourite weapon of Thor, according to the Northern Eddas, was a mallet.

CHAP. II.

The Government and Laws of the more ancient SAXONS.

CHAP.
II.

IT is said by Aristotle, that whoever lives voluntarily out of civil society must have a vicious disposition, or be an existence superior to man.¹ But nature has endeavoured to preserve her noblest offspring from this dismal and flagitious independence. She has given us faculties which can be only used, and wants which can be only provided for in society. She has made the social union inseparable from our safety, our virtue, our pride, and our felicity.

GOVERNMENT and laws must have been coeval with society, for they are essentially necessary to its continuance. A spacious edifice might as well be expected to last without cement or foundation, as a society to subsist without some regulations of individual will, and some acknowledged authority to enforce their observance.

THE Athenian philosopher has correctly traced the progress of our species towards political institutions. The connubial union is one of the most imperious and most acceptable laws of our frame. From this arose families and relationships. Families enlarged into villages and towns, and an aggregation of these gave being to a state.²

A FAMILY is naturally governed by its parents, and

¹ Aristotle's *Politic.* lib. i. c. 2. p. 380. ed. 1606.

² *Aristot.* lib. i. c. 3. p. 381. This is one of Aristotle's most valuable works, and will repay with great profit a careful attention.

its ramifications by the aged. The father, says Homer, is the legislator to his wife and children.³ Among most barbarous tribes, the aged ancestors have prescribed to the community the rules of mutual behaviour, and have adjudged disputes. As population has multiplied, civilisation advanced, and the sphere of human activity has been enlarged, more precise regulations, more decided subordination, and more complicated governments became necessary, and have been established.

THAT the Saxon societies, in their early stages, were governed by the aged, is very strikingly shown in the fact, that the words of their language which denote authority, also express age. When it states that Joseph was appointed ruler over Egypt, the words are, “*ƿette into ealdre over Eȝypta land.*”⁴ For Cæsar, the emperor, we have “*Cæreſar ƿha beoþ cýninga 5 yldeſt.*” Here eldest is used as synonymous to greatest. A British general is called an “*ealdorman.*”⁶ The Latin term *satrapa*, by which Bede expressed the ruling Saxon chief of a district on the continent, is rendered by his royal translator “*ealdorman.*”⁷ The phrase of “*a certain ruler,*” in St. Luke, is, in the Saxon gospel, “*ſum ealdor.*”⁸ The contest between the disciples of Christ

³ Cited by Aristot. *ibid.* p. 379.

⁴ Genesis, xlv. v. 8., in Thwaite's Saxon Heptateuch.

⁵ So the pontifex is called *yldeſta biſceop*. Orosius, lib. v. c. 4.

⁶ Sax. Chron.

⁷ Smith's edition of Bede, p. 624.

⁸ Luke xviii. v. 18. So the highest seats in the synagogue are called *ƿha yldeſtan ſeol*, Luke xx. 46. The Saxons had *yldeſt ƿýphra foſ* the chief workman, *yldeſt ƿicmȝ* for the chief of pirates, *on ſcýpe yldeſt* for a pilot, *yldeſt on ƿham yldeſtan floce* for prince of that evil flock.

CHAP.
II.

which should be the greatest, is expressed in the Saxon, which should be the *ylberz*.⁹ The aged were the primitive chiefs and governors among the Saxons, and therefore the terms expressing age were used to denote dignity so habitually that they were retained in common phrase, even after the custom of connecting power with seniority had become obsolete.

THE most ancient account of the Saxon government on the continent exists in this short but expressive passage of Bede: "The ancient Saxons have no king, but many chiefs set over their people, who, when war presses, draw lots equally; and whomsoever the chance points out, they all follow as leader, and obey during the war. The war concluded, all the chiefs become again of equal power."¹⁰

THAT the continental Saxons in the eighth and preceding centuries were under an aristocracy of chieftains, and had no kings but in war; and that the war-kings who were then chosen laid aside their power when peace was re-established, is attested by other ancient authorities.¹¹ More recent historians have repeated the asser-

So Bede's "he who by the priority of seat seemed to be their chief," lib. v. c. 13., is rendered by Alfred *ƿe ƿeƿ ƿeƿler ylberz et me ƿuhƿe ƿha he heopa ealðop beon ƿeolbe*, p. 633.

⁹ Luke xxii. v. 24.

¹⁰ Bede Hist. Eccles. lib. v. c. 10. p. 192.

¹¹ The ancient Saxon poet says,

Quæ nec rege fuit saltem sociata sub uno
Ut se militiæ pariter defenderet usu:
Sed variis divisa modis plebs omnis habebat,
Quot pagos, tot pene duces. Du Chesne.

Si autem universale bellum ingrueret, sorte eligitur cui omnes obedire oporteat ad administrandum imminens bellum. Quo peracto æquo jure ac lege propria contentus potestate.

tion.¹² Cæsar gives an account nearly similar, of the German magistracy in his time.¹³ We may, therefore, safely infer, that when the Anglo-Saxons visited England, they came under war-kings. The reigns of Hengist, and the founders of the dynasties of the Octarchy, were so many periods of continued warfare, and their immediate posterity were assailed with hostility from the natives almost perpetual. The Anglo-Saxons were under a necessity of continuing their war-kings, until at length a permanent, though a limited monarchy, was established. Their chiefs, or witeana, continued in their influence and power. They elected the king, though they chose him from the family of the deceased sovereign; and their consent in their gemot continued to be necessary to the more important acts of his authority.

unusquisque vivebat.—Wittichind, lib. i. p. 7. So the *Vetus Theotisce Chronicon* on the year 810. *Twelff Edeling der Sassen de reden over dat lant tho Sassen. Und Wannere dat se krich in dat lant tho Sassen hadden so koren se von den twelffen einen, de was ore Koning de wile de krich warde. Und wan de krich bericht wart, so weren de twelffe gelick, so was des einen koniges state uth, und was den anderon gelick.*—Lindenb. Gloss. 1347. This is, "Twelve Ethelings governed over the land of the Saxons; and whenever war arose in that land the Saxons chose one of the twelve to be king while the war lasted: when the war was finished the twelve became alike."

¹² Krantz *Metropol.* lib. i. c. 1., and Belli *Dithmar.* p. 431. Fabricius *Hist. Sax.* i. p. 69. Sagittarius *Hist. Bard.* 60.

¹³ *Quum bellum civitas aut illatum defendit aut infert, magistratus qui eo bello præsent ut vitæ necisque habeant potestatem deliguntur. In pace nullus est communis magistratus, sed principes regionum atque pagorum inter suos jus dicunt controversiasque minuunt.*—*De Bell. Gall.* lib. vi. c. 21.

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THERE were four orders of men among the ancient Saxons: the Etheling or noble, the free man, the freed man, and the servile. The nobles were jealous of their race and rank. Nobles married nobles only, and the severest penalties prohibited intrusions of one rank into the others.¹⁴

OF their laws, in their Pagan state, very little can be detailed from authority sufficiently ancient. From the uniformity of their principles of legislation in continental Saxony and in England, in a subsequent age, we may infer, that pecuniary compensation was their general mode of redressing personal injuries, and of punishing criminal offences. This feature certainly announces that the spirit of legislation began to be understood, and that the sword of punishment had been wrested, by the government, out of the hand of the vindictive individual. It also displays a state of society in which property was accumulating. It is, however, a form of punishment which is adapted to the first epochas of civilisation only; because as wealth is more generally possessed, pecuniary mulcts become legal impunity.

THEIR severity against adultery was personal and sanguinary. If a woman became unchaste, she was compelled to hang herself, her body was burnt, and over her ashes the adulterer was executed. Or else a company of females whipped her from district to district, and, dividing her garments to the girdle, they pierced her body with their knives. They drove her, thus bleeding, from their habitations; and wheresoever she went, new collections of women renewed the cruel punishment, till she expired.¹⁵ This dreadful custom shows

¹⁴ Meginhard, 2 Lang. p. 40. Nithardus, lib. iv. Hucbald Vita B. Lebuini, Act. Sanct. vol. vi. p. 282, and Wittichind.

¹⁵ Boniface describes this custom in his letter to Ethelbald, the king of Mercia, in *Mag. Bibl. Patrum*, tom. xvi. p. 55.

that the savage character of the nation was not confined to the males. Female chastity is indeed a virtue as indispensable as it is attractive; but its proper guardians are the maternal example and tuition, the constitutional delicacy of the female mind, its native love of honour, and the uncorrupted voice and feeling of society. If it can be only maintained by the horrors of a Saxon punishment, the nation is too barbarous, or too contaminated, to be benefited, by the penalty.

IN their marriages they allowed a son to wed his father's widow, and a brother his sister-in-law.¹⁶

BY one of the laws of their confederates, the Frisians, who were among the tribes that settled in England, we learn that their religious establishment was protected by penalties as terrible as those which guarded their chastity. "Whoever breaks into a temple, and takes away any of the sacred things, let him be led to the sea, and in the sand which the tide usually covers, let his ears be cut off, let him be castrated, and immolated to the gods whose temples he has violated."¹⁷

¹⁶ Sax. Chron. Bede i. c. 27. p. 64.

¹⁷ Lex Fris. ap. 1. Lindenb. p. 508.

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The Religion of the SAXONS in their Pagan State.

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AT this happy period of the world, we cannot reflect on the idolatry of ancient times without some astonishment at the infatuation which has so inveterately, in various regions, clouded the human mind. We feel, indeed, that it is impossible to contemplate the grand canopy of the universe; to descry the planets, moving in governed order; to find comets darting from system to system in an orbit of which a space almost incalculable is the diameter; to discover constellations beyond constellations in endless multiplicity, and to have indications of the light of others whose full beam of splendor has not yet reached us; we feel it impossible to meditate on these innumerable theatres of existence, without feeling with awe, that this amazing magnificence of nature announces an Author tremendously great. But it is very difficult to conceive how the lessons of the skies should have taught that localising idolatry, which their transcendant grandeur, and almost infinite extent, seem expressly calculated to destroy.

THE most ancient religions of the world appear to have been pure theism, with neither idols nor temples. These essential agents in the political mechanism of idolatry were unknown to the ancient Pelasgians, from whom the Grecians chiefly sprung, and to the early Egyptians and Romans. The Jewish patriarchs had

them not, and even our German ancestors, according to Tacitus, were without them.

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IN every nation but the Jewish, a more gross system of superstition was gradually established. The Deity was dethroned by the symbols which human folly selected as his representatives; the most ancient of these were the heavenly bodies, the most pardonable objects of erring adoration. But when it was found possible to make superstition a profitable craft, then departed heroes and kings were exalted into gods. Delirious fancy soon added others so profusely, that the air, the sea, the rivers, the woods, and the earth, became so stocked with divinities, that it was easier, as an ancient sage remarked, to find a deity than a man.

BUT if we meditate more profoundly on the subject, we may infer that polytheism and idolatry were but the effects of the natural progress of the human mind towards knowledge, and in reasoning. They were erroneous deductions, but they were efforts at improvement. As the intellect became more exercised, and the sensibilities awakened; and as vice began to spread, the idea arose that the adored Supreme was so great, and man so unworthy, that human beings, or concerns, could not be objects of his divine attention. The theory of our world being consigned to inferior divinities more like our imperfect selves, was a suggestion of infant philosophy attempting to reconcile their perception of the exalted majesty of the Deity with their feeling of the daily misconduct and follies of the human race. They would neither deny his existence, nor disbelieve his providence, nor could they live in comfort without believing it; and polytheism was patronised by the refining religious intellect as a supposition calculated to unite both these truths, and to satisfy the doubts of the scrupulous and

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inquisitive. At first they were but venerated as his ministers and delegates. But as new refinements or caprices arose, and especially after the custom of allegorising natural phenomena prevailed, the fancied deities were multiplied, and connected with all the departments and agencies of nature. Hero-worship emerged from their belief of the soul's immortality, and was in time added to that excess of posthumous gratitude and veneration to which mankind are always prone.

THE use of idols was an attempt to solace the mind, to excite the memory, interest the feelings, and fix the attention by a visible image of the invisible Omnipresence. In all religious countries they have been found to be efficacious for these purposes, especially with the less intellectual. But in all, both polytheism and idolatry are found at last to fix the mind almost exclusively on their own false imaginations, to deprave the reasoning faculty, to supersede the adoration of the universal Parent, and to occasion the most deplorable superstitions and tyrannical persecutions. The continuing advance of the human mind then led to the abolition of both these fictitious systems as steadily as it originally suggested them. When our Saxon ancestors had settled themselves in England they used both. They had many gods, and they venerated their images; but that the progress of their manly intellect was fast operating to shake the attachment to their national superstitions, we may infer from the candour with which they listened to the first Christian missionaries, and from the rapidity with which they adopted the Christian faith.

THERE is a beauty in the name appropriated by the Saxon and German nations to the Deity which is not equalled by any other, except his most venerated Hebrew appellation. The Saxons called him *God*, which is

literally, THE GOOD; the same word signifying both the Deity and his most endearing quality.

THE peculiar system of the Anglo-Saxons is too imperfectly known to us for its stages to be discriminated, or its progress detailed. It appears to have been of a very mixed nature, and to have been so long in existence as to have attained a regular establishment and much ceremonial pomp.

THAT when they settled in Britain they had idols, altars, temples, and priests; that their temples were surrounded with inclosures; that they were profaned if lances were thrown into them; and that it was not lawful for a priest to bear arms, or to ride but on a mare; we learn from the unquestionable authority of our Venerable Bede.¹

SOME of the subjects of their adoration we find in their names for the days of the week.

Sunday,	or Sunnan dæg,	is the Sun's day.
Monday,	or Monan dæg,	is the Moon's day.
Tuesday,	or Tīwe dæg,	is Tiv's day.
Wednesday,	or Wodnes dæg,	is Woden's day.
Thursday,	or Thunwe dæg,	is Thunre's day.
Friday,	or Frīge dæg,	is Friga's day.
Saturday,	or Seterne dæg,	is Seterne's day. ²

¹ Bede, lib. ii. c. 13. et 9.; lib. iii. c. 8.; lib. ii. c. 6. Pope Gregory mentions, that if their pagan temples were well built, they might be used for Christian churches, lib. i. c. 30. Their name for idol was *wiȝ*, and for altar *wiȝbed*, the table or bed of the idol. The word *wiȝ* also signifies war, and this may imply either that the idol was a warrior, or the god of war.

² I take the Saxon names of the days of the week from the Cotton MS. Tiberius A. 3. They may be also found in the Saxon gospels, p. 24 S. 72 M. 55 T. 48 W. 49 Th. 28 F. 52 S. As *Thop* means also a mountain, his name may

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Of the sun and moon we can only state, that their sun was a female deity, and their moon was of the male sex³; of their Tiw, we know nothing but his name. Woden was the great ancestor from whom they deduced their genealogies. It has been already remarked, that the calculations from the Saxon pedigrees place Woden in the third century.⁴ Of the Saxon Woden, his wife

have some connection with the ancient Eastern custom of worshipping on mountains and hills. He was called the god of thunder; hence is named Thunpe. The word Thor seems to imply the mountain deity.

³ The same peculiarity of genders obtained in the ancient Northern language. Edda Semundi, p. 14. It is curious, that in the passage of an Arabian poet, cited by Pocock, in not. ad Carmen Tograi, p. 13, we meet with a female sun and masculine moon. The distich is,

Nec nomen femininum soli dedecus,
Nec masculinum lunæ gloria.

Thus the Caribbees think the moon a man, and therefore make it masculine, and call it Noneim. Breton's Gram. Carabb. p. 20. So the Hindu Chandra, or moon, is a male deity, 2 A. R. 127. The priests of Ceres called the moon Apis, and also Taurus. Porph. de Ant. Reg. 119. Cæsar mentions, that the Germans worshipped the sun and moon, lib. vi. c. 19. In the Saxon treatise on the vernal equinox we have their peculiar genders of these bodies displayed. "When the sun goeth at evening under this earth, then is the earth's breadth between us and the sun; so that we have not *her* light till *she* rises up at the other end." Of the moon it says, "always *he* turns *his* ridge to the sun."—"The moon hath no light but of the sun, and *he* is of all stars the lowest."—Cotton MS. Tib. A. iii. p. 63.

⁴ 1 Anglo-Saxons, p. 202. Perhaps hleoþop, the Saxon for oracle, may have some reference to Thor. þleo means a shady place, or an asylum. þleoþop is literally the retirement of Thor. þleoþop cpyðe means the saying of an oracle. þleoþopꝛede the place of an oracle.

Friga, and of Thunr, or Thor, we know very little, and it would not be very profitable to detail all the reveries which have been published about them. The Odin, Frigg, or Frega, and Thor of the Northmen, were obviously the same characters; though we may hesitate to ascribe to the Saxon deities the apparatus and mythology which the Northern scalds of subsequent ages have transmitted to us from Denmark, Iceland, and Norway. Woden was the predominant idol of the Saxon adoration, but we can state no more of him but so far as we describe the Odin of the Danes and Norwegians.⁵

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⁵ Without imitating those who have lately fancied that there never was an Odin, and that he is merely a mythological personage, the name of a deity, we may remark, that the date of Odin's appearance in the North cannot be accurately ascertained. This difficulty has arisen partly from the confusion in which, from their want of chronology, all the incidents of the North, anterior to the eighth century, are involved, and partly from the wild and discordant fictions of the scalds, who have clouded the history of Odin by their fantastic mythology. The same obscurity attends the heroes of all countries who have been deified after death, and upon whose memory the poets have taken the trouble to scatter the weeds as well as the flowers of their fancy. The human existence of Odin appears to me to be satisfactorily proved by two facts: 1st, The founders of the Anglo-Saxon octarchy deduced their descent from Odin by genealogies in which the ancestors are distinctly mentioned up to him. These genealogies have the appearance of greater authenticity by not being the servile copies of each other; they exhibit to us different individuals in the successive stages of the ancestry of each, and they claim different children of Odin as the founders of the lines. These genealogies are also purely Anglo-Saxon. 2d, The other circumstance is, that the Northern chroniclers and scalds derive their heroes also

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THE names of two of the Anglo-Saxon goddesses have been transmitted to us by Bede. He mentions RHEDA, to whom they sacrificed in March, which, from her rites, received the appellation of Rehd-monath; and EOSTRE, whose festivities were celebrated in April, which thence obtained the name of Eorþe-monath.⁶ Her name is still retained to express the season of our great pascal solemnity: and thus the memory of one of the idols of our ancestors will be perpetuated as long as our language and country continue. Their name for a goddess was ȝyðena; and as the word is applied as a proper name instead of Vesta⁷, it is not unlikely that they had a peculiar divinity so called.

THE idol adored in Heligland, one of the islands originally occupied by the Saxons, was FOSETE, who was so celebrated that the place became known by his name; it was called Fořeteřland. Temples were there built to him, and the country was deemed so sacred, that none dared to touch any animal which fed on it, nor to draw water from a fountain which flowed there,

from Odin by his different children. Snorre, in his Ynglinga Saga, gives a detailed history of Sweden regularly from him; and though the Northerns cannot be suspected of having borrowed their genealogies from the Anglo-Saxons, yet they agree in some of the children ascribed to Odin. This coincidence between the genealogies preserved in their new country of men who left the North in the fifth and sixth centuries, and the genealogies of the most celebrated heroes who acted in the North during the subsequent ages, could not have arisen if there never had been an Odin who left such children. I have already expressed my opinion, that the Anglo-Saxon genealogies lead us to the most probable date of Odin's arrival in the North.

⁶ Bede, De Temporum Ratione, in his works, vol. ii. p. 81.

⁷ See Saxon Dictionary, voc. ȝyðena.

unless in awful silence. In the eighth century, Willebrord, a converted Anglo-Saxon, born in Northumbria, who, under the auspices of his uncle Boniface, went missionary to Friesland, endeavoured to destroy the superstition, though Radbod, the fierce king of the island, devoted to a cruel death all who violated it. Willebrord, fearless of the consequences, baptized three men in the fountain, invoking the Trinity, and caused some cattle who were feeding there to be killed for the food of his companions. The surrounding pagans expected them to have been struck dead or insane.⁸

THAT the Angles had a goddess whom they called Hertha, or mother Earth, we learn from Tacitus. He says, that in an island in the ocean there was a grove, within which was a vehicle covered with a garment, which it was permitted to the priest alone to touch. The goddess was presumed to be within it, and was carried, by cows, with great veneration. Joy, festivity, and hospitality were then universal. Wars and weapons were forgotten, and peace and quiet reigned, then only known, then only loved, until the priest returned the goddess to her temple, satiated with mortal converse. The vehicle, the garment, and the goddess herself, were washed in a secret lake. Slaves ministered, who were afterwards drowned.⁹

THE Saxons dreaded an evil being, whom they named

⁸ Alcuini vita S. Willebrord in his works, p. 1438, or in Sanct. Hist. Col. vol. vi. p. 130, Charles Martel conquered Radbod, and added the island to his dominions, *ibid.* Saint Liudger, who died in 809, destroyed the temples of Fosete. See his life by Altfridus, who was alive in 848, in Act. Sanct. Bolland. March. tom. iii. p. 646.

⁹ Tacit. de mor. German.

Faul¹⁰; some kind of female power they called an elf, who is very frequently used as a complimentary simile to their ladies. Thus Judith is said to be elf-jcinu, shining as an elf.¹¹ They also venerated stones, groves, and fountains.¹² The continental Saxons respected the lady Hera, a fancied being, who was believed to fly about in the air in the week after their Jule, or between our Christmas and Epiphany. Abundance was thought to follow her visit.¹³ We may add that Hilde, one of their terms for battle, seems to allude to a war-goddess of that name.

THAT the Saxons had many idols, appears from several authors. Gregory, in the eighth century, addressing the old Saxons, exhorts them to abandon their idols, whether of gold, silver, brass, stone, or any other

¹⁰ That Faul might not hurt, was part of one of their exorcisms. See Sax. Dict. voce Faul.

¹¹ So Judith, p. 21.

¹² See Meginhard. Conrad Usperg. Wilkins, 83. Linden. Gloss. 1473.

¹³ Gobelin ap. Meibom. Irminsula. p. 12. We may add that Bede, in his commentary on Luke, mentions demons appearing to men as females, and to women as men, whom, he says, the Gauls call Dusii, the presumed origin of our word deuce. Hincmar, in 16 Bib. Mag. 561. But he does not say that these demons were part of the Saxon paganism. There were two personages feared in the North, whom we may mention here, as words from their names have become familiar to ourselves; one was Ochus Bochus, a magician and demon, the other was Neccus, a malign deity who frequented the waters. If any perished in whirlpools, or by cramp, or bad swimming, he was thought to be seized by Neccus. Steel was supposed to expel him, and therefore all who bathed threw some little pieces of steel in the water for that purpose. Verel. Suio-Goth. p. 13. It is probable that we here see the origin of hocus pocus, and Old Nick.

kind.¹⁴ Hama, Flinnus, Siba, and Zernebogus, or the black, malevolent, ill-omened deity, are said to have occupied part of their superstitions, but we cannot be answerable for more than their names.¹⁵ A Saxon Venus has been also mentioned; she is exhibited as standing naked in a car, with myrtle round her head, a lighted torch in her breast, and the figure of the world in her right hand. But this description implies too much refinement in its allusions, and the authority is not decisive.¹⁶

THE account of Crodus has stronger marks of authenticity; it seems to have been preserved in the Brunswick Chronicle, from which more recent historians have taken their descriptions. The figure of Crodus was that of an old man clothed in a white tunic, with a linen girdle with floating ends. His head was uncovered; his right hand held a vessel, full of roses and other flowers, swimming in water; his left hand supported the wheel of a car; his naked feet stood on a rough scaly fish like a perch.¹⁷ It was raised on a pedestal. It was found on the Mount Hercinius, in the fortress of Harsbourg, which was anciently called Satur-bourg¹⁸, or the fortified

¹⁴ 16 Bib. Mag. 101.

¹⁵ Fabricius Hist. Sax. p. 62. Verstigan describes the idol Flynt as the image of death in a sheet, holding a torch, and placed on a great flint-stone. He was also represented as a man in a great cloke, with a lion on his head and shoulders, and carrying a torch. His figure was sometimes more deformed with monstrous feet. It had a crown on its head. Montf. Ant. Exp. c. 10.

¹⁶ Gyraldus says he read of this idol in the Saxon histories. Worm. Mon. p. 19.

¹⁷ Albinus Nov. Sax. Hist. p. 70, and Fabricius, p. 61.

¹⁸ Montfaucon Ant. Exp. c. 10. He says, that at the entrance of this fortress the place was, in his time, shown where this image stood.

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THAT the Saxons had the dismal custom of human sacrifices on some occasions, cannot be doubted. Tacitus mentions it as a feature of all the Germans, that on certain days they offered human victims to their chief deity. Sidonius attests, that on their return from a depredation the Saxons immolated one-tenth of their captives, selected by lot.²⁰ We have already mentioned, that for sacrilege the offender was sacrificed to the god whose temple he had violated; and Ennodius states of the Saxons, Heruli, and Francs, that they were believed to appease their deities with human blood.²¹ But whether human sacrifices were an established part of their superstitious ritual, or whether they were but an occasional immolation of captives or criminals, cannot be decided. Nor is the distinction material.²²

¹⁹ The description of Prono, of the three-headed Trigla, of Porevith with five heads, and Svanto with four; of Radegast with a bull's head in his breast, and an eagle on his head, mentioned by Montfaucon from Grosser's History of Lusatia, seem to be more Oriental than Teutonic, and may have come into Germany from the later Sarmatian tribes.

²⁰ Tac. De Moribus Germ. Sid. Apoll. ep. vi. lib. 8. Herodotus says of the Scythians, the presumed ancestors of the Saxons, that they sacrificed to Mars every hundredth man of their prisoners. Melp.

²¹ Ennodius in Mag. Bib. Pol. 15. p. 306.

²² Of the human sacrifices of the Northmen we have more express testimony. Dithmar apud Steph. 92, says, that in Seland, in January, they slew ninety-nine men, and as many horses, dogs, and cocks, to appease their deities. Snorre mentions a king of Sweden who immolated nine of his sons to Odin, to obtain an extension of life, i. p. 34. He also states that the Swedes sacrificed one of their sovereigns to

OF the rites of the Anglo-Saxons we cannot learn many particulars. In the month of February they offered cakes to their deities, which occasioned the month to be called *Sol monath*. September, from its religious ceremonies, was denominated *Haliȝ monath*, the holy month. November was marked, as the month of sacrifices, *Bloȝ monath*, because at this period they devoted to their gods the cattle that they slew.²³ As it was their custom to use during the winter salted or dried meat, perhaps November, or *Bloȝ monath*, was the period when the winter provision was prepared and consecrated.

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THEIR celebrated festival of *Leol*, *Jule*, or *Yule*, which occurred at the period of our Christmas, was a combination of religion and conviviality. December was called *eppa Leola*, or before the *Leol*. January was *eƿepa Leola*, or after it. As one of the Saxon names for Christmas day was *Leola*, or *Leohol deȝ*, it is likely that this was the time when the festival commenced. This day was the first of their year; and as Bede derives it from the turning of the sun, and the days beginning then to lengthen²⁴; as it was also called

Odin, to obtain plenty, *ib.* p. 56. When the famine began, oxen were offered up; in the following autumn, they proceeded to human victims, and at last destroyed their king. Dudo Quint. says, they slew cattle and men in honour of Thor. For other instances of human sacrifices in the North, see *Herv. Saga*, 97.; *Ara Frode*, 63. 145.; *Kristni Saga*, 93.

²³ Bede, *De Temporum Ratione*, p. 81. See a good description of a Danish sacrifice in *Snorre*, *Saga Hak. God.* c. 16.

²⁴ Bede, *De Temporum Ratione*. I see that *ȝyl runne* once occurs in a hymn, "Let the sun shine." See *Dict. voc. Gyl*. They who desire to see the opinions which have been given of the derivation of the *Leol* will be assisted by *Hickes*, *Dissert. Ep.* p. 212, &c.

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mother night, and their sun was worshipped as a female, I suspect that this was a festival dedicated to the sun.

BUT the Saxon idol, whose celebrity on the continent was the most eminent, was the IRMINSULA.²⁵

THE name of this venerated idol has been spelt with varying orthography. The Saxon Chronicle, published at Mentz in 1492, calls it Armensula, which accords with the pronounciation of modern Saxony. The appellation adhered to by Meibomius, the most elaborate investigator of this curious object of Saxon idolatry, is Irminsula.²⁶

It stood at Eresberg, on the Dimele.²⁷ This place the Saxon Chronicle above mentioned calls Marsburg. The Rhyning Chronicle of the thirteenth century writes it Mersberg, which is the modern name.²⁸

Its temple was spacious, elaborate, and magnificent. The image was raised upon a marble column.²⁹

THE predominant figure was an armed warrior. Its right hand held a banner, in which a red rose was conspicuous; its left presented a balance. The crest of its helmet was a cock; on its breast was engraven a bear, and the shield depending from its shoulders exhibited a lion in a field full of flowers.³⁰ The expressions of Adam of Bremen seem to intimate that it was of wood,

²⁵ The most complete account of this idol is in the *Irminsula Saxonica*, by Henry Meibomius. It is in the third volume of his *Rerum German. Hist.* published by the two Meibomii.

²⁶ Meibom. p. 6. It has been called *Irminsulus*, *Irminsul*, *Irmindsul*, *Erminsul*, *Hermansaul*, *Hormensul*, *Hermesuel*, *Hermensul*, and *Adurmensul*, *ibid.*

²⁷ *Ibid.* c. ii. p. 6.

²⁸ *Ibid.* p. 7.

²⁹ *Ibid.* c. iii. p. 8.

³⁰ *Ibid.* p. 9. The particular descriptions of this idol are all taken from the Saxon Chronicle printed at Mentz.

and that the place where it stood had no roof. It was the largest idol of all Saxony, and, according to Rolwinck, a writer of the fifteenth century, whose authorities are not known to us, though the warlike image was the principal figure, three others were about it.³¹ From the chronicle called the Vernacular Chronicle, we learn that the other Saxon temples had pictures of the Irminsula.³²

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PRIESTS of both sexes attended the temple. The women applied themselves to divination and fortunetelling; the men sacrificed, and often intermeddled with political affairs, as their sanction was thought to insure success.

THE priests of the Irminsula at Eresberg appointed the gow graven, the governors of the districts of continental Saxony. They also named the judges, who annually decided the provincial disputes. There were sixteen of these judges: the eldest, and therefore the chief, was called Gravius; the youngest, Frono, or attendant; the rest were Freyerichter, or free judges. They had jurisdiction over seventy-two families. Twice a year, in April and October, the Gravius and the Frono went to Eresberg, and there made a placatory offering of two wax lights and nine pieces of money. If any of the judges died in the year, the event was notified to the priests, who out of the seventy-two families chose a substitute. In the open air, before the door of the person appointed, his election was seven times announced to the people in a loud voice, and this was his inauguration.

IN the hour of battle, the priests took their favourite image from its column, and carried it to the field. After

³¹ Meibom. c. iii. p. 9.

³² Ibid.

CHAP. III. the conflict, captives, and the cowardly of their own army, were immolated to the idol.³³ Meibomius states two stanzas of an ancient song, in which the son of a Saxon king, who had lost a battle, complains that he was delivered to the priest to be sacrificed.³⁴ He adds, that, according to some writers, the ancient Saxons, and chiefly their military, on certain solemn days, clothed in armour, and brandishing iron cestus, rode round the idol, and, sometimes dismounting to kneel before it, bowed down and murmured out their prayers for help and victory.³⁵

To whom this great image was erected, is a question full of uncertainty. Because *Ερμης* approached the sound of Irminsul, and *Αρης* that of Eresberg, it has been referred to Mars and Mercury.³⁶ Some considered it a memorial of the celebrated Arminius³⁷; and one has laboured to prove that it was an hieroglyphical effigy, intended for no deity in particular.³⁸

³³ Meib. c. iii. p. 10. Tacitus mentions generally of the Germans, that they detached their idols and banners from their sacred groves, and carried them to the field of battle. Germ. s. 7.

³⁴ The verses are :

Sol ich nun in Gottes fronen hende
 In meinen aller besten tagen
 Geben werden, und sterben so elende
 Das musz ich wol hochlich klagen.

Wen mir das glucke fuget hette
 Des streites einen guten ende,
 Dorffte ich nicht leisten diese wette
 Netzen mit blut die hire wende.

Meibom. p. 10.

³⁵ Meibom. p. 11.

³⁶ Ibid. c. v. p. 11.

³⁷ The names to this supposition are very respectable.

³⁸ Joannes Goropius Beccanius is the person whose reve-

IN 772, this venerated object of Saxon superstition was thrown down and broken, and its fame destroyed by Charlemagne. For three days the work of demolition was carried on by one part of the army, while the other remained under arms. Its immense wealth and precious vessels were distributed to the conquerors, or devoted to pious uses.³⁹

THE fate of the column of the image after its eversion may be noticed.⁴⁰ It was thrown into a waggon, and buried on the Weser, in a place where Corbey afterwards stood. It was found again in the reign after Charlemagne, and was transported beyond the Weser. The Saxons attempting to rescue it, a battle ensued on

ries are given at length in Meibomius, 13—17. We may suggest as a new opinion, that either Hermansul literally expresses, “The Pillar of the Lord the Moon, or the Lord Man,” whom the Germans, according to Tacitus, revered. As the moon was a male deity, Mannus and the moon may have been the same person. From the inscription mentioned below, it was clearly their war god. The similarity between Irmin and *Egmunz* may have led Tacitus to mention that the Germans chiefly worshipped Mercury, s. 9.

³⁹ Meibom. p. 18. The image is said to have been long preserved in the monastery at Corbey. It then bore this inscription: “Formerly I was the leader and god of the Saxons. The people of war adored me. The nation who worshipped me governed the field of battle.” Ibid.

⁴⁰ It was about eleven feet long, and the circumference of the base was about twelve cubits. The base was of rude stone, or of gravel-stone. The column was marble, of a light red colour. Its belts were of orichalchus; the upper and lower gilt, and also the one between these and the crown, which is also gilt, as is the upper circle incumbent on it, which has three heroic verses. The whole work was surrounded with iron rails, dentated to preserve it from injury. Meibom. p. 31. He has given a plate of it.

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the spot, which was afterwards called Armensula, from the incident. The Saxons were repulsed, and, to prevent further chances, the column was hastily thrown into the Inner. A church being afterwards built in the vicinity, at Hillesheim, it was conveyed into it after much religious lustration, and placed in the choir, where it long served to hold their lights at their festivals.⁴¹ For many ages it remained neglected and forgotten, till at length Meibomius saw it, and a canon of the church, friendly to his studies, had its rust and discoloration taken off.⁴²

IDOLATROUS nations are eminently superstitious. The proneness of mankind to search into futurity attempts its gratification, in the æras of ignorance, by the fallacious use of auguries, lots, and omens.

ALL the German nations were addicted to these absurdities, and the account which Tacitus relates of them generally is applied by Meginhard to the ancient Saxons. They were infatuated to believe that the voices and flights of birds were interpreters of the Divine will. Horses were supposed to neigh from celestial inspiration, and they decided their public deliberations by the wisdom of lots. They cut a small branch of a fruit-tree into twigs, marked them, and scattered them at random on a white vest. The priest, if it were a public council, or the father, at a private consultation, prayed, gazed at heaven, drew each three times, and interpreted according to the mark previously impressed. If the omen were adverse, the council was deferred.⁴³

⁴¹ Meibom. p. 19. and p. 31.

⁴² Ibid. p. 19. Our ancient Irmin-street has been lately conjectured to have been derived from the name of this idol. If so, the inference would be reasonable that it was worshipped also in England.

⁴³ Tacit. de morib. Germ. and Meginhard, p. 39.; and

To explore the fate of an impending battle, they selected a captive of the nation opposing, and appointed a chosen Saxon to fight with him. They judged of their future victory or defeat by the issue of this duel.⁴⁴

THE notion which from Chaldea pervaded both East and West, that the celestial luminaries influenced the fortunes of mankind, operated powerfully on the Saxon mind. Affairs were thought to be undertaken with better chance on peculiar days, and the full or new moon was the indication of the auspicious season.⁴⁵

MAGIC, the favourite delusion of ignorant man, the invention of his malignity, or the resort of his imbecility, prevailed among the Anglo-Saxons. Even one of their kings chose to meet the Christian missionaries in the open air, because he fancied that magical arts had peculiar power within a house.⁴⁶

OF the speculative principles of the Anglo-Saxon Paganism we have no written evidence. But of the religion of the Northmen, which prevailed in or near the parts which the Angles and Saxons inhabited about the Elbe, and was the religion of the Northmen colonies of England, we have sufficient documents remaining. In these we probably contemplate the substance of the faith of our rude forefathers. In some respects the polytheism of the north was one of the most rational forms of its erroneous theory; and, though inferior in taste

see Bede, p. 144. 147. In the law of the Frisians there is a curious order of determining by lot, with twigs, who was guilty of a homicide, when it occurred in a popular tumult. See it in Lindenb. i. p. 496. Alfred, in his version of Bede, says, they hluton mis tanum, they cast lots with twigs, p. 624.

⁴⁴ Meginhard, p. 39.

⁴⁵ Ibid.

⁴⁶ Bede, i. c. 25. p. 61.

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and imagination, displays on the whole a vigour and an improvement of mind beyond the classical mythology. The Edda, though wilder, has better theology than much of Ovid's *Metamorphoses*.

It is remarkable, that the Northmen venerated three principal supreme deities connected with each other by relationship. Odin, whom they called All-father, or the universal parent; Freya, his wife; and their son Thor. Idols of these three were placed in their celebrated temple at Upsal.⁴⁷ Of these the Danes, like the Anglo-Saxons, paid the highest honour to Odin; the Norwegians and Icelanders to Thor; and the Swedes to Freya.⁴⁸

IN the system of the Northmen's religion, we see the great principles of the ancient theism, mingled with the additions of allegory, polytheism, and idolatry. Odin's first name is the All-father, though many others were subjoined to this in the process of time. He is described in the Edda as the First of the Gods: "He lives for ever: he governs all his kingdom, both the small parts and the great: he made heaven, and the earth, and the air: he made man, and gave him a spirit which shall live even after the body shall have vanished. Then the just and the well-deserving shall dwell with him in a place called Gimle; but bad men shall go to ⁴⁹Hela." In other parts it adds: "When the All-father sits on his supreme throne, he surveys with his eyes all the

⁴⁷ Ad. Brem.

⁴⁸ Mallet. *Nort. Antiq.* vol. i. p. 97. So in the Edda, Gangler is represented as beholding three thrones, each above the other. The lowest was called the lofty one; the second his equal; the highest was named "the third." *Suppl. Nor. Ant.* vol. ii. p. 282.

⁴⁹ Edda, *Hist. Prim.* p. 283. See the twelve names given to Odin, p. 285. and 46. in p. 305.

world and the manners of all men.”⁵⁰ — “Odin is the first and the most ancient: he governs all things; and though the rest of the gods are powerful, yet they serve him as children their father. He is called All-father, because he is the father of all the gods.”⁵¹ Thor is represented as the son of Odin and Freya, and the Earth is called Odin’s daughter.⁵²

THEY had some remarkable traditions preserved in their ancient Voluspa. One, that the earth and heavens were preceded by a state of non-entity.⁵³ Another, that at a destined period the earth and all the universe would be destroyed by fire. This catastrophe was connected with a being, that was to direct it, whom they called Surtur, or the black one.⁵⁴ Till this day Loke,

⁵⁰ Edda, Hist. Sext. p. 292.

⁵¹ Edda, Hist. Duod. p. 305.

⁵² Edda, p. 292.

⁵³ The words of the Voluspa are: “At the beginning of time there was nothing: neither land, nor sea, nor foundations below. The earth was nowhere to be found: nor the heaven above. There was an infinite abyss, and grass nowhere.” Edda, Hist. Prim. p. 284.

⁵⁴ The Edda thus describes him: “First of all was Muspells-heim. It is lucid, glowing, and impervious to strangers. There Surtur rules, and sits in the extremity of the earth. He holds a flaming sword, and will come at the end of the world and conquer all the gods and burn the unwise. Edda,” p. 286. The more ancient and oracular Voluspa thus speaks of this period:—

“ The giant Hrymr rides from the east.
The sea swells.
The serpent that surrounds the world
Turns himself with gigantic might.
The snake moves the seas.
The eagle clamours;
It tears the dead with its beak.
The ship of nails is loosened.

CHAP. their principle of evil, was to remain in the cave and
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It floats from the East.
 The sons of Muspell come
 Along the deep :
 Loke governs them.
 The raging people press on.

What occurs among the gods?
 What among the Elfi?
 The world of the giants resounds.
 The gods are in the council.
 The dwarfs groan
 Before their stone doors.
 They knew the paths of the rocks.
 Do you know what is happening?

Surtur is coming from the south
 With Fire, his companion.
 Like the sun shines his sword :
 The sword of the gods of slaughter.
 The rocks threaten destruction.
 The giantesses are wandering.
 Men tread the path of Hela.
 The heavens are cleft asunder.

Then to Hlina
 Will come a second grief,
 When Odin goes forth
 To battle with the wolf.
 And the slayer of Bela ;
 The fair one, with Surtur,
 Then will fall,
 The husband of Freya.

The Voluspa then mentions that Vidar, a son of Odin, will revenge his father's death on the wolf; and that Thor will kill the great serpent. It adds:

All mankind
 Will disappear from the world —

chains of iron to which he was consigned.⁵⁵ A new world is to emerge at this period; the good will be ⁵⁶ happy. The gods will sit in judgment, and the wicked will be condemned to a dreary habitation.⁵⁷ The Edda ends

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The sun darkens ;
The sea overwhelms the earth ;
The peaceful stars
Vanish from the sky.
Fire rages
To the end of the age.
The ascending flame
Plays on the heavens.

See the original, ap. Bartholin, 590—595.

⁵⁵ Edda, p. 347.

⁵⁶ The Voluspa thus describes it :—

Then will be seen again
A green world come up
Out of the sea.
The waters will glide ;
The eagle flies,
And takes the fish in the mountains.

The gods will meet
In the field of Ida,
And there discourse
On the desolated abode ;
And there will discuss
Great conferences
And the ancient words of Odin.

Voluspa, ib. p. 596, 597.

⁵⁷ “ The hall will then be seen to stand

Fairer than the sun,
Covered with gold
In Gimli.
There the just people will dwell,
And for endless days
Enjoy pleasure.

CHAP. with another description of this final period, which pre-
 III. sents it to us in a more detailed shape.

“ Snow will rush from all the quarters of the world. Three winters without a summer will be followed by three others, and

The powerful one will then come
 For the divine judgment.
 The strong one from the realms above,
 Who governs all things.
 He brings the sentence,
 And determines the causes.
 He appoints the sacred destinies
 Which will be fulfilled.

Then will come the dim
 And flying dragon ;
 The fierce serpent from below
 The mountains of Nida,
 He floats on his wings ;
 He hovers over the plain ;
 Nidhoggr, over the dead.
 Now the earth shall be swallowed up.

A hall will be seen to stand,
 Far from the sun,
 In Nastrondo.
 Its doors behold the north.
 Poison-drops distil
 Within from its windows.
 The abode is woven round
 With serpent-thorns.

There, over rapid rivers,
 Will be seen to go
 The perjured
 And the assassins ;
 And they who pull the ear
 Of another's wife.
 Nidhoggr will there gnaw

then wars will pervade the whole world. Brother, father, son, will perish by each other's hands. The wolf will devour the sun; another, the moon. The stars will fall from heaven. The earth trembles. Mountains and trees are torn up. The sea rushes over the earth. Midgard the great serpent hastens over it. The ship made of the nails of dead men floats. The giant Hrymer is its pilot. The wolf Fenris opens his enormous mouth; the lower jaw touching the earth; the upper, the heavens. The serpent breathes poison over heaven, and the sons of Muspell ride forward: Surtur leads them. Before him, behind him, a glowing fire spreads. His sword radiates like the sun. From their course the bridge of heaven is broken. They move towards a plain, and Fenris and Midgard follow. There Loke and Hrymer meet them with all the infernal genii. The hosts of the sons of Muspell glitter round. Heundal sounds vehemently his tremendous trumpet to awaken the gods. Odin consults. The ash Ygdraul trembles. Every thing in heaven and earth is in fear. The gods and heroes arm. Odin, with his golden helmet, moves against Fenris. Thor assails Midgard. Frey falls beaten down by Surtur. The dog Garmer attacks Tyr, and both perish. Thor kills the serpent, but dies also. And the wolf devours Odin. Vidar seizes the monster's jaws, and at last rends them asunder. Loke and Heundal slay each other. Surtur then darts his flames over all the earth, and the whole world is consumed." ⁵⁸

THESE traditions correspond with the idea mentioned in the beginning of this work, that the barbaric nations of Europe have sprung from the branches of more civilised states.

The bodies of the dead.

The wolf will tear them.

Knowest thou what is coming?

Voluspa, ap. Barth. p. 599—601.

The same events are mentioned in the Vafthrudnismal, Edd. Scm. p. 28—33.

⁵⁸ Edda, last chapter, p. 347—350. It then proceeds to describe the new world.

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ALLEGORY, disturbed imagination, mysticism, and perverted reasoning, have added to these traditions many wild and absurd tales, whose meaning we cannot penetrate. The formation of Nifl-heim, or hell, from whose rivers came frozen vapours; and Muspeil-heim, or the world of fire, from which lightning and flames issued. The gelid vapours melting from the heat into drops: one of these becoming the giant Ymer⁵⁹, and another, the cow *Ædumla*, to nourish him; who, by licking off the rocks their salt and hoar frost, became a beautiful being, from whose son Bore, their Odin, and the gods proceeded⁶⁰; while from the feet of the wicked Ymer sprang the Giants of the Frost. The sons of Bore slaying Ymer, and so much blood issuing from his wounds as to drown all the families of the Giants of the Frost, excepting one, who was preserved in his⁶¹ bark. The re-creation of the earth from the flesh of Ymer; his perspiration becoming the seas; his bones the mountains; his hair the vegetable races; his brains the clouds; and his head the heavens.⁶² All these display that mixture of reasoning to account for the origin of things; of violent allegory to express its deductions; of confused tradition, and distorting fancy, which the mythologies of all nations have retained.

WE have already remarked, that the general term used by the Anglo-Saxons to express the deity in the abstract was God, which also implied the Good. This identity of phrase carries the imagination to those primeval times, when the Divine Being was best known to his creatures by his gracious attributes, was the object

⁵⁹ Edda, Hist. Tert. p. 288.

⁶⁰ Edda, Hist. Quart. 289.

⁶¹ Edda, Hist. Quin. p. 290. He was called Bergelmer.

⁶² The Voluspa, quoted Edda, p. 291.

of their love, and was adored for his beneficence. But when they departed from the pure belief of the first æras, and bent their religion to suit their habits, new reasonings, and their wishes, then systems arose, attempting to account for the production of things, without his preceding eternity or even agency, and to describe his own origination and destruction. Hence the Northmen cosmogonists taught the rising of the world of frost from the north, and of the world of fire from the south, the forming by their united agency a race of evil beings through Ymer, and of deities through the cow *Ædumla*; a warfare between the divine and the wicked race; the death of Ymer; the fabrication of the earth and heaven out of his body; and the final coming of the powers of the world of fire to destroy all things, and even the deities themselves. The mixture of materialism, atheism, and superstition visible in these notions, shows the divergency of the human mind from its first great truths, and its struggles to substitute its own phantoms and perverted reasonings instead. All polytheism and mythology seem to be an attempted compromise between scepticism and superstition: the natural process of the mind beginning to know, resolved to question, unattending to its ignorance, and solving its doubts by its fancies, or concealing them by its allegories.

THE most formidable feature of the ancient religion of the Anglo-Saxons, as of all the Teutonic nations, was its separation from the pure and benevolent virtues of life and its indissoluble union with war and violence. It condemned the faithless and the perjured; but it represented their Supreme Deity as the father of combats and slaughter, because those were his favourite children who fell in the field of battle. To them he assigned the heavenly Valhall and Vingolfa, and promised to salute

CHAP. III. them after their death as his heroes.⁶³ This tenet sanctified all the horrors of war, and connected all the hopes, energies, and passions of humanity with its continual prosecution.

As the nation advanced in its active intellect it began to be dissatisfied with its mythology. Many indications exist of this spreading alienation⁶⁴, which prepared the Northern mind for the reception of the nobler truths of Christianity, though at first averse from them.

⁶³ Edda, Hist. Duod. p. 304.

⁶⁴ Bartholin has collected some instances which are worth the attention of those who study the history of human nature. One warrior says, that he trusted more to his strength and his arms than to Thor and Odin. Another exclaims: "I believe not in images and demons. I have travelled over many places, and have met giants and monsters, but they never conquered me. Therefore I have hitherto trusted to my own strength and courage." To a Christian who interrogated him, one of these fighters boasted, that he knew no religion, but relied on his own powers. For the same reason a father and his sons refused to sacrifice to the idols. When the king of Norway asked Gaukathor of what religion he was, he answered, "I am neither Christian nor heathen; neither I nor my companions have any other religion than to trust to ourselves and our good fortune, which seem to be quite sufficient for us." Many others are recorded to have given similar answers; despising their idols, yet not favouring Christianity. Another is mentioned as taking rather a middle path. "I do not wish to revile the gods; but Freya seems to me to be of no importance. Neither she nor Odin are any thing to us. See Bartholin de Caus. p. 79—81.

CHAP. IV.

On the Menology and Literature of the PAGAN SAXONS.

IN their computation of time, our ancestors reckoned by nights instead of days, and by winters instead of years. Their months were governed by the revolution of the moon. They began their year from the day which we celebrate as Christmas-day¹, and that night they called Moedrenech, or mother night, from the worship or ceremonies, as Bede imagines, in which, un-sleeping, they spent it. In the common years, they appropriated three lunar months to each of the four seasons. When their year of thirteen months occurred, they added the superfluous month to their summer season, and by that circumstance had then three months of the name of Līða, which occasioned these years of thirteen months to be called Tṛi-Līði. The names of their months were these:

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Līuli, or æftera Geola, answering to our	January.
Sol monath	February.
Rehð monath	March.
Ɔorȝur monath	April.
Tṛi-milchī	May.
Līða	June.
Līða	July.
Weihð, or Wenden monath	August.

¹ The Franks began the year in the autumnal season; for Alcuin writes to Charlemagne: "I wonder why your youths begin the legitimate year from the month of September." Oper. p. 1496.

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	Wýntýr fýlleth	October.
	Bloth monath	November.
	Líuh, or æppa Leola (before Leol)	December.

THEY divided the year into two principal parts, summer and winter. The six months of the longer days were applied to the summer portion, the remainder to winter. Their winter season began at their month pýntýr fýlleth, or October. The full moon in this month was the era or the commencement of this season, and the words pýntýr fýlleth were meant to express the winter full moon.

THE reason of the names of their months of Sol monath, Rehð monath, Eorþur monath, Haliz monath, and Bloth monath, we have already explained. Bede thus accounts for the others :

Tþri-milchi expressed that their cattle were then milked three times a day. Líða signifies mild or navigable, because in these months the serenity of the air is peculiarly favourable to navigation. Wenden monath implies that the month was usually tempestuous. The months of Leola were so called because of the turning of the sun on this day, and the diminution of the length of the night.² One of the months preceded this change, the other followed it.

It has been much doubted whether the Anglo-Saxons had the use of letters when they possessed themselves of England. It is certain that no specimen of any Saxon writing, anterior to their conversion to Christianity, can

² This valuable account of the Saxon year is in Bede, De Temporum Ratione, in the second volume of his works, in the edition of Cologne, p. 81. Other Saxon menologies may be seen in Wanley, 185. and 109.; and a comparative one of the Anglo-Saxons, Franks, Icelanders, Danes, and Swedes, is in Hicckes's Gram. Anglo-Sax. p. 214.

be produced. It cannot therefore be proved that they had letters by any direct evidence, and yet some reasons may be stated which make it not altogether safe to assert too positively, that our ancestors were ignorant of the art of writing in their pagan state.

1st. ALPHABETICAL characters were used by the Northern nations on the Baltic before they received Christianity³, and the origin of these is ascribed to Odin, who heads the genealogies of the ancient Saxon chieftains, as well as those of Sweden, Norway, and Denmark; and who is stated to have settled in Saxony before he advanced to the North.⁴ Either the pagan Saxons were acquainted with the Runic characters, or they were introduced in the North after the fifth century, when the Saxons came to Britain, and before the middle of the sixth, when they are mentioned by Fortunatus, which is contrary to the history and traditions of the Scandinavian nations, and to probability. We may remark, that Run is used in Anglo-Saxon⁵, as Runar in the Icelandic, to express letters or characters.⁶ It is true that Odin used the runæ for the purpose of magic, and that in Saxon *pun-cpæftriȝ*, or skilled in runæ,

³ I would not attribute to the Runic letters an extravagant antiquity, but the inscriptions on rocks, &c. copied by Wormius in his *Literaturæ Runicæ*, and by Stephanus, in his notes on Saxo, prove that the Northerners used them before they received Christianity.

⁴ Snorre, *Ynglinga Saga*.

⁵ So Cedmon uses the word, *pun biȝ zepecenoð*, p. 73.; *hpæt jeo pun buðe*, p. 86.; that he to him the letters should read and explain, *hpæt jeo pun buðe*, p. 90.; he had before said, in his account of Daniel and Belshazzar, that the angel of the Lord *ppæt ȝha in paze popða ȝepýnu barpe bocȝtafar*, p. 90.

⁶ Schilter's *Thesaurus*, vol. iii. p. 693.

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signifies a magician⁷; but the magical application of characters is no argument against their alphabetical nature, because many of the foolish charms which our ancestors and other nations have respected, have consisted, not merely of alphabetical characters, but even of words.⁸

2d. THE passage of Venantius Fortunatus, written in the middle of the sixth century, attests that the Runic was used for the purpose of writing in his time. He says,

The barbarous Runæ is painted on ashen tablets,
And what the papyrus says a smooth rod effects.⁹

Now, as the Anglo-Saxons were not inferior in civilisation to any of the barbarous nations of the North, it cannot be easily supposed that they were ignorant of Runic characters¹⁰, if their neighbours used them.

3d. THOUGH it cannot be doubted that the letters of our Saxon MSS. written after their conversion, are of

⁷ Thus Cedmon says, the *pun-cræftige* men could not read the hand-writing till Daniel came, p. 90.

⁸ One passage in a Saxon MS. confirms this idea: "Then asked the ealdorman the heftling, whether through *drýcpreft*, or through *pýnrtapef*, he had broken his bonds; and he answered that he knew nothing of this craft." Vesp. D. 14. p. 132. Now *pýnrtapef* means literally *ryn* letters. We may remark, that the Welsh word for alphabet is *coel bren*, which literally means the tree or wood of Omen; and see the Saxon description of the northern Runæ, in Hickes's *Gram. Ang. Sax.* p. 135.

⁹ Ven. Fortun. lib. vi. p. 814. Ed. Mag. Bib. tom. viii.

¹⁰ There are various alphabets of the Runæ, but their differences are not very great. I consider those characters to be most interesting which have been taken from the ancient inscriptions remaining in the North. Wormius gives these, *Lit. Run.* p. 58. Hickes, in his *Gram. Anglo-Isl.* c. 1. gives several Runic alphabets.

Roman origin, except only two, the th and the w, þ, þ, the thorn and the wen, yet these two characters are allowed by the best critics to be of Runic ¹¹ parentage; and if this be true, it would show that the Anglo-Saxons were acquainted with Runic as well as with Roman characters when they commenced the hand-writing that prevails in their MSS. C H A P.
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4th. If the Saxons had derived the use of letters from the Roman ecclesiastics, it is probable that they would have taken from the Latin language the words they used to express them. Other nations, so indebted, have done this. To instance from the Erse language:

For book, they have leabhar, from liber.

letter, litir ¹², litera.

to write, scriobham, scribere.

grafam, γραφα.

writing, sgriobhadh, scriptura.

leagham, }
leabham, } legere.

to read,

But nations who had known letters before they became acquainted with Roman literature would have indigenious terms to express them.

THE Saxons have such terms. The most common word by which the Anglo-Saxons denoted alphabetical letters, was ꝛtæf; plural, ꝛtæfa. Elfric, in his Saxon

¹¹ The Saxons used three characters for th, Ð, ð, and þ. Of these the two first seem to be Roman capitals, with a small hyphen. Astle, in his History of Writing, p. 7. and 8. gives these d's. The other, þ, is the Runic d. See Wormius, p. 58. The Runic d, in some dialects, was pronounced th: so dus, a giant, or spectre of the woods, as given by Wormius, p. 94, is by other writers written, thus. I consider the þ to be taken from the þ.

¹² In the Erse Testament, Greek letters are expressed by litrichibh Greigis. Luke, xxiii. v. 38.

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Grammar, so uses it.¹³ The copy of the Saxon coronation oath begins with, "This writing is written, *ƿtæƿ* be *ƿtæƿe* (letter by letter), from that writing which Dunstan, archbishop, gave to our lord at ¹⁴ Kingston." In the same sense the word is used in Alfred's translation of Bede¹⁵, and in the Saxon gospels.¹⁶ It is curious to find the same word so applied in the Runic mythology. In the *Vafthrudis-mal*, one of the odes of the ancient Edda of Semund, it occurs in the speech of Odin, who says "fornum stavfom" in the ancient letters.¹⁷

THE numerous compound words derived from *ƿtæƿ*, a letter, show it to have been a radical term in the language, and of general application.

<i>Stæƿ-cƿeƿt</i> ,	the art of letters.
<i>Stæƿen-roƿ</i> ,	the alphabet.
<i>Stæƿ-ƷeƿeƷ</i> ,	a syllable.
<i>Stæƿlic</i> ,	learned.
<i>Stæƿnian</i> ,	to teach letters.
<i>Stæƿ pleƷa</i> ,	a game at letters.
<i>Stæƿ-ƿiƷe</i> ,	wise in letters.
<i>Stæƿeƿ-heapob</i> ,	the head of the letters.
<i>Stæƿa-nama</i>	the names of the letters.

The same word was also used like the Latin *litera*, to signify an epistle.¹⁸

¹³ Cotton. Lib. Julius, A. 2. ¹⁴ Cotton. Lib. Cleop. B. 13.

¹⁵ Bede, 615. 633.

¹⁶ John, vii. v. 15. Luke, xxiii. v. 38.

¹⁷ Edda Semund, p. 3. In the Icelandic Gospels, for Latin and Hebrew letters we have *Latiniskum* and *Ebreskum bokstefum*. Luke, xxiii. v. 38. The Franco-theotisc, for letters, has a similar compound word, *bok-staven*.

¹⁸ When a letter or authoritative document is mentioned in Saxon, the expressions applied to it are not borrowed from the Latin, as *scriptum*, *mandatum*, *epistola*, and such like; but it is said, "Honorius sent the Scot a *Ʒe-ƿƿit*," Sax.

THE art of using letters, or writing, is also expressed in Saxon by a verb not of Roman origin. The Saxon term for the verb to write is not, like the Erse expression, from the Latin *scribere*, but is “*apputan*,” or “*Ʒepputan*.” This verb is formed from a similar noun of the same meaning as *Ʒtæf*. The noun is preserved in the Mæso-Gothic, where *writs* signifies “a letter.”

IN like manner the Saxons did not derive their word for book from the Latin *liber*; they expressed it by their own term, “*boc*,” as the Northerns called it “*bog*.”

I DO not mean to assert indiscriminately, that whenever a word indigenous in a language is used to express writing, it is therefore to be inferred, that the people using that language have also letters; because it may so happen that the word may not have been an indigenous term for letters, but for something else; and may have been applied to express letters only analogically or metaphorically. To give an instance: the Indians of New England expressed letters, or writing, by the terms *wussukwhonk*, or *wussukwheg*.¹⁹ But the Indians had no letters nor writing among them; whence then had they

Ch. 39.; desired the Pope with his *Ʒe-pput* to confirm it, *ib.* 38. So Alfred, translating Bede, says, “the Pope sent to Augustin *pallium* and *Ʒe-pput*,” *i. c.* 29. here borrowing from the Latin the *pallium*, a thing known to them from the Romans, but using a native Saxon term to express the word *epistle*.

¹⁹ Thus in the Indian Bible, “and this writing was written,” *Dan. v.* 24. is rendered, *kah yeh wassukwheg unussukkuh whosu*; “and this is the writing that was written,” *kah yeh wussukwhonk ne adt tannus-sukuh whosik*, *ib. v.* 25. “Darius signed the writing,” *Darius sealham wussuk whosuonk*, *vi. v.* 9. “And the writing was” *wussuk whonk no*. *John, xix. v.* 19.

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these words? The answer is, that they were in the habit of painting their faces and their garments, and when we made them acquainted with writing, they applied to it their word for painting.²⁰ But though they could figuratively apply their term for painting to express writing, they had nothing to signify a book, and therefore it was necessary to ingraft our English word "book" into their language for that purpose.²¹

ON the whole, I am induced to believe that the Anglo-Saxons were not unacquainted with alphabetical characters when they came into England. However this may be, it is certain that if they had ancient letters, they ceased to use them after their conversion, with the exception of their þ and p. It was the invariable policy of the Roman ecclesiastics to discourage the use of the Runic characters, because they were of pagan origin, and had been much connected with idolatrous superstitions.²² Hence, as soon as the Christian clergy acquired influence in the Saxon octarchy, all that appeared in their literature was in the character which they had formed from the Romans.

²⁰ Thus wussukhosu was a painted coat. Williams' Key to the Language of America, p. 184. ed. 1643, and see his remark, p. 61. The Malays, who have borrowed their letters from other nations, have used the same analogy. Their word "to write" is toolis, which also signifies to paint. See Howison's Malay Dictionary.

²¹ Hence the translator was obliged to express, "this is the book of the generation" by uppometuogane book. Matt. i. v. 1. So, "I have found the book of the law," nunnanteoh naumatue book, 2 Kings, xxii. v. 8. "Hilkiah gave the book," Hilkiah aninnumauau book. Ibid. v. 9.

²² The Swedes were persuaded by the Pope, in 1001, to lay aside the Runic letters, and to adopt the Roman in their stead. They were gradually abolished in Denmark, and afterwards in Iceland.

WE know nothing of the compositions of the Anglo-Saxons in their pagan state. Tacitus mentions generally of the Germans, that they had ancient songs²³, and therefore we may believe that the Anglo-Saxons were not without them. Indeed, Dunstan is said to have learned the vain songs of his countrymen in their pagan state; and we may suppose, that if such compositions had not been in existence at that period, Edgar would not have forbidden men, on festivals, to sing Heathen songs.²⁴ But none of these have survived to us. If they were ever committed to writing, it was on wood, or stones; indeed, their word for book (*boc*) expresses a beech-tree, and seems to allude to the matter of which their earliest books were made.²⁵ The poets of barbarous ages usually confide the little effusions of their genius to the care of tradition. They are seldom preserved in writing till literature becomes a serious study; and therefore we may easily believe, that if the Anglo-Saxons had alphabetical characters, they were much more used for divinations, charms, and funeral inscriptions, than for literary compositions.

²³ De Moribus German.

²⁴ Wilk. Leg. Anglo-Sax. p. 83.

²⁵ Wormius infers, that pieces of wood cut from the beech-tree were the ancient northern books, Lit. Run. p. 6. Saxo Grammaticus mentions, that Fengo's ambassadors took with them *litteras ligno insculptas*, because, adds Saxo, that was formerly a celebrated kind of material to write upon, lib. iii. p. 52. Besides the passage formerly cited from Fortunatus, we may notice another, in which he speaks of the bark as used to contain characters. See Worm. p. 9. who says, that no wood more abounds in Denmark than the beech, nor is any more adapted to receive impressions, *ib.* p. 7. In Welsh, *gwydd*, a tree, or wood, is used to denote a book. Thus Gwilym Tew talks of reading the *gwydd*. Owen's Dict. voc. *Gwydd*.

APPENDIX,

No. II.

ON THE LANGUAGE OF THE ANGLO-SAXONS.

CHAP. I.

On the Structure or Mechanism of the Anglo-Saxon Language.

CHAP.
I.

TO explain the history of any language is a task peculiarly difficult at this period of the world, in which we are so very remote from the era of its original construction.

WE have as yet witnessed no people in the act of forming their language, and cannot therefore from experience demonstrate the simple elements from which a language begins, nor the additional organization which it gradually receives. The languages of highly civilised people, which are those that we are most conversant with, are in a state very unlike their ancient tongues. Many words have been added to them from other languages; many have deviated into meanings very different from their primitive significations; many have been so altered by the changes of pronunciation and orthography, as scarcely to bear any resemblance to their ancient form. The abbreviations of language, which have been usually called its articles, pronouns, conjunctions, prepositions,

adverbs, and interjections; the inflections of its verbs, the declensions of its nouns, and the very form of its syntax, have also undergone so many alterations from the caprice of human usage, that it is impossible to discern any thing of the mechanism of a language but by ascending from its present state to its more ancient form.

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THE Anglo-Saxon is one of those ancient languages to which we may successfully refer, in our inquiries how language has been constructed.

As we have not had the experience of any people forming a language, we cannot attain to a knowledge of its mechanism in any other way than by analysing it; by arranging its words into their different classes, and by tracing these to their elementary sources. We shall perhaps be unable to discover the original words with which the language began, but we may hope to trace the progress of its formation, and some of the principles on which that progress has been made. In this inquiry I shall follow the steps of the author of the *Diversions of Purley*, and build upon his foundations; because I think that his book has presented to us the key to that mechanism which we have so long admired, so fruitlessly examined, and so little understood.

WORDS have been divided into nine classes: the article; the substantive or noun; the pronoun; the adjective; the verb; the adverb; the preposition; the conjunction; and the interjection.

UNDER these classes all the Saxon words may be arranged, although not with that scientific precision with which the classifications of natural history have been made. Mr. Tooke has asserted that in all languages there are only two sorts of words necessary for the communication of our thoughts, and therefore only two parts

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of speech, the noun and the verb, and that the others are the abbreviations of these. That nouns and verbs are the most essential and primitive words of language, and that all others have been formed from them, are universal facts, which, after reading the Diversions of Purley, and tracing in other languages the application of the principles there maintained, no enlightened philologist will now deny. But though this is true as to the *origin* of these parts of speech, it may be questioned whether the names established by conventional use may not be still properly retained, because the words now classed as conjunctions, prepositions, &c., though originally verbs, are not verbs at present, but have been long separated from their verbal parents, and have become distinct parts of our grammatical syntax.

THAT the conjunctions, the prepositions, the adverbs, and the interjections of our language, have been made from our verbs and nouns, Mr. Tooke has satisfactorily shown: and with equal truth he has affirmed, that articles and pronouns have proceeded from the same source. The same may be affirmed of adjectives. Nouns and verbs are the parents of all the rest of language, and it can be proved in the Anglo-Saxon, as in other tongues, that of these the nouns are the ancient and primitive stock from which all other words have branched and vegetated.

THE Anglo-Saxon adjectives may be first noticed.

THE adjectives, which are or have been participles, have obviously originated from verbs, and they are by no means an inconsiderable number.

ADJECTIVES which have been formed from participles, as *aberendlic*, *bebeodenlic*, &c. are referable to the same source.

BUT the large proportion of adjectives are either nouns

used as adjectives¹, or are nouns with an additional syllable. These additional syllables are or have been meaning words. CHAP.
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LIC is an Anglo-Saxon word, which implies similitude, and is a termination which includes a large class of adjectives.²

ANOTHER large class may be ranged under the ending leas, which implies loss or diminution.³

ANOTHER class of adjectives is formed by adding the word sum, which expresses a degree or portion of a thing.⁴

OTHER adjectives are made by putting the word full at the ends of nouns.⁵

A LARGE collection of them might be made, which consist of nouns, and the syllable ig, as blod-ig, bloody; clif-ig, rocky; cræft-ig, skilful. Other adjectives are composed of a noun and cund; others of a noun and bæc, &c. &c.

AFTER these examples, it will be unnecessary to go through all the classes of adjectives to show that they are either participles of verbs, or have sprung from nouns. Every one who takes that trouble will be convinced of

¹ As laþh, evil, also pernicious; lenz, length, also long; hize, diligence, also diligent, &c.

² As ceoplic, vulgar, ceopl-lic; cildlic, childlike, cild-lic; circlie, ecclesiastical, circl-lic; cræftlic, workmanlike, cræft-lic; fpeolic, free, fpeo- (a lord) lic; fpeonðlic, friendly, fpeonð-lic; zoðlic, divine, zoð-lic; zramulic, furious, zrama-(anger) lic; fænlic, muddy, fæn-lic, &c.

³ As caplear, void of care, cap-lear; cræftlear, ignorant, cræft-lear; facenlear, not deceitful, facen-lear; feoh-lear, moneyless, ðream-lear, joyless, &c.

⁴ As fpeumsum, benign, fpeum-sum; yingum, joyful, &c.

⁵ As facen-ful, deceitful; ðeorc-ful, dark; ege-ful, fearful, &c.

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the fact. I will only remark, that the Saxon comparative degree is usually formed by the addition of *er*. Now *er* or *ær* is a word which implies priority, and is therefore very expressively used to denote that degree of superiority which the comparative degree is intended to affirm. So *est*, which is the termination of the Saxon superlatives, is a noun which expressess munificence or abundance. *Tir* is a præfix which makes a superlative, and *tir* signifies supremacy and lordship.

THE Anglo-Saxon VERBS have essentially contributed to form those parts of speech which Mr. Tooke has denominated the abbreviations of language. The verbs, however, are not themselves the primitive words of our language. They are all in a state of composition. They are like the secondary mountains of the earth—they have been formed posterior to the ancient bulwarks of human speech, which are the nouns—I mean of course those nouns which are in their elementary state.

IN some languages, as in the Hebrew, the verbs are very often the nouns applied unaltered to a verbal signification. We have examples of this sort of verbs in our English words, *love*, *hate*, *fear*, *hope*, *dream*, *sleep*, &c. These words are nouns, and are also used as verbs. Of verbs thus made by the simple application of nouns in a verbal form, the Anglo-Saxon gives few examples.

ALMOST all its other verbs are nouns with a final syllable added, and this final syllable is a word expressive of motion, or action, or possession.

To shew this fact we will take some of the Anglo-Saxon verbs :

Bað, a *pledge*.

bæp, a *bier*.

bæth, a *bath*.

bat, a *club*.

bebod, a *command*.

bað-ian, to *pledge*.

bæp-an, to *carry*.

bæth-ian, to *wash*.

beat-an, to *beat*.

bebod-an, to *command*.

biðbe, <i>a prayer.</i>	biðð-an, <i>to pray.</i>
biȝ, <i>a crown.</i>	biȝ-an, <i>to bend.</i>
blifȝ, <i>joy.</i>	blifȝ-ian, <i>to rejoice.</i>
bloȝem, <i>a flower.</i>	bloȝem-ian, <i>to blossom.</i>
blot, <i>a sacrifice.</i>	blot-an, <i>to sacrifice.</i>
boð, <i>an edict.</i>	boð-ian, <i>to proclaim.</i>
boȝȝ, <i>a loan.</i>	boȝȝ-ian, <i>to lend.</i>
briðl, <i>a bridle.</i>	briðl-ian, <i>to bridle.</i>
bȝoc, <i>misery.</i>	bȝoc-ian, <i>to afflict.</i>
bȝe, <i>an habitation.</i>	bȝ-an, <i>to inhabit.</i>
bȝȝeȝ, <i>business.</i>	bȝȝ-ian, <i>to be busy.</i>
bȝȝmp, <i>contumely.</i>	bȝȝmp-ian, <i>to deride.</i>
bȝtla, <i>a builder.</i>	bȝt-ian, <i>to build.</i>
ceap, <i>care.</i>	ceap-ian, <i>to be anxious.</i>
ceap, <i>cattle.</i>	ceap-ian, <i>to buy.</i>
cele, <i>cold.</i>	cel-an, <i>to cool.</i>
ceȝȝe, <i>a bending.</i>	ceȝȝ-an, <i>to return.</i>
cið, <i>strife.</i>	cið-an, <i>to quarrel.</i>
cnȝt, <i>a knot.</i>	cnȝt-an, <i>to tie.</i>
comp, <i>a battle.</i>	comp-ian, <i>to fight.</i>
cræȝt, <i>art.</i>	cræȝt-an, <i>to build.</i>
cupȝ, <i>a curse.</i>	cupȝ-ian, <i>to curse.</i>
cȝið, <i>a saying.</i>	cȝȝið-ian, <i>to say.</i>
cȝȝm, <i>a noise.</i>	cȝȝm-an, <i>to cry out.</i>
cȝth, <i>knowledge.</i>	cȝth-an, <i>to make known.</i>
coȝ, <i>a kiss.</i>	cȝȝ-an, <i>to kiss.</i>
ðæl, <i>a part.</i>	ðæl-an, <i>to divide.</i>
ðæȝ, <i>day.</i>	ðæȝ-ian, <i>to shine.</i>
ðeaȝ, <i>colour.</i>	ðeaȝ-an, <i>to tinge.</i>

If we go through all the alphabet, we shall find that most of the verbs are composed of a noun, and the syllables an, ian, or gan. Of these additional syllables, gan is the verb of motion, to go, or the verb agan, to possess; and an seems sometimes the abbreviation of anan, to give⁶, and sometimes of the verbs gan and agan. Thus

⁶ It is probable that anan is a double infinitive, like gan-gan, to go, and that an is the original infinitive of the verb to give.

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deagan, to tinge, appears to me deag-an, to give a colour; dælan, to divide, dæl-an, to give a part; cossan, to kiss, cos-an, to give a kiss; cursian, to curse, curs-an, to give a curse: while we may presume that eurian, to be anxious, is car-agan, to have care; blostmian, to blossom, is blostm-agan, to have a flower; byan, to inhabit, is by-agan, to have a habitation. We may also say that cydan, to quarrel, is the abbreviation of cid-gan, to go to quarrel; bæthian, to wash, is bæth-gan, to go to a bath; biddan, to pray, is bidde-gan, to go to pray. The Gothic to pray, is bidgan.

THAT the words gan, or agan, have been abbreviated or softened into an, or ian, can be proved from several verbs. Thus fylgan, or filigian, to follow, is also filian. Thus fleogan, to fly, becomes also fleon and flion. So forhtigan, to be afraid, has become also forhtian. So fundigan has become fundian; gethyldgian, gethyldian; fengan, foan and fon; and teogan, teon. The examples of this change are innumerable.

THIS abbreviation is also proved by many of the participles of the abbreviated verbs ending in gend, thus showing the original infinitive to have been gen; as frefrian, to comfort, has its participle frefergend; fremian, to profit, freomigend; fulian has fuligend: gæmnian, gæmnigend, &c.

MANY verbs are composed of the terminations above mentioned, and of words which exist in the Anglo-Saxon, not as nouns, but as adjectives, and of some words which are not to be met with in the Anglo-Saxon, either as nouns or adjectives. But so true is the principle, that nouns were the primitive words of these verbs, and that verbs are but the nouns with the additional final syllables, that we shall very frequently find the noun we search for existing in the state of a noun in some of

those languages which have a close affinity with the Anglo-Saxon. This language meets our eye in a very advanced state, and therefore when we decompose it we cannot expect to meet in itself all its elements. Many of its elements had dropped out of its vocabulary at that period wherein we find it, just as in modern English we have dropped a great number of the words of our Anglo-Saxon ancestors. In this treatise, which the necessary limits of my publication compel me to make very concise, I can only be expected to give a few instances.

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BERAN is to bring forth, or produce; there is no primitive noun answering to this verb in the Anglo-Saxon, but there is in the Franco-theotisc, where we find *bar* is fruit, or whatever the earth produces: *ber-an* is therefore to give fruit, or to produce. So *mærsian*, to celebrate, is from *segan*, to speak, and some noun from which the adjective *mæra*, illustrious, had been formed. The noun is not in the Saxon, but it is in the Franco-theotisc, where *mera*, is fame, or rumour; therefore *mærsian*, to celebrate a person, is *mera-segan*, to speak his fame. I have observed many examples of this sort.

IN searching for the original nouns from which verbs have been formed, we must always consider if the verb we are inquiring about be a primitive verb or a secondary verb, containing either of the præfixes *a*, *be*, *ge*, *for*, *on*, *in*, *to*, *with*, &c. &c. In these cases, we must strip the verb of its præfix, and examine its derivation under its earlier form. The verbs with a præfix are obviously of later origin than the verbs to which the præfix has not been applied.

SOMETIMES the verb consists of two verbs put together, as *gan-gan*, to go; so *for-letan*, to dismiss or leave, is composed of two verbs, *faran*, to go, *lætan*, to let or suffer, and is literally to let go.

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I.

THE Anglo-Saxon NOUNS are not all of the same antiquity, some are the primitive words of the language from which every other has branched, but some are of later date.

WE have mentioned the nouns of which the adjectives and the verbs have been formed. Such nouns are among the earliest of the language. But the more ancient nouns having been applied to form the adjectives and the verbs, a more recent series of nouns has been made by subjoining new terminations to the adjectives and verbs. Thus we have pursued the noun *car* to the adjective *car-full*. But this adjective, having been thus formed, has become the basis of a new substantive, by the addition of the syllable *nysse*, and thus we have *carfulnysse*. In the same way the new noun *carleasness* has been made. So *facenfulness*, &c. &c.

A GREAT many nouns have been made from verbs; as, *gearcung*, preparation, from *gearcian*, to prepare; *gearnung*, earning, from *gearnian*, to earn; *geascung*, an asking, from *geascian*, to ask; *gebicnung*, a presage, from *gebicnian*, to show, &c.

A NEW set of secondary nouns has been made by combining two more ancient nouns. Thus *accorn*, an acorn, is made up of *ac*, an oak and *corn*, and thus *accorn* is literally the corn of the oak; so *ceapscipa* is a merchant ship; *ceapman* a merchant, from *ceap*, originally cattle, and afterwards property, or business; and the other nouns, *scipa*, a ship; and *man*, a man. Thus *ceasterwara*, citizens, literally *ceaster*, a city, and *wara*, men. So *burgwara*, citizens, from *burg* and *wara*. So *eorl-dom*, freondscip, &c.

A GREAT many secondary nouns have been made by adding nouns of meaning terminations, which are in fact other nouns, as *esse*, or *nesse*; *eld*; *er*; *ing*; *leaste*; *dom*, *rice*, *had*; *scipe*; *scire*.

A VERY large proportion of nouns has been made by applying the primitive noun in a variety of figurative meanings. Thus originally ceap, cattle, came afterwards to express business, also sale, and also food. So cniht, a boy, a servant, a youth, a disciple, a client, and a soldier; cræft, art, is also workmanship, strength, power, and cunning. But an hundred examples might be adduced on this topic.

THIS view of the decomposition of the Anglo-Saxon language exhibits the same principles of mechanism which may be found in other languages. They appear very conspicuously in the Welsh language, which, from the long seclusion of the Welsh nation, has retained more of its ancient form than any other language now spoken in Europe. They may be also seen in the Gaelic.

HAVING thus succinctly exhibited the Anglo-Saxon language in a state of decomposition, we may form some notion of its mechanism and progress.

THE primitive nouns expressing sensible objects, having been formed, they were multiplied by combinations with each other. They were then applied to express ideas more abstracted. By adding to them a few expressive syllables, the numerous classes of verbs and adjectives arose; and from these again other nouns and adjectives were formed. The nouns and verbs were then abbreviated and adapted into conjunctions, prepositions, adverbs, and interjections. The pronouns were soon made from a sense of their convenience; and out of these came the articles. To illustrate these principles, from the various languages which I have examined, would expand these few pages into a volume, and would be therefore improper; but I can recommend the subject to the attention of the philological student, with every assurance of a successful research.

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THE multiplication of language by the metaphorical application of nouns to express other nouns, or to signify adjectives, may be observed in all languages. Thus, beorht, light, was applied to express bright, shining, and illustrious. So deop, the sea, was applied to express depth.

As a specimen how the Anglo-Saxon language has been formed from the multiplication of simple words, I will show the long train of words which have been formed from a few primitive words. I select four of the words applicable to the mind. The numerous terms formed from them will illustrate the preceding observations on the mechanism of the language.

Ancient noun :

þýge, or hýge, *mind or thought.*

Secondary meaning :—*care, diligence, study.*

þoza, *care.*

þozu, *care, industry, effort.*

Adjective, being the noun so applied :

þýge, *diligent, studious, attentive.*

þoza, *prudent, solicitous.*

Verbs from the noun :

þozian, *to meditate, to study, to think, to be wise, to be anxious : and hence to groan.*

þýgian, } *to study, to be solicitous, to endeavour.*
þýzzan, }

The verb, by use, having gained new shades of meaning and applications, we meet with it again ; as,

hiczan, } *to study, to explore, to seek vehemently, to en-*
hýczan, } *deavour, to struggle.*

Secondary noun derived from the verb :

hozunz *care, effort, endeavour.*

Secondary nouns compounded of the ancient noun and another :

hýgeþæft, *acuteness of mind.*

hýgeleart, *negligence, carelessness.*

hýgeþoza, *anxieties, mental griefs.*

hoꝝaꝛeip, } *prudence.*
 hoꝝoꝛeip, }
 hyꝝeleaꝛt, *folly, madness, scurrility.*
 hyꝝeꝛceaꝛt, *the mind or thought.*

Adjectives composed of the ancient noun and a meaning word :

hyꝝeleaꝛe, *void of mind, foolish.*
 hyꝝe ƿoꝛ, } *magnanimous, excellent in mind.*
 hyꝝe ƿoꝛ, }
 hoꝝƿæꝛt, } *prudent.*
 hoꝝoꝛæꝛt, }
 hoꝝfull, *anxious, full of care.*
 hyꝝe ƿꝛoð, *wise, prudent in mind.*
 hyꝝe leaꝛ, *negligent, incurious.*
 hyꝝe ꝛtanꝝ, *strong in mind.*
 hyꝝe ðhancle, *cautious, provident, thoughtful.*

Adverbs from the adjective :

hyꝝeleaꝛ hce, *negligently, incuriously.*
 hoꝝfull hce, *anxiously.*

ANCIENT NOUN :

Moð, *the mind ; also passion and irritability.*

Verb :

moðian, } *to be high minded.*
 moðigan, } *to rage.*
 moðgian, } *to swell.*

Adjectives composed of the noun and another word or syllable :

moðeꝝ, } *irritable.*
 moðiꝝ, } *angry, proud.*
 moðful, *full of mind, irritable.*
 moðza, *elated, proud, distinguished.*
 moðhpata, *fervid in mind.*
 moðilic, *magnanimous.*
 moð leaꝛ, *weak-minded, pusillanimous.*
 moð ꝛtaðhol, *firm-minded.*
 moððheꝛ, *patient in mind, meek, mild.*

Secondary nouns composed of the ancient noun and some other :

moð zethanc, *thoughts of the mind, council.*

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- mob zethoht, *strength of mind, reasoning.*
 mob zepinne, *conflicts of mind.*
 mobej mynla, *the affections of the mind—the inclinations.*
 mobhece, *heat of mind—anger.*
 moblearte, *folly, pusillanimity, slothfulness.*
 mobneffe, *pride.*
 mobrepa, *the intellect—sensation—intelligence.*
 mob joriz, *grief of mind.*

Secondary nouns of still later origin, having been formed after the adjectives, and composed of an adjective and another noun :

- mobizneffe,
 mobineffe, *moodiness, pride, animosity.*
 mob seoceneffe, *sickness of mind.*
 mob jatholnyffe *firmness of mind, fastitude.*
 mob jumneffe, *concord.*
 mobthæpneffe, *patience, meekness.*

Adverb formed from the adjective :

- mobizlice, *proudly, angrily.*

THE ANCIENT NOUN :

Wit, } *the mind—genius—the intellect—the sense.*
 Lepit, }

Secondary meaning :—*wisdom—prudence.*

Noun applied as an adjective :

- pita,
 pite, *wise—skilful.*
 Lepita, *conscious* ; hence a witness.

Verb formed from the noun :

- pitan, *to know, to perceive.*
 zepitan, *to understand.*
 pitegian, *to prophesy.*

Adjectives composed of the ancient noun, and an additional syllable or word :

- pitiz, *wise, skilled, ingenious, prudent.*
 ze-pitiz, *knowing, wise, intelligent.*
 ze pitleaf, *ignorant, foolish.*
 ze pitiz, *intelligent, conscious.*
 ze pitjoc, *ill in mind, demoniac.*
 pitol, pittol, *wise, knowing.*

Secondary nouns formed of the ancient noun and another noun: C H A P.
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πιτεδωμ, *the knowledge of judgment, prediction.*

πιτεγα, *a prophet.*

πιτεγυγ, *prophecy.*

πιτε γαγα, *a prophet.*

ζεπιτλαγτ, *folly, madness.*

ζε πιτ λογα, *the mind.*

ζε πιτνεγ, *witness.*

ζεπιτγριπε, *witness.*

πιτε clope, *trifles.*

πιτφορδ, *the answer of the wise.*

Nouns of more recent date, having been formed out of the adjectives:

ζεπιτρεοcνεγ, *insanity.*

πιτιγδωμ, *knowledge, wisdom, prescience.*

πιτολνεγ, *knowledge, wisdom.*

Secondary adjective, or one formed upon the secondary noun:

πιτεδωμικ, *prophetical.*

Conjunctions:

πιτεδλιε, } *indeed, for, but, to wit.*
πιτοδλιε, }

Adverbs formed from participles and adjectives:

πιτεδλιε, *knowingly.*

πιτιγλιε,

ANCIENT NOUN:

Γε-τhanc, } *the mind, thought, opinion.*
Γε-τhonc, }

τhanc, } *the will.*

τhonc, } *thought.*

Secondary meaning:—*an act of the will, or thanks.*

τhιng, } *a council.*
ζετhιng, }

And from the consequence conferred by sitting at the council, came

ζετhιncτh, *honour, dignity.*

Verbs formed from the noun:

τhιncan, } *to think, to conceive, to feel, to reason, to*
τhencan, } *consider.*

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I.

zethencan, }
zethenzcan, } *to think.*

thancian, }
zethancian, } *to thank.*

thinzan, *to address, to speak, to supplicate.*

zethancmetan, *to consider.*

Adjectives formed from the ancient noun :

thancol, }
thoncol, } *thoughtful, meditating, cautious.*

ze thancol, *mindful.*

thancful, *thankful, ingenious, content.*

thancpurth, *grateful.*

thancolmoð, *provident, wise.*

Secondary noun formed from the verb :

thohz, }
zethohz, } *thinking, thought.*

zetheahz, *council.*

zetheahztepe, *counsellor.*

thankunz, *thankings.*

thancmetuncz, *deliberation.*

Secondary verb, from one of these secondary nouns :

zetheahzian, *to consult.*

More recent noun, formed from the secondary verb :

zetheahzinz, *council — consultation.*

Another secondary verb :

Ymbethencan, *to think about any thing.*

Adjective from a secondary verb :

zetheahzenslic, *consulting.*

Adverb from one of the adjectives :

thancpurthlice, *gratefully.*

CHAP. II.

On the Originality of the Anglo-Saxon Language.

IT is difficult to ascertain the originality of the Saxon language; because, however rude the people who used it may have appeared to us, it is a fact that their language comes to us in a very cultivated shape.

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II.

Its cultivation is not only proved by its copiousness — by its numerous synonymes — by the declension of its nouns — the conjugation of its verbs — its abbreviated verbs, or conjunctions, adverbs, and prepositions, and its epithets or adjectives; but also by its great number of compound words applying to every shade of meaning.

By the Anglo-Saxon appearing to us in a state so advanced, it is very difficult to ascertain its originality. It is difficult, when we find words corresponding with those of other languages, to distinguish those which it originally had, like the terms of other tongues, and those which it has imported.

The conjugation of its substantive verb, however, proves that it is by no means in its state of original purity; for instead of this being one verb, with inflections of itself throughout its tenses, it is composed of the fragments of no fewer than five substantive verbs, the primitive terms of which appear in other languages. The fragments of these five words are huddled together in the Anglo-Saxon, and thus make up its usual conjugations.

To perceive this curious fact, it will be useful to recollect the same verb in the Greek and Latin.

In the Greek, the verb εἶμι is regularly deflected through almost all its tenses and persons. In the Latin

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it is otherwise. We begin these with *sum*, and pass directly to the inflections of another word more like the Greek $\epsilon\iota\mu\iota$; but the inflections of *sum* are frequently intermixed. Thus,

Sum,	sumus.
es,	estis.
est,	sunt.

Here we see at one glance two verbs deflecting; the one into *sum sumus, sunt*; the other into *es, est, estis*. In the imperfect and future tenses *eram* and *ero*, we see one of the verbs continuing; but in the perfect, *fui*, a new deflecting verb suddenly appears to us:

fui, fuisti, fuit, fuimus, fuistis, fuerunt.

In another of its tenses we have the curious exhibition of two of the former verbs being joined together to make a new inflection; as,

fuiero, fueris, fuerit, &c.

This is literally a combination of *fui* and *ero*; which indeed its meaning implies, "*I shall have been.*"

The Anglo-Saxon substantive verb is also composed out of several verbs. We can trace no fewer than five in its different inflections.

I am, eom, eart, ys, synd, synd, synd.

I was, wæs, wære, wæs, wæron, wæron, wæron.

beo, byst, byth, beoth, beoth, beoth.

The infinitive is beon, or wesan, *to be*.

These are the common inflections of the above tenses; but we sometimes find the following variations:

for *I am*, we sometimes have eom, am, om, beo, ar, sy;

for *thou art*, we have occasionally eart, arth, bist, es, sy;

for *he is*, we have ys, bith, sy;

and for the plural we have synd, syndon, synt, sien, beoth, and bithon.

In these inflections we may distinctly see five verbs, whose conjugations are intermixed :

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eom, es, ys,	are of one family, and resemble the Greek εἰμι.
ar, arth, and an, are,	proceed from another parent, and are not unlike the Latin eram.
sy, sy, sy, synd,	are from another, and recal to our minds the Latin sum and sunt.
wæs, wære, wæs, wæron,	seem referable to another branch, of which the infinitive, wesan, was retained in the Anglo-Saxon.
beon, bist, bith, beoth,	belong to a distinct family, whose infinitive beon, was kept in use.

But it is curious to consider the source of the last verb, beo, and beon, which the Flemings and Germans retain in ik ben and ich bin, *I am*.

The verb beo seems to have been derived from the Cimmerian or Celtic language, which was the earliest that appeared in Europe; because the Welsh, which has retained most of this tongue, has the infinitive, bod, and some of its inflections. The perfect tense is

bum, buost, bu, buam, buac, buant.

The Anglo-Saxon article is also compounded of two words; as

Nom.	Se,	seo,	that.
Gen.	thæs,	thære,	this.
Dat.	tham,	thære,	tham.
Acc.	thone,	tha,	that.

Se and *that* are obviously distinct words.

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II.

When we consider these facts, and the many Anglo-Saxon nouns which can be traced into other languages, it cannot be affirmed that the Anglo-Saxon exhibits to us an original language. It is an ancient language, and has preserved much of the primitive form; but a large portion of it seems to have been made up from other ancient languages.

CHAP. III.

On the Copiousness of the Saxon Language.

THIS language has been thought to be a very rude and barren tongue, incapable of expressing any thing but the most simple and barbarous ideas. The truth, however, is, that it is a very copious language, and is capable of expressing any subject of human thought. In the technical terms of those arts and sciences which have been discovered, or much improved, since the Norman Conquest, it must of course be deficient. But books of history, belles lettres, and poetry, may be now written in it, with considerable precision and correctness, and even with much discrimination, and some elegance of expression.

CHAP
III.

THE Saxon abounds with synonymes. I will give a few instances of those which my memory can supply. To express

Man.	Woman.
man.	ıber.
nıth.	pyf.
fıpa.	femne.
calla.	mezth.
zuma.	epe.
hæleth.	meopla.
per.	blæð.
pınc.	mennen.
folc.	pıza.
Segezberbanum.	Lebedða.

For persons possessing power and authority they used

palðende.	balðor.
bpezo.	ppumzapa.
bpema.	ðpıhten.

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βρυττα.	ealþor.
ꝥꝥea.	hlaþorþ.
τῆρ.	be
hold.	e τ
theoðne.	nepe.
τοηταν.	pepa.

Besides the compounds

ꝥolceꝥ peꝥpan.	leoðhata.
ꝥolc τozan.	heathorinc.
ꝥiꝥina baldeꝥ.	leoða peꝥpan.
burza ealþor.	æthelþorpen.
ꝥice man.	ꝥꝥymtha ꝥalþenð.

And besides the official names of

cýning.	eopl.
ealþorman.	thezn.
heꝥetozaꝥ.	zeꝥiꝥhcunðeman, &c.

For property they had in use the terms

ýꝥꝥe	ꝥceat.
peaꝥ.	ꝥinc.
æhta	ceap.
ꝥeoh.	

Besides the metaphors from the metals and coins.

In a poem we find the following synonymous terms used to express convivial shouting:

hlýðbe.	ꝥꝥýmbe.
hlýneð.	zeleýbe.
ðýneð.	

To the mind we find several words appropriated:

moð.	ꝥeꝥa.	hizeꝥeꝥt.
zeþhanc.	moð-ꝥeꝥa.	inzeheýzð.
ꝥeꝥth.	zeꝥmýnð.	moð-zeþhoht.
hize.	zeꝥꝥæze.	zeþhoht.
hꝥeþeꝥ.	ze ꝥiꝥ.	oꝥþhanc.
zeꝥiꝥ loca.	ꝥuncoꝥa.	anðziꝥ.

For knowledge and learning they had list, croest, leornung, leornesse.

For the sea,

þꝥým	mæpe.	eꝥꝥꝥeam.
loze.	ych.	ꝥæteꝥeꝥ.

ræ.	zappecz.	holm.
ea.	ɣream.	ɣepe.
floðe.	pillfloð.	

Besides numerous metaphors; as

Span paðe.

Γανοτεɣ bath, &c.

For poetry and song,

leoth.	ðreamneɣe.
fiɣɣ.	zethɣepe.
zýð.	ɣpell.
ɣanz.	

They had a great number of words for a ship; and to express the Supreme they used more words and phrases than I can recollect to have seen in any other language.

Indeed the copiousness of their language was receiving perpetual additions from the lays of their poets. I have already mentioned that the great features of their poetry were metaphor and periphrasis. On these they prided themselves. To be fluent in these was the great object of their emulation; the great test of their merit. Hence Cedmon, in his account of the deluge, uses near thirty synonymous words and phrases to express the¹ ark. They could not attain this desired end without making new words and phrases by new compounds, and most of these became naturalized in the language. The same zeal for novelty of expression led them to borrow words from every other language which came within their reach.

We have a specimen of the power of the language in Elfric's Saxon Grammar, in which we may perceive that he finds Saxon words for the abstruse distinctions and definitions of grammar. A few may be added.

verbum	· ɣopð.
accidentia	zelimphic ɣhinz.

¹ See before, p. 280.

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III.

significatio	ζετακνυζε.
actio	δαδε.
passio	τηροπιζε.
tempus	τιδ.
modus	ζε μετ.
species	ηιρ.
figura	ζεφεζεδνιγγ.
conjugatio	ζεθεοδνιγγ.
persona	had.
numerus	ζετελ.
anomala	unemne.
inequalis	unzelic.
defectiva	ατεοριζενδlic.
frequentativa	ζελοmlæcenδε.
inchoativa	ονζinnenδlic.

To express indeclinables the natural resources of the language failed him, and he adopts the Latin word, and gives it a Saxonized form.

The astronomical treatises which have been already mentioned show a considerable power in the language to express even matters of science.

But the great proof of the copiousness and power of the Anglo-Saxon language may be had from considering our own English, which is principally Saxon. It may be interesting to show this by taking some lines of our principal authors, and marking in *Italics* the Saxon words they contain.

SHAKSPEARE.

*To be or not to be, that is the question ;
Whether 'tis nobler in the mind to suffer
The stings and arrows of outrageous fortune,
Or to take arms against a sea of troubles,
And by opposing end them? To die, to sleep;
No more! and by a sleep to say we end
The heart-ach, and the thousand natural shocks
The flesh is heir to! 'twere a consummation
Devoutly to be wish'd. To die ; to sleep ;
To sleep? perchance to dream!*

MILTON.

C H A P.
III.

*With thee conversing I forget all time,
All seasons, and their change; all please alike.
Sweet is the breath of morn, her rising sweet,
With charm of earliest birds; pleasant the sun
When first on this delightful land he spreads
His orient beams on herb, tree, fruit, and flower,
Glistening with dew; fragrant the fertile earth
After soft showers; and sweet the coming on
Of grateful evening mild; then silent night
With this her solemn bird, and this fair moon,
And these the gems of heaven, her starry train.*

COWLEY.

*Mark that swift arrow! how it cuts the air.
How it outruns the following eye!
Use all persuasions now and try
If thou canst call it back, or stay it there.
That way it went; but thou shalt find
No track is left behind.
Fool! 'tis thy life, and the fond archer thou.
Of all the time thou'st shot away
I'll bid thee fetch but yesterday.
And it shall be too hard a task to do.*

Translators of the BIBLE.

And they made ready the present against Joseph came at noon: for they heard that they should eat bread there. And when Joseph came home, they brought him the present which was in their hand into the house, and bowed themselves to him to the earth. And he asked them of their welfare, and said, Is your father well, the old man of whom ye spake? Is he yet alive? And they answered, Thy servant our father is in good health, he is yet alive. And they bowed down their heads, and made obeisance. And he lift up his eyes, and saw his brother Benjamin, his mother's son, and said, Is this your younger brother, of whom ye spake unto me? And he said, God be gracious unto thee, my son. Gen. xliii. 25—29.

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III.

Then when Mary was come where Jesus was, and saw him, she fell down at his feet, saying unto him, Lord, if thou hadst been here, my brother had not died. When Jesus therefore saw her weeping, and the Jews also weeping which came with her, he groaned in the spirit and was troubled. And said, Where have ye laid him? They said unto him, Lord, come and see. Jesus wept. Then said the Jews, Behold how he loved him!
John, xi. 32—36.

THOMSON.

*These as they change, Almighty Father! these
Are but the varied God. The rolling year
Is full of thee. Forth in the pleasing spring
Thy beauty walks, thy tenderness and love.
Wide flush the fields; the soft'ning air is balm,
Echo the mountains round; the forest smiles:
And every sense and every heart is joy.
Then comes thy glory in the summer months,
With light and heat refulgent. Then thy sun
Shoots full perfection through the swelling year.*

ADDISON.

I was yesterday, about sun-set, walking in the open fields, till the night insensibly fell upon me. I at first amused myself with all the richness and variety of colours which appeared in the western parts of heaven. In proportion as they faded away and went out, several stars and planets appeared, one after another, till the whole firmament was in a glow. The blueness of the æther was exceedingly heightened and enlivened by the season of the year.

SPENSER.

*Hard is the doubt, and difficult to deem,
When all three kinds of love together meet,
And do dispart the heart with power extreme,
Whether shall weigh the balance down; to wect
The dear affection unto kindred sweet,
Or raging fire of love to woman kind,
Or zeal of friends, combin'd with virtues meet:
But of them all the band of virtuous mind
Me seems the gentle heart should most assured bind.*

Book iv. c. 9.

LOCKE.

C H A P.
III.

Every man, being conscious to himself, that he thinks, and that, which his mind is applied about whilst thinking, being the ideas that are there; it is past doubt, that men have in their minds several ideas. Such as are those expressed by the words, whiteness, hardness, sweetness, thinking, motion, man, elephant, army, drunkenness, and others. It is in the first place, then, to be inquired, How he comes by them? I know it is a received doctrine that men have native ideas, and original characters stamped upon their minds in their very first being.

Locke's Essay, Book, xi. ch. 1.

POPE.

*How happy is the blameless vestal's lot?
The world forgetting, by the world forgot;
Eternal sunshine of the spotless mind!
Each pray'r accepted, and each wish resign'd;
Labour and rest that equal periods keep;
Obedient slumbers that can wake and weep;
Desires compos'd, affections ever ev'n;
Tears that delight, and sighs that waft to heav'n.
Grace shines around her with serenest beams,
And whispering angels prompt her golden dreams.
For her th' unfading rose of Eden blooms,
And wings of seraphs shed divine perfumes.*

YOUNG.

*Let Indians, and the gay, like Indians, fond
Of feather'd fopperies, the sun adore;
Darkness has more divinity for me;
It strikes thought inward; it drives back the soul
To settle on herself, our point supreme.
There lies our theatre: there sits our judge.
Darkness the curtain drops o'er life's dull scene;
'Tis the kind hand of Providence stretch'd out
'Twixt man and vanity; 'tis reason's reign,
And virtue's too; these tutelary shades
Are man's asylum from the tainted throng.
Night is the good man's friend, and guardian too.
It no less rescues virtue, than inspires.*

CHAP.
III.

SWIFT.

Wisdom is a fox, who, after long hunting, will at last cost you the pains to dig out. 'Tis a cheese, which by how much the richer has the thicker, the homelier, and the coarser coat; and whereof, to a judicious palate, the maggots are the best. 'Tis a sack posset, wherein the deeper you go you will find it the sweeter. But then, lastly, 'tis a nut, which, unless you chuse with judgment, may cost you a tooth, and pay you with nothing but a worm.

ROBERTSON.

This great emperor, in the plenitude of his power, and in possession of all the honors which can flatter the heart of man, took the extraordinary resolution to resign his kingdom; and to withdraw entirely from any concern in business or the affairs of this world, in order that he might spend the remainder of his days in retirement and solitude. — Dioclesian is, perhaps, the only prince, capable of holding the reins of government, who ever resigned them from deliberate choice, and who continued during many years to enjoy the tranquillity of retirement, without fetching one penitent sigh, or casting back one look of desire towards the power or dignity which he had abandoned.

Cha. V.

HUME.

The beauties of her person, and graces of her air, combined to make her the most amiable of women; and the charms of her address and conversation, aided the impression which her lovely figure made on the heart of all beholders. Ambitious and active in her temper, yet inclined to cheerfulness and society; of a lofty spirit, constant and even vehement in her purpose, yet politic, gentle, and affable, in her demeanor, she seemed to partake only so much of the male virtues as to render her estimable, without relinquishing those soft graces which compose the proper ornament of her sex.

GIBBON.

In the second century of the Christian æra the empire of Rome comprehended the fairest part of the earth, and the most civilized portion of mankind. The frontiers of that ex-

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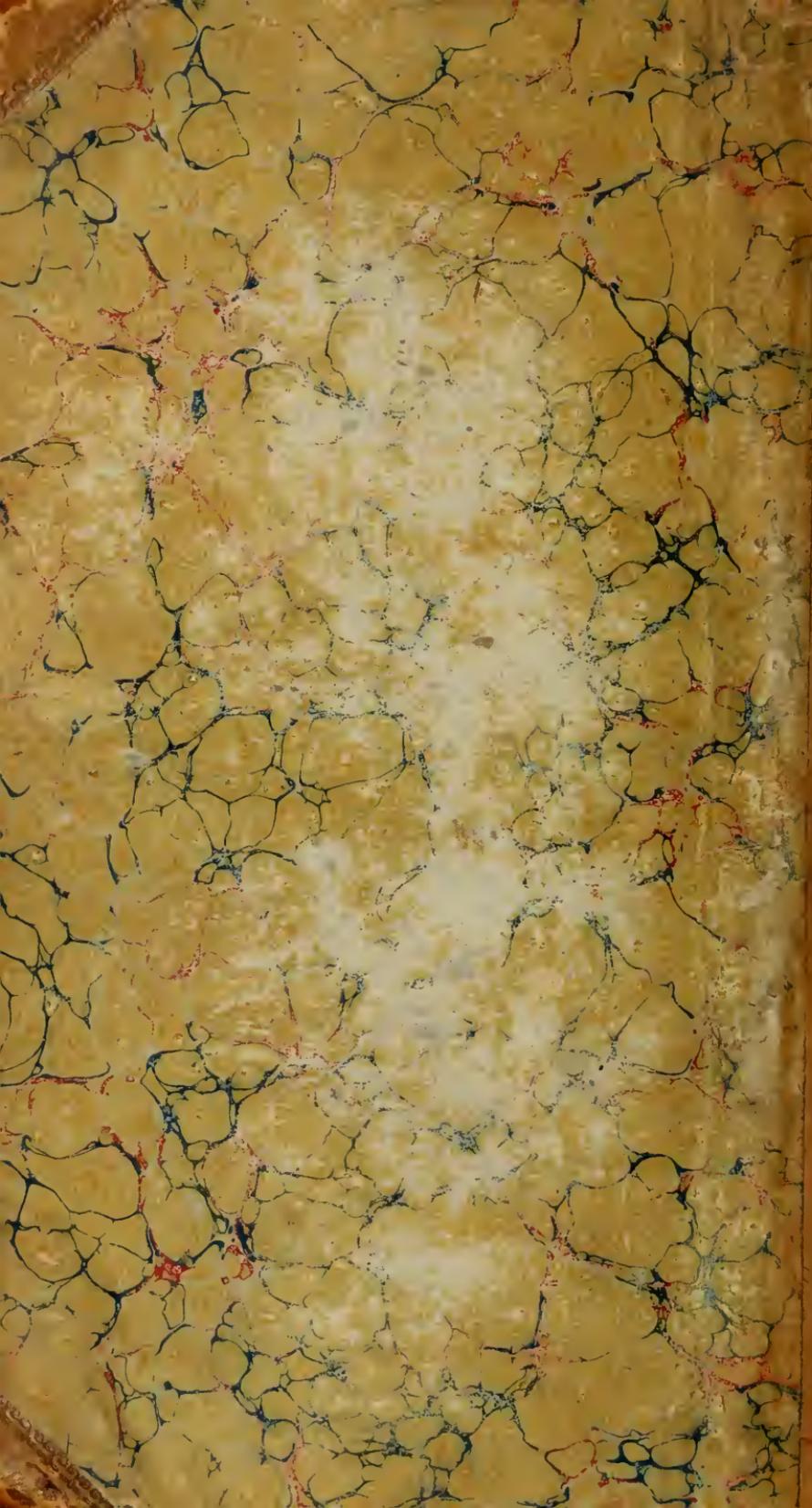
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