

THE OLD ENGLISH VERSION OF
BEDE'S ECCLESIASTICAL HISTORY
OF THE ENGLISH PEOPLE

translated by

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PREFACE.

I, Bede, servant of Christ and priest, send greeting to the well beloved king Ceolwulf. And I send you the history, which I lately wrote about the Angles and Saxons, for yourself to read and examine at leisure, and also to copy out and impart to others more at large; and I have confidence in your zeal, because you are very diligent and inquisitive as to the sayings and doings of men of old, and above all of the famous men among our people. For this book either speaks good of the good, and the hearer imitates that, or it speaks evil of the evil, and the hearer flees and shuns the evil. For it is good to praise the good and blame the bad, that the hearer may profit. If your hearer be reluctant, how else will he gain instruction? I have written this for your profit and for your people; as God chose you out to be king, it behoves you to instruct your people. And that there may be the less doubt whether this be true, I will state the sources of my narrative.

II. My first assistant and teacher was the venerable abbot Albinus, a man who had travelled much and studied, and was the best scholar in England. He told me chiefly about Theodorus, of blessed memory, who was bishop in Canterbury, and of the abbot Adrianus, under whom he had chiefly studied. All that he ascertained in Kent and the adjoining districts, from written documents and the traditions of old inhabitants, or from disciples of the blessed pope St. Gregory, all that was memorable, he transmitted to me through Nothhelm, the pious priest of London, either sending him to me in person or forwarding a written statement. From the beginning of these books till the English received the faith of Christ, we have derived what is here written from the

traditions of old men, (thenceforward) up to the present, chiefly from the disciples of the blessed pope St. Gregory, with the dates according to the kings' reigns, all recorded through abbot Albinus and the reports and statements of Nothhelm. They told me very much as to the bishops and the dates of the kings, under whom the East Saxons, West Saxons, East Angles and Northumbrians received the grace of Christ's faith. And it was chiefly through Albinus that I was encouraged to commence this work, (encouraged) also by Daniel the venerable bishop of the West Saxons, who still survives. He told me much about the South Saxons and West Saxons; and also about the Isle of Wight, (but this last) chiefly by letter. _ And through Cedd, the venerable bishop of the Mercians, and Chad, about the people of the Mercians and East Saxons _ and about the life and death of the bishops, we have learnt from the brethren of the monastery, founded by them, which is called Lastingham. Events in East Anglia we have traced partly from the writings of older men or their traditions; partly we have ascertained them from the statements of the venerable abbot Isse. The progress of Christ's faith in Lindsey we have learnt from the statements of the venerable bishop Cyneberht, and through written reports from him and other very trustworthy persons still living. (I also relate) what we have ascertained about the faith of Christ in Northumbria up to the present day, not on the authority of a single person, but from the statements of numberless faithful witnesses, who knew and remembered the events, and afterwards what I myself knew, I did not leave unrecorded. What I have written about the holy father Cuthbert, either in this book or in another, his deeds and his life, I have taken first from the writings I found among the brethren of the church at Lindisfarne, and the particulars, which I myself could ascertain from the report of very trustworthy persons, I have added on. And I now humbly beg and entreat the reader that, if he find or hear anything different about this, he will not blame me.

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XXVII. That the same Cuthbert, while living as a hermit, by his prayers brought up a spring out of dry ground, and obtained a crop by the labour of his own hand, though it was past the right seed-time.

XXVIII. That the same bishop Cuthbert foretold his coming death to the hermit Hereberht.

XXIX. That his body, after eleven years in the tomb, was found, free from all decay: and a short time after his successor departed from this earth.

XXX. That quite lately a man was cured of an affection of the eyes at his relieves.

XXXI. That another, at his tomb, was cured of palsy.

Here ends the fourth book.

Here begins the fifth book.

I. That Æthelwald, who succeeded St. Cuthbert, dwelt as a hermit, and by his prayers for brethren in distress at sea, calmed and stilled the storm.

II. That bishop John by his prayers cured a dumb man.

III. That the same bishop by his prayers cured a sick girl.

IV. That he cured the sick wife of a gesith with holy water.

V. That the same bishop by his prayers recalled from death the attendant of a gesith.

VI. That by his prayers and blessing be similarly recovered from death one of his priests, who had fallen from his horse and was bruised.

VII. That Ceadwalla, king of the West Saxons, went to Rome to be baptized: also later his successor Ine devoutly visited the same threshold of the blessed apostles.

VIII. That on the death of Theodore, Beorhtwald succeeded to the archbishopric, and among many others whom he ordained, consecrated the learned Tobias as bishop of the church at Rochester.

IX. That the holy man Ecgberht wished to visit Germany and preach the word of God. And he might not: but Wihtberht went there for him and effected nothing there; and then returned home again to Ireland, whence he first came.

X. That Wilbrord in Friesland by his preaching turned many to the Lord, and that his two companions suffered glorious martyrdom.

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XV. That many churches in Ireland accepted the catholic Easter, on the teaching of Athaman: and of Ealdhelm, who wrote the book 'De Virginitate' and many others: and also that the South Saxons received as their own bishops Eadberht and Eolla; and the West Saxons received Daniel and Ealdhelm: and of the writings of Ealdhelm.

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XIX. That the monks in the isle of Iona, with the monasteries subject to them, began then to celebrate the orthodox Easter on the preaching and teaching of Ecgberht.

XX. Of the death of Tobias, bishop of Rochester, and the venerable bishop Eadberht, on the first Easter day: and in the same year died Osric, king of Northumbria.

XXI. What the condition of the English and of all Britain is at present.

BOOK I.

Britain is an island in the ocean, formerly called Albion, lying between the north and the west, opposite, though far apart, to Germany, Gaul and Spain, the chief divisions of Europe. It runs northward for 800 miles, and is 200 miles broad. It has on the south opposite to it the province called Gallia Belgica. The island is rich in crops and trees of various kinds, and it is suited for grazing sheep and cattle, and vineyards are grown in some places. This land also produces birds of various kinds and marine animals, and (it abounds) in springs and waters full of fish. Seals, whales, and porpoises are often caught here, and various kinds of shell-fish and mussels are commonly taken, and in these are often found the finest pearls of every colour. There is also here abundance of molluscs, from which is made the dye of 'shell-fish red'; this neither the sun can bleach nor the rain mar, and it grows fairer with age. The land also has salt-pits and hot water, and hot baths in various localities, suitable for every age and both sexes; it also produces ores of copper and iron, lead and silver in masses. Jet is also found here, which is a black gem; if put in the fire, adders fly from it. Formerly this island was also embellished with the noblest of towns, twenty-nine in number, furnished with walls, towers, gates and the strongest of locks, besides countless other towns of smaller size. As this island lies close under the very north of the world and the nights here are light in summer so that often at midnight a question arises among the spectators, whether it is the evening gloaming or morning dawn-by this it is clear that the days are much longer in this island in summer, and also the nights in winter, than in the southern parts of the world.

I. At this present time the island studies and acknowledges one and the same science of sublime truth and true sublimity in the tongues of five nations, according to the number of the five books of Moses, in which the Divine law is written; that is in the tongues of the English, Britons, Scots, Picts and Latins. This one, the Latin, is common to all the others, in the study of the Scriptures. At the very first the Britons were the sole inhabitants of this island, which received its name from them. They, it is said, came into Britain from the province of Armorica, and occupied and appropriated the southern parts of this island. Subsequently it happened, that the Picts came in ships from Scythia, and passed round the whole British coast, till they landed in Ireland. And there they found Scots, and prayed for a settlement and dwelling-place in their country among them. Then the Scots answered, that their land was not large enough to contain two nations. But they said: We can give you sound advice, as to what you may do. We know, not far from this, another island to the east, which we can often see on clear days. If you will proceed there, you may find a dwelling place: or if any oppose you, we will assist you. Then the Picts landed in Britain, and began to occupy the north of this island, the south, as we said before, being in the hands of the Britons. Now as the Picts had no wives, they asked wives from the Scots. These consented to give them, on condition that, if the matter was doubtful, they should choose the sovereign rather from the female line than from the male; which custom is still observed among the Picts to this day. In the course of time, next after the Britons and the Picts, a third race, that of the Scots, occupied Britain within the borders of the Picts. They came from Ireland, the island of the Scots, with their leader named Reada, and partly on friendly terms, partly after a struggle, secured for themselves a settlement and dwelling-place among them, which they still hold. Up to this day the race is called Dalreadings. Ireland, the island of the Scots, is far superior to Britain in the breadth of its conformation and in salubrity and mildness of climate, so that snow seldom lies there more than three days. No one there mows hay or builds stalls for his cattle, as a provision against winter's cold. No poisonous reptile is to be seen there, nor indeed may any viper live there; for vipers have been brought on board

ship from Britain, but they died as soon as they smelt the air of the land. Besides, almost everything from that country is efficacious against all poisons. In proof of this, men have been seen, who were bitten by vipers; shavings have been taken from leaves of books brought over from Ireland and put into water and given to the men to drink, and at once the poison was overpowered and the men cured. The island is rich in milk and honey, and vineyards grow in some places. It abounds in fish and fowl, and is famous for hunting the hart and the roe. This is the proper home of the Scots; hence came that third race of Scots mentioned above, as dwelling in Britain along with Britons and Picts.

II. The island of Britain was unknown to the Romans, till the emperor Gaius, also called Julius, came with an army and overran it, sixty years before the advent of Christ.

III. After this the emperor Claudius, who was fourth from Augustus, again led an army into Britain, and there, without serious resistance or bloodshed, took possession of a great part of the country. He also united to the Roman empire the Orkneys, islands out in the ocean beyond Britain. He returned again to Rome within six months of his first coming. This expedition was made in the fourth year of his reign, which was the forty-sixth from the advent of Christ. The same emperor Claudius dispatched Vespasian to Britain, who became emperor after Nero. He overran the Isle of Wight also, and brought it under the Roman dominion. It is thirty miles long east and west, and twelve miles broad north and south. Nero succeeded to Claudius. He did no service in the state, but among countless other disasters to the Roman empire, he also lost the dominion of Britain.

IV. Then came the hundred and fifty-sixth year after Christ's advent, and Marcus, also called Antonius, who was fourteenth from the emperor Augustus, succeeded to the Roman empire jointly with his brother Aurelius. In the time of these kings the holy Eleutherus was bishop and pope of the Roman church. To him Lucius, king of Britain, sent a letter,

praying and entreating, that under his direction he might be converted to christianity. And his pious request was quickly carried into effect. Then the Britons received baptism and the faith of Christ, and maintained it unimpaired and undefiled in quiet and peace till the time of Diocletian the bad emperor.

V. Then came the hundred and eighty-ninth year from the incarnation of Christ, and the emperor Severus, who was an African by descent, from the town called Leptis, succeeded to the empire, and held it for seventeen years. He was seventeenth from Augustus. This emperor governed the state vigorously, but yet not without toil. He brought over a force to fight in Britain, and there, after prolonged and severe encounters, recovered a great part of the island; he then surrounded and fortified it with a ditch and rampart from sea to sea, severing it from the other barbarous tribes. He died from illness in the island at York; and Bassianus his son succeeded to the government of Britain.

VI. It was then about two hundred and eighty-six years after the incarnation of our Lord, when the emperor Diocletian, who was the thirty-third from Augustus, filled the throne for twenty years. He chose Maximian as his coadjutor, and assigned him the western portion of the world. The latter on assuming the purple came to Britain. Then among the many ill deeds done by them, Diocletian in the East and Maximian in the West afflicted and harassed the churches of God, and illtreated and slew christians. These emperors occupy the tenth place among the persecutors of God's church since the emperor Nero. The persecution of these impious kings was more violent and continuous than any before in the world, for with burning of God's churches and condemnation of the innocent and slaughter of holy martyrs it went on incessantly for ten years' time. Britain also was sorely afflicted, to the great glory of the faith and confession of God.

VII. At this time also St. Alban suffered in Britain, of whom the priest Fortunatus, in his 'Laus Virginum,' when mentioning the blessed

martyrs, who came from all the earth to the Lord, thus spoke: 'Fruitful Britain produces the noble Albanus.' Albanus was still a heathen, when the commands of the faithless kings burst forth in fury against christians. It so happened that he entertained a pious man of the priesthood, who was fleeing from the cruel persecutors. And when he saw him day and night busied in continual prayers and vigils, then was Alban suddenly visited by the mercy of God's grace. And he soon began to imitate the example of his belief and piety; and also gradually was taught, by his saving exhortations, to leave the darkness of idol worship and become with sincere heart a christian man. Now when the aforesaid man of God had been entertained many days by Alban, it came to the ears of the sinful governor, that Alban had this servant and confessor of Christ concealed in his house. Then he quickly ordered his attendants to go and demand him. As soon as they came to the martyr's house, St. Alban put on the monk's dress, substituting himself for the stranger who was his guest, and gave himself into their hands. And they brought him bound to the governor. Now it happened at the very time, when Alban was led to him, that the judge stood by his idols and offered sacrifice to devils. On seeing St. Alban he at once burst into a passion, because the saint wilfully presumed to give himself over to such risk in place of the stranger, whom he entertained as guest. Then he ordered him to be taken and dragged before the idols by which he stood, and thus spoke: 'As you sought to conceal from me the impious foe and scorner of our gods rather than betray him to my servants, know that you shall receive the same punishment as he earned, if you think to withdraw from the worship of our religion.' Then St. Alban voluntarily declared and confessed to the persecutors of God's faith, that he was a christian man. Nor did he fear the governor's threats, but girding himself with the armour of spiritual warfare, openly said that he would not obey his commands. Then said the governor and judge to him: 'Tell me of what family and of what race thou art.' Then St. Alban answered: 'What matters it to you from what stock I am sprung? But if you wish to hear the truth as to my religion, know that I am a christian, and will devote myself to christian services.' Then said the judge: 'Tell me thy name by

which thou art called.' Then said he: 'I am called Alban by my parents; and I ever worship and pray to the true and living God who created heaven and earth and all creatures.' Then the judge grew angry, and said to him, 'If you wish to enjoy with us happiness in this life, delay not to join us in worshipping the great gods.' Then answered St. Alban: 'The sacrifices which were offered by you to devils cannot benefit the devil's subjects, nor fulfil their lusts and their will; nay more, whoever offers to these images and idols, for that receives his reward, the eternal pains of hell torments.' When the judge heard those words he was stirred with great wrath and fury. Then he ordered his men at once to scourge and torture this confessor of God, for he reckoned and supposed that by scourging he would weaken his courage and the steadfastness of his heart, though he could not by words. And then the saint was afflicted with grievous scourging and tortures, and he bore and endured with patience and joy all the pains inflicted on him for the Lord's sake. When the judge perceived this, and saw that he could not conquer him with torture or scourging, nor turn him from the worship of the christian religion, he ordered him to be beheaded. As he was led to death, he came to a very rapid stream which flows near the town wall. And he saw there a great crowd of persons of both sexes, of various ages and ranks. The crowd was doubtless summoned by an inspiration from heaven as an escort for the blessed martyr: and they were so detained by the bridge over the river that it was hardly possible to cross till a little before evening. And as almost all had gone forth, the judge remained in the town without escort. And when St. Alban, in whom there was a burning fervour of mind to attain with all speed to his martyrdom, came to the brook which I mentioned before, and lifted up his eyes to heaven, then the stream at once dried up and gave way before his feet, so that he could pass over dry shod. When among others the executioner, who should slay him, saw this marvel, he was at once inwardly warned by the inspiration of divine grace, so that he threw the sword away, that he held in his hand and fell at his feet; and he earnestly prayed and desired that he might suffer with the martyr whom he was to have slain, or in his place. So by God's grace was this man turned from a persecutor into a

friend of the truth and of the faith of Christ. Then went up the venerated confessor of God on the hill with the crowd, which was then green with the season, and fair and painted and adorned on all sides with flowers of various plants. And this was meet, that the place should be so comely and so fair, which afterwards was to be glorified and sanctified with the blood of this blessed martyr. On the top of this hill St. Alban prayed that water might be given him for his use by God. Then, at once, a fountain quickly sprang up before his feet, so that all men might perceive that this water was sent for his service, as he already desired of God. And now the fountain and the water, having fulfilled devotion and service to the holy martyr, returned to its natural condition and ceased to give evidence of this service. The place was about half a mile from the wall of the town and from the brook which he crossed before dry shod. Then was this most brave martyr St. Alban beheaded there, and received the victorious crown of eternal life, which God has; promised to all who will love him. But the executioner, who stretched forth his impious hands against the pious neck of this martyr and struck off his head, was not permitted to rejoice over his death; his eyes shot out of his head and fell to the earth with the head of the martyr. Then was also beheaded and martyred the man, who had before been rebuked by the heavenly power and refused to be the slayer of God's confessor. As to him, it is certain, though he was not washed with the water of baptism, that he nevertheless was cleansed by the washing of his blood, and made worthy of the kingdom of heaven. Thereupon the judge, much troubled and affrighted by the strangeness of so many heavenly wonders, at once ordered them to cease from the persecution of christians, and began to honour the sufferings of the holy martyrs, by which he previously supposed he could turn them from their devotion to the christian faith. The blessed Alban suffered on the 22nd of June close to the town which the Romans called Verolanium, and is now named by the English Werlameceaster or Wœclingaceaster. Soon after that a season of serenity for christians came, and there was a church wrought and built there of admirable structure, worthy of his passion and martyrdom. At that spot indeed, up to the present day, are still often proclaimed cures of the sick

and the performance of divine miracles, and manifold wonders take place. At the same time suffered also Aaron and Julius, who were burgesses of Chester; and many others also of both sexes, in various places, were racked with various tortures and lacerated with unheard-of rending of their limbs. Their strife being ended, they gave up their souls, to enter the joys of the city above amid the glory of the kingdom of heaven.

VIII. When the trials of this persecution quieted down, faithful christians came forth, who previously, in the dangerous times of persecution, lay hid in woods and wastes and caves. They repaired God's churches which had been thrown down, and built and consecrated others in honour of the holy martyrs, extending and honouring their sites in token of victory and celebrating their festivals, and hallowed and performed the divine mysteries with pure mouth and pure heart. This peace ever continued in the churches of Christ, which were in Britain up to the time when the Arian heresy arose. In these times died Constantinus in Britain. He held and swayed the empire of Gaul and Spain in the lifetime of Diocletianus, and was a man of much clemency and goodness in the world. He left his power to his son Constantine, the good emperor, who was born of his wife Helen. Eutropius writes that the emperor Constantine was born in Britain, and succeeded his father on the throne. In this king's time the Arian heresy arose; and the deadly poison of his unbelief he spread not only to all churches in the world, but it also came into this island. This heresy was condemned and crushed in the days of Constantine at the Council of Nicœa.

IX. It was then about 407 years after our Lord's incarnation; Honorius was on the throne, being the forty-fourth from the emperor Augustus; and it was two years before Rome was taken and devastated. The devastation was caused by Alaric, king of the Goths. The capture by the Goths took place about 1164 years after the foundation of the city. From that time the Romans ceased to have dominion in Britain: they had had dominion for 470 years, since Gaius, also called Julius, the emperor

landed on the island. Cities, towers, roads and bridges had been constructed under their rule, which may be seen at the present day. The Britons dwelt to the south within the dyke we spoke of, built by order of the emperor Severus right across the island. Then began two nations, the Picts on the north and the Scots on the west, to assail them, to seize and waste their possessions; and for many years they caused misery and distress. During these troubles they sent messengers to Rome with letters and a plaintive petition, begging for help, and offering humble obedience and perpetual submission, if help were granted that they might overcome their foes. Then they sent a large force to their aid which on landing in the island at once fought against the enemy, defeated them with great slaughter, and drove them in flight beyond the borders. Then they taught the Britons to construct fortifications as a defence against their enemies: and so with great triumph returned home. But when their former adversaries saw that the Roman army had gone away, they proceeded at once with a fleet to the British borders, slew and murdered all they met, and, as if it were a ripe field of corn, trod them under foot, and made havoc, and utterly ruined all. Then once more they sent messengers to Rome and in plaintive tones begged for aid, that their poor country might not be utterly destroyed, nor the name of the Roman people, which so long was bright and shining among them, be overcast and obscured by the violence of foreign nations. Once more an army was sent here, which arriving unexpectedly at harvest time, at once took the field against the enemy and won a victory, and drove all who could escape the slaughter northward over the sea, after they had each year before crossed the sea to spoil and lay waste. Then the Romans said to the Britons once for all, that they could no longer exhaust themselves in such toilsome expeditions for their defence. But they admonished and instructed them to manufacture arms, and pluck up stout hearts that they might fight and withstand their foes. They also thought it advisable and helpful, that they should construct a general line of fortification for their protection, that is a stone wall in a straight line from the sea on the east to the sea on the west, where the emperor Severus formerly directed the construction of a ditch and a rampart of earth: this may still be seen, and

is eight feet broad and twelve feet high. They also built for protection from the side of the sea, towers on the sea coast south of this point, where they were assailed by fleets. As soon as they had completed this fortification, and given them many examples how to manufacture arms and withstand their foes, they took their leave, informing them that they should return no more, and then sailed in triumph across the sea. Now when the Picts and Scots learnt that they had gone home and would return no more here, they were emboldened by this, and at once seized and occupied all the north part of this island up to the rampart. To oppose this the cowardly British soldiers took their stand on the top of the fortification, and there remained day and night with trembling hearts. Then their adversaries sought implements and made hooks, and with these dragged them down miserably from the ramparts: and their death followed immediately on their reaching the ground. So the Britons abandoned the rampart and their cities and fled away, and their adversaries pursued and slew them with a great slaughter. This contest was more bloody and violent than any before: for as sheep are destroyed by wolves and wild beasts, so the poor townsmen were rent and destroyed by their foes, being stripped of their possessions and left to starve.

X. It was then about four hundred and twenty-three years after the incarnation of Christ; the emperor Theodosius succeeded Honorius in the empire, and reigned twenty-six years; he was the forty-fifth from the emperor Augustus. It was in the eighth year of this emperor's reign that bishop Palladius was first sent to the Scots who believed on Christ, by that bishop of the Roman church who is called Celestinus. Also in the twenty-third year of his reign there was a famous man named Aetius, who was formerly patrician and was then consul for the third time and king in Rome. To him the miserable remnants of the Britons sent a letter, of which the beginning ran thus: 'To Aetius, thrice king, these are the groans and laments of the Britons.' And in the course of the letter they thus set forth their misery: 'The barbarians drive us to the sea, the sea thrusts us back to the barbarians; between both we thus suffer a twofold

death, we are either stabbed or drowned in the sea.' Though they pleaded thus, they could not get any help from him, for at that time he was engaged in severe struggles with Blaedla and Attila, kings of the Huns.

XI. Also, at this time, there arose a great famine at Constantinople, the capital of the Greeks, immediately succeeded by a pestilence. Also many walls along with fifty-seven towers collapsed and fell; and many other towns too were ruined. And the famine and pestilential stench of the air carried off and destroyed many thousands of men and cattle. The famine just mentioned spread also to Britain, and affected the people to such a degree, that many gave themselves up into the hands of their enemies; but there were yet more who would not do so; and as all human aid failed them, they trusted the more to aid from heaven. Then for the first time they began to resist their enemies, who now for many years had wasted and spoiled them. They defeated them with great slaughter, drove them home and secured the victory. After this came a good year, and such abundant crops in Britain, as no age since can record. With that began an increase of riotous living; and at once a general corruption hastened in its train, cruelty, hatred to truth, and love of lying and leasing. Nor was it only worldly men who acted thus, but also the fold and shepherds of the Lord. And they cast off the light and pleasant yoke of Christ, and bowed their necks to drunkenness, pride, strife, contention, envy, and other sins of the same kind. During these things, there suddenly came a great and furious pestilence upon these men of perverted hearts, which speedily laid low and carried off such numbers of them, that the living no longer sufficed to bury the dead. And yet the living were not the better disposed for all that terror of death, nor could they be rescued from the death of their souls. Therefore after no long time direr vengeance for their dire sin overtook this depraved people. Then they gathered an assembly and took counsel together, as to what should be done, and where they should look for help to avoid and repel such savage and repeated devastations of the northern nations. Then it seemed best to all, and to their king, Vortigern by name, to invite and

call in to their aid the people of the Saxons from the parts beyond the sea. It is evident that this was so arranged by the divine power, that heavy vengeance should come on these outcasts, as is clearly shown by the issue of events.

XII. It was 449 years after our Lord's incarnation, when the emperor Martianus succeeded to the throne, which he occupied for seven years. He was the forty-sixth from the emperor Augustus. At that time the Angles and Saxons were called in by the aforesaid king, and arrived in Britain with three great ships. They received settlements on the east side of the island by order of the same king, who had invited them here, to fight as for their country. They at once took the field against the foe, who had often before overrun the land from the north; and the Saxons won the victory. Then they sent home messengers, whom they bade to report the fertility of this land, and the cowardice of the Britons. Immediately a larger fleet was despatched here, with a stronger force of warriors; and the host when united overpowered resistance. The Britons gave and assigned to them settlements among themselves, on condition of fighting for the peace and safety of their country and resisting their enemies, while the Britons also provided them with a maintenance and estates in return for their labours. The new-comers were of the three strongest races of Germany, namely, Saxons, Angles and Jutes. Of Jutish origin are the men of Kent, and the Wihtsætan; that is the tribe dwelling in the Isle of Wight. From the Saxons, that is from the people called Old Saxons, came the East Saxons, the South Saxons, and the West Saxons; and from Angle came the East Angles and the Middle Angles, Mercians, and the whole race of the Northumbrians. This is the land which is named Angulus, between the Jutes and Saxons, and it is said to have lain waste, from the time they left it, up to this day. Their leaders then and their commanders were at first two brothers, Hengist and Horsa, sons of Wihtgils, whose father was called Witta, whose father was Wihta, and the father of Wihta was called Woden. From his race the royal families of many tribes derived their origin. Then without delay they came in crowds, larger hosts from the tribes previously mentioned. And the

people, who came here, began to increase and multiply to such an extent, that they were a great terror to the inhabitants themselves, who originally invited and called them in. Later on, when occasion offered, they entered into alliance with the Picts, whom they had previously driven out by arms. And then the Saxons sought excuse and opportunity for breaking with the Britons. So they publicly announced to the Britons and declared, that, unless they gave them a more liberal maintenance, they would take it for themselves by force and by plundering, wherever they could find it. And they soon carried their threats into execution: they burned and plundered and slew from the sea on the west to the sea on the east; and now no one withstood them. Their vengeance was not unlike that of the Chaldees, when they burned the walls of Jerusalem and destroyed the royal palace by fire for the sins of God's people. So then here almost every city and district was wasted by this impious people, though it was by the just judgment of God. Buildings both public and private collapsed and fell; by every altar priests and clergy were slain and murdered. Bishops and people, without regard for mercy, were destroyed together by fire and sword; nor was there anyone who bestowed the rites of burial on those so cruelly slaughtered. Many of the miserable survivors were captured in waste places, and stabbed in heaps. Some through hunger surrendered themselves into the enemy's hands, and engaged to be their slaves for ever in return for a maintenance; some in sorrow went beyond the sea; some timidly abode in the old country, and with heavy hearts ever lived a life of want in wood and wilds and on lofty rocks. Then when the host returned to their home after expelling the inhabitants of the island, the latter began little by little to rouse up their strength and courage: issuing from the obscure retreats in which they had hidden themselves, they began all with one consent to entreat heaven's aid, that they might not utterly and everywhere be annihilated. At that time their general and leader was Ambrosius, also called Aurelianus: he was of Roman origin, and a man of courage and moderation. In his time the Britons recovered heart and strength, and he exhorted them to fight and promised victory; and by God's help in the fight they did win the victory. And then from that time now the Britons,

now again the Saxons were victors, till the year in which Mount Badon was beset; there they made a great carnage of the Angles, about forty-four years after the arrival of the Angles in Britain.

XIII. Then, as time went on, about five hundred and ninety-two years after Christ's advent, the emperor Mauricius succeeded to the throne, and occupied it for twenty-one years. He was the fifty-fourth from Augustus. In the tenth year of this emperor's reign the holy Gregory, foremost both in learning and in active life, succeeded to the bishopric of the Roman church and of the apostolic see, which he held and directed for thirteen years six months and ten days. In the fourteenth year of the same emperor, about one hundred and fifty years after the Angles came into Britain, he was directed by divine inspiration to send Augustine and many other monks with him, men who feared the Lord, to preach the word of God to the Angles. They obeyed the behests of the bishop as to the aforesaid work, started and advanced some way on their route. Then they began to feel alarmed and dread the journey, and thought it would be wiser and safer to return home, than to visit a barbarous and savage race of unbelievers, whose very language was strange. They decided in common on this course, and at once sent Augustine to the pope, having selected him to be their bishop, in case their teaching found acceptance, charging him to entreat humbly on their behalf, that they might not undertake an expedition so dangerous and toilsome, to a barbarous race so utterly unknown. Then St. Gregory sent a letter to them, in which he exhorted and instructed them to proceed humbly to the work of God's word, and trust in God's support; that they should not be afraid of the toil of the journey, nor dread the tongues of evil-speaking men: that they should with all readiness and love to God fulfil the good work, which they by God's help had begun: and that they should be assured that greater glory of everlasting reward would attend their great toil: and he prayed to Almighty God to shield them with his grace, and grant to himself that he might see the fruit of their toil in the glory of the kingdom of heaven, for that he was ready to be with them in that same toil, if permission should be given him. Then Augustine was fortified by

the exhortations of the blessed father Gregory, along with the servants of Christ accompanying him, and returned again to the work of teaching God's word, and came to Britain.

XIV. At that time there was a powerful king in Kent named Æthelberht: his kingdom extended to the boundary of the river Humber, which separates the southern and northern sections of the race of the Angles. Now there is to the east of Kent a large island, Thanet, containing six hundred hides according to the English mode of reckoning. The river Wantsome separates this island from the adjoining country. It is three furlongs broad, and fordable in two places, and both ends run out into the sea. The servant of God Augustine and his companions landed on this island, amounting in all to forty persons. They also brought with them interpreters from France, as St. Gregory directed them. And he sent a messenger to Æthelberht, announcing that he came from Rome and brought the good news, and if any would be obedient to him, certainly promising them eternal joy in heaven and a kingdom to come, that should never end, with the true and living God. When the king heard these words, he ordered them to remain on the island, where they had landed; and they provided them what they needed, till he saw what he should do with them. Besides, the fame of the christian religion had already reached him, as he had a christian wife belonging to the royal family of the Franks named Bertha. She had been given in marriage to him by her parents, on condition of his allowing her to maintain inviolate the practice of the christian faith and of her religion, along with the bishop assigned to her for her support in the faith, whose name was Leodheard. Then after several days the king came to the island, and ordered them to make him a seat in the open air, and directed Augustine and his companions to come there to confer with him. He was on his guard against their entering under the same roof as himself, employing an old counter-charm, in case they had any magical arts to overpower or delude him. But they came not endowed with devils' craft, but virtue from heaven: they bore the emblem of Christ's cross, and had a silver crucifix with them and a likeness of the Saviour drawn and coloured on a

panel, and recited the names of saints and intoned prayers; at the same time they made intercession to the Lord for the eternal salvation of themselves and of those to whom they came. Then the king bade them sit down, and they did so; and they at once declared and made known to him and all his companions who were present the word of life. Then answered the king, and said: 'These are fair words and promises which you have brought and announce to us. But as they are new and unknown, we cannot yet consent to leave those things, which we have long held with all the English race. But as you are foreigners, come here from afar, and, as I think and seem to see, you desired to impart to us those things which ye believed true and best, we will therefore not molest you. But we will receive you heartily as guests, will provide for your maintenance and supply your necessities. Nor do we hinder you from attaching and converting to the religion of your faith all, that you may, by your teaching.' Then the king assigned them a place with a dwelling in Canterbury, which was the capital of all his kingdom, and as he promised, provided for their maintenance and worldly needs; and also gave permission for them to proclaim and teach the faith of Christ. It is said, as they proceeded and drew near to the town, as their custom was, carrying the holy crucifix and image of the great King our Lord and Saviour Christ, that they sang this litany and anthem with harmonious voice: 'Deprecamur te, Domine, in omni misericordia tua, ut auferatur furor tuus et ira tua a ciuitate ista et de domo sancta tua, quoniam peccauimus.'

XV. Then soon after they entered into the habitation which was assigned them in the royal city, they began to imitate the apostolical life of the primitive church, that is, they served the Lord in continual prayers, vigils and fasts; and they preached and taught the word of life, to whomsoever they might, and they despised all things of this earth as alien. Those things only which appeared needful for their maintenance, they received from those whom they taught. In all points they lived as they taught, and their minds were ready to suffer adversity and even death itself for the truth which they preached and taught. Then without delay many

believed and were baptized; they admired the simplicity of that innocent life and the sweetness of their heavenly doctrine. There was close to the town on the east a church, built long ago in honour of St. Martin, when the Romans were still in occupation of Britain; in which church the queen usually prayed, who, as we have already said, was a christian. In this church the holy teachers first began to assemble for song and prayer, and to celebrate mass, teaching and baptizing men, till the king was converted to the faith, and they received more liberty to teach everywhere and to build and restore churches. It then happened by God's grace, that the king also among others began to take pleasure in this pure life of holy men and in their sweet promises. And they also confirmed the truth of these with display of many heavenly miracles; and he then gladly received baptism. Then began many daily to hurry and hasten to hear the word of God; and they left heathen worship, and through faith joined the unity of Christ's holy church. In their faith and conversion the king is said to have felt pleasure, but yet so that he forced none to belief in Christ, only he loved more deeply those who were converted to faith and baptism, as if they were his fellow-citizens in the kingdom of heaven. For he learnt from his teachers and from the authors of his salvation, that Christ's service should be voluntary, not compulsory. And then the king gave and bestowed on his teachers a place and settlement suitable to their station in his chief city, and ministered also to their necessities in stores of various kinds.

XVI. Now in the meantime the holy man Augustine crossed the sea, and went to the city of Arles, and was consecrated by Etherius, archbishop of that city, according to the direction and ordinance of the blessed father St. Gregory, to be archbishop of the English people. He then returned, and proceeding to Britain immediately despatched envoys to Rome, namely, the priest Laurentius and the monk Peter, to report and make known to the blessed bishop St. Gregory that the English people had received the faith of Christ, and that he was consecrated bishop. He also begged for his advice on many questions and points, which seemed to him necessary. And he soon returned a suitable answer to his enquiries.

THE INTERROGATIONS.

QUESTION I

First as to the bishops. How shall they conduct themselves and live with their clergy? And in the gifts of the faithful, which they bring to the altars and God's church, how many shares shall be made? And how shall a bishop act in the church?

ANSWER.

He said: Holy Writ states this, which I doubt not you know well, and especially the epistle of the blessed Paul which he wrote to Timothy, in which he earnestly directed and taught him, how he should behave and act in God's house. Now it is the custom of the apostolical see, when consecrating bishops, to give them directions, and that four shares shall be made of all the maintenance which is provided for them, one first for the bishop and his household to entertain and receive guests and strangers, a second share for God's servants, a third for the poor, the fourth for the repair and improvement of God's churches. But yet, as you, my brother, have been trained and taught in monasterial discipline, you shall not keep apart from your clergy in the English church, which is but lately brought over to God's faith. You shall establish the mode of life and conduct which our fathers followed in the beginning of the rising church, among whom none maintained that anything they possessed was their private property, but they all had all things in common. If then any priests and servants of God, not included in the holy brotherhoods, cannot live without wives, let them take to them wives and receive a maintenance without. For it is written about those fathers, of whom we have already spoken, that they distributed their worldly property to individuals, as each had need. Also with regard to their maintenance, care and caution is necessary, that they may live morally under church discipline for singing psalms and attending vigils, and that they should keep their hearts, tongues, and bodies, in the sight of God Almighty, pure from all that is unlawful. What are we to say about those who share in the common life, as to their distribution of alms, their practising hospitality, and showing compassion? For all that remains over of their

worldly goods is to be devoted and given to the pious and good, for so Christ the Lord and teacher of us all directed, saying, 'Quod superest, date elemosynam, et ecce omnia munda sunt nobis,' 'What is over and above, give as alms, and all things are clean unto you.'

QUESTION II.

Whereas there is one faith and there are diverse customs among the churches, there is one custom for the celebration of mass in the holy Roman church and another maintained in the realm of Gaul.

ANSWER.

You know yourself the mode of worship and customs of the Roman church, in which you were brought up. But it now seems to me, and I prefer, that whatever it be that you find in the Roman church or the church of Gaul or in any other, which may be more pleasing to Almighty God, that you carefully choose this, and establish it to be firmly maintained in the church of England, which is still new in the faith. For things are not to be loved for sake of the places, but places for the good things. Therefore, whatever you select as pious, good and right from among all the various churches, put together and establish in the minds of the English as a custom.

QUESTION III.

I beseech you, what punishment shall a man suffer, who steals anything away out of a church?

ANSWER.

You, my brother, may consider according to the condition of the thief, how he may be reformed. For there are some who have worldly wealth and yet thief; there are some who transgress in this point from poverty. Therefore it is needful that some be corrected by loss of goods, some with more severity, some more lightly. And though the punishment may be carried out with some harshness and severity, yet it is to be done out of love, not in passion or hot temper. For by the chastisement we

provide, that the man shall not be given over to the everlasting fires of hell's torment. Therefore we should discipline men, in the same way as good fathers are wont to do to their children after the flesh, whom they discipline and scourge for their sins; and yet too they love those whom they discipline and pain with the punishment, and they desire to have them as their heirs, and they reserve for them, whom they have clearly been seen to afflict and punish, the worldly property that they possess. For love is ever to be maintained in the heart, and it dictates and determines the measure of correction, so that the heart does nothing at all without reasonable rule. You also further ask, how a man should make good what has been taken from a church by theft. But far indeed be it from God's church to recover with increase, what it seems to lose of earthly things, and to seek worldly gain in things which are of no account.

QUESTION IV.

May two full brothers take in marriage two sisters, who are far removed in descent from them?

ANSWER.

This may be so, and is in every way allowable: for we cannot find anywhere in holy books anything, that seems a negative to this question.

QUESTION V.

Up to what degree of affinity may christian men be joined in wedlock with their relations? And is it allowed to be united in wedlock with stepmothers and brothers' wives?

ANSWER.

He said: There is an earthly law in the Roman commonwealth, which allows brother and sister, or the children of two brothers or a son and a daughter of two sisters, to be joined in marriage. But we have certainly learnt and understood, that no offspring may be produced or grow up from such wedlock; and the holy law prohibits and forbids uncovering

the shame of relatives. Therefore it is needful that christian men shall marry among themselves in the third or fourth degree, for the second degree already mentioned must absolutely refrain and abstain. It is a grievous sin and offence against God for a man to wed his stepmother, for it is written in God's law, 'Turpitudinem patris tui non reuelabis,' 'Thou shalt not uncover thy father's shame.' And as it is written, 'Erunt duo in carne una,' 'Man and wife, they two shall be in one body,' then he who dares to uncover the shame of his stepmother, who was one body with his father, in very truth he uncovers his father's shame. So also it is forbidden a man to wed his brother's wife, for by the previous union she became his brother's body. For this cause also John the Baptist was beheaded and ended his life by holy martyrdom, because he said to the king, that it was not lawful for him to marry and have his brother's wife. But as there are many in England [who], while still in unbelief, were said to have been united in this sinful wedlock, so they are to be warned, now they have come to the faith, to abstain from such unrighteousness, and to understand that it is grievous sin, and to fear the tremendous judgment of God, lest they receive the torments of eternal death for their carnal affections. However, they are not, for this cause, to be excluded from the communion of Christ's body and blood, lest we seem to revenge on them the sins committed in ignorance before baptism. For at this time, holy church amends some things with fervour, some it tolerates out of gentleness, with some it temporises out of consideration, and so bears and temporises, that oft by tolerating and temporising it checks the evils to which it is opposed. All those, who come to the faith of Christ, are to be admonished that they may not attempt any such thing. If then any subsequently do attempt, they are to be cut off from Christ's body and blood. For as in those men, who sin through ignorance, something is to be tolerated, so those who fear not to sin wittingly are to be visited with severity.

QUESTION VI.

If the distance between places is great, so that bishops may not easily travel, may a bishop be consecrated without the presence of other bishops?

ANSWER.

Certainly, in the Church of England in which you, so far, are the only bishop to be found, you cannot in any other way consecrate a bishop [except] without other bishops. But bishops shall come to you from Gaul, who may assist as witnesses at a bishop's consecration. For the consecration of bishops may not take place in any other way, save before a congregation and in presence of three or four bishops, that they may make prayer and send up their petitions together to Almighty God for his protection.

QUESTION VII

How shall we proceed with the bishops of the Gauls and of the Britons?

ANSWER,

We do not grant you any authority in the case of the bishops of the Gauls, for ever since the old days of my predecessors the bishop in the city of Arles has received the pallium, whom we should not deprive or bereave of the authority he has obtained. But if you chance to travel in the land of the Gauls, confer and consult with this bishop as to the course of action, and if there be any fault found in bishops, how they should be corrected and reformed. And if it be supposed, that he is too remiss in vigour and severity of discipline, then he must be incited and reformed with your brotherly love, so that he may remove from the conduct of bishops those habits, which are contrary to the law and ordinance of our Creator. But you may not judge the bishops of Gaul without, their own authority, but you shall ever admonish them gently and show them the example of your own good works. We commit to you, my brother, all bishops of the Britons, to the end that the unlearned may be taught, and

the feeble may be strengthened with your encouragement, and the perverse amended by your authority.

QUESTION VIII.

Shall a woman with child be baptized or after the birth of the child? And after what period may she go to church? And also after how many days may the child that is born be allowed to receive the sacrament of baptism, lest it be carried off by death beforehand? And after how long a period may man and wife come together again? Or if a woman be menstruous, is she allowed to go to church or receive the sacrament of the Holy Communion? Or may a man after approaching his wife go to church, or to the sacrament of the Holy Communion before bathing? It is proper for the English people, who are still new in the faith of God, to have all these points ascertained.

ANSWER.

Why should not a woman that is pregnant be baptized, seeing that there is no sin in fecundity of the body before the eyes of God Almighty? For our parents, the first of mankind, on sinning in Paradise, lost by the just judgment of God the immortality they had received and were created in. Now, as Almighty God would not utterly destroy mankind for their sin, he deprived man of immortality for his sin, and yet reserved to him fertility in offspring out of the kindness of his mercy. If this was reserved by the grace of God Almighty for human nature, what reason is there in prohibiting from the grace of Holy Baptism? In the sacrament by which all sin is thoroughly done away with, it is very foolish to offer opposition to the divine grace. You asked also, how many days after childbirth a woman might go to church. Now you have yourself learnt in the ordinances of the Old Testament, that for a man-child she should abstain thirty-three days from entering God's house, for a woman-child sixty-six days. You must know, however, that this is understood as a spiritual mystery. For even if she should go to church, to thank God, in the very hour after childbirth, she does not incur any burden of sin. For carnal pleasure is sinful, not the pains of childbirth. In carnal copulation there is

pleasure, in the birth of offspring groaning and pain. As to this it was said to the first mother of all mankind, 'in dolore paries,' 'in sorrow thou shalt bear children.' Now if we prevent a woman after childbirth from going to church, surely we then account this pain and penalty as her sin. So then, to baptize a woman after childbirth or the new-born child, if threatened with danger of death, either the woman in the very hour of childbirth or the babe, is a thing in no wise prohibited. For as the grace of the holy sacrament is to be provided with much discretion for those who are alive and sensible, it is however without any delay to be brought and administered to those threatened by death, lest, if there be any little delay, no one may be found who may be redeemed. A husband shall not enter his wife's bed, before the babe is weaned from the breast. A culpable habit indeed has arisen in places between the married pair, that the woman neglects to feed her child, that she has borne, and hands it over to others to feed. Now this seems to occur through incontinence only, for they neglect to feed their own babes, when they will not live apart from their husbands. Now these women, who from culpable habit give their children to others to feed, shall not enter their husband's bed, unless the time of purification has past. Those who are menstruous were prohibited from entering their husband's bed, except for the sake of offspring, so that the holy law visits with death any man going to a menstruous woman. Yet the woman, while menstruous, shall not be prohibited from going to church, for the natural overflow may not be counted as her sin, and it is not right that she should be cut off from entering God's church through a necessary affliction. Now we know and learn in Christ's books, that the woman suffering from an issue of blood came humbly behind the Lord's back and touched the hem of his garment, and at once her infirmity departed and she became whole. Now if this woman while suffering from an issue of blood might laudably touch the Lord's garment, why should one, who is menstruous, not be allowed to go to the Lord's church? But you say now: Her infirmity forced her to touch Christ's garment; the women of whom we speak are constrained by constant habit. Think now, my dearest brother, that all, which we suffer in this mortal body, is ordered by the just judgment of

God from the infirmity of nature. It followed on the sin of the first man, for hunger and thirst, fever, chill, fatigue, all come from the infirmity of nature. And what else is to be sought for against hunger than food; against thirst, drink; against heat, coolness; against chill, a garment; against weariness, rest; against illness medicine is to be sought. Now for women the menstrual flow is an illness. If now the woman was justly bold in touching the Lord's garment in time of illness, why should not that be allowed to all women, that was allowed to a single sick person, seeing that they are all visited with the infirmity of their nature? Also during these days they shall not be prohibited from receiving the Holy Communion. Now if anyone out of great veneration does not venture to receive, he is to be praised; but if he receive, he is not to be judged. For it is the habit of good minds and men, that at times they imagine sin where there is no sin, and often a thing originating in sin is done without sin as for instance when hungry we eat without sin, and yet the possibility of hunger arose from the sin of the first man. For as in the old covenant, external works were regarded, so in the new covenant, not so much the external act, as the internal thought, is carefully regarded. For while the law prohibits the eating of many things as unclean, yet in the gospel the Lord saith, 'Not that which entereth into the mouth of man defileth, but that which goeth out of the mouth, that defileth the man.' And a little after he explained that and said, 'Out of the heart proceed evil thoughts.' There it is sufficiently declared that, whatever is produced from the root of polluted and unclean thought, is shown by God Almighty to be unclean and polluted in act. About this also the apostle Paul says, 'To the clean all is clean: to the polluted and unfaithful nothing is clean.' And immediately the apostle declared the cause of this pollution, subjoining, 'Therefore their mind and conscience are polluted.' If then meat is not clean to him whose mind is unclean, why should to the woman that be accounted for uncleanness, which she with clean mind suffers by nature? The man, who has entered his wife's bed, shall not go into, church, except he be washed with water and bathed, nor though bathed may go in at once. For the law directed the old people of God, that a man, after approaching his wife, should be washed and bathed with water, and not

enter their assembly before sunset. This, however, may be spiritually understood; for a man approaches a woman, when the mind is associated by delight in thought with unlawful desire. For this, unless the fire of illicit desire cool down in the mind, he shall not deem him worthy of the congregation of the brethren and God's servants, when he sees himself burdened by the evil of unrighteous desire. Though in this point various races of men have a variety of ideas and observances, yet it was ever the custom of the Romans, from the time of their ancestors, that after approaching their wives they sought purification by bath and washing, and reverently abstained for some time from entering church. Though we say this, we do not account wedlock a sin; but as the lawful union with a woman may not be without carnal pleasure, a man should abstain from entering the holy place, because the pleasure itself may in no wise be without sin. He was not born of adultery nor fornication, but of lawful wedlock, who said, 'Ecce enim in iniquitatibus conceptus sum, et in peccatis concepit me mater mea;' 'I know that I was conceived in iniquity, and in transgression did my mother bear me.' Since he knew himself to be conceived in iniquity, he lamented that he was born of transgression. For he bore in the branch the sap of vice, which he previously drew from the root. Still in these words it is clear, that he called iniquity, not the union in wedlock, but the actual pleasure in the union. It is fit then that lawful copulation should be for the sake of offspring, not of pleasure, and that fleshly union should be for the sake of child-bearing, not the satisfaction of vice. Whatever man visits his wife, not with the desire of unrighteous pleasure, but only for the sake of begetting, is to be left to his own judgment, either as to entering church or receiving the sacrament of Christ's body and blood; for we shall not prohibit him from receiving the holy sacrament, who is placed in the fire and yet cannot burn. But when the desire is not to beget offspring, but pleasure prevails rather in the act of union, then the married pair have need for sorrow and repentance in their union. For the holy teaching concedes this to them, and yet, as regards the actual concession, moves the mind with terror. Therefore when the apostle St. Paul says, 'Qui se continere non potest, habeat uxorem suam,' 'he who cannot contain, let

him have his wife,' at once the apostle subjoined and said, 'Hoc autem dico secundum indulgentiam, non secundum imperium,' 'but this I speak by permission, and not of commandment.' For that is not conceded which is lawful, but it is right. In what he said of concession, he showed that there was sin. With vigilant mind we must consider and reflect, that, when the Lord would address his people on Mount Sinai, he first commanded that they should wash and cleanse their garments and abstain from their wives. If now in the place, where the Lord spoke to men through the subject creature, bodily cleanness was sought after with such care, that those, who received God's word, should not come at their wives, much more then the women, who receive the body of the Lord Almighty, shall maintain in themselves bodily cleanness, lest they be burdened with the very greatness of the inestimable mystery. Also on this point it was declared to David by the priest about his companions, that, if they had abstained from women, they might receive and partake of the shewbreads, which were sacred among them, which they might not at all receive, before David confessed that they had abstained from women. Then the man, who after approaching his wife is washed with water and bathed, may receive the sacrament of Holy Communion, since he is allowed, as we said before, to enter a church.

QUESTION IX.

After the delusion, which comes on men in sleep, may one receive the Lord's body, or, in case of a priest, celebrate the holy mystery of mass?

ANSWER.

The Testament of the old law declares this man also polluted, as we said in the former chapter, and does not allow him to enter God's house, unless he be washed with water, nor even then before evening. This however the spiritual people will understand in another way with the same interpretation, as we made before. For a man is deluded, as it were, by a dream, who is tempted with uncleanness, and then is polluted with real imaginations in thought. But he is to be washed with water, that is, he is to wash away the sin of thought with tears, and unless the

fire of temptation depart, he is to consider himself as guilty, as it were till evening. But yet in this very delusion distinction is very necessary, as we should carefully consider, in what way it comes to the mind of the sleeper. For sometimes it comes from overfulness, at times from the overflow and infirmity of nature, at times from thought. When it comes from the overflow and infirmity of nature, this delusion is in no wise to be feared, as the mind does not suffer it wittingly; wherefore it is more a subject for sorrow than it is of action. When the delusion comes from overfulness, then the mind has some tinge of guilt, yet not so as to prevent receiving the Holy Communion or performing the celebration of mass, if need require, or it be a festival, or if there be no other priest in the place, who can officiate in his place in the sacrament of mass. If then others are there, who can perform the service, he shall humbly abstain from offering the holy sacrament, according to my judgment. If however the sleeper's delusion arises from foul thoughts in the waking man, surely then the mind discerns its guilt, seeing from what root the pollution came, namely, that he wittingly suffered, what was in his waking thoughts. But further the thought itself is to be considered, whether it came in by suggestion or of delight, or whether further, what is more, with consent to the sin. For every sin is fulfilled in three ways, namely, first through suggestion, and through delight, and through consent. Suggestion is of the devil, delight of the body, consent of the spirit. For the accursed spirit suggested the first sin through the serpent, and Eve then, as it were the body, took delight, and Adam then, as it were the spirit, consented: then was the sin fulfilled. And there is great need, that the mind itself sit as its judge, distinguishing between suggestion and delight and again between delight and consent. For when the accursed spirit suggests sin in the mind, if no delight in the sin follow, in no wise then is the sin carried out. But when the body begins to have pleasure, then first is sin born. If he then consent with thought and deliberation, then sin is understood to be committed. And in the suggestion of sin, if the mind is in delight, that is nutriment: in consent the devil fulfils his purpose: and it often happens, that what the accursed spirit sows in the thought, the body makes into delight; and yet the mind

does not assent to the delight. And while we know that the body cannot have delight without the mind, yet the mind itself struggles against the unlawful desires of the body: so then the mind, in this delight of the body, is in a way held fast by compulsion, so that with the reason itself it refuses assent to the delight; and yet is held fast by the delight, deeply groaning and lamenting at being so held fast. For this cause the most mighty and exalted champion of the heavenly host, the apostle St. Paul, with groans and lamentations thus spake, 'I see another law in my members warring against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin, which is in my members.' Now if he was captive, then certainly he did not fight; but as he fought, he was for that reason taken captive. Now he fought with the law of the mind, which the law in his members resisted. If he fought, he was not captive. Well then man is, so to speak, both captive and free. He is free, because of the truth he loves, captive, because of the delight which he submits to out of compulsion. These are the answers of the blessed pope St. Gregory to the consultation and enquiry of the venerable bishop Augustine. Augustine also bade them announce to him, that the harvest here was now plenteous, but the labourers few; so he then sent him with the aforesaid envoys greater help for the teaching of the Word. The first and chiefest among these were Mellitus and Justus and Paulinus and Ruffianus; and he sent by them all those things in general, which were necessary for church worship and service, sacramental vessels, altar covers, church ornaments, bishops' and deacons' robes, as well as relics of the apostles and holy martyrs, and many books. He sent also to bishop Augustine a pallium and a letter, in which he signified how he should consecrate other bishops, and in what places in Britain he should establish them. The blessed pope Gregory sent also at the same time a letter to king Æthelberht, along with many worldly gifts of various kinds: he desired also with these temporal distinctions to glorify the king, to whom, by his labour and zeal in teaching, he disclosed and made known the glory of the kingdom of heaven.

XVII. Then the bishop St. Augustine, as soon as he received the episcopal seat in the royal city, repaired and restored with the king's help the church, which he learnt had been constructed long ago of old Roman work; and he consecrated it in the name of our Lord and Saviour Christ; and there he established a habitation for himself and all his successors. He also erected a monastery to the east of the town, in which, by his exhortation and direction, king Æthelberht ordered a church to be erected of becoming splendour, dedicated to the blessed apostles Peter and Paul, and endowed it with a variety of gifts; in which church the body of Augustine and also those of all bishops and kings of Canterbury might be laid. However it was not Augustine, but his successor bishop Laurentius, who consecrated the church. The first abbot of this monastery was a priest called Peter. Afterwards he was sent as an envoy to Gaul, and there was drowned in an inlet of the sea called Ambleteuse; and he was buried by the inhabitants of this place in a mean tomb. But God Almighty desired to make known, what the deserts of this holy man were: and every night over his tomb a heavenly light was displayed, till those, that dwelt near and saw it, understood that it was a great and holy man who there was buried. Then they enquired as to this, and whence he came; then they took his body, and it was deposited and buried in a church in the town of Boulogne, with the honour suitable to a man so great and so holy.

XVIII. At this time there ruled over the kingdom of Northumbria a king named Æthelfrith, who was very brave and very ambitious. He destroyed and wasted the Britons more than all the English and their chiefs, so that he might be exactly compared to Saul of old, king of Israel, except that he was ignorant of the divine religion. There never was a king or chief who depopulated or reduced to subjection more of their lands; for he rendered them tributary to the English or drove them out of their country. The words might well be appropriated to him, which the patriarch Jacob said regarding the person of king Saul, when he blessed his son: 'Benjamin is a ravening wolf: in the morning he shall devour the prey, and in the evening he shall divide the spoil.' Then

Ædan, king of the Scots who dwell in Britain, was roused by his progress; he went to war, and came with a vast and powerful host to fight against him. However he was defeated, and fled away with only a few. This battle took place at that famous place which is called Dawston. There almost all his host was slain. In this battle too Theodbald, Æthelfrith's brother, was slain, with all the host he led. Æthelfrith finished this war in the eleventh year of his reign, which lasted twenty-four years. This was the first year of the emperor Phocas, who was at the head of the Roman power. From that time on no king of the Scots ventured to meet the English in battle, up to this present day.

Here ends the first book and the second begins.

BOOK II.

I. At this time, that is, six hundred and five years after the incarnation of our Lord, the blessed pope Gregory, after he had ruled and directed the see of the Roman and apostolic church with great glory for thirteen years six months and ten days, departed this life, and was led to his everlasting seat in the kingdom of heaven. He ruled and directed the church in the time of the emperors Mauricius and Phocas; and it was in the second year of this Phocas, that he departed this life and went to the true life which is in heaven: and his body was buried in the church of St. Peter before the sacristy on the twelfth of March, and he now will one day with it arise in glory with other pastors of the holy church. And on his tomb an epitaph is written to this effect, 'Receive, thou earth, body taken of thy body, that thou mayest again give it up when God quickens it. The spirit mounted to heaven; no power of death will hurt it; death itself is for it rather the way to a second life. The members of this exalted bishop are enclosed in this tomb, who lives ever and everywhere by his countless good deeds. The hunger of the poor he assuaged with food, and their chill with garments, and he by holy admonitions protected their souls from the foe. And he fulfilled indeed, whatever he taught in word. He spoke mystic words, that he might be an example of life to holy men. By the piety of his teaching he converted the English to Christ, and of them won fresh hosts for God's faith. This toil and more like this, this care thou hadst and this thou didst as a pastor, so that thou broughtest to the Lord a great treasure of holy souls. In these triumphs thou mayest rejoice, thou bishop of God, because thou hast an eternal reward for thy works without end.' We cannot pass over in silence the report which has come to us by the tradition of older men about the

blessed Gregory, as to the reason why he was warned to take such zealous care for the salvation of our people. They say, that one day merchants came there fresh from Britain, and brought to market many wares, and many also came to buy those things. Then it happened that Gregory among others also came there, and saw among other objects for sale, youths placed there: they were men of fair complexion and handsome appearance with beautiful hair. When he saw them there and regarded them, he asked from what land or race they were brought, and was told that they were brought from the island of Britain, and that the inhabitants of this island had this appearance. Again he asked, whether the people in that country were christians or still living in heathen error. They replied and told him that they were still heathen; and he then sighed deeply from the bottom of his heart and thus spoke, 'Alas the pity! it is grievous that such fair forms and men of such bright faces should be owned and possessed by the prince of darkness.' Again he asked what the people was called from which they came; they answered that they were called English. He said, 'That may well be; for their look is angelical, and also it is fit that they should be joint-heirs with the angels in heaven.' Then he further asked and said, 'What is the people called, from which the youths were brought here?' They answered him and said that they were named Deiri. He said, 'Deiri is well said, de ira eruti; they shall be rescued from God's wrath and called to the mercy of Christ.' Further he asked their king's name; and they answered and said that he was called Ælle. And then he played on the name in his words and said, 'Alleluia, 'tis fit that the praise of God our creator should be sung in those parts.' And then he went at once to the bishop and pope of the apostolic see, because he himself had not yet been made bishop: he begged him to send some teachers to Britain for the English, that they through them might be converted to Christ; and he said that he himself was ready with God's help to carry out that work, if it pleased the apostolical pontiff, and it were with his will and leave. But the pope would not suffer that, nor yet the citizens, that a man so noble and so excellent and so learned should go so far from them. But as soon as he was made bishop, he carried out the object that he had long desired, and

sent here the holy teachers, whom we mentioned before. And by his exhortations and prayers St. Gregory gave his help, that their teaching might be fruitful with God's will and with benefit to the English people.

II. Then bishop Augustine, supported by king Æthelberht, invited to a conference the bishops and teachers of the Britons, at a place still called the oak of Augustine, on the borders of the Hwiccas and West Saxons. And he there began with brotherly love to admonish and teach them, to maintain due peace and love among one another, and to undertake joint labour for God in order to instruct the people of England in the divine teaching. But they would not listen to him, nor would they keep Easter at its proper time; and they had also many other observances dissimilar and contrary to the unity of the church. Now when they had had a long discussion and conflict on these points, and would not in any way assent to the teaching and entreaties of Augustine, nor to his usages and those of his clergy, but preferred their own usages and ordinances, rather than conform to all the churches of Christ throughout the world, then the holy father Augustine put an end to this wearisome conflict and spoke as follows: 'Come, let us pray God Almighty, who maketh those who are of one mind to dwell in his Father's house, that he will condescend to declare to us by heavenly miracles, which ordinance is to be followed, and on what path we must speed to enter his kingdom. Let them bring here to us some sick man; and let the faith and works of him, through whose prayers he is healed, be believed acceptable to God and to be followed by all.' When his opponents reluctantly consented, they brought out a blind man of English descent. First he was brought to the bishops of the Britons: and he received neither healing nor comfort by their benediction. Then at last Augustine was compelled by the just necessity of the case; he arose and bowed his knee; he prayed God the Father Almighty to give the blind man sight, that he, by the bodily illumination of one man, might kindle the grace of spiritual light in the hearts of many faithful men. Then without delay light was given to the blind, and he received his sight: and Augustine was declared and magnified by all as the true declarer of light from on high. Then the Britons also

acknowledged with shame their conviction, that that was the way of truth which Augustine declared. They said however, that they might not without consent and leave from their people reject and give up their old usages: they begged that a second synod might be held again, and they would come with more of their leading men. When this was settled, there came seven bishops of the Britons and all their most learned men, who were chiefly from Bangor. At that time the abbot of this monastery was called Dinoh. As they were on their way to the meeting, they came first to an anchorite, a holy and wise man among them. They consulted him and asked, whether they should give up their own ordinances and usages in accordance with Augustine's teaching. He answered them: 'If he is a man of God, follow him.' They said to him, 'How may we know whether he is one?' He said, 'The Lord himself saith in his gospel, "Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me, that I am meek and of lowly heart:" and now if Augustine is meek and of lowly heart, then it is credible that he bears the yoke of Christ and teaches you to bear it. If however he is not meek but proud, then it is clear that he is not of God; and heed not his words.' They said again, 'How may we discern this?' He said, 'See that he comes first with his followers to the place of meeting and takes his seat. And if he rises up to meet you when you come, then be sure that he is Christ's servant, and listen to his words and his teaching with submissiveness. If however he scorns you and will not rise to meet you, when you are in the majority, then let him be scorned by you.' Now they did, just as he said. They came to the place of meeting: archbishop Augustine sat in his chair. When they saw that he did not rise up for them, they were at once angered and considered him haughty and contradicted and opposed all his words. The great bishop said to them: 'In many things you were opposed to our rite and that of the universal church of God too. And yet if you will hearken to me in these three things, that first you will keep the right Easter at its proper time; and if you will celebrate the office of baptism, through which we are born children of God, according to the usage of the Holy Roman and apostolical church; and if, thirdly, you will join us in preaching God's word to the English, we will patiently tolerate everything else that you

do, though they are opposed to our usages.' They replied, that they would not do any of these things, nor have him as archbishop. Among themselves they said, 'If he would not now rise up for us, much more will he regard us as nought, if we are subject to him.' Then St. Augustine, the man of God, is said to have threatened and fore told, that if they would not accept peace with God's servants, they would have hostility and war from their enemies: and if they would not preach the way of life to the English, they would suffer the penalty of death at their hands. All this followed, by the just judgment of God, as foretold by the man of God. And very soon after this, Æthelfrith, king of the Angles, about whom we spoke before, assembled a large army and led it to Chester, and fought there with the Britons: and they made a very great carnage among the unbelieving people. When king Æthelfrith began the battle, he saw their priests and bishops and monks standing apart, unarmed, in a safer position, that they might pray and entreat God for their host. He enquired and asked, what that gathering was, and what they did there. When he understood the cause of their coming, he said: 'Well then I am sure, if they call to their God against us, though they do not bear arms, that they fight against us, because they assail us with their adverse imprecations and curses.' Then he ordered, at once, to turn first against them and slay them. They say that there were twelve hundred in that gathering, and fifty of them got away by flight. And then he destroyed and cut to pieces the rest of the host of that sinful people, not without great loss to his own army. And so was fulfilled the prophecy of the holy bishop Augustine, that they should suffer the penalty of temporal destruction for their faithlessness, because they despised the counsel previously given them for their eternal salvation.

III. Then after this Augustine, archbishop of Britain, consecrated two bishops; the one was called Mellitus, the other Justus. He sent Mellitus to preach the word of God to the East Saxons, who are separated by the river Thames from Kent and adjoin the eastern sea. Their chief town is called London, situated on the bank of the aforesaid river; it is a mart for many nations coming by sea and land. In that province Sœberht was then

king, nephew of Æthelberht and dependent on him. Then the province of the East Saxons received the word of truth and faith of Christ by the teaching of bishop Mellitus. Then king Æthelberht ordered a church to be built in London and to be consecrated to the apostle St. Paul, that Mellitus and his successors might have an episcopal seat in that place. He consecrated Justus as bishop at Rochester in Kent itself. This town is four-and-twenty miles to the west of Canterbury. In it also king Æthelberht ordered a church to be built and consecrated to the apostle St. Andrew. And to each of these bishops the king gave gifts, bocland and possessions for the use of themselves and their clergy. After this the well-beloved father Augustine died: and his body was buried outside close to the church of the blessed apostles Peter and Paul, which we mentioned before; because it was not yet fully completed nor consecrated. As soon as it was consecrated, they placed his body in it; and he was, with due honour, buried in the northern transept of the church. In this are also buried the bodies of all succeeding archbishops, except two, namely Theodore and Beorhtwald; their bodies are placed in the church itself, for there was no more room in the aforesaid transept. Almost in the centre of the great church an altar has been set up and consecrated in the name of St. Gregory. At that mass is celebrated every Saturday, and their memory and their death are set forth by the priest of that place. On the tomb of St. Augustine there is an inscription to this effect: ' Here rests the reverend the first archbishop of Canterbury, Augustine, who long ago was sent here by the blessed Gregory, bishop of the city of Rome, and was supported by God with the working of miracles. He led king Æthelberht and his people from the worship of idols to the faith of Christ; and having fulfilled the days of his service in peace, he departed this life on the 26th of May, during the reign of this king.'

IV. Laurentius succeeded Augustine as bishop, whom he had consecrated in his own lifetime, lest on his death the position of a church so new should be unsettled for a time if without a pastor. In this he imitated the example of the apostle St. Peter, the first pastor of God's church, when he

first established Christ's church at Rome: it is said that he consecrated Clement to assist him in teaching the word of God and to be his successor. Now when Laurentius succeeded to the archbishopric, he began zealously to enlarge the foundations of the church, which he saw nobly laid; and he began to raise and increase it, that it might attain to due height, by frequent repetition of holy exhortation and instruction and by continual examples of pious deeds. And he not only cared for the new church, which was gathered together out of the English race, but also for the old inhabitants, the Britons and Scots. For he saw that in many things they were at variance with the churches of God, and above all that they did not celebrate the feast of Easter and the day of the Lord's resurrection at the right time. He wrote and sent a letter to them, praying and entreating, that they would agree with the church of Christ, which is spread throughout the world, in the unity of peace and observance of the right Easter. And though he did so, the present times and the same usages prove, how little he succeeded. At this time Mellitus, bishop of London, visited Rome to determine certain points necessary for the English church. And he took counsel with the apostolic pope Boniface, who was the fourth bishop of Rome from St. Gregory. At that time this pope assembled a synod of Italian bishops, and was about to make orderly arrangements for the life and retirement of monks. This synod took place in the eighth year of the reign of the emperor Phocas. And Mellitus sat among them at the synod, and with his authority signed with the cross of Christ and confirmed, what was there determined to be in accord with monastic rule; and he returned again to Britain and brought these rules in writing with him, to be observed by the English churches, along with the letters, which the pope sent to archbishop Laurentius, well-beloved of God, and to all his clergy and to king Æthelberht and the whole people of England, for their comfort and encouragement in a righteous life.

V. Then about six hundred and sixteen years after the incarnation of our Lord, that was about twenty-one years after Augustine and his companions were sent to teach the people of England, Æthelberht, king

of Kent, after gloriously ruling the temporal kingdom for fifty-six years, now ascended with joy to the kingdom of heaven. He was the third among the kings of England who ruled over all the southern provinces and held sway as far as the river Humber. Ælle, king of the South Saxons, was the first who had authority of this kind. The second was a king of the West Saxons called Ceawlin. The third was, as we have already said, Æthelberht, king of Kent. The fourth was Rædwald, king of the East Angles. The fifth was Eadwine, king of Northumbria, who had authority over all Britain, Kent alone excepted. He also brought under the authority of the English Man, islands of the Britons lying between Ireland, Scotland and Britain. The sixth who had authority within these limits was Oswald, the best and most christian king of Northumbria. The seventh was his brother Oswio, who also over-ran in great part the land of the Picts and the Scots, and made them tributary. Then king Æthelberht died, twenty-one years after receiving baptism and the christian faith, and was buried in the church of the blessed apostles St. Peter and St. Paul in St. Martin's chapel; and queen Bertha is also buried there. Among other blessings which the king by wise deliberation conferred on his people, he also drew up after the Roman model with the advice of experienced men, codes of just decisions, and ordered them to be written in English; and these are still preserved and observed among them up to the present. In these, he first set down what reparation is to be made by the man, who steals church property or the property of a bishop and other ecclesiastical orders. He wished to provide protection for those, from whom he received instruction. This Æthelberht was the son of Eormanric; whose father was called Octa; whose father was Ceric and surnamed Asc, from whom the kings of Kent afterwards were called Æscings. The father of this Æsc was that Hengest, who was first leader and general of the English in Britain, as we have already related. Then after Æthelberht's death his son Eadbald succeeded to the throne, and he soon was cause of great loss and injury to the growth of the tender church; because he not only refused to receive Christ's faith, but also was polluted with unlawful and fearful fornication, so that he went in to his father's wife. By both of these sins he gave occasion to those to return to

their former impurity, who in his father's reign, either by the royal support or out of fear of him, received the laws of purity and faith in Christ. Nor yet were there wanting to the faithless king scourgings of the heavenly discipline, that he might thereby be cleansed and reformed; for he often was afflicted with insanity and with attacks of the unclean spirit. The death of Sœberht, king of the East Saxons, also increased the tempest of this confusion. For when he was departing to the eternal kingdom, he left his three sons as heirs of his temporal kingdom. At once they began openly to serve idols, which men supposed that they had, in their father's lifetime, to some extent given up; and they gave free permission to the people, who were subject to them, to worship idols. When they saw the bishop perform the celebration of the mass in God's church and give the sacrament to the people, they were puffed up with barbarian folly. They said to him, 'Why do you not present to us the white bread, which you gave to our father Saba-so they named him-and still give to the people in church?' The bishop answered them: 'If ye will be washed with the saving fount of baptism, as your father was, then you may also be partakers of that holy bread, as he was; but if you despise the laver of life, you may not in any wise receive the bread of life.'

They said: 'We will not enter that laver, for we know we need it not; but yet we will be fed with that bread.' When they were often earnestly admonished by him, that this in no wise might be, that they should partake of the holy bread without the holy cleansing of baptism, then at last they were roused to fury. They said to him: 'If you will not assent to us in a matter so easy, which we request, you may not remain in our province or in our society.' And they drove him away, and ordered him to depart with his companions from their kingdom. When he was driven away, he came to Kent, and went and took counsel with Laurentius and Justus his fellow bishops, as to what he must do under these circumstances. And after joint deliberation they settled, that it was their better and safer course for all to return to their own homes and serve God there with a free spirit, than to remain any longer fruitlessly among the barbarians and adversaries of Christ's faith. Then first the two bishops, Mellitus and Justus, crossed the sea and came into the districts

of the kingdom of Gaul, and resolved that they there would await the end of this business. But the impious kings, soon after they had driven away from them the preacher of the truth, gave themselves up without restraint to the worship of devils. And they marched to battle against the West Saxons, and all fell together and were slain with their army. And though they had lost their princes, yet the people, who had previously been seduced to sin, could not yet be reformed, nor called back to the purity of faith and love of God.

VI. When archbishop Laurentius was about to follow the other bishops his companions and leave Britain, intending to start on the morrow, he ordered on that very night his bed to be prepared, that he might repose, in the church of the blessed apostles Peter and Paul, which we have often mentioned. And then first during the night he continued long in holy prayers, and shed tears and offered up his petitions to God for the state of the church; and being fatigued and weary he laid his limbs to rest and fell asleep for a little. Then presently there appeared to him the most blessed prince of the apostles, St. Peter, and for a long time, in the secrecy of the night, scourged and chastised him severely. And he asked him with apostolical severity, why he was about to leave the flock of God, which he had entrusted to him to keep, and to what pastor he left Christ's sheep, who were set in the midst of wolves, now that he was fleeing. He further said to him: 'Did you forget my example, what I suffered and endured for Christ's little ones, whom he committed to me in token of his love, that is, bonds, scourging, imprisonment and manifold afflictions, and finally death itself, and death on the cross at the hands of unbelievers and enemies of Christ, that I with Christ might be crowned with triumph?' Then Laurentius the servant of Christ was much encouraged by the chastisement and exhortations of the apostle; at once in the morning he came to the king, and opening his robe showed him, with what a scourging he was chastised and punished. Then the king wondered much, and asked who was so audacious as to inflict such punishment on so great a man. And when he heard and understood, that the bishop endured such torture and punishment at the hands of Christ's

apostle for the sake of his salvation, he was seized with great fear, and being in great alarm at once utterly rejected the worship of the idols, which he had followed before, gave up his unlawful wedlock, and received the faith of Christ; and the bishop baptized him. And at once in all things, he protected and defended the property and goods of the church, as far as he might. And he also sent messengers to the kingdom of Gaul, and bade them invite home the bishops Mellitus and Justus; and he bade them return home freely to their bishoprics. And they returned home a year after their departure from Britain. Justus returned to Rochester, where he was bishop before. The Londoners would not receive bishop Mellitus, but preferred being under the bishops of their idols. And they disregarded the words of king Eadbald, for he had not authority over them, such as his father held. However he and his people of Kent, after his conversion to the Lord, obeyed and submitted to the divine ordinances. The proof is this, that he ordered a church to be erected in the monastery of St. Peter in honour of the blessed lady St. Mary, which Mellitus afterwards consecrated in her name, when he was archbishop.

VII. In this king's reign the blessed archbishop St. Laurentius departed and ascended to the kingdom of heaven, and was buried in the church and monastery of the blessed apostle St. Peter beside his predecessor St. Augustine on the 2nd of February. After him Mellitus, who was formerly bishop of London, succeeded to the see of the church of Canterbury, being the third after St. Augustine. Bishop Justus was still alive, and directed the church at Rochester. And they both governed and ruled the church of England with great care and labour. Mellitus suffered severely from bodily infirmity with gout; but still, in the holy courses of his mind, he surmounted with alacrity all earthly obstacles, and ever in his mind he was in haste to love, to desire and to seek the things of heaven. He was of noble descent by his carnal birth, but much nobler by the elevation of his mind. We shall give one proof of his miraculous power, that we may the more readily comprehend his other miracles. It happened once, that the town of Canterbury was set on fire by sinful carelessness. And the

fire and flame grew and increased much, and no resistance could be offered to it by pouring on water; and a great part of the town was destroyed. When the raging flames advanced and extended to the bishop, he trusting in the divine help, as human aid failed, directed his attendants to carry him towards the fire and set him down, where the flame and danger were greatest; and though infirm he began by his prayers to repel the danger from fire which previously the firm hand of strong men with great labour could not do. And at once the wind, which previously blew from the south and spread the conflagration into the city, turned round north and diverted the fire outwards; and soon by his prayers the flames completely died down and were extinguished. And as the man of God burnt strongly within with the fire of divine love, and often kept away and repelled the storms and tempests of evil spirits from injury to himself and his companions by repeated prayers and exhortations, so was it now fit, that he should prevail against earthly winds and flames, so that they should not injure himself and his friends. And now this holy bishop, after governing and directing the church for five years, during the reign of Eadbald departed to heaven, and was buried with his fathers in the oft-named monastery and church of St. Peter on the 24th of April. He was immediately succeeded in the bishopric by Justus, who was previously bishop at Rochester. He consecrated in his place another bishop for that church, called Romanus, as he had received authority from pope Boniface to ordain bishops.

VIII. At this time also the people of Northumbria with their king Eadwine received the faith of Christ, which the holy bishop Paulinus preached and taught them. As an omen for the king of his reception of Christ's faith and also of the heavenly kingdom, the power of his earthly kingdom had increased, so that, what none of the English had done before him, he got into his power the whole extent of Britain-all that tribes either of English or of British race occupied, he got into his power. He also subjected to the authority of the English Man, the islands of the Britons, as we mentioned before. The first motive for the acceptance of Christ's faith by this people, that is the Northumbrians, was that their

aforesaid king Eadwine was connected by affinity with the kings of Kent; from this family he received as wife Æthelburh, daughter of king Æthelberht, who was also called Tate. When he first sent his envoys to her brother Eadbald, who was then king of Kent, and begged and desired the hand of this lady, Eadbald replied that it was unlawful to give a Christian woman as wife to a heathen, lest the faith and sacraments of the heavenly King should be profaned by association with this king, who knew not the worship of the true King. When the envoys reported these words to Eadwine, he promised at once to do nothing adverse to the christian faith, which the lady held, saying that she might live according to christian usage in the faith and exercise of her religion and keep it fully, with all the companions she brought with her. Nor did he refuse even to take up that religion himself, if wise councillors on examination found that it was holier. Then the lady was promised, and after a time sent to Eadwine. And as they had already arranged, St. Paulinus, a man beloved of God, was consecrated bishop, who should proceed with her, that he might confirm the lady and her companions by celebration of the holy sacraments and by his daily instruction, so that she should not be defiled in the society of the heathen. Paulinus was consecrated bishop by archbishop Justus on the 21st July. Then he came with the aforesaid lady to king Eadwine, as if he were an attendant at carnal wedlock; but with all his mind he strove to call by his teaching the people, whom he visited, to a knowledge of the true God and to Christ's faith. Now when the bishop came with the lady into that province, he contended earnestly that by God's grace he might keep both his companions, who came with him, from turning aside from the faith, and that he might, if possible, convert some of the heathen by his teaching to the faith of Christ. Yet, as the apostle said, though he strove long in his teaching, God blinded the minds of the unbelievers, lest the enlightenment of Christ's gospel and glory should shine upon them. Then next year there came a man to the province of Northumbria, whose name was Eomoer. He was sent by the king of the West Saxons, named Cwichelm, to deprive king Eadwine of throne and life. He had and carried upon him a two-edged and poisoned dagger, that if the wound

was not sufficient to cause the king's death, the poison might help. He came to the king on the first day of Easter, near the river Derwent, where at that time there was a royal residence and estate. Then he entered, as if to deliver his lord's errand. And as with crafty lips he reported his feigned errand and falsely whispered, suddenly he got up, and drawing his weapon under his garment, rushed on the king. Now when Lilla saw this, who was the most devoted of the king's attendants, having no shield at hand to defend the king, he interposed his body to meet the thrust. And Eomær thrust through the king's attendant and wounded the king. Then he was at once assailed with weapons on all sides. But still he slew with his wicked dagger yet another of the king's attendants in the tumult, who was called Forthere. Then on the very night of holy Easter, the queen bore the king a daughter, whose name was Eanfloed. And when the king in the bishop's presence gave thanks to his gods for the daughter, that was born to him, the bishop on the other hand began to give thanks to Christ the Lord, and to make known to the king, that through his prayers be received this grace from him, that the queen bore that child healthily and without severe suffering. When the king heard this, he began to rejoice at the bishop's words, and promised that he himself would renounce his idols; and said that he would choose Christ's service, if he would give him life and victory in the contest, which he contemplated against the king, who sent the murderer, that wounded him. And he gave his daughter also to the bishop to be consecrated to Christ, as a pledge that he would fulfil the vow. She was baptized on the holy day of Pentecost, being the first among the people of Northumbria, with eleven ladies besides belonging to the queen's household, she being the twelfth. At that time also the king was healed of the wound previously inflicted upon him. Then he assembled his army to fight the West Saxons, and advanced into their country; and as soon as he attacked them, all his enemies were denounced to him, who had plotted against his life. And he slew some, and accepted the submission of others; and so returned home in triumph. Yet he would not at once, on the spot and without consideration, receive the sacraments of the Christian faith; though the fact was, that he never served idols, from the

day he vowed to be Christ's servant. But first earnestly, from time to time, he studied the truth of the holy faith under the venerable St. Paulinus; and also with big nobles, whom he knew to be wisest and most prudent, he often took counsel, and enquired of them what should be done in these matters. Besides, as he was himself naturally a man of the greatest sagacity, he often sat alone with silent lips, while in big inmost heart he argued much with himself, considering what was best to do and what religion he should hold to.

IX. At that time also pope Boniface, bishop of the apostolic see, sent greeting to Eadwine and a letter exhorting him to receive Christ's faith. There was also a message from God and a heavenly revelation, which the divine goodness once revealed to him, when he was an exile with Redwald, king of the East Angles, which supported his mind much in receiving and comprehending the admonitions of saving doctrine. When bishop Paulinus saw that he could not easily convert to humility the pride of this royal spirit, so that he would accept his eternal salvation and the mystery of Christ's quickening cross-and he at the same time, for the salvation of the king and the people he ruled, strove with men by word of exhortation, and strove with the divine goodness by word of prayer in intercession-then at last he learnt in spirit, and it was revealed to him, what heavenly revelation was formerly disclosed to the king, when an exile. He delayed no longer, but went at once to the king and admonished him to fulfil his vow, made at the time of the revelation granted to him, in case he should escape the misery of that time and be raised to the throne. This divine message and revelation was to this effect. When Æthelfrith, his predecessor, persecuted him, and he was a fugitive for many years in various places, at last he turned and came to Redwald, king of the East Angles, and begged him to protect his life against the snares of his mighty persecutor, and ensure his safety. The king welcomed him, and promised to do as he asked. When king Æthelfrith found him out there, at the court of king Redwald, he at once sent envoys with large sums, as the price of his murder or his surrender to death. However he effected nothing by this. Again a second time he

sent envoys; he sent a third time, with much richer gifts and bribes than before, as price of his death. He also bade them threaten, that he would march against Redwald with an army, if he rejected his request and his gifts. Then the king's mind was moved by the threats and corrupted by the gifts, so that he granted the king's prayer and promised to slay Eadwine or give him up to his enemies to be put to death. Now there was one of the king's followers, who was Eadwine's most faithful friend, and he heard and understood the matter. And going to the chamber, where Eadwine was about to lie down to sleep-it was early in the night-he called him out, spoke to him and told what they would do to him. He added, 'If you wish, at this moment, I will bring you out of this country, and into a place where neither Redwald nor Æthelfrith can ever find you.' Eadwine replied: 'I am grateful for your offer and your love, but yet I cannot do what you advise, and wilfully forsake the compact made with so great a king, seeing that he has done me no harm nor showed any hostility. And if I must suffer death, I would rather he put me to death than a meaner man. And see now, where can I flee any longer? For many a year I have been a fugitive throughout all Britain, enduring and guarding against his hate.' Then his friend left him, and Eadwine stayed alone outside; he sat in great despondency on a stone before the hall, and began to be troubled with many a feverish thought, not knowing where to go or what it was best to do. After long brooding in silent anguish of mind and with secret heartburning, suddenly he saw at midnight a man approach him, of strange appearance and strange dress. His coming alarmed him; but the man came up, saluted him, and asked why at that time, when other men were asleep and took their rest, he sat alone on a stone awake and gloomy. Then Eadwine asked, what that was to him, whether he was awake or asleep, outside or within. The other answered and said: 'Do not imagine that I am ignorant of the cause of your despondency and wakefulness and your sitting solitary. But I know well, what you are and why you sorrow, and the coming trouble which you dread as imminent. But tell me what reward you will give to the man, if there be any one, to rescue you from these troubles, and prevail on Redwald's mind not to do you any harm, nor surrender you

to your enemies to be put to death.' Then he answered and said, that he would make every return in his power as a reward for such service. Then the other continuing said: 'And now if he also truly promises you a throne in the future, after the extinction of your enemies, so that you may far surpass in power and authority not only your forefathers, but all kings that ever were in Britain?' Then Eadwine was encouraged by these questions, and at once promised, that whoever did him such service, should receive due gratitude at his hands. Then the man, who talked with him, spoke a third time: 'Well, if the man who foretells truly to you such a great gift in the future, also can show you a way to salvation and to a life better and more useful than any of your kindred or forefathers ever heard of, do you say that you will receive his salutary advice and hearken to him?' Then Eadwine made no delay, but promised at once to hearken in all things and receive his instruction cheerfully, when he saved him from such misery and calamity, and raised him to the throne. When the man who spoke with him received this answer, at once he put his right hand on his head and said: 'When this token comes to you in this wise, then remember the time of our conversation, and delay not to fulfil your present promise.' After these words were spoken, suddenly Eadwine knew not where he went; he would have it understood thereby, that it was not a man who appeared to him but a spirit. As the young prince still sat there alone, rejoicing greatly at the comfort promised him, yet earnestly, with anxious heart, considered who he was, or whence he came, who thus spoke to him, then the aforesaid friend came again to him, and with cheerful face hailed and greeted him saying thus: 'Arise, and go in; rest body and mind without anxiety, because the king's heart is turned; he will do you no harm, but rather keep his faith and promise to you and ensure your safety.' He then told him this: 'The king disclosed to the queen in secret his intentions, of which I told you before. Then she diverted him from the evil purpose of his heart, instructing and admonishing him, that it in no wise became a king so noble and so excellent to sell for gold his best friend in the hour of his need, and to sacrifice honour, which is dearer than all treasures, for greed and love of money.' Why should we say more? The king did as it

has been said; he not only did not give up the exile to death, but also aided him in attaining to the throne. For soon after the envoys returned home, who sought his death, Redwald summoned his troops and gathered a large army to attack Æthelfrith. The latter marched to meet him with an inferior force, as the other did not give him time to assemble all his men. They encountered and fought on the borders of Mercia, east of the river called the Idle; and there king Æthelfrith was slain. A son of Redwald, called Regenhere, also fell in the battle. So Eadwine, in accordance with the divine message before received, not only escaped the snares of the hostile king, but also, after his death, succeeded to the throne of that kingdom. As bishop Paulinus preached and taught God's word, and the king still hesitated to believe, and for a period, as already said, often sat alone and earnestly debated and considered with himself, what he had best do and what religion he should follow, then one day the man of God came in to him, as he sat alone, and putting his right hand on his head, asked him whether he could understand the token. Then he at once clearly recognised it, and being much alarmed fell at his feet; but the man of God raised him up and spoke to him kindly, saying: 'Well now, you have by God's grace escaped the hand of your enemies, whom you feared, and by his gift and grace succeeded to the throne you desired. But remember now to fulfil the third thing, namely, your promise to receive his faith and keep his commandments, who rescued you from temporal adversities and exalted you to the glory of a temporal kingdom. And if you will further hearken to his will, which he preaches and teaches through me, he will also rescue you from the torments of everlasting sufferings, and make you partaker with him of the everlasting kingdom in heaven.'

X. When the king heard these words, he answered and said, that it was both his desire and duty to receive the faith which the bishop taught. Yet he said, he would speak and take counsel with his friends and counsellors, and if they agreed with him, all together would be consecrated to Christ in the fount of life. Then the king did as he said, and the bishop assented. Then he conferred and took counsel with his

advisers, and asked all of them separately their opinion about this new doctrine and worship of the Deity, which was taught therein. Then his chief bishop, called Cœfi, answered: 'Consider for your part, O king, what this doctrine is, that is now preached to us. I truly confess to you, what I have learnt for certain, that the religion we have held and maintained hitherto is absolutely without use or excellence. For none of your followers devoted himself more closely or cheerfully to the worship of our gods than I did; but nevertheless many have received more gifts and promotion from you than I, and in all things have prospered more. Well, I am sure if our gods had any power, they would help me more, for I more zealously served and obeyed them. Therefore, if you consider the religion to be fairer and stronger, which is newly preached to us, it seems wise to me that we should receive it.' Another of the king's counsellors, one of his chief men, assented to his words, and taking up the discussion thus spoke: 'O king, the present life of man on earth, in comparison with the time unknown to us, seems to me, as if you sat at table with your chief men and followers in winter time, and a fire was kindled and your hall warmed, while it rained, snowed, and stormed without; and there came a sparrow and swiftly flew through the house, entering at one door and passing out through the other. Now as long as he is inside, he is not pelted with winter's storm; but that is the twinkling of an eye and a moment of time, and at once he passes back from winter into winter. So then this life of man appears for but a little while; what goes before, or what comes after, we know not. So, if this new doctrine reports anything more certain or apt, it deserves to be followed.' The other elders and the king's counsellors expressed themselves in similar terms. Then Cœfi further said, that he wished to hear more attentively Paulinus speaking about the God whom he preached. This the king ordered to be done. On hearing the bishop's words Cœfi exclaimed, 'I see clearly, that all we worshipped, was but naught. For the more attentively I sought this very truth in our worship, the less I found it. Now then I openly acknowledge that the very truth is evident in this teaching, which can give us the grace of eternal blessedness and the salvation of eternal life. Therefore, O king, I now advise, that we should

speedily destroy and burn with fire the temple and the altars, which we consecrated without producing any benefit.' So then the king openly professed before the bishop and all, that he would firmly renounce idols and receive Christ's faith. When the king asked the aforesaid bishop of that religion, which they previously maintained, who should first profane and throw down the altars and fanes of the idols, and the _hedges which surrounded them, then he answered, 'Who but I? As I long in my folly worshipped them, who may now more readily and suitably overthrow them, as an example to other men, than I myself through the wisdom received from the true God?' And he at once cast away from him the vain folly, which he previously entertained, and prayed the king to give him arms and a stallion to ride on and overthrow the idols. For the bishop of their religion was not allowed to bear arms, nor ride except on a mare. Then the king gave him a sword to gird on; and he took his spear in his hand, and springing on the king's stallion proceeded to the idols. Now when the people saw him thus equipped, they supposed that he was not in his right mind, but gone mad. As soon as he approached the sanctuary, he cast his spear, so that it stuck fast in the sanctuary, and exulted in his knowledge of the worship of the true God. Then he bade his companions pull down all that sanctuary and its buildings, and burn them up with fire. The place is still pointed out of that former idol worship, not far east of York beyond the river Derwent, and at this day it is still called Goodmanham, where the bishop, by the inspiration of the true God, pulled down and destroyed the altars previously consecrated by himself.

XI. Then king Eadwine, with all the princes of his people and a large crowd, received the faith of Christ and baptism in the eleventh year of his reign. He was baptized by his teacher, bishop Paulinus, at York on the most holy day of Easter in the church of the apostle St. Peter, which he there hastily erected of wood, After being catechized, he had also assigned an episcopal residence to his teacher and bishop, Paulinus. As soon as he was baptized, he began under the bishop's direction to erect and complete a larger and loftier church of stone, around the church

previously built and enclosing it. But before the walls attained their full height and were finished, the king was slain by a foul death, and left the work for his successor Oswald to complete. For full six years from that time, that is to the end of the king's reign, bishop Paulinus with his support preached and taught God's word in that province; and men believed and were baptized, as many as were predestined to eternal life. Among them were Osfrith and Eatfrith, sons of king Eadwine, who were both born to him when in exile, of Cwenburh, daughter of Ceorl king of Mercia. At a later time were baptized also his other children, born of queen Æthelburg, namely Æthelhun and Æthelfrith his daughters, and another son named Wuscfrea. The first two died while chrisom-children, and were buried in the church at York. Yffe, son of Osfrith, was also baptized, and many princes of the royal race. It is said, that there was such fervour and desire for Christ's faith and baptism among the people of Northumbria, that bishop Paulinus came once with the king and queen to the royal residence, which was called Yeverin; and there he remained thirty-six days to catechize and baptize the people. And every day from early morning till evening he did nothing but instruct Christ's people in the word of God, who flocked there from all villages and places, washing them in the laver of the remission of sins at the river called the Glen. This royal residence was abandoned in the time of his successors, and another was erected instead at the place called Melfeld. These places are in the province of Bernicia; but also in the province of Deira, where the bishop was often with the king, he baptized the people in the river Swallow, which passes by the township of Catterick. For as yet, at the beginning of the new born church, neither churches nor baptisteries had been erected; still at Slack, where there was a royal residence, Eadwine ordered a church to be built, which after a time, along with all the royal buildings, was burnt down by the heathen, who afterwards slew the king. Afterwards, instead of it, his successors built a residence in the district called Leeds.

XII. King Eadwine was so zealous for the worship of Christ's faith, that he also induced Eorpwald, son of Redwald and king of the East Angles,

to give up the vanity of idol worship and receive the sacraments of Christ's faith with his people, the East Angles. Long before, his father Redwald had been instructed in the sacraments of Christ's faith in Kent, but to no purpose; for on returning home he was seduced by his wife and unrighteous teachers, and left the first purity of Christ's faith. And his last time was worse than his first, so that, imitating the usage of the old Samaritans long ago, he was seen to serve Christ as well as idols; and in the same sanctuary he had an altar for Christ's sacrifice and another for sacrifice to devils. This sanctuary remained there till the time of Aldwulf, king of that people; he said that he saw it when a boy. The aforesaid king Redwald was of noble birth, though ignoble in his deeds. He was son of Tytel, whose father was called Wuffa, from whom the kings of the East Angles were accordingly named Wuffingas. Now the king Eorpwald soon after was slain by a heathen, named Ricberht. Then for three years' time this people lived in their errors, till Sigeberht, brother of Eorpwald, succeeded to the throne, a man in all points most christian and most learned. In his brother's lifetime he had been an exile in Gaul; and there was well instructed in the sacraments of Christ's faith. In this faith he would have his people partake, as soon as he succeeded to the throne; and his good will was well seconded by bishop Felix, who came from the district of Burgundy, where he was born and consecrated. He came here across the sea, first to archbishop Honorius, and told him his will and desire. And he sent him to teach the word of God in East Anglia. And this pious cultivator of the spiritual soil soon found much fruit of faithful people in that nation. And he released all that people from long continued iniquity and infelicity, in accordance with the mystic import of his name, and turned them to the faith of Christ, to the works of truth, and to the grace of eternal felicity. He received an episcopal residence at Dunwich; and after ruling as bishop for seventeen years, he there ended his life in peace.

XIII. Bishop Paulinus also taught God's word in Lindsey. This province is the nearest on the south side of the river Humber, and runs out into the sea. And there first he converted to the faith of the Lord the reeve of

Lincoln, whose name was Blœcca, and all his household. Also in that town he built a stone church of noble workmanship, of which the walls may be still seen standing; and there too every year are displayed many miracles in the healing of the sick, who visit that place in faith. In the same church bishop Paulinus, after bishop Justus departed to Christ, consecrated Honorius bishop in his room, as we will relate afterwards. With regard to the faith of this people, says Beda, a venerable priest, abbot at the house of Parteney, called Deda, spoke to me. He said, an old councillor had told him, that he was baptized at midday by bishop Paulinus in presence of king Eadwine, along with a great crowd of people, at the river Trent by the town of Torksey. The same man described the appearance of the bishop Paulinus: he said that he was long in body and slightly bent; he had black hair, a pale face and a small thin nose, and was both venerable and awful in aspect. He had, to assist him in the divine ministry, the deacon James, a man well instructed and noble both in Christ and in his church: he is alive in our day.

XIV. It is said, that in those times there was such peace in Britain, everywhere around where Eadwine had authority, though a woman should go alone with her new born child, she might proceed without injury from sea to sea all over this island. Also the king established for the use of his people a custom, that in many places where clear springs ran, and on frequented roads, where there was most traffic, he directed for the refreshment of travellers that poles should be set up and brazen cups hung upon them: and yet no one, out of fear and love for him, durst or would touch them, except for his necessary use. He maintained such a noble style in his realm, that not only were standards borne before him in battle, but also in time of peace, wherever he rode, among his hamlets or townships with his retinue, and even if he was on foot, the ensign was always borne before him. At that time Honorius was bishop of the apostolic see, being successor to Boniface. Now when this pope learnt, that the people of Northumbria along with king Eadwine had been converted to the faith and confession of Christ by Paulinus' preaching, he sent here a pallium to this bishop; and he also sent a letter of exhortation

to king Eadwine, and with fatherly affection encouraged him, that they might ever stand fast and always abide in belief of the truth, which they had received.

XV. Meantime archbishop Justus had been taken to the kingdom of heaven on the tenth of November. Honorius was the name of the bishop chosen in his room. He came to St. Paulinus to be consecrated; who proceeded to Lincoln to meet him and consecrated him as bishop, in the church we have mentioned before. He was fifth archbishop of Canterbury from St. Augustine. To this bishop also pope Honorius sent a pallium and a letter, in which he arranged and directed, that as often as the bishop of Canterbury or York departed, this life, the survivor of this rank should have power to consecrate another bishop, in room of the one who had departed, that there might be no need for perpetually toiling over so long a journey by sea and land to Rome, for consecration as archbishop.

XVI. Now after Eadwine had reigned gloriously over English and Britons for seventeen years-during six of which he had been champion of Christ's kingdom-Ceadwealla king of the Britons went to war with him, and was supported by Penda, the most valiant soldier of the Mercian royal race. And this Penda, at that time, had ruled over the kingdom of the Mercians for twenty-two years with varying fortune. The battle took place at Hatfield and was violent and bloody; in it fell king Eadwine on the twelfth of October; he was then forty-seven years old: and all his people were slain or put to flight. Also in this fight one of his sons, Osfrith, was killed before him, who was a brave warrior. His other son, Eadfrith of necessity submitted to king Penda; and he after a time, when Oswald was king, was unrighteously slain by him in defiance of oath and good faith. At that time very great carnage was wrought in the nation and church of Northumbria. Nor was that without reason; because one of those leaders, who carried on the war, was a heathen and the other more furious and cruel than the heathen, being a barbarian. Penda and all the Mercians were given up to idolatry and ignorant of the name of

Christian. Though Ceadwealla professed to bear the name of Christian, yet in his mind and habits he was such a barbarian, that he respected not even the female sex nor the innocent years of children, but put all to death by torture with the savagery of a wild beast. And for a long time he traversed all that district like a madman, and in his heart thought and devised to drive all the English race beyond the borders of Britain. And though he should have been a christian, he would not show any regard for christian piety, which had sprung up among them. Such is still to this day the custom of the Britons, that they utterly disregard the faith and piety of the English, and will not communicate with them in any way more than with the heathen. Then the head of king Eadwine was brought to York, and later on was deposited in the church of the apostle Peter, which he began to build; but as we said before, it was completed by his successor Oswald. It was deposited in the chapel of pope St. Gregory, from whose disciples he had received the word of life and faith of Christ. Then after the slaughter of Eadwine, owing to the danger of the times, bishop Paulinus took with him queen Æthelburh, whom he had previously brought there, and returned on board ship to Kent. Their guide was Bassa, a very brave follower of king Eadwine. And they were received with great honour by archbishop Honorius and king Eadbald. They had also with them Eanflœda daughter of Eadwine and his son Wuscfrea, as well as Yffe his Bon Osfrith's son. These their mother afterwards, for fear of the kings Eadbald and Oswald, sent to Gaul to be brought up by king Dagobert, who was her friend. There they both died in childhood, and were buried in church with the honour due to their birth and innocence. The queen brought with her much valuable plate belonging to king Eadwine, among which was a large golden crucifix and a golden chalice, consecrated for altar service, which may be still seen preserved in the church of Kent. At that time the church of Rochester had no pastor, because Romanus bishop of that town had been sent as envoy to pope Honorius by archbishop Justus, and had been drowned in the waves of the sea. For this reason the aforesaid bishop Paulinus received charge of the church, by invitation from the archbishop and king Eadbald; and he held it, till in his time he ascended to the kingdom of

heaven with the reward of his glorious toil. In that church he left the pallium received from the Roman pontiff, and his body rests in peace. He left behind also in his church at York James the deacon, an ecclesiastic of great holiness: and he remained long after in that church, and by his teaching and by baptism he took much spoil from the old enemy. And the township in which he mostly lived, close to Ketterick, is still called by his name. And as he was most skilful in church music, and soon after times of peace returned to the people of Northumbria and the number of the faithful grew, he taught many church music after the usage of Rome and Kent. And then old and full of days, that is of good deeds, as holy writ says, he went the way of his fathers.

Here ends the second book.

BOOK III

I. When Eadwine was slain in the battle, the son of his uncle Ælfric, Osric by name, succeeded to the throne of Deira, for Eadwine was by origin from that province and there first reigned. Osric had been instructed in the mysteries of Christ's faith by the teaching of the bishop Paulinus. Then Æthelfrith's son, by name Eanfrith, succeeded to the throne of Bernicia, for he belonged to the royal family in that people. The nation of Northumbria was of old divided into these two tribes. And as long as Eadwine was king, Eanfrith, son of Æthelfrith, along with a large number of young nobles, remained in exile among the Scots and Picts; and there they received Christ's faith through the teaching of the Scots and were baptized. And as soon as their enemy Eadwine was slain, they returned home to their native land; and Eanfrith succeeded to the throne of Bernicia. Now both of those kings, after their accession, gave up the sacraments of the kingdom of heaven by which they were sanctified, and fell back into the old foulness of idolatry. And by this they ruined themselves. At once without delay Cadwalla king of the Britons slew both with impious hand, but yet with just vengeance. And first, next summer, he came with his army on Osric by surprise at the town 'Municep,' and destroyed him and his whole force. After that for a whole year he held the province of Northumbria, not as a victorious king, but as a tyrant, furiously ruining and rending it as it were with tragic carnage. Then at last Eanfrith, with twelve nobles, rashly came to him, purposing to sue for peace and alliance. Him the tyrant condemned to a like fate and slew. This inauspicious and miserable year is still odious, both for the apostasy of the kings from Christ's faith-and they returned to their idols-and for the fury of the tyrannical king of the Britons.

Therefore all in common have determined, in computing the times of those kings, to strike out the record of these faithless monarchs, and reckon this year in the reign of their successor Oswald, the well beloved of God. Now after the death of his brother Eanfrith, Oswald marched with a small army but strengthened with the faith of Christ, and at the place, which in English is called Dilston, he defeated and slew the sinful king of the Britons, along with a monstrous host which he boasted was invincible. The place is still shown at this day and is much venerated, where Oswald marched to the battle, and raised the holy ensign of Christ's cross and bowed his knees, and prayed God to assist with heavenly aid his worshippers in such dire necessity. It is said that the crucifix was of hasty workmanship, and that he dug a pit in which it should stand. The king himself was fervent in faith, and taking the crucifix set it in the pit, and with his two hands held and supported it, till his followers had piled up clay about it and made it fast. And when it was set up, he lifted up his voice and called to all that host and said: 'Come let us all bow our knees and together pray to the Almighty, living, and true God, to defend us from this proud and savage foe, with his mercy: for he knows that we justly fight for the safety of our people.' Then they all did as he bade. And in the morning, as soon as it began to dawn, he advanced against the enemy which was arrayed against him, and as his faith deserved, they defeated their enemies and won the victory. Afterwards at this place of prayer many marvels and miracles of healing were performed in token and memory of the king's faith. And at the present day still many take chips and shavings from the wood of this holy crucifix, and put them in water, and sprinkle the water on sick men or cattle, or give it to drink; and they are at once cured. The place is called in English 'Heavenfield.' It was of old so named, foreshadowing the future wonders, because there the heavenly trophy should be reared, and there victory from heaven was given to the king, and still at the present day heavenly marvels are celebrated there. It is not therefore unsuitable to relate one miracle and one marvel out of many, which took place at this holy crucifix. There was a servant of God among the brethren of the church at Hexham, whose name was Bothelm. He was

walking one night on the ice incautiously and suddenly fell upon his arm, violently bruising and fracturing it, and was so tortured with the pain in the broken arm, that he could not on account of the pain even raise his hand to his mouth. When he heard one of the brethren say, that he was going to that holy crucifix, he begged him to bring a little bit of that precious tree, when he returned home; he said he believed, he might by God's grace be cured through its efficacy. Then the brother went, as he asked, and came home in the evening. The brethren were sitting at table. Then he brought him a bit of old moss, grown on the holy timber. As he sat at table, he had nothing at hand to keep the proffered gift in; so he slipped it into his bosom. When he went to bed, he forgot to put it away elsewhere, and let it remain in his bosom. Rousing up at midnight he felt, he knew not what, lying cold at his side, and tried with his hand to find what it was. Then he perceived that his arm and his hand were as whole and sound, as if they had never suffered fracture or injury.

II. Now as soon as king Oswald succeeded to the throne, it was his desire and will, that all the people he ruled over should be instructed in the grace of the christian faith, of which faith he most effectively received evidence in his victories over barbarous races. So he sent envoys to the chief men of Scotland, among whom he had long been an exile, and from whom he had received the sacrament of baptism, along with his followers: he begged them to send him a bishop, by whose teaching and ministry the English people, which he ruled, might learn the grace of God's faith and receive the sacrament of baptism. And they gladly assented and sent him a bishop named Aidan, a man of much gentleness, piety and moderation; and he had the zeal of God and love for him in a high degree. Now when the bishop came to the king, he assigned him a place and an episcopal residence in Lindisfarne, in accordance with his own prayer and desire. And the king humbly and cheerfully followed his admonitions in all points, and zealously set up and established Christ's church in his realm. And oft there was the fair spectacle, when the bishop was teaching the word of God, that as he was not quite familiar with English, the king himself, being fully acquainted with the Scots' tongue,

acted as interpreter of the heavenly doctrine to his chief men and followers. At that time many came daily from the land of the Scots into Britain; and with great fervour preached and taught Christ's faith in the tribes of English under Oswald's rule. And those who belonged to the priesthood, administered baptism to them. And churches were also built in many places, and the people of English race flocked there eagerly to hear the word of God, which they preached and taught. And the king gave and bestowed on them possessions and land for the erection of a monastery; and Scots instructed young and old with monastic discipline. For those who had come to teach, were monks, as was the bishop Aidan himself. He was sent from the island and monastery which is called Iona. For a long time this monastery was the chief seat and ruling authority among all the North Scots and monasteries of the Picts. However the Picts assigned and made over this place to the monks of the Scots, because they had formerly received Christ's faith through their teaching.

III. It was from this island and this brotherhood of monks that bishop Aidan was sent to preach Christ's faith to the English people. And among other instruction for men to live by, the bishop left to his disciples the fairest example, in that he was of great abstinence and continence of life. And this chiefly supported his teaching, that he lived just as he taught. For he did not seek or desire the things of this world; but all the worldly goods given him by kings and rich men in the world, he at once gladly distributed and made over to the poor who met him. He travelled everywhere through cities and country districts, and never would mount on horseback, except there were special need, but went about everywhere on foot. And wherever he came and whomsoever he saw, rich or lowly, he turned to them; if they were unbelievers, then he invited them to receive the mysteries of Christ's faith; and if they were believers, he confirmed them, exhorting them to continue steadfast in their faith; and by word and deed he stirred them up to almsgiving and the performance of good deeds. And his life so differed from the sluggishness of our time, that all who went with him, whether tonsured or lay, wherever they came, must either learn psalms or other holy

writings, or thirdly devote themselves to holy prayer. This was his daily work and that of all with him. And if it happened, which was seldom, that he was invited to the king's table, he went there with one or two of his priests, and as soon as they had refreshed themselves a little, he at once arose and went out to his prayers, or to study with his clergy. By the example of this holy man at that time all religious people, whether men or women, were so confirmed, that it became their habit throughout the year, except during fifty days after Easter, to fast up to the ninth hour on the fourth and sixth days of the week. And this bishop never would either out of respect or fear be silent before rich men, when they did anything wrong, but addressed them with severe rebuke and corrected them. And he never would give any money to a sick man, but merely food and entertainment to those who visited him; but rather he either bestowed the gifts and money, given him by the rich, for the use of the poor, or made it over for the redemption of men, who had been unjustly sold. And many of those whom he redeemed with a price he took as his disciples, and by his zeal in training and instructing them, raised them after a time to the priesthood. It is said, when king Oswald begged for a bishop from the island of the Scots, who should minister and maintain Christ's faith and baptism among his people, there was first sent to him another bishop, a man of harsh temper. When he had been preaching and teaching the English for some time and effected nothing by his teaching, and the people were reluctant to hear him, he returned back to the Scots in his native land, and in an assembly of their councillors he declared, that he could not do anything by his teaching for the people to whom he was sent; because the men were untameable and of a hard and savage temper. And as it is related, they then had long discussion and deliberation in the assembly, as to what they should do. They declared, they preferred and desired to be the saving of the people, as they were entreated; and they grieved very much at their refusal to receive the teacher sent to them. Now Aidan sat in the assembly among the other councillors; and said to the bishop on hearing his words: 'I think, brother,' said he, 'you were in your teaching harder with those illiterate men than was right, and that you would not, in accordance with

the apostolical discipline, first give them to drink the milk of gentle doctrine, till they being fed gradually with the word of God, might receive then the perfect and glorious ordinances of God.' Now when the council heard these words, they turned their eyes and faces all to him, and earnestly considered what he said. And it was decided by the judgment of all, that he was worthy of the episcopate, and that he should be sent as teacher to the English, as he by God's grace had exhibited such discretion at their deliberations. And they did so: they consecrated him bishop, and sent him as teacher to their friend king Oswald. Now when he received the episcopate, just as he had previously succeeded by the temperance of his discretion, so after a time he showed himself adorned with other spiritual virtues.

IV. Now through this bishop's teaching Oswald, with the English under him, was instructed, and not only learnt from him to entertain hopes of a heavenly kingdom, but also received an earthly kingdom beyond any of his forefathers, from that same God who created heaven and earth. For all the race and tribes of Britain, which are divided into four languages, namely those of the Britons, and Picts and Scots and Angles, passed under his authority. And though he was so exalted with the elevation of his earthly kingdom, none the less, wonderful to relate, he was ever humble and helpful and liberal to poor men and foreigners. It is said, that once, on the holy Easter day, he happened to be sitting with the aforesaid bishop at his early meal, and the table was set before him; and on it stood a large silver dish filled with royal dainties. And the bishop took bread and blessed and gave it to the king. Then suddenly came in one of his attendants, whom he had directed to take charge of the poor and needy, and he told the king, that on all sides there was flocking a great crowd of the poor, so that the street was full of them sitting and begging for alms. Then at once the king bade the meat and the victuals set before him to be taken and carried to the poor, and also ordered the dish to be broken in pieces and distributed to them. When the bishop, who sat by him, saw this, he was pleased with the king's pious action, took him by the right hand, kissed it and said: 'May this hand never

grow old.' And this was fulfilled also in accordance with the desire in his benediction. For when he was afterwards slain in battle, it so happened that they cut off the hand with the arm from the body; and they still remain undecayed to this day. These were carried to the royal city called Bamborough, and are there kept with reverence in a silver box. By the efforts of their king also the two provinces of Northumbria, Deira and Bernicia, which till then had been disunited and unfriendly to one another, were drawn together and united into one league and one people. This Oswald was nephew of the noble king Eadwine, being his sister's son. It was meet that so noble a predecessor should have out of his own kindred such an inheritor of his piety and dominions.

V. At that time the people of the West Saxons with their king Cynegels received the faith of Christ. Bishop Birinus preached and taught them God's word, who came to Britain by advice of pope Honorius. He promised him to sow the seed of the holy faith in the most remote parts of England, where no teaching had ever penetrated before. Then the pope directed him to be consecrated as bishop and sent him to Britain. When he landed first in Wessex and found the people there heathen, he thought it more useful and better to preach and teach God's word there, than to travel further into Britain. And he did so: he taught God's word there and converted the king to Christ's faith, and catechized him and, after a time, washed him in the laver of baptism, with his people the West Saxons. It so happened that at the very time of the king's baptism, Oswald, the saintly and victorious king of Northumbria, was present. He had betrothed his daughter to Cynegils; and he received and took him as godson at the font, after the sacred administration by the bishop's hands. Then the kings jointly made over and gave to the bishop a dwelling and episcopal seat at Dorchester-on-Thames. And the bishop lived there to God and built and consecrated a church; and by his pious labours converted much people to the Lord. And there he ended his days, and departing to the Lord was buried in that town. But many years later bishop Hædde directed his body to be taken up and brought to Winchester, and it was buried with honour within the church of the

blessed apostles St. Peter and St. Paul. After this king Cynegils died, and his son Cœnwalh succeeded to the throne. He refused to receive the faith and sacraments of the Heavenly King; and shortly after he lost the dominion of his earthly kingdom. He abandoned one wife, sister of Penda, whom he had previously wedded, and took another wife. Then Penda led his troops and a host against him, and deprived him of his throne. And he departed to the king of the East Angles named Anna, and with him remained in exile three years, and he there learnt the true faith, received it and was baptized. For the king, at whose court he was an exile, was a good man, blessed with goodly and holy offspring, as we shall learn hereafter. When Cœnwalh was restored to his kingdom, there came to Wessex from Ireland, the island of the Scots, a bishop named Ægelberht. He was of Gallic origin, but had lived long in Ireland to study the holy scriptures. And he readily joined the king and instructed him in God's word. When the king perceived his learning and zeal, he prayed him to remain among his people and be their bishop, promising to provide a bishop's seat suitable to his rank. And he assented to his request, and for many years presided with episcopal authority over that people. At last the king, who knew the Saxon tongue only, got tired of his foreign speech, and invited into Wessex another bishop acquainted with his language, who was called Wine and had been consecrated in Gaul. And the king then divided Wessex into two bishoprics, and assigned to Wine the episcopal seat at Winchester. Then Ægelberht was very angry, because the king acted without his advice; he left Britain and returned to his own people in Gaul. And he there received the bishopric of his own town, which was called Paris; and there he departed old and full of good deeds. Then a few years after his departure from Britain, Wine was expelled from his episcopal seat by the same king. So he went to Wulfhere, king of Mercia, and with money bought from him the episcopal seat in London, and was his bishop to the end of his days. And so the province of Wessex was long without a bishop. At the same time also the aforesaid king of this people frequently suffered severe damage to his dominions at the hands of his enemies. Then at last he recollected, that his want of faith formerly caused his expulsion, and that on

receiving the faith of Christ he recovered the throne. So he also saw, that by his perverse conduct his land was without a bishop, and at the same time deprived of the divine support. So he sent envoys to bishop Ægelberht in Gaul, and with humble supplication and petition prayed him to return to the episcopal seat among his people. But the other excused himself, saying that he could not come here, as he had received the bishopric of his own town. And yet because of his earnest prayers in seeking his support, he also sent him his nephew the priest Leutherius. He said that he might, if he would, ordain him as bishop, and that he knew him to be worthy of the position by his meritorious life. And he was at once received with honour by the king and all his people. And they requested Theodore, then archbishop of the church of Canterbury, to consecrate him as bishop. And he did so; he consecrated him in that very town; and he, as sole bishop, with the sanction of the whole synod for many years held and directed the bishopric of Wessex with much authority.

VI. Now about 640 years after our Lord's incarnation Eadbald, king of Canterbury, departed this life; and Erconberht his son succeeded to his dominions, which he nobly swayed and directed for twenty-four years and a few months. He was the first among the kings of England, who ordered the idols to be overthrown and finally abandoned throughout all his kingdom; and by his authority he also directed the forty days' fast to be observed before Easter under fear of penalty. The king's daughter Ercongote was a lady of great virtues, as befitted such noble descent. She was a servant of the Lord in the convent built in France, by the noble abbess called Fara, at the place called Brie. For at that time but few monasteries had as yet been erected in England, and accordingly it was usual for many to leave Britain and go to monasteries in France and Gaul for the sake of monastic life. Kings also and rich men sent their daughters there, to be educated and to be espoused to the heavenly bridegroom, and above all at these monasteries, Brie, Chelles, and Andely. Among these was Soethryth, daughter of the wife of Anna king of the East Angles, and Æthelberg the king's own daughter by birth. Both of these

were foreigners there, and still from their meritorious life both were advanced to the position of abbess at the monastery in Brie. The king's elder daughter Sœburg was wife of Erconberht, king of Canterbury, and had a daughter Ercongote, about whom we shall now speak. The inhabitants of this place are wont to relate, up to the present day, many works of spiritual virtue and many signs of heavenly miracles wrought by this virgin hallowed to God. But we now shall rapidly touch on some points concerning her death only, and the manner of her ascent to the heavenly kingdom. Now when the day was at hand that she should be called from this life, she began to go round the dwellings of the infirm servants of Christ in this monastery, and especially if they were of advanced age, or remarkable and superior for the excellence of their conduct. And she then humbly asked the prayers of all, and made known to them in words, that she had learnt by revelation her last day and her departure to be close at hand. She told them the revelation was on this wise; she said, she saw a great company of men white and fair enter the monastery, and she asked, what they sought or wanted there. They replied and said, that they were sent there to fetch the golden coin, that had come there from Kent. Now in the last hours of the same night, when daybreak began, she rose above the darkness of this present world and passed to the light of the heavenly kingdom above. And many of the brethren of this monastery, who were in other dwellings, said that they clearly heard the song of angels, and heard too a noise as it were of a great multitude entering the monastery. And they arose at once and went out, desiring to know what that was. And they saw a great light in the heaven approaching. This light released the holy soul from the fetters of the body, and led it to the eternal joys of the heavenly home. They further told other wonders, divinely displayed at the same monastery, which are too long to be now related. Then the body of this honoured virgin and bride of Christ was buried in the church of St. Stephen the first and blessed martyr. Now the third day after her burial the brethren thought, they would set the stone, with which the tomb was covered, in a higher and more suitable position at the same spot. On their removing it, there came from within the tomb such a sweet odour, that to all of

that household who stood by, it seemed as if a storehouse of balsam and of the most valuable and sweetest spices in the world had been opened. Also her aunt Æthelberg, beloved of God, of whom we spoke before, maintained the glory of perpetual purity and virginity with great continence. What her virtue was, was more fully made known after her death. While abbess she began to build a church in her monastery in honour of all the holy apostles, in which she wished her body to be buried. But as the work on the church was about half completed, she was carried off by death, before she could finish it; and she was buried in the part of the church, where she desired. Then after her death, the brethren were more occupied with other works, and for seven years neglected the erection of the church. At the end of the seven years, they then finally resolved to give up altogether the construction of the church, owing to the immense labour. So they took up the bones of the abbess from that place, and laid them in another church, which was completed and consecrated. And then they opened her tomb, and found her body as undecayed and as sound, as it was pure and undefiled by the corruption of bodily desire. And they washed the body afresh and wrapped it in another shroud, and laid it in the church of the blessed martyr St. Stephen. And the festival of the abbess to this time is celebrated with much pomp at that spot, on the 7th of July.

VII. Oswald, the most christian king of Northumbria, reigned for nine years, if we reckon in the year, which was disgraced by the savage impiety of the king of the Britons and the apostasy of the English kings from Christ's faith, as we related above. When the course of these years was fulfilled, Oswald was slain. There was a great and bloody battle, brought on by the same heathen king and by the heathen people of Mercia, by whom his predecessor Eadwine was slain, in the place which is called Maserfield. Oswald was in the thirty-eighth year of his earthly life, when he was slain on the fifth day of August. What this king's faith and devotion to God were, was manifested after his death by miraculous wonders. For at the spot, where he with his people fought for his land and was slain by the heathen, up to this present day, there are notable

cures of sick men and animals. Hence it happened that the very clay, where his body fell, was carried away by many, and being put into water was given to sick men or animals to drink; and they at once recovered. And this was done gradually so often, that the clay was removed, till a deep pit was hollowed out, in which a man might stand up to his neck. It is no great marvel, that the sick were cured at the place of his death, seeing that he ever in life regarded the poor and sick, giving them alms and assisting them in their suffering. And many miraculous wonders are said to have taken place at that spot and with the clay taken from it. But it is now enough for us to hear two or three only. Not long after he was slain, a man happened to be riding past the place. Suddenly his horse began to tire and stand still, and hung its head to the ground; foam came from its mouth, and violent pains grew and increased, till it fell to the ground. The rider dismounting took off the bridle and waited awhile there, till his horse should get better or he should leave it there dead. After suffering long and severely from violent pain and rolling and twisting in every direction, suddenly it came to the spot, where the aforesaid king was slain. Without delay, the pain was relieved; and it ceased to move its limbs in suffering, and in the usual manner of horses after fatigue began to roll, and threw itself repeatedly from side to side: and soon arose thoroughly whole and sound, and began to eat the grass greedily. When the man saw this, he understood by keen discernment that there was some wonderful sanctity in the spot, where his horse was so rapidly cured. So he set up a sign and marked the spot, and jumping on his horse rode to the place he had previously intended. And on coming to the person he wished to visit, he found there a woman, niece of the head of the household he was visiting; she had long been sorely afflicted with paralysis. When the people of the household began to lament before him about the dreadful illness of the woman, then he began to tell them of the place where his horse was cured. So they at once got ready a cart, put the woman in, brought her to the place and set her down there. She was tired when she was set down, and fell asleep for a little. As soon as she awoke, she felt she was healed of her bodily infirmity, called for water, washed and arranged her hair, and wrapping

herself in a garment returned back home on foot whole and sound, in company of the men who brought her there.

VIII. At that time also there came another man, who is said to have been of British descent. He was travelling past the spot, in which the aforesaid fight took place. He saw a portion of one place greener and brighter than the rest of the field. So being a man of sagacity he began to think and reason, that there was no other cause for the greenness and brightness of the place, than the circumstance that some man was slain there more holy than the rest of the army. He took some portion of the clay at that spot, tied it up in his garment, supposing that this clay might prove to be a medicine and a cure for the sick: and he went on his way once more. Then in the evening he came to a house, and went in and found all the hamlet assembled and feasting. He was received by the owner of the house, and they pointed him out a seat, and he sat down with them to the feast. But the cloak with the clay, which he brought, he hung on one of the supports of the wall. A large fire had been kindled in the middle of the house. And when they had been long feasting, and had drunk much, and the sparks flew up to the roof of the house, which was interwoven with rods and thatched, then it happened that the whole house within caught fire and suddenly began to burn. When the guests saw this, they fled out in fright, and could give no help to the burning house; and it was burnt clean down, except the single support on which the clay hung, which remained standing sound and untouched by the fire. Then all marvelled at that very much, and enquired carefully into the cause of this. Then it was shown them that the clay hung there, which was taken from the place, where king Oswald's blood was shed. These marvels were celebrated and spread far and wide; and since that many men daily visited the spot, and there began to obtain the grace of healing for themselves and their friends.

IX. In speaking of this, we cannot pass over a heavenly marvel and miracle, displayed when they came upon and found his bones and brought them to the church, where they are now kept. This was done

through the zeal of Osthryth, queen of Mercia; she was daughter of his brother Oswio, who succeeded him on the throne of Northumbria. There is a noble monastery in Lindsey, called Bardney, which the queen and her husband Æthelred loved, honoured and cherished much. In this she wished to preserve the bones of her venerated uncle. When the wain came conveying the bones to the aforesaid monastery, the inmates in the monastery were unwilling to receive them. For though aware of his sanctity, yet as he was of another province and received authority over them, out of ancient hostility they persecuted him, even when dead. So it was, that the bones when brought remained outside that night, only that an awning was spread over them. But the display of a heavenly wonder showed, how reverently they should be received by all believers. For all night there stood as it were a bright sunbeam high up to heaven from the wain, which might be clearly seen almost from every part of Lindsey. So when it was light on the morrow, the brethren in the monastery, who had previously refused, earnestly begged, that the holy relics so precious in God's sight might be preserved among them. Then they washed the bones, and putting them in a chest, deposited them in the church with due honour. And that the royal rank of this holy man might be kept in perpetual remembrance, his ensign, adorned with gold and purple, was placed above his tomb. And the water, in which the bones were washed, was poured out at one end of the church. From that time on the earth, which received this holy water, had power to heal demoniacs and other infirmities. At a later time, when the aforesaid queen happened to be staying in the monastery, she was visited by a venerable abbess called Æthelhild, sister of the holy men Æthelwin and Aldwin. Of these one was bishop in Lindsey, and the other abbot at the monastery called Parteney, not far from which was the convent of the abbess. When she came to the queen, and they had been conversing, among other topics they spoke of Oswald. Then the abbess declared, that she saw on the night the light over his bones high up to heaven. The queen told her, that many sick were healed by dust from the floor, where the water that washed his bones had been poured. She begged that some of this healing dust might be given her; and this was done; and she bound it in a cloth,

put it in a box and went home. At a later time, after her return to the monastery, a stranger came there, who in the hours of the night used to suffer severely by sudden visitations from an unclean spirit. He was hospitably received; and after supper desired to repose. Then he was suddenly seized by the devil, and began to call and shout and grind his teeth, and the foam came from his mouth, and he began to twist his limbs with all sorts of movements. As no one could hold or bind him, an attendant ran and knocked at the gate and told the abbess. She at once opened the monastery gate, and went with one of her women to the men's quarter, summoning the priest to accompany her to the sick man. On coming there they saw many with him, who earnestly endeavoured to calm his madness, but could not. The priest chaunted and recited an exorcism composed for this sickness, and did all that he knew to be best for it, but still produced no effect by this. As none could find anything to help him, suddenly the abbess bethought her of the aforesaid dust, and at once ordered her attendant to go and fetch the box containing it. When she with the box entered the hall of the house, where the demoniac was tormented, he suddenly became silent and dropped his head, as though he would sleep, and composed his limbs to rest. Then all were silent and still, and awaited the result with apprehension. Then after a little he sat up, sighed heavily and said: 'Now I am in my right mind, and have recovered my senses.' And they eagerly asked him, how that was. He replied: 'As soon as the woman carrying the box came near the hall of the house, all the evil spirits departed, who tormented and oppressed me, and they left me and appeared not here any more.' Then the abbess gave him a portion of the dust; and the priest recited an exorcism, and they prayed for him: and all that night he rested whole and sound. And from that time on the evil spirits durst not visit him with any terror or torment.

X. After this at a subsequent time a boy in the monastery at Bardney suffered severely from a prolonged fever. When one day he was looking with apprehension for an attack, then one of the brethren came in to him and said: 'My child, will you learn from me, how you may be cured of

this grievous sickness? Rise up and go into the church, and sit by the body of the holy Oswald and keep still, and see that you do not leave, till the attack is gone. Then I will come to you and bring you off home.' The boy did as he was directed, and went to sit by the saint's body. And that day the illness did not visit him, but kept away as if afraid, nor on the next, nor on the third day, nor ever after durst attack him. A brother coming from that place, said Beda, told me that it so happened, adding that the brother was still alive in the monastery on whom, as a boy, this miracle of healing had been wrought. It was no wonder, if the king's prayer, when reigning with the Lord, prevailed and was effective with him, seeing that while he held this temporal kingdom, it was rather his wont ever to contend and bless God for the eternal kingdom. Those who knew said, that he very often continued and persevered in prayer from the time of lauds till clear daylight; and owing to his constant habit of praying, wherever he sat, he habitually kept his hands on his knees with the palms upwards, and he was continually thanking God for his mercies. It was also repeated far and wide, and it turned into a current saying, that he died with a prayer on his lips. For being surrounded on all sides by armed enemies, and perceiving that he should be slain, he prayed for the souls of his army; and thus they expressed it in a saying: 'The Lord God have mercy on the souls of our people, said the holy Oswald, as he sank to the ground.' His bones were brought and preserved in the aforesaid monastery at Bardney. The king who slew him, ordered his head to be set on a pole, and to hang up his hand with the arm, that was struck from his body. Then after a year's time, his brother Oswio, who succeeded to his throne, came with a host and took them away from that place: and his head was brought to Lindisfarne and was buried in the church; but his hand and arm are preserved in the royal town of Bamborough.

XI. The fame of this noble man not only was diffused over all Britain, but also the fame of his miracles spread along the south sea into Germany, and also into the districts of Ireland the island of the Scots. For the venerable bishop Acca was often wont to repeat that, on his way to

Rome, when staying with the holy Wilbrord, bishop of the Frisians, he often heard him speak of the wonders, that had been wrought in that land at the relics of the revered king. The bishop also said, that when he was still a priest in Ireland, living there in a foreign land for love of the heavenly kingdom, that he often heard the fame of his sanctity repeated far and wide in that island. So we may now relate one miracle, which he mentioned among many others. He said that at the time of the great plague and loss of life, which ruined and wasted the islands of Britain and Ireland with great mortality, among many others there was smitten by the mortality a disciple in the school of Scotch descent. He was well read, but too slack and careless in regard for his eternal salvation. When he saw himself near death, he began to fear and to dread that, as soon as he died, he should be carried to hell prison according to his sins' deserts. As I was near him, he called me, and amid his feeble sighs, trembling and with plaintive voice, he thus spoke lamenting to me, and said: 'Now you see that this sickness and heaviness of my body increases much, so that I am forced soon to undergo death. I do not doubt, that after the death of this body I shall be carried at once to the eternal death of my soul and be subject to hell's torments. For I have long served sin and vice rather than God's commandments, while studying the divine word. I am now firmly resolved, if the heavenly goodness will grant me any time to live, that I will renounce my vicious habits, and steadfastly change all my mind and life to the ordinance of the divine will. I know in truth, that I shall not receive for my own merits a respite to live, nor do I trust to receive it, unless God will have mercy on me, a miserable and unworthy man, through the aid and prayers of his true servants. We have heard, and it is everywhere reported, that in your people there was a king of wondrous sanctity called Oswald; and the loftiness of this king's faith and virtue shone out and was evident even after death by the working of repeated wonders. Lo now I pray you, if you have any of his relies with you, that you give them me. It may easily be, that the Lord will have mercy on me for his merits.' Then I answered him: 'I have,' said I, 'a portion of the tree on which his head was placed, when he was slain. And if you believe with a firm heart, then divine goodness, through the merits of so great a

man, may either give you a longer time in this life, or make you worthy to enter into eternal life.' Then at once without delay he answered and said, that he had firm and full belief in this. Then I blessed water and put in it a chip from the aforesaid tree, and gave it to the sick man to drink. And at once he was better, grew strong and recovered from sickness. And he lived long after and turned steadfastly to God with all his heart and actions; and wherever he came, he reported and preached to all the mercy of the good God and the glory of his faithful servant.

XII. Now when Oswald was carried to the kingdom of heaven, his brother Oswio succeeded him on the throne of his earthly kingdom. He was thirty years old at his accession, and held and maintained the kingdom amid many difficulties for twenty-eight years. King Penda and the heathen people of the Mercians assailed and fought with him, as well as his own son Alhfrith, and Æthelwald, son of the brother who reigned before him. In the second year of his reign the venerable father Paulinus, formerly bishop at York, then at Rochester, departed and went to the Lord on the 10th of October, after he had been bishop for nineteen years two months and twenty-one days. He was buried in the church of the apostle St. Andrew, which king Æthelberht formerly ordered to be built in this town of Rochester. In his place archbishop Honorius consecrated Itthamar, of Kentish descent, but in life and learning equal to his predecessors. In the first years of his reign king Oswio had a partner in the royal dignity, named Oswini, of the family of king Eadwine, being son of Osric whom we mentioned before. Oswini reigned over Deira for seven years in complete affluence. He was just and pious, and for this beloved by all his people. But he could not maintain peace with the king, who had the other part of the Northumbrian realm, that is, Bernicia. Such disunion and hostility sprang up between them, that they assembled their followers and armies. Now when Oswini saw that he could not cope with him, as he had more auxiliaries and a greater force, he bethought him of the more expedient course, and determined to give up the struggle and reserve himself for better times. So he disbanded his troops and directed everyone to return home from the place, which is

called Wilfaresdun, which is ten miles west from the village of Catterick. And he turned off with one attendant, whom he considered most faithful, named Tondheri, to the house of his gesith Hunwald, whom he formerly believed to be most loyal to him, intending to conceal himself there. But it was far otherwise. For this gesith, by the instrumentality of his reeve Æthelwin, betrayed the king with his aforesaid attendant; and he was shamefully put to death. This took place on the 20th of August in the ninth year of Oswio's reign, at the place called Gilling. There after a time to purge away this sin a monastery was erected, in which daily prayer and supplication should be offered to the Lord for the deliverance of the souls of both kings, the one that was slain and the one who ordered his slaying. King Oswini was handsome in appearance, tall in person, and pleasant in address, gentle in his manners, and liberal to all whether gentle or simple. Consequently he was beloved of all for the kingliness of his spirit and his looks, and his high merits. And the noblest flocked to join his retinue and service, from almost every quarter in all the adjoining provinces. Among other virtues of this king and signal instances of modesty and of special blessedness, it is also said that he was of the utmost humility, as we may clearly perceive from a single example. He bestowed and gave his best horse of the finest breed to bishop Aidan, though the latter was wont to travel more on foot than on horseback, to enable him at any rate to ride over the fords, when he came to any river, or in case of need, to proceed more rapidly. Now after a little, when the bishop was on horseback, a poor man met him and begged alms. Then he dismounted at once and ordered the horse to be given to the poor man, along with the royal trappings that were on it. For he was very benevolent and cared for the needy and was, as it were, a father to the poor. On this being reported to the king he said to the bishop, as they were going to dinner: 'Sir bishop, why would you give that royal steed to the poor man, which it was proper for you to keep for yourself? Had we not many other less handsome horses of other breeds, which we might give to the poor as a gift, without your giving them the horse, which I specially chose to be your own property?' The bishop replied at once: 'What do you say, O king? Do you say that the offspring

of a mare is dearer to you than God's child?' Having thus spoken they went in to dinner, and the bishop went and took his place on his own chair. Then the king, having just come from hunting, stood at the fire and warmed himself among his attendants. And suddenly, while warming himself, he recollected the words which the bishop had just said to him, unbuckled his sword and gave it to his attendant, and stepping up quickly to the bishop, fell at his feet and begged him to be friendly with him, saying: 'Never after this will I say a word more, or judge as to what or how much you give of our property to God's children.' When the bishop saw the king's humility to be so great, he was much afraid, at once arose to meet him, lifted him up, promised to be very friendly to him, earnestly entreating that he would go and sit in his place at the meal, and put away sadness from his heart. Now when the king at the bishop's bidding and request recovered his spirits, the bishop on the other hand began to be sad, and so sad that he began to weep profusely. Then his priest asked him in his own language, which neither the king nor his household knew, why he wept. He said: 'I know that this king will not survive long, for I never before saw humility in a king: therefore I feel that he is soon to depart this life; and this people is not worthy to have such a king and ruler.' Not long after the dire prophecy of the bishop was fulfilled, namely, that the king was murdered by a foul death as already related. And bishop Aidan himself, not more than twelve days after the death of the king whom he loved, that is on the last day of August, was taken from this world, and received from the Lord the eternal reward of his labours.

XIII. Now what this bishop's merits were, was made known to men also by miraculous signs from God the judge of hearts. But it is now enough to relate, for his memory's sake, three out of many. There was a venerable priest named Utta, a man of great gravity and truthfulness, and for this reason beloved and valued by all, as well as by the great men of this world. He was once sent to Kent to fetch Eanflœde, daughter of king Eadwine, to be wife of king Oswio, who had been brought there, when her father was slain. Then he settled and arranged to go there by a

land route, and to return home with the lady on board ship. Then the priest went to bishop Aidan, entreated his prayers for himself and companions and supplications to God for their safety, as they had such a long journey to travel. Then he did so: he prayed for them, blessed them, and commended them to God. He also gave the priest consecrated oil, saying: 'I know that, soon after you embark, a great storm and tempest will come upon you, and a contrary wind will arise. But remember to cast into the sea this oil which I give you; and at once the wind will fall, and calm will follow and send you home rejoicing on your way, as you desire.' And all fell out in order, and was fulfilled according to the bishop's prophecy. And first, as soon as they went on board and put out, contrary winds arose, and the waves of the sea rose and raged. Then the ship's crew and the sailors hoisted the anchors, and dropped them into the sea, intending to moor the ship with them. But they effected nothing, though they did so; for the waves seethed and swept round them, and filled the ship from all sides, so that they utterly despaired of safety, and all saw death before their eyes. At last the priest recollected the bishop's words, took his flask and poured some of the oil into the sea. And at once, as it was foretold, the sea calmed down from its fury. And so had the man of God by a spirit of prophecy foreseen the storm coming, and by virtue of the same spirit, laid to rest and stilled it, after it had arisen, though not there present in the body. The circumstances of this miracle were reported to me by no doubtful authority, but by a most trustworthy priest of our church called Cynemund, who said he heard it from the priest Utta himself, in whose case and through whom this miracle was wrought.

XIV. Now many, who are well informed, relate another memorable miracle of the same father. During the time of his episcopate it happened, that Penda, king of Mercia, led his host into the land of Northumbria, wasting and despoiling it far and wide with cruel carnage. At last he came to the royal city, named Bamborough; and seeing that the town was so strong, that he could not by assault or investment destroy or capture it, he determined to burn it down. So he pulled down all the

villages around the city, which were to be found in the neighbourhood, and conveyed to the city and collected a huge pile of beams, rafters, partition walls, wattles and thatch. With these he surrounded the city to a great height, on the side where it adjoins the land. And when the wind blew fair on to the town, he kindled the pile, intending to burn down the town. Now just at this time the venerable bishop St. Aidan was at the island of Farne, which is two miles out at sea from the town. He was wont often to visit the place for the sake of retire ment and prayer in secret, and still at this day his dwelling-place may be seen on the island. Now when the bishop saw the flames of fire and the smoke carried up by the sweeping winds over the walls of that city, it is said that he raised his hands and his eyes to heaven and spoke thus with tears: 'Lord, see how much evil Penda does.' And then at once on the spot the wind shifted from the town, and the flames and the heat turned on those, who kindled and burnt the fire, and many were much injured; and all fled away in alarm and ceased to attack the city, which they saw was divinely protected. Now when the years of his episcopate were fulfilled, that he should leave this mortal life, and he fell sick, he was then at that royal residence, not far from the city we have mentioned before, at which he had a church and a cell. And it was his wont to go often and stay there, and from this he went about in every direction, preaching and teaching the word of God. This also it was his habit to do at other residences of the king, as easily might be the case, for he had nothing of his own, save his church and a few fields adjoining. Then his companions, when he fell ill, put up a tent fastened to the west side of the church. And it happened, when he was about to die, that he took hold of the buttress, which supported the church, and leaning on that so died, in the fourteenth year of his episcopate, on the last day of August. His body was carried to Lindisfarne and buried in the cemetery of the brethren. And at a later time, when a larger church was built there and consecrated in the name of the chief apostle St. Peter, they took up his bones and laid them in the church, on the south of the altar, as was due to so great a bishop. Finan followed him in the episcopate; he too was sent from Iona, a monastery and island of the Scots, and was a long time bishop. After

not many years it happened that Penda, king of Mercia, came with a Mercian host to that place, and ruined and destroyed all he could with fire and sword, and burnt also the village where the bishop died, along with the church we have mentioned. But in a wonderful way the fire could not touch the buttress alone, on which the bishop leant when he died. Now when the story of this marvel was made known, the church was quickly rebuilt and the same buttress set up without, to support the wall as before. Again after a time it happened by sinful carelessness, that the same village was burnt down, and the same church along with it, was destroyed in the fire. Yet the flame might not touch this buttress, but very wonderfully the flame eat through the nails in the nail holes, by which it was fastened to the edifice, and still might not injure the buttress. Then the church was built a third time on that spot; and the buttress was not placed as before outside to support the building, but in memory of the miracle, they put it in the church, that those who entered might there bow the knee, and desire and seek for themselves the mercy of heaven. And it is well known, that many from that time received the grace of healing at that spot. They also cut off chips from the same buttress and took shavings, and put them in water and gave them to the sick to drink, and they obtained remedies against many infirmities. Now I have written thus about the works of the aforesaid man. Still I did not approve of this in him, that he did not rightly hold or know the celebration of Easter; but I objected to it strongly, as I very clearly showed in the book which I composed, *De temporibus*. But I, as a truthful historian, wrote what was done about him or through him, and praised what deserved praise. He was very earnest for peace and true love, for temperance and humility. There was in him neither anger nor pride nor covetousness, nor had idle boasting any hold on him. He was wise in keeping and teaching God's ordinances; he was zealous in reading Holy Scripture and in keeping vigils. He had authority befitting a priest to check the arrogant and powerful; he was compassionate in comforting the sick and needy. To declare in a few words all that was said by those who knew him, of all that is ordained in the holy books to be kept, he allowed nothing to be neglected, but ever fulfilled all, as far

as he had power. This then I heartily love in the aforesaid bishop, not doubting that it is well pleasing in God's sight. But that he did not keep Easter at its right time, either not knowing its appointed season, or, though he knew, disregarding it owing to the authority of his own people, this I do not approve. However in celebrating Easter he neither believed, nor esteemed, nor preached anything else than we do, that is, the redemption of mankind by the passion, resurrection and ascension of our Saviour, the man Christ, The Mediator between God and man. He did not keep Easter, as some imagine, in agreement with the Jews, on the fourteenth night of the moon on any day of the week, but always on Sunday, from the fourteenth night of the moon up to the twentieth night, from belief in our Lord's resurrection, which he believed to have been on one of the days of rest, and also from the hope of our future resurrection, which he believed would really come to pass on one of the days of rest, now called Sunday, in accordance with the opinion of the holy and orthodox church. At this time after Earpwald, successor to Redwald, his brother Sigberht ruled over the kingdom of the East Angles. He was a good and pious man, who had formerly received baptism in Gaul, where he was an exile, flying from the hostility of Redwald. And immediately on his return to his country and his accession to the throne, he desired to imitate the life which he saw well established in Gaul. And he founded a school in which boys and young men were taught and educated, being supported by bishop Felix, whom he got from Kent. He established masters and teaching after the usage in Kent. And the king became so ardent a lover of the heavenly kingdom, that at last he gave up his earthly kingdom, handing it over to his kinsman Ecgberht, and withdrew to a monastery formerly built by himself, and receiving the tonsure, devoted himself rather to contend for the eternal kingdom. Now when he had done so for a long time, it so happened that Penda, king of Mercia, led his troops against the East Angles and advanced to a battle there. Now when they saw themselves inferior in the field, and less in number than their enemies, they begged Sigberht to accompany them to the battle in order to encourage their troops. As he was unwilling and refused, they dragged him by force from the

monastery and brought him to the host. They supposed the spirit of their troops would be higher, and that they would be less disposed to fly because of his presence; for he had formerly been a most active general. But he remembered his profession and the vows he made to God: and when he was encompassed by immense numbers, he would not take any other weapon in his hand except a rod; and he was slain with king Ecgric, and all their soldiers were either killed or put to flight. His successor on the throne was Anna son of Eane, one of their royal family; he was an excellent man and progenitor of a most excellent offspring, of whom we shall have to speak afterwards at their proper time. And he himself was slain later on, by the same heathen king as his predecessor. While Sigberht was still on the throne, there came from Ireland, the island of the Scots, a holy man, Furseus by name. He was bright and shining in word and deed, just as he was famous for his noble virtues. He desired, wherever he might find a suitable place, to live in a foreign country for God's name. Then he came to the province of the East Angles, and was received with honour by the aforesaid king. And at once he took up the work that was habitual to him, to teach the doctrine of the gospel; and he encouraged many by the example of his virtue and by the exhortation of his words, even though unbelievers, to believe in Christ. Then he was afflicted with a bodily infirmity, in the course of which it was vouchsafed him to enjoy an angelic vision. By this he was warned to devote himself zealously to the ministry of the divine word, which he had begun, and to observe zealously his wonted vigils and prayers; for his coming death was certain, but the hour of death unknown; as to which the Lord says: 'Watch, for you know not the day nor the hour'. Then was the man of God very much cheered by the vision, and began rapidly to build on the site of the monastery, which he received from the aforesaid king Sigberht, and he established it with monastic discipline. It was a fair monastery, built in the forest adjoining the sea, at a town called in English Burghcastle. Later on Anna, king of the province, and many noblemen adorned and embellished this city with loftier buildings and more splendid donations. This man Furseus was from one of the highest families among the Scots; but he was far

nobler in mind than in worldly origin, and from the time of his childhood he had great zeal for sacred study and also for monastic discipline; and what is most becoming in holy men, all he learnt to do, he carefully strove to maintain. Then in course of time he erected for himself a separate dwelling, in which he might live in freedom. There he was attacked with a bodily infirmity, as related in the book composed about his life, which clearly states, that he was led forth from the body and from evening to cockcrow was divested of his body, and beheld the host of angels and their appearance. It was vouchsafed him also to hear the blessed songs of praise, in which they magnified and praised God. He was wont to affirm, that he clearly heard them, among many other things, cry aloud and sing, 'Ibunt sancti de virtute in virtutem, videbitur Deus Deorum in Sion.' 'The saints shall go from virtue to virtue, the God of saints shall be seen in bright vision.' Then he was again brought back into the body, and on the third day was once more led forth from the body. And he not only saw the greater bliss of the blessed spirits, but also the very great struggle and toil of the accursed spirits. The accursed spirits fought against him, and by frequent accusations strove to shut up and cut off from him the road to heaven; but yet they effected nothing in this point, for the angels protected him. When he was raised up on high, he was ordered by the angels, who led him, to look at this earth; and he then bent his eyes and looked here on these lower things. And then he saw, as it were, a single dark valley lying below him at the bottom. He saw also four fires kindled in the air and separated from one another by slight intervals. Then he asked the angels what those fires were, and they said: 'These are the fires which _are to burn up the earth and destroy it. One is, first, the fire of lies; that is, that we do not fulfil, what we promise at baptism, to renounce the devil and all his works. The second is the fire of unlawful desire, when we prefer the riches of this world and allow them to be dearer to us, than the love of heavenly blessings. The third is the fire of dissension, that is, when we do not fear to irritate the minds of our neighbours in idle matters. The fourth is the fire of impiety, that is, when we think nothing of despoiling poor men and robbing them of their property and their goods.' Then the fires grew

much and joined together and combined, till they were united and joined into one monstrous flame. When the fire came near him, he was frightened and alarmed, and said to the angel: 'Sir, what is this fire? It comes very near me.' And he answered and said to him: What you did not kindle before, that does not burn in you. Therefore, though this fire seems great and terrible, yet it judges and burns everyone according to the merits of his works; for the unlawful desire of everyone shall burn in this fire. For, as everyone burns in the body through unlawful desire, so afterwards, when released from the body, he burns through the punishment he has incurred.' Then he saw one of the three angels, who were his guides in either vision, go before into that flame of fire and divide it. And the two flew on his two sides, and protected him from the danger of the fire. He saw also the accursed spirits flying through the fire; and they set up a war of fire against the righteous. And they were also against him, and brought forward accusations and calumnies: but there was a vision of the good spirits in greater numbers and heavenly hosts, who protected him. He also found there holy men of his nation and recognised men, who formerly had been nobly endowed in the priesthood, and were reported to have served God with zeal. From them he heard much, very salutary to be known, both for himself and for those who would bear it. And when they ended their words and advice, and also had returned again with the angelic spirits to heaven, there remained with the blessed Furseus the three angels, of whom we have spoken before. Now when they again drew near the great fire mentioned before, then again the angel divided the flame of fire before him, as he had previously done. And when the man of God came to the door, which was open between the flames, the unclean spirits caught one of the men, who were burnt and tormented in the fire, and threw him all burning on Furseus; and he touched his shoulders and cheek, and so they scorched him. Then he recognised the man, and recollected that he had received his garment when he died. Then at once the angel took the man, and threw him back into the fire. But the accursed foe said: 'Seek not to reject him, whom you received before. For as you formerly received his sinful goods, so you must share his torments.' Then the angel replied to him:

'Nay,' said he, 'he did not receive his goods out of covetousness, but because he would save his soul.' And the fire ceased from him. Then the angel turned to him and said: 'What you kindled burns in you; for if you had not received the property of this man, who died in his sins, his punishment would not burn in you.' And the angel spoke much to him, and with salutary words counselled him, what should be done for the salvation of those, who repented their sins in the hour of death. Then after a little he was restored to the body; and for all his lifetime the mark of the burning which he suffered in his soul, he bore so that all could see, in his shoulder and on his cheek; and in wondrous fashion, what the soul suffered in secret, that the body showed openly. Then the man of God ever anxiously strove, as he was wont to do before; he both by example showed and by word taught virtuous conduct to all men. But the series of his visions he would reveal and relate only to those, who asked and questioned him for sake of devotion and love of the heavenly kingdom. There is now still living an old brother belonging to our monastery, who told me-said the author of this book-that he was informed by a very pious and excellent man of having seen Furseus in the province of the East Angles, and of having heard his visions from his own mouth. And he also added that it was winter time; and the winter's cold was severe, and all hard with frost and ice. He added, that the holy man sat in a thin garment, and while speaking, owing to the extreme terror recalled by his vision, sweated excessively, as if in the sultriness of midsummer. Now this man of God preached, and taught for many years the word of God at first to all among the Scots. But as he could not easily endure the disturbance of invading multitudes, he left all, that he had in the world, for God's sake, and also withdrew from his country: and with a few brethren, passing through the Britons, he came into the province of the East Angles, and there preached and taught God's word, as we said before, and built a noble monastery. Now when he had established this with all monastic usages, he desired to estrange himself from all communication with this world. So he left the charge of the monastery to his brother Fullan and two priests Gobban and Dicul, and settled to end his life in the manner of a hermit, free from all things of this earth. He

had also another brother called Ultan, who withdrew to a hermit's life from the daily trials of the monastery. And he lived a whole year with him in prayer and in much abstinence, labouring with his own hands. After this seeing the province troubled by the incursion of the heathen, and foreseeing much danger imminent for God's churches and monasteries, he left the province and crossed the sea into Gaul. And there he was received with honour by Clovis, king of the Franks, and the patrician Erchinwald, and he there founded a monastery at the place which is called Lagny. Then after a little, he was seized with illness there and ended his days. And this patrician Erchinwald took his body, and kept it in a portico in his church, which he had built in his township called Péronne, till the church was consecrated. Then after twenty-seven days, they took up his body from this portico, intending to bury it in the church near the altar. Then he was found as free from decay, as if he had departed from this life at that very hour. Then four years later, another church was built: and it seemed fitter to all, that his body should be laid on the east of the altar. Then still he was found without spot of corruption, and they laid him there with due honour. And his merits there often shine and are displayed, through the divine agency, in abundant miracles. Meantime on the death of Felix, bishop of the East Angles, after an episcopate of seventeen years, archbishop Honorius consecrated his deacon Thomas as bishop in his stead, who was from the district of the Fens. After an episcopate of five years he departed this life, and Berhtgels, also called Boniface, from Kent, was appointed as bishop in his stead. Then too archbishop Honorius, after fulfilling the term of his course, departed this life on the 30th of September, 653 years after our Lord's incarnation. Then the bishopric was vacant for a whole year and six months of the next. Then Deusdedit was chosen as sixth archbishop in the see of Canterbury, who was of Wessex. Itthamar, bishop of the church at Rochester, came there to consecrate him; and he was consecrated on the 26th of March, and ruled and directed the church for nine years four months and two days. And on his death Itthamar consecrated in his place Damianus, who was by origin of Sussex.

XV.

At this time the Middle Angles, with Peada, son of king Penda, received the faith of Christ and the mysteries of the truth. Peada, was an excellent young prince, well worthy of the name and rank of king; and for this reason his father made over to him the government of that people. Then he came to Oswio, king of Northumbria, and begged him to give him his daughter Ealhflæd in marriage. His prayer was only granted on condition of his receiving the faith of Christ, along with the people under his rule. When he heard the truth preached and taught and of the promise of the kingdom of heaven and the hope of the resurrection and future immortality, he professed that he would gladly be a christian, even though he should not obtain the maiden. He was chiefly induced to receive Christ's faith by a son of king Oswio, named Alhfrith, his kinsman and friend, who had married his sister, Cyneburg by name, daughter of king Penda. Then he with all his companions, who had come with him, and the king's followers and all their servants, were baptized by bishop Finan at the well-known town of the king which is called Walbottle. And he received, and the king made over to him, four priests to baptize and teach his people, who were by their learning and their life men of power and virtue; and he returned home full of joy. The priests were thus named, Cedd, Adda, Bete, Deoma. The last was of Scot descent; the others were English. Adda, was brother of Uttan, the noted priest and abbot of the monastery called Gateshead, who has been mentioned before. Now when the aforesaid priests came with king Penda into the province, they preached and taught there the word of God and were gladly heard, and daily both gentle and simple renounced the foulness of idolatry and were washed in baptism from their sins. Then king Penda no longer refused permission, if any would come to teach God's word among the Mercian race. Nay more, he despised and hated those, whom he saw to be instructed in Christ's faith and yet unwilling to do the works of faith. And he said, that they were wretched and miserable, as they would not obey their God, in whom they believed. All this began two years before the death of king Penda. But

when he was slain and the christian king Oswio succeeded to his authority, as we shall relate further on, then Deoma, one of the four above mentioned priests, became bishop both of the Middle Angles and of the Mercians; for the scarcity of priests made it necessary, that one bishop should rule over two nations. And he there in a short time acquired and gained much people for the Lord by his teaching. And he died among the Middle Angles, in the district which is called Feston. Then Ceolloh succeeded him as bishop, who was of the race of the Scots. He after a little resigned his bishop's charge, and returned into his native country to the island of Iona, where the Scots had the chief seat and head of many monasteries. He was succeeded in the episcopate by Trumhere, a man of piety and godliness, who was trained in monastic life, and was of English descent, but was consecrated as bishop by the Scots. This was in the days of king Wulfhere, about whom we shall speak later.

XVI.

At this time also through the efforts of king Oswio the East Saxons returned to the faith, which they formerly rejected, when they expelled bishop Mellitus. For Sigeberht, king of this people, who succeeded to the other Sigeberht, was king Oswio's friend, and often went to visit him in the province of Northumbria. At those times king Oswio was wont to exhort him and teach him to see, that those could not be gods which were wrought with men's hands, of earthly materials, either tree or stone; of which trees splinters and remnants were either burnt up with fire or fashioned into some vessel for human use, or at any rate cast out, held in contempt and trodden under foot and turned again to earth. But God was rather to be understood as incomprehensible in majesty, invisible to human eyes, almighty and eternal, who created heaven and earth and mankind and all creatures, and should come to judge the whole compass of the earth in righteousness: and his seat men must believe to be eternal in the heavens, not in earthly structures, transitory and fleeting: and it was right to hold, that all who learnt and wrought his will, by whom they were created, should receive from him an eternal

reward. These words and much to this effect king Oswio often and repeatedly addressed to king Sigeberht with friendly and fraternal advice. Then at last he became a believer, with the support and agreement of his friends. Then he took counsel with his nobles and friends, and with their encouragement, support and consent he received Christ's faith and was baptized with his companions by bishop Finan, in the royal township mentioned before, which is called Walbottle. It is by the wall, with which the Romans formerly enclosed the island of Britain, twelve miles from the east sea. Now when king Sigeberht was made a citizen of the heavenly kingdom, and wished to return to the seat of his temporal kingdom, he prayed king Oswio to give him some teachers, who should convert his people to Christ's faith and wash them in the saving fount of baptism. And this king sent envoys to the Middle Angles, and summoned to him Cedd, the holy man of God, and gave him for help another associate, who was a priest, and sent them to preach God's word to the people of the East Saxons. After they had travelled through all the land and acquired and won over a large church and congregation to the Lord, it happened on one occasion, that Cedd travelled home and came to his church at the island of Lindisfarne, to consult bishop Finan. Now when the bishop perceived, that he had devoted himself earnestly to the teaching of the gospel and had converted the people to the faith of Christ, he ordained him as bishop for the East Saxons, and summoned to him two other bishops for the consecration service. Now when he had received the episcopate, he returned again to the province of the East Saxons and carried out with more authority the work he had begun, building churches in many places and ordaining priests and deacons, to assist him in teaching the word and administering baptism, especially at the place which is called Ythanceaster [Othona], and at another place which is called Tilbury. The first place is on the banks of the river Freshwell, the other is on the banks of the Thames. At this place he gathered a great host of Christ's servants, and taught them to observe the discipline of monastic life, in as far as the new christians could yet receive it. Now when for a good while in the aforesaid province the ordinance of heavenly life daily gathered strength, to the joy of the king

which was shared by all his people, then it happened, through the instigation of the enemy of all good, that the king was slain by the hand of his kindred. There were two brothers who committed this sin: and when afterwards asked why they did so, they could give no other answer, except that they were angry and hostile to the king, because he was wont to show too much mercy to his enemies, and to condone the injuries wrought by them, mildly and cheerfully, as soon as they supplicated him and prayed forgiveness. Such was the sin, for which the king was slain, because he observed and carried out the commands of the gospel with fervent heart. Yet in his undeserved death a true kin of his was punished according to the prophecy of the good and holy bishop. For one of those gesiths, who slew the king, was unlawfully wedded; and as the bishop could not prevent and correct this, he excommunicated him and ordered all, who would listen to him, not to enter his house or taste meat at his table. Then the king disregarded his order; the gesith invited him to his house, and he visited him, entered, and partook of his meal. As he was going away, the bishop met him. And when the king looked upon him, he was afraid, and dismounting fell at his feet and asked forgiveness for his guilt. Then the bishop dismounted also at the same time, and in his anger touched the king, as he lay, with the rod he had in his hand; and with episcopal authority he declared and said: 'I tell you,' said he, 'as you would not refrain from the house of this lost and condemned man, you shall perish and suffer death in the same house.' But we must believe, that such a death of a pious man not only did away with such sin, but also increased his merits; for it befell him because of piety and observance of Christ's commandments. Then Swithhelm, son of Sexbald, succeeded Sigebert on the throne of the East Saxons, who had been baptized by this same Cedd, in the province of the East Angles, at the royal township called Rendlesham; and Aethelwald, king of the East Angles and brother of their king Anna, received him as godson at the baptismal font.

XVII.

It was the habit of this good man, when fulfilling the office of bishop among the East Saxons, often to go and visit his own people, the Northumbrian nation, for the sake of teaching the Word. Now when Aethelwald, son of king Oswald, who ruled in Deira, saw him and knew him to be a man of sanctity and wisdom and excellent in his character, he prayed him to accept at his hands a portion of land, that he might build a monastery and gather servants of God; in which too the king might often come for his prayers and to hear the word of God, and also be buried on his decease. And he declared, that he fully believed he could be much assisted by the daily prayers of those, who served the Lord at that place. The king had had with him a brother of the bishop called Cœlin, who was a priest and equally devoted to God: he taught the word to himself and his household, and administered the sacraments of the holy faith. It was chiefly through his information that the king learnt to like and know the bishop. Then the bishop supported the king's wishes, and chose a place for the erection of a monastery high up upon the moors, in which place there seemed to be rather a retreat for robbers and a lair for beasts than habitation for man. There, according to the prophecy of Isaiah, sprang up a growth of reeds and rushes in the clefts, where formerly dragons dwelt: by which we should understand, that the fruits of good works were produced, where formerly either beasts dwelt or men were wont to live like beasts. Then at once the man of God strove first to cleanse the site of the monastery, which he had received, from the foulness of former sins and pollutions, with prayer and with fasting, and then laid the foundations of the monastery at that place. Then he prayed the king to give him means and leave to dwell there for his prayers, all the time of the fast of forty days before Eastertide, which was then approaching. And on all those days he fasted till evening, as his wont was, except on Sundays; nor then did he take anything except a small slice of bread and a hen's egg with a little milk mixed with water. However he said it was the habit of those, from whom he learnt the rule of monastic discipline, to hallow first to the Lord, by prayer and fasting, the new sites which they received for the erection of monastery or church. When ten days of the forty days' fast were still left, a messenger

came bidding him proceed to the king. Then he prayed his priest Cynebill, his own brother, to fulfil his pious function, as he could not, lest the pious work should be abandoned, because of the royal service. And he gladly consented: and having fulfilled his devotions in fasting and prayer, he erected the monastery, which is now called Lastingham. And he established and founded it with religious usages in accordance with the usages at Lindisfarne, where he was educated. Now when he had served as bishop for many years in the aforesaid province, and also had taken charge of the monastery, and established there a prior and head man, he happened to arrive at this monastery at the time of the great mortality and plague, which had come upon mankind. There he was attacked with bodily infirmity and died: and his body was first buried without. Then later in course of time a stone church was erected at this monastery, in honour of the blessed virgin St. Mary, and his body was deposited afterwards in it on the south of the altar. The bishop made over the monastery to his brother Chad, to rule as his successor, who later on became a bishop and was a holy man of God, as we shall afterwards relate. There were four brothers Cedd and Cynebill and Cœlin and Chad, all priests of God—a rare occurrence—and famous and good men. Two were bishops, two were distinguished priests. Now when the brethren, at the monastery in the province of the East Saxons, heard that their bishop was dead and buried in Northumbria, thirty of them proceeded from the monastery and came to that place. It was their will and desire beside their father's body, either to live to God, if it pleased God, or to die and there be buried. And they were welcomed by the brethren of the monastery. And there all were soon carried off by the ravages of the aforesaid plague, and there were buried, save one lad, of whom it is certain, that he was saved from death by the prayers of the bishop. For when he had lived a long time after and zealously studied and meditated on the Holy Scriptures, at last he understood and learnt in spirit, that he had not been regenerated as a child of God, in the water of baptism; and he was soon washed from sin with the fount of the laver of salvation, and was after a time advanced to receive priestly orders. And he was useful and of service to many in God's churches. We cannot

doubt about this man, but must rather believe, as we said before, that he was saved from the hour of death by the intercession of his father, to whose body he came out of love, so that he both escaped eternal death and also by his teaching and life's example provided for other brethren the ministry of life and eternal salvation.

XVIII.

At this time king Oswio was suffering the furious and intolerable devastations of the oft-mentioned Penda, king of Mercia, who also slew his brother. Then at last he was forced by necessity to offer and promise to him, in return for peace, a vast amount of treasure and royal gifts, more than many men will believe, on condition that Penda returned home with his army and did not waste his land and kingdom to its utter destruction. Now when the faithless king absolutely rejected his prayers, as he thought in his mind and had determined to destroy and annihilate all his people from the young up to the elders, then Oswio looked for support to the divine mercy, as he could not receive any peace at the hands of the cruel king. And he bound himself with a vow, thus saying: 'Since the heathen may not receive our gifts, come, let us give and offer them to the Lord our Saviour Christ, who may receive them.' And he vowed, if the Lord would give him victory, to present his daughter to God and consecrate her as a pure virgin; and also to give a possession of twelve boclands to God for the erection of a monastery. And so with a small force he advanced to battle. It is said that the heathen had thirty times as large a host; to meet which king Oswio and his son Ahlfrith advanced with a small host, trusting in Christ's aid. For another son of his, Egferth, was at that time in the land of Mercia with the queen Cynwisse, having been given as a hostage. Moreover Æthelwald, son of king Oswald, who should have aided him, was on the side of his adversaries, and fought and strove against his country and his uncle. Soon after they began the fight, the heathen were slain and put to flight; and thirty chief men and leaders who had come to the king's aid, were almost all slain. Among these was Æthelhere, brother of Anna, king of the East Angles, who succeeded him on the throne: he was the instigator

of the war. He was slain and all the troops he brought with him. And because the river Aire, near which the battle was fought, was very furious owing to abundant rains, and heavy floods filled it, it so happened, that in their flight a much larger number were drowned in the water, than were slain with the sword. Then king Oswio did, as he had promised the Lord, and gave thanks to God for the victory vouchsafed him, and gave his daughter Ælffled to God and consecrated her to him in perpetual chastity. And he exempted also the twelve boclands from the obligation of earthly service and earthly lordship, to perform the service of heaven, and established them as monastic settlements, and gave the brethren wealth and possessions to pray for him and for the peace of his people. There were 120 hides in all of this land, sixty in the province of Deira and sixty in Bernicia. Then the daughter of king Oswio being consecrated to God entered the monastery, that is called Hartlepool, in which Hilde was then abbess. She after two years acquired by purchase ten hides of land at the place, which is called Whitby, and here erected a monastery, in which the aforesaid king's daughter was first a pupil and novice in monastic life, and after mistress and teacher in the monastery, till the number of her days was fulfilled, that is to say, full fifty-nine years. Then this blessed virgin passed to the embrace and espousals of the heavenly bridegroom. At this monastery she and her father Oswio and her mother Eanfled and her mother's father Eadwine and many other nobles were buried in the church of the apostle St. Peter. King Oswio brought this war to a conclusion in the thirteenth year of his reign, on the 15th of November, in the district called Leeds, to the great advantage of both nations, For he relieved and rescued his people from the hostile devastations of the heathen, and also converted the nation of the Mercians and adjoining provinces to the grace of Christ's faith, by cutting off their faithless head Penda. Deoma had been the first bishop of Mercia and of Lindsey and the Middle Angles, as we mentioned before. Among the Middle Angles he died and was buried. The second was Cellah; he gave up his episcopal functions among the English and in his lifetime returned to the Scots. Both of these were of the Scot race. The third bishop was Trumhere, who was of English descent, but trained and

ordained by Scots; he was abbot in the monastery, which is called Gilling. This is the place where Oswini was slain, as we mentioned before. And so queen Eanfled, his kinswoman, to atone for his unrighteous murder, begged king Oswio to grant a site to the aforesaid servant of God Trumhere, to build a monastery there-for he too was a kinsman of the murdered king-that in that monastery might be perpetual prayers for the eternal weal of both kings, both for the murdered man and for him who ordered the murder. Now this king Oswio after Penda's death for three whole years had authority over the Mercians and the other nations also of the southern provinces. And he also subjected the Picts in great part to the English dominion, and brought them under obedience to himself. At that time also king Oswio assigned and gave the kingdom of South Mercia, to the above-mentioned Peada, son of king Penda, because he was his kinsman, in which there are, as men say, five thousand families: and they are parted by the river Trent from the North Mercians, whose land contains seven thousand. But then this Peada next spring was very foully slain by the treason, as men say, of his own wife, at the feast of Easter. Now three full years after the death of king Penda, Immen and Eafa and Eadberht, Mercian chiefs, rebelled and fought against Oswio, and raised Wulfhere, son of Penda, to the throne of Mercia, whom they had kept in hiding before, as he was young. They expelled the foreigner's chiefs, occupied in force their own land and borders and recovered freedom. And so, free with their king, they joyfully served the Lord Christ, who is the true King, for the sake of the eternal kingdom in heaven. Wulfhere was king of Mercia for seventeen years: and he first had bishop Trumhere as his instructor, of whom we have spoken before. The second bishop was Gearuman, the third was Chad, the fourth was Wynferth. All these in succession filled the episcopate among the people of Mercia in his day.

XIX.

Then 664 years after our Lord's incarnation, there was an *eclipsis solis*, that is to say, a failing of the sun, so that it had no light: and it was

dreadful to see. It took place on the third of May, about the tenth hour of the day. After this in the same year there also suddenly arose a plague and sickness, which wasted and destroyed first the southern districts of Britain; but it also afflicted the province of Northumbria, and with fearful mortality long raged far and wide, killing and destroying a great multitude of men. Tuda, servant of Christ, who was bishop of Northumbria after Colman, was also carried off from this world by the plague, and was honourably buried at the monastery which is called Finchale. Ireland, the island of the Scots, was also assailed and ravaged with the same mortality. There were there, at that time, many of English descent, both nobles and others, who, during the time of the bishops Finan and Colman, left their native soil and withdrew there, some for study of the Word and some for the sake of an ascetic life. And some at once faithfully served the Lord in monastic discipline, living by the rules of the brotherhood; but some travelled from monastery to monastery in search of teachers of the Word. And the Scots gave a welcome to all and provided them with a daily maintenance free of cost, giving them also and assigning gratuitously books for study and teachers. Among these there were two young nobles of English descent, Æthelhun and Ecgberht, men of much ability. The first was brother to Æthelwini, the well beloved of God, who himself also at a later time visited Ireland for the sake of theological study; and when he was well instructed, he returned home again to his country and became bishop in Lindsey: and for a long time nobly and well he ruled and directed God's church. Now these were in the monastery, which in the Scots' tongue is called Rathmelsigi (Mellifont); and all his companions were either carried off from the world in the mortality of the plague or were scattered through other places. And they both were violently attacked with the disorder of this pestilence and suffered severely, and they despaired of their lives. Then Ecgberht got up, (so I was told by a venerable old priest, that he heard from his own mouth), as he considered and supposed that he must succumb and suffer death. He went in the early morning out of the house, in which the sick slept, and sat down by himself at a retired spot, and began earnestly to think of his conduct, and he was moved at the

thought of his sins and wept, and washed his face with tears: and from the bottom of his heart prayed to God, that he might not die as yet, before that with time he had purified himself more perfectly from past acts of omission in childhood or in youth, and exercised himself more abundantly in good works. And he also made a vow, that he would for God's sake live all his life in a foreign land, and never return to the island of Britain, where he was born; and that besides psalm singing at the regular hours, if not prevented by bodily infirmity, he would every day sing through the whole psalter in memory of the divine praise; and that every week he would fast a night and a day continuously. And when he had ended his vows, prayers, and tears, he returned home, and found his comrade sleeping. He also got into bed to rest for awhile; and when he had rested for a short time, his comrade roused up and looked at him saying, 'Oh, brother Ecgberht; oh,' said he, 'what have you done? I hoped and thought, that we two should now soon pass together into eternal life. Know however, that you will receive what you prayed for.' For by a vision he had learnt, both what he prayed God and desired, and that his prayers were heard. Why should we speak further of this? Well then, Æthelhun died next night; and Ecgberht recovered from the illness, and lived long after this and became a bishop and adorned his office with corresponding conduct. And after many blessings of spiritual virtues, according to his desire, when he was ninety years old, he departed to the heavenly kingdom. He spent his life in great humility and gentleness, in abstinence, innocence, truth and perfection. And he thereby greatly benefited his people, as well as the nations of the Scots and Picts among whom he lived in exile, both by the example of his life and by his teaching and by authoritative discipline, and piety in giving away the property, which he received from the rich. He added to the vow previously mentioned, that always during the forty days' fast before Easter he took food only once a day, partaking of nothing else than a little bread and thin milk. This same measure of abstinence he also maintained the forty days before Christ's birth time and the forty days after Pentecost.

XX.

Meantime king Alhfrith, son of Oswio, sent his priest Wilfrid, to be consecrated as bishop for himself and his household. He sent him over the sea to be ordained by bishop Ægelberht, of whom we have spoken before, who had previously left Britain and had become bishop at Paris. He was consecrated by him with much pomp, many bishops meeting for the consecration at the royal township of Compiègne. While he still remained in the country across the sea in consequence of his consecration, king Oswio followed the example of his son's zeal, and sent to Kent a man of holy life and modest character, and well learned in the holy Scriptures; and what he learned to do in the Scriptures, he zealously followed in his conduct. He was to be consecrated bishop of the church at York. He was a priest and called Chad, brother of the venerable bishop Cedd, whom we have often mentioned before. The king also sent with him his priest called Eadoeth, who subsequently in the reign of Ecgfrith became bishop at Ripon. On coming to Kent, they found that archbishop Deusdedit had departed this life: and as yet no one else was appointed bishop in his place. Then they returned to the province of the West Saxons, where Wini was bishop; and the aforesaid man of God was consecrated bishop by him. He associated with himself at the consecration two bishops of the Britons. At that time there was no bishop in all Britain, except Wini, duly consecrated. Then Chad was consecrated bishop by him; and he soon began to take the greatest care for truth and purity in the church, devoting himself to humility, abstinence and study, and travelling through town and country, castle, township and hamlet to teach the gospel, not riding on horseback, but according to apostolical usage going on foot. He was one of the disciples of the good bishop Aidan, and by his conduct and habits, and after the example of his brother Cedd, he confirmed and instructed his bearers. Then came also Wilfrid to Britain on being consecrated, and with his teaching introduced many rules of the orthodox, observances of the Roman church, among the churches of the English. And so it came to pass, that the orthodox doctrine flourished more every day; and all the Scots, who lived among

the English and were opposed to orthodox doctrine in the observance of the proper Easter and in many other points, either pledged their faith to join in the right observance, or returned home to their country.

XXI.

At this time the most noble kings of the English, Oswio of Northumbria and Ecgberht of Kent, conferred and deliberated with one another, what they should do with regard to the condition of the church of England. For though Oswio had been educated and taught by the Scots, he was fully aware that the Roman and apostolic church was orthodox. Accordingly they selected and took, with the consent of the holy church of England, a man of piety and ability for the office of bishop, named Wigheard, a priest among the clergy of bishop Deusdedit. And they sent him to Rome to be consecrated there as bishop, that he, having received orders as archbishop there, might ordain afterwards orthodox bishops for the churches of England throughout all Britain. On Wigheard's arrival in Rome, before he could be made bishop, he was there attacked by mortal illness and died. Then pope Vitalius sent a loving letter to Oswio, king of the Saxons, as he understood his pious devotion and his warm love to God, which he had for the blessed life, and because he by the protection of the Lord had been turned to the true and apostolical faith. And he said that he hoped, that, as he had a temporal throne among his people, so he might in the life to come reign for ever with Christ. And he also in the letter mentioned Wigheard's death, and their great grief at his dying there, and promised him, as soon as they could find a man of ability and worthy of the position, that they would consecrate him bishop and send him here. In the next book we shall more conveniently and aptly set down and state, who was chosen then and consecrated as bishop in place of Wigheard.

XXII.

At this time there were in the province of the East Saxons two kings, Sighere and Sebbe, who came after Swithhelm, of whom we have spoken before, who however were subject in allegiance to Wulfhere, king of Mercia. Now when the province of the East Saxons was enfeebled by losses in the aforementioned mortality, Sighere, with the division of people under his sway, abandoned the mysteries of Christ's faith and reverted to heathenism. For this king and his chief men and many of his people loved this mortal life and sought not the life to come, nor even believed that there ever should be one. Then they began to restore the temples, which they had previously abandoned, and to worship and pray to idols, as if by these means they might be protected from the plague and mortality. But Sebbe, his associate and joint heir to the throne, with great zeal kept with all his people the faith of Christ once received, and he fulfilled a life of faith with great prosperity, as we shall relate further on. Now when king Wulfhere learnt this, and it was reported to him, that the faith of Christ was in part profaned in the province of the East Saxons, he sent bishop Gearuman, successor to Trumhere, into the district of the East Saxons, to correct this heresy and to recall them to belief in the truth. And this the bishop did with much zeal, as is related by the priest, who was his companion and assistant in preaching the Word of God. The bishop was a pious and good man and travelled far and wide throughout all the people, and brought back the nation and the aforesaid king to the way of truth, so that they gave up and destroyed the temples and idol worship, which they had hitherto followed, and opened God's churches and gladly confessed the name of Christ, which they had previously opposed. And they rather, with belief in eternal life and the resurrection to glory, desired to die therein, than to live in foulness of unbelief among their idols. When this was accomplished, the bishop and their teachers returned home glad and rejoicing.

End of Book III.

BOOK IV.

I. In the year we have mentioned of the aforesaid eclipse, and immediately, succeeding pestilence and mortality, it was that Deusdedit, the sixth archbishop of the church of Canterbury, departed this life on the 14th of July. Erconberht, king of Canterbury, also died in the same month and on the same day, and he left his dominions, that he had held and swayed for nineteen years, to his son Ecgberht. When the bishopric had been vacant for a considerable time, priest Wigheard was dispatched to Rome by Ecgberht and by Oswio, king of Northumbria, as we briefly stated in the previous book. This man was of English descent and well trained in ecclesiastical discipline. The two kings also sent along with him large gifts to the apostolic pope, consisting of much gold and silver plate: and they begged him to consecrate Wigheard as archbishop over the churches of England. Now when he came to Rome, Vitalius was chief bishop of the apostolic see at that time. When he had announced to the pope the motive for his journey, after a short time, Wigheard and almost all his fellow travellers were carried off and died from the attacks of the pestilence. Then the apostolic pope took counsel on these matters, and sought earnestly for some one to send as archbishop over the English churches. There was at that time in the monastery of Nirida, not far from the town of Naples, in the province of Campania, the abbot Adrianus. He was well trained in the sacred writings and in monastic and ecclesiastical discipline, and duly instructed both in the Latin and Greek languages. Then the pope directed that they should summon the man to him, and ordered him to accept the episcopate and go to Britain. Then he answered and said, that he was unworthy of such a high position; and

said he could point out someone else, who was more deserving of the episcopacy, both by learning and meritorious life and suitability of age. Accordingly he pointed out to the pope a suitable monk in the neighbouring cloister, whose name was Andrew: but his bodily infirmity prevented his becoming bishop. Again the pope urged the abbot Adrianus to accept the episcopate. Then he prayed him for delay and an interval to see whether he could after a time find another, who might be ordained bishop. There was at that time a monk at Rome named Theodore, well known to the abbot Adrianus. He was born at Tarsus in Cilicia, a man well read both in profane and sacred writings, in Greek and in Latin. And he was of excellent conduct, and of dignified age, that is sixty-six years old. The abbot Adrianus made him known to the pope, and said that he might be consecrated bishop: and he agreed. However they arranged between them, that the abbot should be his guide to Britain, as he had already twice visited and travelled over the districts of the kingdom of Gaul for various purposes, and because the route was familiar to him, and also because he was well provided with a staff of attendants; and further he should aid him in teaching the Word, and carefully provide that he introduced nothing contrary to the true faith, in accordance with the Greek mode, into the Church of England, over which he should rule. Then he was first consecrated sub-deacon; and waited four months till his hair grew, that he might receive priestly tonsure, for he previously had the oriental tonsure after the mode of the apostle St. Paul. Then he was consecrated by pope Vitalianus, 668 years after the Lord's incarnation, on Sunday the 26th of March. And so he was dispatched along with abbot Adrian to Britain on the 27th of May. Then they travelled together first to Marseilles, and from that through the district of Arles, to visit John, archbishop of that town; and they delivered to him a letter from pope Vitalianus, requesting for them an honourable reception. And he acted accordingly, and entertained them with much honour, till Ebrinus, the mayor of the palace, gave them leave and power to proceed, wherever they would. Then bishop Theodore went to Ægelberht, bishop of Paris, of whom we have spoken before; and was hospitably received by him, and well entertained for a

considerable time. Adrian went first to Emme, bishop of Sens, and afterwards to Faro, bishop of Meaux, and was a long time well entertained by them. For the approach of winter obliged them to remain quietly, wherever they could. Now when king Ecgberht was informed by trustworthy messengers, that the bishop was in the kingdom of the Franks, whom he and Oswio had asked from the Roman pontiff, he at once sent his reeve Rethfrith there, to fetch and escort him to him. On arriving, by permission of Ebrinus the mayor, he took bishop Theodore and brought him to the port, which is called Etaples. He was there attacked by an illness, and remained some time; and, as soon as he began to recover, he embarked and proceeded to Britain. The mayor Ebrinus seized abbot Adrian and kept him in prison, for he suspected he had an errand from the emperor to the kings of Britain to the detriment of the kingdom of the Franks, which at that time he was carefully guarding. But when he really understood and perceived, that it was not as he suspected, he released him and let him proceed after the bishop. Immediately on his arrival the bishop assigned to him the monastery of St. Peter, where the bodies of the archbishops are buried, as we have already mentioned. For the apostolic pope directed bishop Theodore, on his departure, to provide for the abbot a suitable place in his diocese and assign it to him, as a dwelling for himself and his companions. Then bishop Theodore arrived at his church in Canterbury in the second year after his consecration, on the 27th of May; and he lived as bishop for twenty-one years three months and twenty-six days.

II. Immediately he travelled through the whole island of Britain, wherever the English lived and were settled; and he was welcomed by all, and they eagerly listened to his words. And he pointed out to them the right mode of life, and taught them to solemnize the canonical Easter. And abbot Adrian travelled with him, and supported him well in all points. He was the first archbishop to whom the whole English race yielded obedience. And as they both were, both bishop and abbot, as we have already said, well trained in knowledge both sacred and profane, they assembled a large following of pupils; and along with the holy

books and ecclesiastical discipline, they taught and instructed them in metre and astronomy, and in grammar. The clear proof was, that their pupils were well trained both in Greek and Latin; and these languages were as familiar to them as their own, in which they were brought up. There never were, since the English race came to Britain, times more prosperous or brilliant. There were in the land powerful kings, thoroughly christian, and a terror to all barbarous tribes without; and the will of all was inclined to listen to the joys of the kingdom of heaven; and whatever men desired to be instructed in sacred learning, they had masters at hand to teach and instruct them. Also from that time throughout all the churches in England, men began to learn how to use chanting in church, which hitherto they had only known in Kent. And at first, besides the precentor James already mentioned, there was a teacher of music in the churches of Northumbria called Ædde, surnamed Stephen. He had been invited from Kent by the venerable bishop Wilfrid, who was the first of English bishops to make known and teach in the churches of the English the catholic rule of life. Then bishop Theodore traversed the entire country of the English and consecrated bishops at suitable places. And whatever he found imperfect, he set right and improved with their help. At this time when he reproved bishop Chad, saying, that his consecration was irregular, Chad replied in a humble voice: 'If you are sure that my consecration is irregular, I will cheerfully resign the office, for I never deemed myself worthy of the position But for the sake of obedience, when ordered, I consented to undertake the position, though unworthy.' Now, on hearing the humility of his answer, he said that he should not give up the episcopate. And subsequently he completed his ordination according to ecclesiastical order. At that time bishop Deusdedit had died; and a bishop for Canterbury was sought out and sent off to be ordained. And bishop Wilfrid also was sent from Britain to Gaul to be ordained. He then also ordained priests and deacons in Kent, till archbishop Theodore came to his see. Immediately on coming to Rochester, as the bishopric had long been vacant after the decease of bishop Damianus, he consecrated a man who was more perfect in ecclesiastical discipline and simplicity of life, than he was

energetic in the things of this world; his name was Putta. Above all he had been instructed in church music after the Roman mode, which he had learnt from the disciples of St. Gregory.

III. At this time Wulfhere was king in Mercia. When, on the death of bishop Gearuman, he begged bishop Theodore to look out and assign him a bishop for his people, Theodore refused to consecrate a new bishop for him, and requested Oswio, king of Northumbria, to let him have Chad, who was already consecrated, and at that time was living in retirement, at his monastery in Lavingham. Bishop Wilfrid was discharging episcopal duties at York, and also throughout all Northumbria and among the Picts, wherever the dominion of king Oswio extended. And as it was the custom of this venerable bishop to carry on the work of the holy gospel, rather by going about on foot than on horseback, bishop Theodore bade him ride, wherever his journey proved unusually long. And he was extremely reluctant because of his fervour and love for the pious toil. Then the archbishop urged him strongly to ride, whenever it was needful, and even at last put him up on horseback with his own hands; for he had found the man to be of power and sanctity by the merits of his life. Then Chad took over the bishopric of Mercia in conjunction with that of Lindsey; and at once, after the pattern of the holy fathers, he held and administered the bishopric with great perfectness of life. King Wulfhere gave and assigned to him at Lindsey fifty hides for the erection of a monastery, at the place which is called Barrow. At this monastery up to the present day there still remain the traces of the regular discipline established by him there. He had an episcopal seat at the place called Lichfield, where he died and is buried. There up to the present is the seat of the succeeding bishops of Mercia. He erected also a separate dwelling, not far from the church, at which he resided privately with a few brethren, about seven or eight, for the purpose of prayer and study, as often as he was at leisure from the toil of service in teaching the Word. When he had been two years and a half in that province, ruling and directing the church gloriously, the time came by the dispensation of the divine judgment, of which the book

Ecclesiastes speaks, 'Tempus mittendi lapides et tempus colligendi:' 'There is a time to cast away stones and a time to gather stones together.' Then came a great mortality and loss of life divinely appointed, which by death of the body transported the living stones of the church from their places on earth to the building in heaven. Now when many of the congregation of this venerable bishop were led forth from the body, then came his time to depart from earth to the Lord. Then it happened one day, that he was staying at the aforesaid dwelling with a single brother named Owini, and his other companions had returned to the church in the monastery for due reasons. This same Owini was a monk of much merit as a man, who, out of sincere regard for a reward in heaven, had long before given up the world; and he was a thoroughly worthy man and one of God's elect; and the Lord revealed to him specially his mysteries. He had come with Ethelreda from East Anglia, and was the chief head over all her servants, her house, and her retinue. When God's faith waxed and grew fervent, he thought he should renounce the world, and did so without delay; and he so divested and stript himself of things of the earth, that he left all he had, except his simple clothing, and came to the monastery of the venerable bishop at Lastingham. He carried in his hand an axe and an adze, intimating thereby that he did not enter the monastery to be idle, as some others, but to toil; and this also he proved by his actions. And as he had but little capacity for meditation and study of Holy Writ, he toiled all the more with his hands, and wrought those things that were needful. A proof of this is, that he was kept among the brethren with the bishop at the aforesaid dwelling, for his worthiness and fervour. While they within went about their studies and their reading, he remained without at work on whatever seemed needful. While engaged one day outside on something of this kind, his companions having gone to church in the town, as they often did, and the bishop being alone in his oratory, busied in reading or in prayer, he suddenly heard, as he said afterwards, the sweetest and fairest of voices of some, who were singing and rejoicing, descend from heaven to earth. The voices and the song, he said, he first heard from the south-east quarter of the sky, that is, from the highest point of the sun's path, as it

risers in winter, and from this they gradually approached him, till it came to the roof of the chapel, in which the bishop was; and entering in, it filled all, and enveloped the whole compass of it. And he earnestly gave up his mind to the things which he heard. Then he heard again, about the space of half an hour, the same song of joy mount up from the roof of the church, and return up into heaven with unspeakable sweetness, by the same route as it came. Then he remained there some time wondering and hesitating, and with careful thought reflected and considered, what those things might be. Then the bishop opened the window of the chapel, and clapped his hands for a sign, as his wont was, in order that if anyone were outside, he should go in to him. Then he went in at once to him; and the bishop said to him: 'Go quickly to church, and bid our seven brothers come to me here: and come you also along with them.' And when they were present, he admonished them first to maintain zealously among themselves and with all men of God the virtue of love and peace; and also that they should follow and carry out with unwearying zeal the ordinances of regular discipline, which they had learnt from him or observed in him or in the conduct of the deceased fathers, or in divine law. After this he further added, that the day of his departure was very near, and thus spoke: 'The well beloved and loving visitant, who was wont to visit our brethren, came to me also to-day, calling and summoning me from the world. Therefore return now again to church and beg our brethren to commend my departure with their prayers and supplications to the Lord, and also that they remember to anticipate their own departure, the time of which is unknown, with vigils and prayers and good works.' After speaking to them these words and much to this effect, when they had gone out from him, after receiving his blessing, in great sadness, then he who had heard that heavenly song returned alone in to him and humbly prostrating himself before the bishop on the ground, thus spoke: 'My father, may I ask something from you?' He said, 'Ask what you will.' Then said he: 'See now, I entreat and pray you for the love of God to tell me, what the song was of that joyous company, which I heard as they came from heaven over the church and returned after a time to heaven.' The bishop answered: 'If you heard the voice of

song and perceived the heavenly host also pass over us, I charge you in the name of the Lord to make it known to no one, nor tell it before my departure. I tell you of a truth, that they were the spirits of angels who came there, to call and summon me to the heavenly reward, which I have always loved and desired. And they promised me to return and come again after seven days; and they wish to take me with them then.' That was indeed truly so fulfilled, as was said to him. Then he was at once attacked by bodily infirmity, and it daily increased and grew worse; and on the seventh day, as promised to him, after he had fortified his departure by receiving the Lord's body and blood, the holy soul was released from the burdens of the body, and mounted and attained to the eternal joys and heavenly bliss, as is right to believe, with the guidance and attendance of angels. Is it any wonder, that he saw with joy the day of his death or rather the day of the Lord, the coming of which he always anxiously awaited? For among many merits of his virtues, in abstinence, humility, teaching of the Word, prayer, voluntary poverty, and also of other virtues, he was very submissive to the fear of the Lord and so mindful of his last days in all his actions, that-as I was told by one of the brethren, who gave me information in writing, being brought up and educated in the monastery under his teaching; his name was Trumberht; he said-if he sat at study or did anything else, if suddenly a greater breeze of wind got up, he at once appealed to the Lord for compassion and prayed for mercy to mankind. If then a stronger wind arose, then he closed his books and fell on his face and earnestly cried out in prayer: and then still, if a more violent storm or tempest came down, and lightning and thunder shook and terrified earth and air, then he went to church and anxiously continued in prayer and psalm-singing with perseverance, till there was a return to a serene sky. When his companions enquired and asked, why he did so, he answered: 'Have you never learnt, "Quia intonuit de celo dns et altissimus dedit uocem suam misit sagittas suas et dissipauit eos; fulgora multiplicauit et conturbauit eos:" "The Lord makes a sound from heaven and the Highest utters his voice; he sends out his arrows and scatters them; he multiplies his lightnings and confounds them?" For the Lord lets loose the air, arouses

the winds, shoots lightnings from heaven and thunders, that he may stir up the inhabitants of the earth to fear him; that he may recall their hearts to the remembrance of future judgment; that he may cast down their pride and confound their boldness, by bringing before their minds the fearful lime, when he is to come in the clouds of heaven, while heaven and earth are on fire, in great power and majesty to judge the quick and dead. Therefore it believes us to answer his heavenly admonition with due fear and love; that, as he stirs the air and displays his hand threateningly, as if to slay us, and still does not even yet slay us, we may at once cry and entreat his compassion, and may consider the secrets of our hearts and purge away the foulness of our vices, behaving ourselves with care, that we may not merit to be slain.' With the revelation and report of the aforesaid brother about this bishop's death correspond also the words of the venerable father Ecgberht, of whom we spoke before. He long before lived with this Chad in Ireland, island of the Scots, when they were both youths, under monastic discipline, in prayer, abstinence and study of the Holy Scriptures. But Chad after a time returned back to his native land in Britain; but Ecgberht abode there in exile for God's name up to his life's end. When a long time after there came to him on a visit from Britain a most holy and most ascetic man, called Hygebald, who was abbot at Lindsey, then they talked of the life of holy fathers, as became holy men, desiring also to imitate it. During this mention was made of the venerable bishop Chad. Then said Ecgberht: 'I know a man in this island, still living in the body, who, when the saint departed from the earth, saw the soul of his brother Cedd descend with a company of angels from heaven: and they fetched his soul and took it with them and returned to the heavenly kingdom.' Whether he said this of himself or of some other man, is unknown to us. Still as so great a man said it, we are sure it was true. Then Chad died on the 10th of March: and was first buried in the church of St. Mary. But after a time, when a church was built there in honour of St. Peter, the blessed chief of the apostles, his bones were laid in that. In both of these places frequent miracles of healing are wont to be wrought, in token of his virtue and sanctity. The proof is, that lately a lunatic, while running about and wandering from

place to place, came there in the evening, while the guardians of the place either did not know or did not heed, and he rested there all night: and then in the morning he arose in his sound senses and went out. Then all men marvelled, and rejoiced at the miracle of healing, which by God's grace was there shown and performed. Over his burial-place a structure of timber has been erected, in the form of a small house and furnished with a canopy. Further there has been made in this a small aperture, through which those, who come here because of devotion, generally put in their hands and take thence a portion of the dust. When they put this in water and give it to sick men or animals to taste, they are at once cured from the severe symptoms of the distemper, and have the pleasure of the health they desired. In this bishop's room bishop Theodore consecrated Wynfrid, a man of piety and modesty, who, like his predecessors, served as bishop over the provinces of Mercia, of the Middle Angles and of Lindsey; in all of these Wulfhere, who was still alive, exercised royal authority. Wynfrid was one of the clergy of the bishop, whom he succeeded, and discharged the duties of deacon under him for a considerable time.

IV. During this time bishop Colman, who came from the Scots, left Britain, and took with him all the Scots, whom he had assembled at Lindisfarne, as well as thirty men of English race; both of these bands had been well and carefully trained in the discipline of monastic life; and he left at the church some brethren. First he came to the isle of Iona, from which he had been sent out to preach and teach God's Word to the English people. After this he withdrew to a small island, far removed from Ireland on the west; in the Scots' tongue it is named Inishbofin, that is, island of the white heifer. On coming to that island, he erected a monastery there, and there established the monks, whom he had gathered from both nations and brought with him. Now when these were established and settled there, they could not live in unity and harmony among themselves. For the Scots in summer and harvest time, when the crops are gathered in, used to leave the monastery, straying and travelling through familiar localities, and then returning home again

in winter, they wanted to enjoy in common those stores, which the English by their labour had procured. Colman, endeavouring to heal this dissension and disagreement, went round many places far and near; then he found a suitable place in Ireland for the erection of a monastery, which in the Scots' tongue is called Maigeo. And he bought a small portion of land for the erection of a monastery from a gesith, the owner of the land, with this condition attached, that the monks, who for the time being were there, should cry to the Lord and entreat for him who furnished them with the site. He quickly erected a monastery there, with the aid of the gesith and all the neighbours; and there he placed and established the English, leaving the Scots on the aforesaid island. This monastery up to the present day is still occupied by Englishmen living there in exile. This is the monastery, which has now been enlarged from a small beginning, and is usually called Muigeo; and as all there has long since been brought under better regulations, it still holds a noble assembly of monks, which are collected there from the English race, and, after the pattern of the venerated fathers, live under rule and abbot in great abstinence and purity of life, by the labour of their own hands.

V. It was now about 670 years after our Lord's incarnation, that is, the second year after bishop Theodore came to Britain, when Oswio, king of Northumbria, was attacked by a disorder, of which he also died in the fifty-eighth year of his age. The king at that time had become so much attached to the constitution of the Roman and apostolical church, that, if he had been cured of this disorder, he intended to proceed to Rome and there end his life at those holy places, and he begged bishop Wilfrid to be his guide on the journey, offering him in return no small sum of money. He died then on the fifteenth of February and left his son Ecgfrith heir to his throne. In the third year of this king's reign bishop Theodore held a meeting and synod of bishops along with many teachers of the church, who knew and were attached to the canonical ordinances of the holy fathers. When they were assembled, he began earnestly to instruct them to maintain, in a spirit becoming a bishop, those things which accorded with unity of peace in the church. The text of the

synodical proceedings is to this effect: 'In the name of the Lord God and of our Saviour Jesus Christ, our Lord and Saviour Christ reigning for ever and guiding his church, it seemed good to us to meet in accordance with the usage stated in the venerated canons, to consider of the necessary business of God's church. We met at the place which is called Hertford, on the

twenty-fourth day of the month of September; it was the first indiction. I, Theodore, though I be unworthy, was sent out from the apostolic see as bishop of the church of Canterbury. And the most venerable priest, our brother Bisi, bishop of the East Angles, and also our brother, the priest Wilfrid, bishop of Northumbria, by his own proxy were present. There were also present our brethren the priests Putta, bishop of the town of Kent which is called Rochester, Leotherius, bishop of Wessex, Wynfrid, bishop of Mercia. When we had come together and taken our seats, each in order, I said: I pray you also, dearest brethren, for the fear and love of our Saviour, that we may all in common take thought for our faith, that the decrees and ordinances, settled and ordained by holy and elect fathers, may be maintained by us all undefiled. When I had said this and much besides, that pertained to the love of God and the unity of the holy church, then I asked each one of them in order, whether they agreed to observe the canons, which had been determined of old by holy fathers. And all the bishops answered him and said, that they all fully accepted them, and they would all readily and cheerfully maintain them. Then I at once showed them the book itself of the canons; and I put in their hands ten chapters out of these books, which I had transcribed passage by passage, and which I knew to be most needful, and I prayed them all to observe them diligently. This is the first chapter: that we all in common observe the holy day of Easter on the Lord's day after the fourteenth moon of the first month. The second is: that no bishop invade the diocese of another, but be content with the management of the people committed to him. The third is: that no bishop be allowed in any wise to disturb the monasteries, which have been consecrated to God, nor to appropriate by force any of their property. The fourth is: that monks shall not stray from place to place, nor from monastery to

monastery, except with leave, each of his own abbot; but that they continue in the obedience, which they vowed to God at the time of their conversion. The next and fifth is: that no servant of God, who is one of the bishop's clergy, leave his own bishop and hurry about through a variety of places; and that he be not received, wherever he come, without some token or writing from the bishop. If he be received once, and when ordered to return home, refuse, both the entertainer and the guest shall be liable to excommunication by the bishop. Next the sixth is: that foreign bishops and servants of God are to be content with hospitality and entertainment given them; and that none of them be allowed to exercise any priestly function without leave from the bishop, in whose diocese they are guests. The seventh is: that a synod assemble twice a year. But because various reasons and occupations often arise, it was unanimously agreed by us all, that a synod should assemble once a year on the first of August, at the place which is called Clofeshoh. The eighth is: that no bishop shall with undue ambition put himself above another, but that all shall note the time and order of their consecration. The ninth chapter was discussed in common, namely: that as the number of the faithful was increasing, there should be an increase in the episcopate. The tenth regards married persons: that no one be permitted to enter into any union save lawful wedlock; that no one commit incest or impurity, or leave his wife, except, as the holy gospel teaches, because of fornication. If any man put away his own wife, who is given and united to him duly by law, if he will be really a christian, he shall not associate with any other, but so remain or be reconciled to his own wife.'

VI. This synod took place in the year, that was about 673 from our Lord's incarnation, in which year also Ecgberht, king of Kent, died, in the month of July: and his brother Hlothre succeeded to the throne, which he occupied for thirteen years and seven months. Now Bise, whom we have mentioned as being present in the aforesaid synod, was bishop of the East Angles; he was successor to bishop Boniface, mentioned before, who was a man of great holiness and piety. For when Boniface died, after being bishop seventeen years, then bishop Theodore consecrated this

Bise as bishop after him; and as, while he was still alive, he was prevented by great infirmity from performing his episcopal functions, two bishops, Ecce and Beadowine, were chosen and consecrated for him. From that time up to the present this province has two bishops.

VII. After this, when a short time had elapsed, archbishop Theodore, being offended by Wynfrid, bishop of Mercia, because of some act of disobedience, deprived him of his bishopric, and consecrated Seaxwulf as bishop in his room, who was the founder and abbot of the monastery at Peterborough, as it is called, in the land of the Gyrwas. Wynfrid returned to his monastery, which is called Barrow, and there ended his days in a life of piety. Then he also appointed Erconwald bishop at London for the East Saxons. Their kings at that time were Sebbe and Sighere, whom we have mentioned before. This bishop's life and conduct during his episcopate and previously are said to have been most saintly, as was also proved subsequently by signs of heavenly miracles. And for this reason long afterwards his horse litter, in which he was conveyed while ill, was kept by his disciples; and many sick persons, suffering from fever or other complaints and infirmities, were cured thereby. And not only the sick, who were placed under the litter or close to it, were cured, but also splinters, cut from it and taken to the sick, at once procured and brought them relief. This holy man, before becoming bishop, erected two noble monasteries, one for himself, the other for his sister Æthelburg, and established both of them excellently under regular discipline. For himself he built one in Surrey by the river Thames, at the place called Chertsey, for his sister, among the East Saxons at a place called Barking, in which she might live as teacher and foster-mother of women devoted to God. Now when she took over the government of the monastery, she showed herself in all things worthy to rank with the bishop her brother, by a life of piety and discipline, as was afterwards also proved by heavenly marvels.

VIII. For at the monastery in Barking many signs of spiritual powers were exhibited, which were preserved in writing by many well-informed

persons, for the information and edification of posterity, some of which we have now taken care to insert in this our ecclesiastical history. When the storm of the oft-mentioned pestilence was wasting and destroying all far and wide, it penetrated also into that part of the monastery occupied by the men; and daily on all sides some were taken to the Lord from the world. When the abbess and mother of the society, anxious and apprehensive as to the time, when this plague should attack that part of the monastery, in which the band of women serving the Lord dwelt, she began often in meetings of the sisters to ask and enquire, in what part of the monastery they desired to have the cemetery placed for their burial, when the time came, that they should be carried off from the earth by this plague, as they saw in the case of others. When she could not obtain any certain answer, though she earnestly sought one from the sisters, it happened, that she herself and all the sisters obtained a most certain answer from divine providence. For one night, when the psalm-singing at lauds was ended, the servants of Christ issued from the chapel to visit the graves of the brethren, who preceded them from this life, and there were singing the usual songs of praise to the Lord. Then suddenly a light from heaven was sent there and passed above them all, spreading out over them like a great sheet, and struck them with great terror and amazement, so that out of fear they interrupted the song they were singing. The brightness of the light, which had been sent, was greater than the light of the sun at mid-day. Then after some time it was raised up from that place, and passed to the south of the monastery, that is, to the west of the chapel. It remained there some time and pointed out to them the place, which they had previously been considering about; and so in sight of all it passed up into heaven, leaving no doubt in the minds of any, that the light, which was to lead and receive into heaven the souls of Christ's servants, was then also pointing out the place to them, where their bodies should rest and await the day of the resurrection. The rays of this light were so powerful, as an old brother next morning stated, who was then at prayers in the chapel with a younger brother, that, said he, the rays of light entered through the crannies of the door and through the windows, surpassing all brightness of light by day.

IX. There was in that monastery a child, not more than three years old, named Æsica, who because of his childish years was still brought up and instructed in the monastery of the virgins consecrated to God. Then he was attacked with the aforesaid sickness. And when he came to his last day, he thrice cried out and called to one of the consecrated virgins of Christ by her own name, as if she were present and he was speaking to her; he said: 'Eadgyth, Eadgyth, Eadgyth;' and so he ended this temporal life and entered into eternal life. And at once the virgin, whom he called to at his death, at the place where she was, was attacked by the same distemper and was removed from this life, on the very day she was called: and she followed him, who called her, to the kingdom of heaven.

X. Again one of these servants of God was seized by the aforementioned sickness and was brought to her last day. Then she began suddenly at midnight to call to those who tended her; she begged them to extinguish the lamp and the light burning there; and this she repeatedly begged and directed, and still no one listened to her. Then at last she said: 'I know, you suppose I speak in delirium. But yet be assured it is not so. For I tell you truly, I see this house filled with such a strong light, that your lamp and light seem to me quite dark.' And not even then, though she spoke thus, did anyone answer or heed. Then again she said: 'Burn on now your lamp and light, as long as you will. Know however that it is not mine, for my light comes to me, when it begins to dawn.' Then she began to say to them, that a holy man appeared to her, who had died that very year, and told her, that when dawn came, she should depart to the eternal light. The truth of this vision was soon proved and verified by the woman's death and departure about daybreak.

XI. When the pious mother of God's well-loved congregation, the abbess Æthelburg, was to depart from the world, a wonderful vision appeared to a sister named Tortgyth. She had lived many years in the same monastery, and ever with all humility, sincerity, and purity zealously served God: and she assisted the mother and abbess in the maintenance

of regular discipline, instructing and correcting the younger sisters by teaching and by her life's example. That according to the apostle's saying, this sister's virtue might be made perfect in weakness, she was suddenly attacked with a severe bodily infirmity, and for full nine years, by the pious providence of our Redeemer, was sorely tried, that whatever impurity in her existed along with the virtues through ignorance or omission, the fire of this continual trial should purge it all away. One night towards dawn this sister was coming out of the cell, which she occupied. Then she saw clearly, as it were a human body brighter than the sun, carried up on high wrapt in a sheet. It was first raised aloft from the house, in which the sisters were sleeping. As she looked earnestly to see, who drew up the form of this glorious body which she beheld, she saw this, as it were, raised aloft by ropes of gold, till the heavens opened and it was carried in, and could no more be seen by her. Then she reflected on her vision; and she had no doubt, that someone of the society should soon die, whose soul, through the good and bright deeds she did, was to be raised to heaven as if by ropes of gold. And this really so fell out. For after an interval of not many days, the mother of the society, well beloved of God, was delivered from the burden of the body; and her holy soul ascended to entrance into the kingdom of heaven. Also, at the same monastery there was a nun, noble according to rank in this world, and much nobler in love of the world to come. She for many years had been so utterly deprived of all use of her body, that she could not stir a limb. On learning that the body of the venerable abbess had been brought and deposited in the church, till she should be buried, she begged to be carried there. This being done, she bowed down to the body, and like to one in prayer, as though she spoke to her in life, begged her to obtain permission from the mercy of our gracious Creator, that she might be released from such severe and continued torment. And her prayer was heard not later than twelve days after, so that she was taken from the body, and for her temporal afflictions received an eternal meed and reward.

XII. While the aforementioned servant of Christ, Tortgyth, was still detained three years in this life after that lady's death, she was so very much afflicted with the infirmity we have mentioned, that not even the bones were left untouched: and at last, when the time of her release approached, she lost, not merely in her other members but also in her tongue, all power of movement. When she had been speechless for three days and three nights, then she was suddenly refreshed by a spiritual vision, and opened her mouth and eyes and looked up to heaven and thus began to speak to the vision, which she beheld: 'To me,' said she, 'your coming is very grateful; and thou art dear and welcome.' Having said this she was silent for a time, as though she were awaiting an answer from the person she saw, and to whom she was speaking. Again, as if she were slightly displeased, she said afterwards: 'I am not at all willing to suffer that.' Again she was silent for a little time. Then she said the third time: 'If it absolutely may not be to-day, I entreat that there may be no long interval.' Then again she was silent for a little, as before, and then concluded, ending with these words: 'If it is certainly so settled, and this decree may not be changed, I beg and entreat that there may be no longer interval, than just this next night.' When she had said this, those who sat by asked, with whom she was talking. She said: 'With my well beloved mother, Æthelburg.' Then they saw by this, that she had come to tell her the approach of her decease. And it was, as she had asked: when the day and night had passed, she was released from the fetters of her body and of her affliction, and entered into the joys of eternal weal.

XIII. Then the devout servant of God, Hildelid, succeeded Æthelburg in the office of abbess. And she for many years, that is to extreme old age, vigorously superintended the monastery, both in providing for the things necessary for common use, and also in maintaining regular discipline. Then it seemed good to her, because of the confined space, on which the monastery is erected, to take up the bones of Christ's servants there buried, and deposit them in the church of the blessed virgin St. Mary, and there keep them in one place. And there very often

afterwards appeared a brightness of heavenly light; and also often great sweetness of wondrous odour came, and many other signs and marvels appeared, which any one may find, who reads it, in the book from which we have extracted this. Now there is a marvel of healing, which we cannot omit, related in this book, as taking place in the cemetery of God's well loved society. There was a gesith in that neighbourhood. At that time his wife was afflicted with an attack in her eyes: and then for days they were so sore and so blind, that at last she could not see a particle of daylight. After being thus blind for some time, it came into her mind one night, where she lay confined, that if she were brought to the monastery of God's consecrated virgins, and prayed there at the relics of the saints, she might recover her lost sight. She delayed no longer, but at once carried out what came into her mind. Then she was led by her servants and maids to the monastery close at hand. There she professed, that she had full faith as to her being cured. Then she was led to the cemetery of God's servants; and remaining there a long time in prayer with bended knees, she soon earned a hearing for her prayers. At once, on arising from prayer, before leaving the spot, she received the gift of sight she prayed for. And she, who had been led there before by her servants' hands, returned home in joy, freely on her feet, exactly as if she had only lost that temporal light, that she might show by her cure, how much light the saints of Christ had in heaven, and what the grace of their virtue was.

XIV. At this time the ruler of the East Saxons, as the same book tells us, was the devout servant of God named Sebbe, of whom we have spoken above. The man was religious in his conduct, much given to holy prayers and very zealous in the pious fruits of almsgiving; and he preferred a retired monastic life to all the wealth and honours of his earthly kingdom. This life he often desired long before to adopt and resign his earthly kingdom, but the contrary disposition of his wife prevented him. For this reason many thought and often repeated, that a man of such a character was more suitable for consecration as bishop, than for being king. Now when he had continued thirty years on the throne, serving as

a warrior of the heavenly kingdom, he was much afflicted by a severe bodily infirmity, of which he also died. Then he admonished his wife, that even then they should join in serving God, when they might no more love the world or serve the world. When he had carried this out with some difficulty because of his infirmity, he came to the bishop of London, called Waldhere, who was successor to bishop Ærconwald, and by his blessing received those religious orders, which he had long before desired. He also brought the same bishop no little amount of money to distribute to the poor; and of all this he reserved nothing for himself, but rather desired to remain poor in spirit for the kingdom of heaven. Now when he was overpowered with the aforesaid infirmity, and felt that his death's day was at hand, then, being a man of royal character, he began to fear, lest on the approach of death, enfeebled by great pain, he might do something undignified or unbecoming, through the words of his mouth or the movements of his other members. Then he summoned to him the bishop at the aforesaid town of London, where he then dwelt; and he begged of him the favour, that when he should die, there should not be present more persons than the bishop and two of his attendants. When the bishop promised cheerfully to do as he requested, then shortly after this man of God composed his limbs to rest, desiring to repose, and fell asleep. Then he saw a comforting vision, which removed from him all anxiety, as to the trouble we have mentioned, and also showed him, on what day he should end this temporal life. He saw, as he himself said afterwards, three men come to him clad in bright garments. One of these took his seat before the bed, while his companions, who came with him, remained standing. Then they asked the one who was seated about the condition of the sick man, whom they had come to visit, and how it should be with him. He said, that soul and body should be parted without any pain and amid a great splendour of light. And he also made known and stated to them, that he should die on the third day. Both of these things were fulfilled, as he had been informed by the vision. For on the third day after at the end of the ninth hour, suddenly, as if he had fallen gently asleep, he gave up the ghost without any sense of pain and so departed. Then they prepared a stone coffin to bury his body. Now

when they had begun to lay the body in it, it was a span too long for the coffin. Then they hewed the stone, as well as they could, and increased the length of the coffin to the extent of two fingers. But it could not even then take in the body. And when there was great difficulty as to his burial, they considered, and said they should either look for another coffin or bend the body at the knees, that they might put it in. But marvellously, nay even divinely, it came to pass, that both of these proposals were frustrated. The bishop and the king's two sons, Sigeheard and Swefred, who succeeded their father, were standing by the body, along with a great crowd of men. Then suddenly the coffin was found to be of a length proportioned to the body, insomuch that a pillow also could be inserted at the end by the head; and at the end by the feet, the coffin was four fingers longer than the body. Then the man of God was buried in the church of the apostle St. Paul, by whose admonitions he had been taught and instructed to hope for heavenly bliss.

XV. The fourth bishop of the West Saxons was called Leutherius. The first was Birinus; the second was Ægelberht; the third was Wine. When king Cenwalh died, in whose reign this Leutherius had become bishop, petty princes seized on the government of the province, divided it between them, and held it for ten years. During their government bishop Leutherius died; and bishop Theodore consecrated in his room Hedde, as bishop at London. In this bishop's time the princes were overpowered and expelled: and Ceadwalla succeeded to the throne of Wessex. And when he had held it and been king for two years, he was inspired with love of the heavenly kingdom, left the earthly kingdom in this bishop's time, and going to Rome there ended his life, as we shall hereafter relate more precisely.

XVI. Then about 676 years after our Lord's incarnation, Æthelred, king of Mercia, led up his wicked host and ravaged Kent, overthrowing and destroying churches and monasteries without regard for piety and without fear of God: and in the general devastation he also destroyed

Rochester, where Putta was bishop, though not at that time present there. Now when Putta found that his church was robbed and despoiled of all its possessions, he went off to Seaxwulf, bishop of Mercia, who gave him possession of a church along with a little land. And in that church he served God, travelling everywhere about, as he was asked, and teaching church music; and there he ended his life in peace. In his room bishop Theodore consecrated Cwichelm as bishop at Rochester; but he after a short time withdrew from the see, owing to lack of worldly means. He then placed Gefmund as bishop in his stead. Then about two years after Æthelred, king of Mercia, had wasted Kent, that is the ninth year of the king Ecgfrith, there appeared, in the month of August, a new star called a comet; and it remained three months, rising at dawn and displaying a great beam, as it were of shining flame. In the same year there arose dissension and discord between king Ecgfrith and the venerable bishop Wilfrid. And the bishop was thrust out and expelled from his see, and two bishops put in his place to be over Northumbria, namely Bosa, who directed the province of Deira, as Eata did Bernicia. Bosa had his seat at York, Eata at Hexham and Lindisfarne: both were taken from a monk's life to become bishops. Along with them Eadhœd also was consecrated bishop at Lindsey, which king Ecgfrith had lately occupied, after he overthrew and routed Wulfhere in war. This was the first bishop of their own, which this province received. The second was Æthelwine; the third Eadgar; the fourth Cyneberht. Before Eadhœd the province had Seaxwulf as bishop, who was also bishop of the Mercians and Middle Angles. But he was expelled from Lindsey when Ecgfrith occupied it, remaining in authority over the other provinces. Eadhœd, Bosa and Eata were consecrated at York by bishop Theodore. And he also three years after Wilfrid's departure added two bishops to their number, Trumberht for the church at Hexham-while Eata withdrew to Lindisfarne-and Trumwine for the province of the Picts, which at that time was subject to English rule. He established Eadhœd as bishop at Ripon, when he retired from Lindsey, because Æthelred, king of Mercia, recovered and occupied the province.

XVII. At this time bishop Wilfred was expelled from his see, and travelled long through many places, visiting Rome and finally returning to Britain. And though, owing to the hostility of the aforesaid king, he could not obtain admission to his native province or his diocese, still he could not be prevented from the service of teaching the gospel. He turned aside to the province of Sussex, which adjoins Kent on the south and west and extends to the borders of Wessex. This land contains 7000 families, and at that time was still attached to heathen worship. To this people the bishop became the minister of the Christian faith and baptism. Æthelwalh, king of that people, shortly before had received baptism in Mercia, owing to the prompting and the zeal of the Mercian king Wulfhere. Also when he was washed in the laver of baptism, he took him as god-son, and in token of amity made over to him two provinces, that is, the Isle of Wight and the district of Meon in Wessex. The king rejoiced very much at the arrival of the bishop. And he first washed with the holy fount of baptism the chief men of the province and the king's followers; and the priests Eappa and Peada and Burghelm and Oidde baptized the rest of the people, both then and subsequently. The queen moreover, whose name was Æbbe, had been baptized in her own district, that is, among the Hwiccas. She was daughter of Eanfrith, brother of Eanhere, both of whom were Christians along with their people. But the whole province of Sussex had been ignorant of the name and faith of Christ. There was there a monk of Scottish race called Dicul; he had a small monastery, at a place called Bosham. It was surrounded by forest and sea, and in it were five or six brethren, serving the Lord, in a life of poverty and privation. But no man in that province would imitate their life or heed their teaching. And when bishop Wilfrid taught the word of God in that province, he not only rescued it from the misery of eternal damnation, but also from the foul disaster of temporal destruction. For three years before his coming to that province, no rain had fallen in those localities; and consequently a most dreadful famine prostrated the people, and they were carried off by a cruel death. The proof is this: men say, that often forty or fifty persons together, being wasted with the famine, in their misery took one another by the hand and jumped down

in a body from the brink of the sea, desiring either to kill themselves by the fall, or drown themselves. But on the very day, on which the people received the faith of Christ and baptism, there sprang up and came rain, gentle, widespread and abundant; and the land bore and blossomed, and then came a good and productive year. And so they abandoned their old folly and rejected their idols; and the hearts and bodies of all took delight in the living God; and they knew him who is the true God, and that they themselves were, both with internal and external blessings, enriched by the heavenly grace. For the bishop, on his arrival in the province, seeing the great plague of famine, instructed them in procuring a maintenance by fishing; for both the sea and their rivers abounded in fish. But the people did not understand the art of fishing, except for eels only. Then the bishop's men collected the eel-nets wherever they could, and let them down into the sea. And the divine grace aided them, so that they soon caught three hundred fish of various kinds. And these they divided into three shares: one hundred they gave to the poor; one hundred to the owners of the nets; one hundred they kept for their own use. By this service the bishop won the hearts of all to love him: and they began more readily, from his teaching, to hope for heavenly blessings, by whose instrumentality they received and enjoyed temporal blessings. At this time king Æthelwalh gave and assigned to the venerable bishop Wilfrid eighty-seven hides of the land, which is called Selsey, for the settlement of his followers who were in exile with him. The place is surrounded on every side except the west by the sea; there is an entrance on this side, as broad as a sling can throw. Now when the bishop took over the place, he set up a monastery there, establishing it under regular discipline, chiefly out of those brethren whom he brought with him. This his successors in the episcopate still hold and possess to this day. In these parts the venerable bishop Wilfrid discharged with honour the duties of a bishop for five years, that is, till the death of king Ecgrith. And as king Æthelwalh, along with the possession of the aforesaid place, assigned and made over to him all the property to be found there with land and men, so he established all in the faith of Christ and washed them in the laver of baptism. Of these he baptized 250, men and maids; and as he by

baptism saved them all from the devil's service, so he also released and freed them from service to man. Meantime Ceadwalla, a prince of the West Saxons, young and valiant, and then an exile, came with an army, and slew king Æthelwalh and ruined the province by dire slaughter and devastation. But he was soon expelled by the king's chief men, Berhthun and Andhun, who afterwards held the government of that province. The former of these was slain by Ceadwalla, when he was king of the West Saxons, and the province reduced under oppressive servitude. Also Ine, who succeeded Ceadwalla on the throne, ill-treated the province with similar severities, for a period of many years. For this cause, during all this time they could not have a bishop of their own. But when bishop Wilfrid, their first prelate, was recalled home, they then were placed under the bishops of Wessex, who lived at Winchester.

XVIII. After this, when Ceadwalla grew powerful and strengthened himself on the throne of Wessex, he overran and took the Isle of Wight, which till then had been wholly given over to idolatry. And he, after the example of the Trojan disaster, wished to exterminate all the inhabitants and replace them with men of his own people. It is said that he also bound himself with a vow-though he was not yet regenerated in Christ by baptism-that if he should conquer that island, he would make over the fourth part of it and of the booty for God's service. And this he carried out, by giving the portion to bishop Wilfrid to be employed for God's service, who at that time had come there from his own people and was present. The area of the island, according to English estimate, contains 1200 hides. And he gave into the bishop's possession three hundred hides and the stock besides. And he committed the portion he had received to one of his clergy named Berhtwini, who was his sister's son. And he gave him a priest, whose name was Hiddila, to minister God's word and baptism to all, who would be saved. We must not pass over in silence the fact that, as first-fruits of those out of this island, who were saved through faith, two young princes received the crown of victory by God's special grace, who were brothers of Arwald, king of the island. When king Ceadwalla landed on the island with his force, the princes

fled out of the island and were conveyed to the neighbouring province, which is called the land of the Jutes, to a spot called Stoneham. Their intention and hope was to be in hiding and concealed from the eyes of the cruel king. Then they were betrayed to him there, and the king, ordered them to be slain. Now, when an abbot and priest, by name Cyneberht, heard this, who had a monastery not far thence, at a place called Redbridge, he came to the king, who in that district was being secretly cured of the wounds he received, when fighting and contending in the Isle of Wight. And he begged him that, if the boys must certainly be slain, he would give him leave and permission to instruct them in the mysteries of the christian faith. Then the king granted and allowed this. And he then edified and instructed them with the word of truth, and washed them from their sins in the laver of baptism, assuring and instructing them as to their entrance into the eternal kingdom. And the executioner came upon them: and they at once fearlessly and joyfully submitted to temporal death, through which they did not doubt they should pass to the eternal kingdom of their souls. So in this order, after all the provinces of Britain received the faith of Christ, it was received also by the island of Wight. However, owing to the misery of subjection to the stranger, no one undertook the office of bishop there before Daniel, who was bishop of Wessex. This island is situated opposite the middle of Sussex and Wessex; the sea lies between three miles broad, which is called the Solent. In this sea there are two tides, which come in and rise up round Britain from the boundless north ocean; and daily they encounter and struggle with one another, and when the contest is at an end, they pour back their waters and return to the sea, from which they came.

XIX. At this time bishop Theodore heard that the faith of the Church at Constantinople was much troubled by the heresy of Eutyches. Accordingly he desired to keep the Church of England, over which he presided, clear from a plague of this kind. And having assembled a number of venerable bishops and many teachers, he questioned them one by one, and asked of what faith they were; and he found them, by the

unanimous consent of all, to be in the right faith. And this faith he took care to commend and establish by synodical documents for the edification and information of posterity. The beginning of these documents and writings is as follows: 'In nomine Dñi nrî Ihû Xrî Saluatoris: in the name of our Lord and Saviour Christ, under the reign of our pious lords Ecgfrith, king of Northumbria, in the tenth year of his reign, on the 17th of September, in the eighth indiction; and of Æthelred, king of Mercia, in the sixth year of his reign; and Ealdulf, king of the East Angles, in the seventeenth year of his reign; and Hlothere, king of Kent, in the seventh year of his reign; under the presidency of Theodore, by the grace of God archbishop of the island of Britain, and of the city of Canterbury; in session with other venerable bishops of the island of Britain; the most holy gospels lying before us, at the place which is called Hatfield; we jointly considered about the right and orthodox faith. We set down, as our Lord and Saviour Christ, being in a human body, delivered to his disciples, who there saw him face to face, and heard his words. And he delivered to them the watchword of the holy fathers, " id est Credo "; and so do in common all saints and all synods, and all the company of approved doctors of the orthodox Church. These we follow piously and orthodoxly; according to the teaching of those who were divinely inspired, we unanimously believe and confess. And we confess, in accordance with the holy fathers, properly and truly, Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, Trinity in Unity consubstantial, and Unity in Trinity, that is, one God in three substances, or persons consubstantial, of equal glory and honour.' And to this effect men afterwards set down and stated those things, which belonged to the confession of right faith. And these also the holy synod added to its documents: ' We received the five holy and orthodox synods of the blessed fathers, well pleasing to God: that is, those who were assembled at Nicea, 318 bishops, to oppose the impious heretic Arius and his doctrine; and at Constantinople were assembled 150 bishops, to oppose the madness of Macedonius and Eudoxius and their doctrine; and at Ephesus 200 bishops, to oppose that most wicked Nestorius and his doctrine; and at Chalcedon 630 bishops, to oppose Eutyches and Nestorius and his doctrine; and again at Constantinople the

fifth synod was assembled, in the time of the emperor Justinian the younger, to oppose Theodorus and Theodore and Iba, the heretics and their doctrines. And we received also the synod which met at Rome, in the time of the blessed pope Martin, in the ninth year of the reign of the pious emperor Constantine. And we magnify our Lord and Saviour Christ, as they magnified him, adding nothing and subtracting nothing of all they set forth. And we anathematize, with heart and mouth, those whom they anathematized: and whom they received, we also receive, magnifying God the Father without beginning, and his Son the begotten of the Father, begotten before the world, and the Holy Ghost proceeding from the Father and the Son ineffably, as they preached and taught, whom we mentioned above, the holy apostles and prophets and doctors. And we all confirmed and subscribed this with the token of Christ's cross, we who, along with archbishop Theodore, set forth the right Catholic faith.'

XX. The venerable John, precentor of the church of the apostle St. Peter and abbot of the monastery of St. Martin, who had lately come from Rome, by the order of pope Agathon, was also present at the synod and joined in affirming the decrees of the faith. His guide was the venerable abbot called Benedict. When this Benedict had founded a monastery in Britain, in honour of St. Peter the chief of the apostles, at the place called Wearmouth, he went to Rome, with his co-operator and associate in the work, Ceolferth, who was abbot of the monastery after him. He had often before been in the habit of taking the journey. And he was received with honour by pope Agathon of blessed memory. And he requested and received from him, in confirmation of the freedom of the monastery that he had erected, a privilege confirmed by the apostolic authority, when he had ascertained that this was the wish of king Ecgfrith and was with his permission. For he had granted and assigned to him the property in the land, on which he erected the monastery. Then he also took charge of the aforesaid abbot John and brought him to Britain, to teach for twelve months in his monastery the music he had learnt at St. Peter's. Then John did as the pope directed; he taught *viva voce* the singers in the aforesaid

monastery the order and practice of song; and he also committed to writing all, that was necessary for the course of the year in the celebration of feast days, and set it down in a book, which is still kept in the same monastery, and since then has often been copied by many everywhere around. John also received a further direction from the apostolic pope, to enquire and ascertain carefully the faith of the English Church, and to report to him, on returning again to Rome. For this object the synod was assembled in Britain, which we have already mentioned. And then in all there was found uncorrupted and orthodox faith; and he was given a copy in writing of the synodical proceedings to take to Rome. On his way back to his people, shortly after crossing the sea, he was attacked with illness and died. And his body was conveyed by his friends, and out of love for St. Martin, to Tours, and there honourably buried in the monastery, over which he presided as abbot. And though he died on the journey, nevertheless the copy of the orthodox creed of the English Church was taken to Rome, and was thankfully received by the apostolic pope and by all who heard or read it.

XXI. King Ecgfrith had received, as his wife and consort, a daughter of Anna, king of the East Angles, already often mentioned, whose name was Etheldreda. He was a good and pious man, and thoroughly noble both in mind and conduct. She had been previously married to another, a prince among the South Gyrwas, whose name was Tondberht; but he died shortly after the marriage. Then she was given and contracted to the aforesaid king. And when she had been twelve years married to him, she still gloriously retained her virginity unimpaired; as bishop Wilfrid of blessed memory told myself, when I asked, as some doubted this being the case. He said, that he was the most certain witness to her purity and virginity, inasmuch as king Ecgfrith promised to give him land and much money, if he would induce and prevail on the queen to share his bed, for he well knew she loved no one more than him. It is not to be doubted, that this might be in our age, which trustworthy records attest and report to have often taken place in bygone days, through the grace of our Lord alone, who also promised to dwell with us ever to the end of the

world. It was also a clear token of this divine marvel, that this same lady's body might not decay after burial, showing that she remained inviolate from man's touch. She had long and earnestly prayed the king, that she might give up all care and thought of the world, and that he would allow her to serve the true king Christ in a monastery. And when she at last prevailed in carrying this out, she went into the monastery of the abbess Æbbe, who was aunt of king Ecgfrith; which monastery is situated at a place called Coldingham. And she there received the veil and consecration to God's service at the hands of the aforesaid bishop Wilfrid. And about a year after this she became abbess in the district called Ely, where she founded a monastery of virgins devoted to God. And this virgin began to be mother of many, both by example of heavenly life and also by her admonitions. Men say of her, that after she entered the monastery, she never would use linen garments, but woollen only. And she would seldom bathe in hot water, except at the highest festivals and seasons, as Easter and Pentecost and the twelfth day after Yule tide. And when she at first, by her own ministrations and those of her attendants, washed the other servants of Christ who were there, then she would last of all bathe and wash herself. And seldom, except at greater festivals and seasons, or in case of greater need, would she touch food more than once a day. And always, unless unusually severe illness prevented her, she continued in holy prayer at the church from the time of lauds till clear day. Some also said, that by the spirit of prophecy she foretold the illness of which she died; and also the number of those servants of God, who from her monastery should leave this world, she clearly made known to all. Then she departed to the Lord amid her household, seven years after becoming abbess. And then, just as she directed, she was buried in no other place than among her household, according to the order in which her death took place, and was laid in a wooden coffin. She was succeeded in her office as abbess by her sister Seaxburh, the wife of Ærconberht, king of Kent. And when Etheldreda had been buried sixteen years, it seemed well to her sister, the abbess, to take up her bones and put them in a new coffin and translate them to the church. Then she ordered some brethren to go in search of stone, out of

which a coffin might be hewn and wrought. So they went in a boat, for the district of Ely is surrounded on all sides by water and fens, and the stones there are not of large size. Then they came to a ruined town, not far distant, called in English Grantchester. And they immediately found by the walls of the town a fair coffin wrought of white stone, furnished with a very proper lid also of similar material. Then at once they perceived, that their errand and journey were promoted and prospered by the Lord himself; and they thanked God for it, and brought the coffin to the monastery. When the body of this holy virgin and bride of Christ was brought out into the light, on the grave being opened, it was found as sound and undecayed, as if she had died and been buried that very day; as the aforesaid bishop Wilfrid and many others, who knew the matter, testified and declared. But still more certain testimony was that of the leech Cynefrith, who was present when she died, and again when her body was taken up out of the grave. He was wont to say, that when ill she had a large tumour on her neck. 'Then' said he, 'they told me to lance the tumour, that the noxious moisture within might flow out. When I did so, she seemed to be easier and well for two days, so that many concluded she might be cured of the disorder. But on the third day she suffered again with the former pain; she soon was seized and taken from the earth, and exchanged all pain and death for eternal life and health. When after so many years her body was taken up out of the grave, they set up and spread a tent over it, so and all the congregation of brethren and sisters on either side stood by singing. And the abbess went into the tent, and a few persons with her, to take up the bones and wash and cleanse them, as the manner of men is. Then suddenly we heard the abbess within cry out with a loud voice: "Glory be," said she, "to the name of the Lord." Then, after a short time, they called me and summoned me inside. They opened the door of the tent; then I saw the body of God's holy virgin taken up from the grave and laid upon a bed: and she was more like one asleep than dead. Then they uncovered her face also and showed me the wound of the cut, which I had formerly made. And it was healed and closed, so that marvellously, instead of an open and yawning wound with which she was buried, there appeared

only the thinnest and slightest scar; and also all the cloths, with which the body was swathed, seemed as entire and fresh and pure as if they had that very day been put round her pure limbs.' It is also said, that when she was afflicted and suffering with the tumour and pain in her neck, she rejoiced much in the nature of this malady, and she commonly repeated: 'I know well that I deserve to bear on my neck the burden of this illness and malady, as I remember that long ago, when I was young, I bore the idle burden of a golden necklace. And I believe the divine goodness would have me to be afflicted with a pain in my neck, that so I might be released from the guilt of my very idle levity, seeing that I now for gold and gems have this redness and burning of the tumour and pain standing out from my neck.' Now it happened that, on touching the robes taken from her body, demoniacs and many other forms of infirmity were often cured. Also the coffin, in which she was first buried, served to cure many persons, who had sores and pains in their eyes, when they bowed down their heads and eyes to it and prayed at it: and at once the discomfort of the sore and the pain left their eyes. Well then, they washed and bathed the body of the holy virgin, and wrapping it in new robes carried it into church and laid it in the stone coffin, which had been brought there; and there it is still kept with great honour to the present day. It was also a great marvel that the coffin was found to fit her body so exactly, as if it had been made specially for her. Also the place for the head seemed to be wrought with marvellous skill and properly cut out in proportion to the head. Ely is a district in East Anglia of about six hundred hides, in the form of an island. It is all, as we have said, encompassed with fen and water: and it got its name from the abundance of eels caught in these fens. The aforesaid servant of Christ desired to have a monastery there, because she derived her origin according to the flesh from this province of East Anglia, as we have already stated.

XXII. In the ninth year of the reign of king Ecgrith he and Æthelred, king of Mercia, began and engaged in a severe struggle and bloody

contest. In the battle by the river Trent, Ælfwine was slain, brother of king Ecgfrith, a young prince eighteen years of age. He was very amiable and a favourite in both countries, as his sister, called Osthryth, was wife of Æthelred, king of Mercia. Now when a subject for furious strife and prolonged enmity between these violent kings and their nations seemed to be rising up, then bishop Theodore, well beloved of God, by the divine grace and aid, through his salutary exhortation and advice, completely extinguished the kindling flames of this great peril, and so fully, that he brought about peace between the kings and the nations, and no life was lost, and there was no further bloodshed on account of the death of the king's brother; but he arranged a payment of blood money for him, so that there was peace between them. The conditions of this pence between the kings and their realms continued long after.

XXIII. In the aforesaid fight, when the king's brother Ælfwine was slain, there was a memorable circumstance, which must not be passed over in silence, for the story may prove the salvation of many. Now in that battle there was struck down among others a young follower of king Ecgfrith, named Imma. And when he had lain there that day and the following night, among the corpses of the others who had fallen, as if dead, then at last he came to life, recovered, and sat up, and bound up his wounds, as well as he could. And after he had rested for a short time, he got up and began to move away, on the chance of finding a friend somewhere, to take care of him and attend to his wounds. While doing this he was met and seized by men from the enemy's army; and they brought him to their lord, who was a gesith of king Æthelred. When he asked him what he was, he feared to acknowledge that he was a follower of the king, so he declared that he was a man of the people, poor and married; and that he had joined the expedition, in order to fetch supplies and food to the king's followers and their companions. Then the gesith received him, took care of him, and ordered his wounds to be attended to. And when he began to recover and get well, he directed him to be bound, that he might not flee away or steal off by night. Then no one could bind him; for, as soon as those who had bound him went away, the bonds gave

and became loose. He had a brother Tuna, a priest, who was abbot at the monastery and town, which is still to this day named after his name, Towcester. On hearing that he had been slain in the battle, he came and searched among the slain in hopes of finding his corpse. And he found another, exactly like him in all points, and supposed it was he. Then he brought him to his monastery and buried him with honour: and often sang masses for the release of his soul. It was through this celebration that, as I mentioned before, no one could bind him, but at once the bonds gave way, and he was released. Meantime the gesith also, who kept him, began to wonder and ask him, why no one could bind him. And he enquired whether he knew the charm for loosing, and had the words with him written out, about which men tell idle tales, saying that this was the reason he could not be bound. Then he answered that he knew nothing of such arts. 'But I have,' said he, 'in my own country, a brother who is a priest; and I am sure he accounts me slain and often says mass for me. And if I were now in another life, then my soul there would be released from eternal bonds and punishment by his intercession.' Now, when he had been detained for some time with the gesith, those who looked at him more narrowly, perceived from his face and bearing and his words also, that he was not of the poorer class, as he said, but of noble descent. Then the gesith called him privately to him; questioned him strictly as to his origin, and promised to do him no harm or ill, if he would tell him plainly, what he was. Then he did so: confessed and said, that he was a follower of the king. Then the gesith answered and said: 'From certain of your answers I felt and saw, that you were not such a common man, as you asserted. And now I tell you, you deserve death at my hands, for all my brothers and kindred fell in that battle. Still I will not kill you, lest I break my promise and my faith.' When he was fully recovered, he sold him in London to a Frisian. Then he wanted to bind him, but he could not in any way be bound either by him, or when he was being led there, though his enemy put fetters on him, now of one, now of another kind: and most generally his bonds gave way and were loosed after the third hour, when mass is most generally sung. When the purchaser saw, that he could not be confined with bonds, he gave him

permission to ransom himself with money, if he could. And he made oath to return or send his ransom. Then he went to Kent to king Hlothere, who was sister's son of queen Etheldreda, mentioned above, as he formerly had been one of the queen's followers. And he begged him to give him the value of his ransom; and he granted it to him, and sent it to his lord for him, according to promise. After this he returned to his native country; and coming to his brother told him all in order, both his adversity and the comfort that came to him in his adversity. And he perceived by his report, that the bonds were loosed just about the time, that the solemnity of the mass was celebrated for him. And also many other advantages and deliverances, which befell him in his peril, he saw and perceived had been divinely vouchsafed to him by his brother's intercession, and by the offering of the saving sacrifice. And many, who heard this told by the aforesaid man, were inflamed in faith and pious devotion, to pray and give alms and offer to God the sacrifice of the holy oblation, for the relief of their friends who had departed from this world. For they perceived, that the saving sacrifice availed for eternal redemption and profited both body and soul. I was told this story by some, who heard it from the very man, in whose case it took place. And for this reason, I certainly and unhesitatingly believed I should add and insert it in this ecclesiastical history.

XXIV. It was about six hundred and eighty years from the Lord's incarnation, when the pious servant of Christ, Hild, abbess of the monastery which is called Whitby, as already mentioned, after many heavenly deeds performed on earth, in order to receive the meed of heavenly life, was carried up from earth and departed on the seventeenth of November, in her sixty-sixth year. If the years be divided into two equal parts, she spent the first thirty-three nobly moving in the world; and the same number subsequently she still more nobly consecrated to the Lord in conventual life. She was also nobly born in worldly origin, being daughter of a nephew of king Eadwine, called Hereric. He, along with the king, received the faith and sacraments of Christ, at the preaching and teaching of Paulinus of blessed memory,

who was first bishop of Northumbria; and he kept the faith undefiled, till he was found deserving to appear before His face. Now when Hild left the world and determined to serve God alone, she withdrew to East Anglia, being of the king's kin: from this she desired, if possible, relinquishing her home and all she had in the world, to pass into Gaul and to live in exile for the Lord at the monastery of Chelles, that she might more easily earn an eternal home in heaven. For at this monastery her sister Hereswith, mother of Aldwulf, king of East Anglia, lived under regular discipline, and was then awaiting the eternal crown of victory. In imitation of her example she purposed to go abroad, and was detained a whole year in the aforesaid province of East Anglia, till she was invited and persuaded to return home again by bishop Aidan. Then she received, to the north of the river Wear, ground sufficient for one family, and there similarly she lived one year, under conventual discipline with a few associates. After this she became abbess at the monastery which is called Hartlepool. This monastery was founded and erected, not long before, by Hegiu the pious servant of Christ, who is said to have been the first woman in Northumbria to become a nun and take the veil, being admitted by bishop Aidan. But she, soon after the monastery was erected, withdrew to the town which in English is called Tadcaster, and built herself a dwelling where she might live to God. Then Hild servant of Christ succeeded to the government of the monastery, and she soon established and arranged it with regular life, as well as she could ascertain from learned men. For bishop Aidan and many other pious and godly men, who knew her, often went and visited her, because of her prudence and wisdom and love for the divine service; and they loved her fervently and carefully taught and instructed her. Now when she had for many years ruled over this monastery, with great diligence in the teaching of regular discipline, it happened that she undertook to construct and arrange a monastery, at the place which is called Whitby; and she carried out the work, which was then assigned to her, without slothfulness. For she appointed, under the discipline of a regular life, the same persons who had previously held and ruled the monastery, and encouraged them; and she also taught there earnestly the

maintenance of truth, religion, purity, and other spiritual virtues, and above all peace and the love of God, so that, after the example of the primitive church, no one there was rich and no one poor; but all had all things in common, and no one regarded anything as his own. She was of such great prudence and wisdom, that not only ordinary men came there about their business, but even kings and princes often sought counsel and wisdom from her, and there readily found it. And she set those under her so fully to the study of the Scriptures and to works of truth, that many could easily be found there who were suitable for the ecclesiastical state, that is for the service of the altar. The proof of this is, that we subsequently have seen five bishops, who came from this monastery and had received instruction there: and these were all men of great learning and holiness. Their names are as follows: Bose, Etlá, Oftfor, John and Wilfrid. We have stated already about the first, that he was consecrated bishop of York. About the second we may briefly intimate, that he was consecrated bishop of Dorchester on Thames. As to the last two, we shall have to relate subsequently, how the former was consecrated bishop of Hexham, and the latter bishop of York. About the middle one we may now say, that when in both the monasteries of the abbess Hild, he zealously devoted himself to his studies and to the observance of holy Scripture, at last he desired in his mind the more perfect way. Then he came to Kent to archbishop Theodore of blessed memory. After he had there studied theology for some time, he desired also to visit Rome, which at that time was accounted and believed an act of great virtue. On his return he once more visited Britain: and made his way to the province of the Hwiccas. At that time Osric was king there; and he there preached and taught the word of God and his holy faith, and at the same time exhibited in himself a pattern of life to all, who saw and heard him: and there he remained long. Just then the bishop of the province, Bosel by name, was attacked with severe bodily infirmity, and could no longer of himself discharge the episcopal duties. Accordingly then by the general voice the aforesaid man was selected for the bishop's office in his room; and by the directions of Æthelred, king of Mercia, bishop Wilfrid of blessed memory, who at that time performed episcopal ministrations

among the Middle Angles, consecrated Offfor as bishop. For archbishop Theodore was then dead, and as yet no one had been consecrated in his place. In this province shortly before, that is before the aforesaid man of God Bosel, there was a man of energy, learning and acuteness, from the monastery of the same abbess, who was chosen as bishop, by name Tatfrith. But before he could be ordained, he was suddenly carried off by death. Now the aforesaid servant of Christ, the abbess Hild, by all who knew her, in token of her piety and God's favour, was generally called by the name of mother. And she not only was an example of life to those who were present in her monastery, but also to many living at a distance, to whom the felicitous report of her zeal and virtue came, it served as an occasion for godly amendment and for salvation. It was also proper, that the dream should be fulfilled which her mother, Breogswith, saw in her daughter's childhood. When her husband, Hereric, was in exile under Cerdic, king of the Britons, and was there taken off by poison, she saw in a dream, as though he was suddenly lifted up and carried away from her. Then she sought him with all care, and no trace of him appeared anywhere. And while she carefully and earnestly sought for him, suddenly she found under her robe a very precious golden necklace. Now when she looked at this and regarded it earnestly, it seemed to shine with great brightness of light, so that it filled all the borders of Britain with the rays of its light. This dream was really fulfilled in her daughter, of whom we are now speaking. For her life was an example of light, not only to herself and those under her, but also to many far and wide who wished to lead a good life before God. Now when she had been many years in the office of abbess over this monastery at Whitby, it pleased the gracious author of our salvation, that her holy soul also should be proved and afflicted with long-continued bodily infirmity, that after the example of the apostle her virtue should be perfected and confirmed in infirmity of body. Then she was attacked with severe bodily infirmity, and for six years in succession struggled unceasingly with the severity of this illness. And during all that time she never ceased to give thanks to God Almighty her Creator, and also to admonish and instruct the flock committed to her, to remember one and

all her example, that they, in the days of prosperity and while granted bodily health, should zealously serve and obey the Lord, and in time of adversity or bodily infirmity ever faithfully give thanks to the Lord. Then, in the seventh year of her affliction, the disease and pain attacked her internally. And she came to her last day: and about the time of cockcrow she received the viaticum of the most holy communion of Christ's body and blood. Then she summoned to her the servants of God, who were in this monastery; and she once more warned and taught them to maintain peace and love with one another and all men of God. And during these words of exhortation and instruction she joyously saw death approach; or, to speak more truly in the words of the Lord, she passed from death to life. It came to pass on the same night, that God Almighty vouchsafed to reveal her death in a clear vision, at another monastery lying at a distance, which she had founded previously in the same year, called Hackness. In this monastery there was a holy nun named Begu, consecrated to the Lord in pure virginity for more than thirty years, and serving the Lord there in monastic life. While sleeping in the sisters' dormitory, she suddenly heard, high up in the air, the familiar sound and ring of their bell, with which they were usually called to prayer and roused, when any of their number departed from the world. Then, as it seemed to her, she saw with open eyes a great light come from the roof above: and it filled all that house. As she looked attentively at that light and regarded it earnestly, she saw the soul of the aforesaid servant of God, the abbess Hild, borne up to heaven in this light and escorted by hosts of angels. Now when she awoke from sleep, she saw the other sisters about her asleep. Then she perceived, that, what she saw, was shown her in the dream and in a mental vision. And at once she arose, trembling with great fear, and ran to the virgin, who was then abbess of the monastery; she was younger than Hild and named Freogith. And she was all suffused with weeping and tears, drew long sighs, and told her that the mother of them all, the abbess Hild, was then departing from the world, and in her sight, amid a great light and bands of angels, was ascending to the eternal light of glory in the kingdom of heaven, and to fellowship with the heavenly citizens. On hearing this she

aroused all the sisters, bidding them go to church; and there in prayer and singing of psalms they earnestly entreated for the soul of their mother. Now when they had earnestly done so for the rest of the night, there came very early at dawn some brethren, to announce her decease, from the place where she died. Then they answered and said, that they had previously known and understood this. And when they had explained to the brethren in order, how and when they had learnt this, and told them the hour of her departure from earth, it was found, that her departure was at the very hour, at which it was shown to the nun by the vision. And by a beautiful harmony of things it was divinely provided, that while they witnessed her passage out of this life, those above perceived her entrance into the eternal life of holy souls. At that place the distance between the two monasteries is thirteen miles by measure.

XXV. In the monastery of this abbess there was a brother specially remarkable and distinguished by the divine grace. For he was wont to compose suitable songs, tending to religion and piety, so that whatever he had learnt through scholars of the divine writings, he presently embellished in poetic compositions of the greatest sweetness and fervour, well expressed in the English language. And by his songs many men's minds were often fired to disregard the world and attach themselves to the heavenly life. And also many others after him in England began to compose pious Songs: none however could do that like him. For he had not been taught of men or through man to acquire the art of song, but he had divine aid and received the art of song through God's grace. And for this reason he never could compose anything frivolous, nor any idle poetry, but just that only which tended to piety, and which it became his pious tongue to sing. The man had lived in the world till the time that he was of advanced age, and never had learnt any poetry. And as he was often at a beer drinking, when it was arranged, to promote mirth, that they should all in turn sing to the harp, whenever he saw the harp come near him, he arose out of shame from the feast and went home to his house. Having done so on one occasion,

he left the house of entertainment, and went out to the fold of the cattle, the charge of which had been committed to him for that night. When in due time he stretched his limbs on the bed there and fell asleep, there stood by him in a dream a man, who saluted and greeted him, calling on him by name: 'Cedmon, sing me something.' Then he answered and said: 'I cannot sing anything; and therefore I came out from this entertainment and retired here, as I know not how to sing.' Again he who spoke to him said: 'Yet you could sing.' Then said he: 'What shall I sing?' He said: 'Sing to me the beginning of all things.' On receiving this answer, he at once began to sing, in praise of God the Creator, verses and words which he had never heard, the order of which is as follows: 'Now should we praise the guardian of the heavenly kingdom, the power of the Creator and the counsel of his mind, the works of the Father of glory, how he, the eternal Lord, originated every marvel. He the holy Creator first created the heaven, as a roof for the children of the earth; then the eternal Lord, guardian of the human race, the Almighty ruler, afterwards fashioned the world as a soil for men.' Then he arose from his sleep, and he had firmly in his memory all, that he sang while asleep. And to these words he soon added on many others in the same style of song worthy of God. Then he came in the morning to the steward of the manor, who was his superior: and told him what gift he had received; and he at once brought him to the abbess and made the matter known to her. Then she ordered all the best scholars and the students to be assembled: and in their presence bade him relate the dream, and sing the song, that by the judgment of all it might be determined, what or whence this gift was. Then it seemed to all, as indeed it was, that a heavenly grace had been vouchsafed him by the Lord himself. Then they set forth and stated to him a holy narrative and some word of divine doctrine, and directed him, if he could, to turn it into the harmony of verse. Having undertaken the task, he went home to his house; and returning in the morning recited and presented to them, what had been delivered to him, composed in excellent verse. Then the abbess began to welcome and find a pleasure in God's grace in the man; and she admonished and enjoined him to leave the world and become a monk: and he readily assented.

And she admitted him with his property into the monastery, and attached him to the congregation of God's servants; and she directed, that he should be taught the whole round of sacred history and narrative. And he retained in his memory, whatever he learnt by hearing: and, like a clean animal, he ruminated and converted all into the sweetest music. And his song and his music were so delightful to hear, that even his teachers wrote down the words from his lips and learnt them. He sang first of the earth's creation and the beginning of man and all the story of Genesis, which is the first book of Moses; and afterwards about the departure of the people of Israel from the land of Egypt and their entry into the land of promise; and about many other narratives in the books of the canon of Scripture; and about Christ's incarnation; and about his passion; and about his ascension into heaven; and about the coming of the Holy Ghost, and the teaching of the apostles: and again about the day of judgment to come, and about the terror of hell torment, and about the sweetness of the kingdom of heaven, he composed many a song. And he also composed many others about the divine blessings and judgments. In all these he earnestly strove to draw men from the love of sin and transgression, and to rouse them to love and zeal for good deeds. For the man was very pious and humbly submissive to regular discipline. And towards those who would act otherwise, he was inflamed with a zeal of great fervour. And he accordingly concluded and ended his life by a fair close. For when it grew near the time of his departure and decease, fourteen days previously he was oppressed and afflicted with bodily infirmity, yet to such a moderate extent, that he could all the time speak and move about. There was there close at hand a house for the sick, into which it was their custom to bring those who were more infirm, and those who were at the point of death, and tend them there together. Then he directed his attendant on the evening of the night, on which he was to depart from the world, to prepare a place for him in the house, that he might rest. Then the attendant wondered, why he asked this, for it seemed to him his death was not so near: however he did, as he said and directed. And when he went to bed there, and cheerfully spoke and jested along with those in the house,

then after midnight he asked them, whether they had the Eucharist in the house. Then they answered and said: 'What need have you of the Eucharist ? It is not so near your death, seeing that you are speaking so cheerfully and brightly to us.' He repeated: 'Bring me the Eucharist.' When he had it in his hand, he asked whether they all felt peaceably and cheerfully disposed towards him, without any rancour. Then all answered, and said they had no rancorous feeling towards him, but all were most friendly disposed to him: and they in turn prayed him to feel kindly to them. Then he answered and said: 'Dear brethren, I feel very friendly towards you and all God's servants.' And so he fortified himself with the heavenly viaticum, and prepared his entry into another life. Then once more he asked, how near it was to the hour that the brothers should get up, and raise the song of praise to God and chaunt lauds. Then they answered: 'It is not far to that.' He said: 'Good: let us indeed await the hour.' And he prayed and signed himself with the token of God's cross, and laid down his head on the pillow and fell asleep for awhile; and so in quiet ended his life. And so it came to pass, that as with pure and simple heart and with tranquil devotion he served the Lord, so he also by a tranquil death left the earth, and appeared before God's face. And the tongue, which composed so many saving words in praise of the Creator, concluded its last words to his glory, as he crossed himself and commended his spirit into his hands. We see also that he was conscious of his own decease, from what we have just now heard related.

XXVI. At this time the monastery called Coldingham, already mentioned, was destroyed by fire and flame, through the sin of carelessness. However all, who knew the matter, could easily see, that this befell owing to the wickedness and evil life of those who dwelt in that town, and above all of those who were the chief persons there. And yet there was no lack of warning from the divine goodness, that they should chastise and correct their sins by fasting, tears and prayer, and that they should turn from them the wrath of the true Judge in the manner of the people of Nineveh. There was at that monastery a man of the race of the Scots, called Adamnanus. He led a life of great abstinence and was very

fervent in holy prayers to God, so that he never ate food nor partook of meals, except on the Lord's day and the fifth day of the week, and often for whole nights persevered and continued watching in holy prayer. The severity of this hard life was first imposed upon him by necessity, to atone for his sins; but as time went on, he changed the necessity into a habit. It happened in his youth, that he committed some transgression. When the guilt came home to his heart, he was utterly horror-struck at it, and feared, that he should be severely punished for it by the strict Judge. Then he went to a priest, by whom he supposed the way of salvation might be pointed out to him; he confessed his guilt, and begged him to advise, how he might flee from the wrath to come. On bearing his guilt the priest said: 'A severe wound needs severe treatment: therefore, as much as you may, devote yourself to fasting, singing psalms and prayers, that you by confession may anticipate the Lord's presence, and deserve to enjoy his mildness.' And he, being then seized with excessive sorrow and overpowered by the consciousness of guilt, and he desired that he might be quickly released from the internal bonds of the sins, by which he was oppressed-said to the priest: 'I am of youthful years and sound in my body. Whatever you set me and command me to do, that I may be saved in the day of the Lord, all that I will readily endure, though you bid me to continue all night watching in prayer, and though I should fast the whole week, I will do it gladly.' He said: 'It is much, that you should continue the whole week without bodily sustenance: but a fast of two days or of three days is enough to observe. Do this,' said he, 'till I come to you again after a while, and then show you more fully what you ought to do and how long you ought to continue in penance.' Then the priest departed from him. Then it happened for some reason, that he suddenly departed to Ireland, the island of the Scots, whence he previously came: and returned no more to him in fulfilment of their agreement. He, however, was mindful of his precepts and of his own vow; and he served the Lord with tears of repentance, holy vigils and great abstinence, so that he never partook of food or a meal oftener than on the Lord's day and on the fifth day of the week, as I said before. On the other days he observed the rule of fasting. Now when he heard that the priest had

gone to Ireland and died there, he ever from that time observed and carried out the aforesaid mode of abstinence; and what he once began out of fervour, because of his sin, in view of divine terror, he afterwards, in view of the divine love, firmly carried out, because of his delight in the eternal reward. Now when he had observed and done this for a long time, it happened that he went one day on business to a distance from the monastery; and one of the brethren was his companion and went with him. Now when they had completed the journey, they turned back home. And when they drew near to the monastery and saw the buildings rising and towering up on high, suddenly the man of God became gloomy, and began to weep hot and bitter tears, and by the expression of his face revealed and made known the sorrow of his heart. Now when his companion saw and understood this, he questioned him and asked what was the matter, and why he behaved so. Then he said: 'All the buildings that you see here and look upon, both the large and the small, are soon to be all seized by fire and turned into ashes.' When the brother heard this, immediately after their arrival at the monastery, he made it known and reported it to the mother of the society, the abbess who was called Æbbe. Then naturally she was much disturbed by such a prophecy, and in her alarm she summoned to her that man of God, and earnestly questioned him and asked how he had learnt and knew this circumstance. He said: 'Not long ago I was occupied at night in vigils and psalm singing and prayer; then I suddenly saw standing by me a man of strange appearance. As I was very much alarmed at his presence, he soothed me and told me not to be afraid.; and then he spoke to me as it seemed in a familiar tone: "Thou doest well," said he, "that at this hour of quiet at night, you will not give yourself to sleep, but prefer rather to devote yourself to vigils and prayers." I said: " I know that I have much need of devoting myself to saving vigils, and earnestly entreating the Lord for my errors and sins." Then said he who spoke to me: "You speak the truth," said he, "and there is need both for you and for many to atone for their sins by good works, and that when they cease from toiling in temporal things, that they then the more freely labour for the desire of eternal blessings. But yet only a few do so. I tell you the truth,

that I have now gone round all this monastery in order and seen the dwellings and beds of all individually: and I have found none of them all except yourself occupied with his soul's salvation; but all, both men and women, are either heavy with sleep or were awake for sin. And the dwellings which were made for prayer and study, are now turned into dwellings of gluttony and drunkenness, idle talking and other unlawful transgressions. And also the virgins, who were dedicated to God, regardless of the respect due to their profession, whenever they have leisure, weave and work fine cloth, with which they either adorn themselves like brides, to the risk of their position, or purchase to themselves the friendship of men without. Therefore deservedly is heavy vengeance by furious flames from heaven prepared for this place and its inhabitants.'" The abbess said to him: 'Why would you not at once make known and report the secret to me?' Then he answered and said; 'Out of respect for you, I feared that you might be too utterly confounded and terrified; and yet you have the comfort that this punishment will not come upon this town in your day.' Now when this vision was noised abroad, then for some little time, that is for a few days, the inhabitants of the place began to fear and to purify themselves, and they gave up their evil deeds. But soon after the death of the abbess, they returned again to the former foulness, and did what was still more wicked. And when they said: 'Now is peace and security'; then in a moment, when they least thought of it, they were smitten with the penalty of the aforesaid vengeance. That all took place thus, I was assured by my venerable fellow priest Edgils, who at that time had his abode and lived in that monastery. He afterwards dwelt a long time in our monastery, and there died, after many of the occupants of the former had departed thence owing to the ruin of the town. This story we have inserted in our book, with a view to warn men to regard the work of the Lord, how terrible he is in his counsels for the children of men, lest at any time we become slaves to bodily licence, and have less dread of God's judgment and less fear, than we should, and his wrath suddenly overpower us and justly afflict and bring us low with temporal miseries, or severely adjudge us to eternal perdition.

XXVII. It was then about 684 years after our Lord's incarnation, when Ecgfrith, king of Northumbria, sent an army and expedition into Ireland, island of the Scots. Beorht was its leader and general, and by it the innocent people, who were always most friendly to the English race, were so miserably devastated, that the violence of war spared and respected neither church nor monastery. And the natives themselves, as well as they could, stood on their defence and resisted the foe, and called to their aid the divine goodness, and with unceasing imprecations long prayed, that they might be avenged by Heaven. And though they that curse may not have a place in the kingdom of God, yet we believe that the others were deservedly accursed for their cruelty, so that they soon suffered punishment for their sins through the vengeance of the Lord. For indeed, the year after this, when the same king rashly led an army to waste the province of the Picts-and though his friends, and above all Cuthberht of blessed memory, then lately consecrated bishop, tried much to restrain him, yet still he did lead an army against the Picts-then they simulated flight, and drew him on into a great but narrow fastness among impassable moors. And he was slain with the greater part of his force in the 40th year of his age and the 15th of his reign, on the 20th of May. And, as I said before, his friends tried to restrain him from commencing the war. But as in the previous year he would not listen to the venerable father Ecgberht, and abstain from attacking the Scots who did him no harm, then in punishment for his sin a judgment was sent upon him, that again he should be deaf to those, who would recall him from destruction. From this time the prospects and power of the English realm began to ebb and fail. For the Picts got their land back into their own possession, which the English had held, and the Scots similarly, who were in Britain; and a large part of the Britons also recovered their freedom. Then among many of the English, who were either slain with the sword, or brought into slavery, or fled away from the land of the Picts, also the venerable servant of the Lord, Trumwine, who was their bishop, departed with his clergy, who were in the monastery of Abercorn, which lies in English territory, but is however

near the sea, which separates the territory of the English and the Picts. The bishop then committed his clergy to his friends in various monasteries, wherever he could, choosing an abode and dwelling for himself in the oft-mentioned monastery called Whitby. And he there with a few of his clergy lived for many years, to the advantage not only of himself, but of very many besides, in all the strictness of a monastic life. And there too he died, and was buried in the church of the apostle St. Peter with the honour due to his life and station. At this time the royal maiden Ælflœd was abbess of the monastery, along with her mother Eanflœd, whom we have mentioned before. And when the bishop came there, this virgin devoted to God found in him great help in the government, as well as comfort for her life. Then Ealdfrith succeeded Ecgrith on the throne; a man most learned in the Scriptures; who, it was said, was his brother and son of king Oswio. And he nobly restored the ruined state of the realm, though it remained within narrow limits. Then in this year, that is 685 years after our Lord's incarnation, Hlothere, king of Kent, ended this mortal life and deceased, being the successor to his brother Ecgberht, who had reigned eight years. After him he had come to the throne and occupied it twelve years. He was wounded in a battle with the South Saxons, whom Eadric, son of Ecgberht, had drawn together against him; and he died while under medical treatment. Then Eadric succeeded him and reigned for a year and a half. On his death, for some time pretenders to the throne and foreign kings destroyed and wasted the realm, till their rightful king, Wihtred, son of Ecgberht, was firmly seated on the throne. And he at once by piety and by energy rescued and delivered his people from devastation by strangers.

XXVIII. Now in the same year in which king Ecgrith ended his life, he caused the holy and venerable Cuthberht to be consecrated as bishop of the church at Lindisfarne. He formerly had lived in a small island, called Farne, as a hermit for many years, with great temperance of body and mind. This island lies out at sea, about nine miles distant from the church. And the holy man of God, from his earliest childhood, had been ever fervent in study and in zeal for a religious life. But when he grew

up, he desired and was admitted to monastic orders. And first he went into the monastery of Melrose, which lies on the banks of the river Tweed. This monastery was then swayed and directed by bishop Eata, a man of mild and gentle character, who subsequently became bishop at Hexham and Lindisfarne, as already mentioned. The prior and director of the monastery was then Boisel, a priest of great virtues, and having a spirit of prophecy, Cuthberht humbly submitted to his training, and acquired from him knowledge of the Holy Scriptures and an example of good works. After he had departed to the Lord, Cuthberht became director of the monastery; and he, both by the authority of his teaching and by the example of his outward conduct, trained and brought up many to a life of discipline. And not only did he give to the monastery precepts and at the same time a personal example for a life of discipline, but he also zealously strove to convert the neighbouring people, far and wide, from a life of perverse habits, to the love of heavenly joys. For many profaned the faith, which they held, by unrighteous acts, and also many, at the time of the great pestilence and mortality, neglected the sacraments of the holy faith, in which they were trained up, and hastened and flocked to the delusive remedies of their idols; as if they could avert the punishment sent from God their creator, by their incantations or charms or some secrets of devilish craft. Now the man of God often issued from the monastery to correct both errors. At times he mounted on horseback, oftener he went on foot. He proceeded to the hamlets that lay around, preaching and teaching the way of truth to those who were in error. This also his master, Boisel, had usually done in his time. It was at this time customary among the English tribes, that when a priest or anyone else came to a hamlet, they all assembled at his summons to hear the word of God; and they readily listened to what they were taught, and also sedulously carried out in their conduct, whatever they understood. Now this man of God, Cuthberht, had such training and skill in speaking and such love for the word of God, which he began to teach, and such a light of angelic appearance shone in him, that not one of those, who were present, dare conceal from him the secrets of his heart, but so all openly by confession disclosed their

actions. For they considered and thought that they alone escaped his notice, whose secrets he did not then care to know; and they amended the sins they confessed with due fruits of true repentance, as he directed. And he was most in the habit of travelling through those places and preaching the word of God in those hamlets, which were situated at a distance on elevated and rugged moors, which others felt a horror of visiting, and which by their poverty and ignorance deterred teachers; these he however with pious toil, cheerfully tended in his great zeal for divine teaching. And he often went out from the monastery a whole week, at times even two or three; also often for a whole month he did not return home, but remained in the moorlands and summoned and invited to heavenly things that ignorant people, by the words of his teaching and by his works of virtue. Now when the venerable servant of God had been spending many years in the monastery of Melrose, and there shone and was resplendent with many tokens of spiritual virtues, then at last his venerable abbot Eata, carried him off to Lindisfarne, that he might there also introduce among the brethren the observance of regular discipline, setting forth and exhibiting it by the authority of his teaching and by his personal conduct. For in the same place where this venerable father Eata ruled and directed with the power of abbot, there was there formerly in old times both a bishop with his clergy and also an abbot dwelling with monks. However these fell to the charge of the bishop as part of his household. For the holy man of God, Aidan, who first was bishop of that place, being himself a monk, came there with monks and established the mode of monastic life in the monastery.

XXIX. After this the holy man of God, Cuthberht, as the merits of his pious resolve increased, retired also to the secrecy and retirement of divine contemplation in a hermit's life, as we have already stated. And as many years ago we wrote fully about his life and virtues both in verse and prose, it is now enough to record at present this one fact, that when he was about to withdraw to the island, he protested to the brethren and said: 'If the divine grace will be vouchsafed to me at the place, that I may live by the labour of my hands, cheerfully will I live there. If it be

otherwise, with God's will I will return to you quickly.' The place was destitute of water, produce of the ground, and trees; but there was there a gathering and haunt of accursed spirits, and it was unfit for any human habitation. But then in accordance with the desire of the man of God it became habitable; and soon because of his coming the accursed spirits departed thence. And when the foe had withdrawn, he sought out for himself a small and confined dwelling, and surrounded it and strengthened it with a ditch and mound; and within he erected the necessary buildings, with the aid of the brethren's hands, that is, an oratory and a common dwelling. And then he bade the brethren dig a pit for him in the floor of the house. Now the earth was so hard and stony, that no trace of a spring could be seen in it. But when the brethren in faith and at the prayers of the servant of God had done so, next day it was found full of water. This same water at this present day supplies to all who come there the divine gift of its abundance. Then the man of God ordered iron tools with wheat to be brought to till the ground. And when the ground was tilled and in due time he sowed it with wheat, there came up no growth nor crop, nor even herbage till summer time. When the brothers returned to visit him, as their wont was, he told them to bring him barley seed, in case there might be hopes of its growing or suiting the soil, or its being the will of the heavenly giver of all things, that a crop of this produce might spring up there. After the seed was brought to him, though it was quite past the season for sowing, and there were no hopes of it bearing produce, as he sowed it in the land, then there soon sprang up an abundant crop and produce, which yielded to the man of God the desired supplies from the labour of his hands. After serving the Lord for many years there as a hermit, it happened that a great synod was assembled by the river Alne, at the place which is called Twyford, in the presence of king Ecgfrith. Archbishop Theodore of blessed memory presided over the synod as primate; and Cuthberht there, with unanimous consent of all its members, was chosen bishop of the church at Lindisfarne. Then they sent to him many messengers and letters, and yet were utterly unable to lure him out of his dwelling and home to them. Then at last the aforesaid king himself, accompanied by

the holy bishop Trumwine and many other pious and rich men, sailed to the island. And also many of the brethren from Lindisfarne flocked to him, and all bent the knee and shed tears and entreated and prayed him by the living God, till they drew him out of his beloved retirement, with many tears on his part also, and brought him to the synod. On coming there, though very reluctant, he was overpowered by the unanimous desire of all and forced to undertake the duties of the episcopate. He was chiefly prevailed upon by the words, in which Boisel, the man of God, when by the spirit of prophecy he revealed to him what should come upon him, even then foretold that he should at some future time be a bishop. His consecration was however not at once decreed; but when the winter, which was then coming, had passed, exactly at the festival of Easter, it was completed at York in the presence of king Ecgfrith: and seven bishops assembled for his consecration, among whom bishop Theodore of blessed memory held the primacy. He then, in imitation of the blessed apostles, adorned the episcopate, which he had received, with works of spiritual virtue, and the flock, committed to him to keep for God, he both shielded with his continual prayers and called and incited to heavenly things by his salutary warnings and teaching; and, what in general is the greatest aid to pious teachers, what he taught in word, he first fulfilled in deed. Before all things he was warm and fervent with the fire of godly love, modest with the virtue of patience, attentive and zealous in devotion to holy prayer; and he was affable to all who came to him for comfort; and he regarded it in the light of holy prayer, if by his encouragement and instruction he rendered aid to the feeble brethren. For he knew and remembered, that he who said, 'Love the Lord thy God,' also said, 'Love thy neighbour.' He was esteemed and famous for the purifying discipline of his asceticism, and was ever intent on heavenly things with all the grace of fervour. As a proof of this, whenever he offered the sacrifice to God and sang mass, he never raised up his voice on high, but with streaming tears out of his inmost heart commended his desires to the Lord.

XXX. Then for two years he thus occupied and held the bishop's seat. Then he was divinely warned to prefer and desire once more his island and his dwelling there; for his approach to death was at hand, or rather to life, for this alone is to be called true life; as he himself, at that same time, revealed and made known to many men with his usual simplicity, in obscure terms, which however could soon be clearly understood. To some men he however openly disclosed and made known the same fact. There was a priest of venerable life named Hereberht, of old and long associated with this man of God in a union of spiritual friendship. He was on an island in the large lake out of which the source of the river Derwent springs, living as a hermit. It was his wont year by year to come and visit him, and hear from him counsel tending to eternal salvation. On hearing that the bishop had come to Carlisle, as his custom was, he went to him there, desiring that by his salutary exhortations he might be more and more inflamed with desire for things above. Now as they talked with one another about the lives of holy fathers, and each for the other poured out the cup of heavenly life, the bishop said during the conversation: 'Remember, brother Hereberht, now to ask and tell me whatever you desire and need. For after we part this time, we shall never see one another again in this world with the eyes of the body. For I certainly know, that the time of my release and departure is very nigh.' On hearing these words Hereberht fell at his feet, and shedding tears with much lamentation, wept sore and said: 'I entreat thee by the living Lord not to leave me, but to remember your true companion, and to pray the heavenly goodness, that (it may please) the God, whom we served together on earth, that we also may go to heaven together, there to see and behold his grace. For you know that I ever strove to live according to the precepts of your mouth, and wherever I failed for ignorance and frailty, I at once tried to amend according to the judgment of your will.' Then the bishop extended himself in the form of a cross and prayed, and at once was informed in the spirit, that the Lord had granted the request he preferred; and he said: 'Arise, my brother, and weep not, but rejoice and be glad: for the heavenly mercy has granted our prayer.' The subsequent issue of events verified and confirmed the truth of this

promise and prophecy. For after parting they never saw one another with the eyes of the body; and on one and the same day, that is to say on the 20th of March, they parted from the body, and their souls soon were united with one another in beatific vision, and by the ministry of angels were together led to the heavenly kingdom. But Hereberht was first afflicted and distressed with continual infirmity. We may believe, that this was done by the dispensation of divine goodness, that if in aught he were inferior and behindhand in merit, as compared with the blessed Cuthberht, the pain of the long illness should make up and atone for that, that thus he might be made equal by the grace of his intercessor: so that, as he was parted from the body at one and the same time with him, he might also merit to be received along with him in a similar place in eternal bliss. The venerable father Cuthberht died on the island of Farne; and he prayed the brethren very earnestly, that he might too be buried there, where he had so long contended for the Lord. And yet at last he was prevailed upon by their entreaties to consent, that his body should be brought to Lindisfarne and laid in the church there. When this was done, the venerable bishop Wilfrid held the episcopate of the church for one year, till a bishop was chosen to be consecrated in Cuthberht's place. After this Eadberht was consecrated bishop. This man was esteemed and famous for his knowledge of Holy Scripture as well as for his observance of God's ordinances, and above all for works of almsgiving, so that every year, according to the law of Moses, he gave for God's sake the tithe of fourfooted beasts, as well as of all crops fruits and textile fabrics, as alms to the poor.

XXXI. Then the divine goodness desired to show more openly, in how great glory the man of God, Cuthberht, lived after death; whose life before death was revealed and displayed by sublime tokens of heavenly miracles. About eleven years after his burial, God put it into the hearts of the brethren to take up his bones and place them above ground. Expecting that the rest of his body, as is usual with the dead, had been destroyed and turned to dust, they thought that they would put his bones in a new coffin, and lay them carefully in the same place above

ground with due honour, and there keep them. Then they repeated and made known to their bishop, Eadberht, that this was their intention and desire, if it was his will; and he assented to their plan, directing them to do so on the day of his death, which was kept in his memory. And so they did: they opened his tomb and found all his body whole and sound, as if still alive, and the joints of his limbs were flexible, so that he was much more like one asleep than dead. Also all the robes, in which he was attired, were not only undecayed, but miraculously appeared as white and new, as if he had been wrapped in them that very day. When the brethren saw this, they were frightened and hastened to announce and report to the bishop what they had found there. He was then living in solitude in a place apart from the church, surrounded on every side by the waves of the sea. At this place it was ever his wont, at the time of the forty days' fast before Easter, and again for the forty days before Christ's nativity, to live in great abstinence, fervent prayer and outpouring of tears. In this place also his venerable predecessor, Cuthberht, before going to the island of Farne, had for some time in retirement contended for the Lord. They brought there also to the bishop some portion of the garments, in which the holy body had been attired. And he gratefully received the gift, and joyously listened to the wonders, and with marvellous love kissed the robes, as if they still were round the body of the holy father; and thus spoke: 'Clothe the body with new garments, instead of those which you took from it, and so lay it in the coffin, which you have prepared for it. For I well know the place will not long remain empty, which with so great gift of heavenly grace has thus been hallowed. And most blessed is he, he to whom the Lord, who is author and giver of all blessedness, allows to rest in that place.' Now when the bishop had concluded these words and many to this effect, with many tears and great fervour of heart, and also with trembling tongue, then the brethren did as he bade, and wrapping the body in a new robe, set it in the new coffin made on purpose and laid it above on the floor of the church. Then without delay bishop Eadberht, beloved of God, was seized with an attack of severe illness; and it daily increased and grew worse, so that, after a short time, he also departed to the Lord,

that is on the sixth day of May. The brethren laid his body in the tomb of the blessed father Cuthberht, and placed above it the coffin, in which they had deposited the undecaying limbs of this father. At that place also have often taken place heavenly marvels and miracles of healing of the sick in token of the merits of both. Some of these we formerly recorded in the book of Cuthberht's life; but we shall add one in this history of ours, which we chanced to hear lately.

XXXII. There was at this monastery a brother named Beadothegn, who had been for a long time attendant on the guests who visited the monastery. And the historian said that the man was still alive, when he composed the account. He had witness and testimony from all the brethren and all who came to visit the monastery, that he was a man of great piety and devoted with much humility to the service committed to him, for the sake of the heavenly reward. Then the brother went one day to wash and cleanse in the sea his rugs and blankets, which he used in the strangers' quarters. When he turned home again, suddenly half way he was seized with an attack of severe illness, so that he collapsed and sank on the ground, and lay for a long time on his face, and at last hardly got up. As he was getting up, he felt his body from the head to the foot half smitten with the infirmity, which the Greeks call paralysis, and we call palsy;; and with the greatest difficulty he got home, supporting himself on his stick. The infirmity gradually increased, and at once, on that very night, became, more severe, so that, when day came, he could only with difficulty get up or walk by himself. When he was affected and distressed with this infirmity, he conceived in his mind a useful thought, that he would, in whatever way he could, go to church and to the tomb of the venerable father Cuthberht, and there bow the knee and humbly pray the heavenly goodness, till he was cured of the illness, if that were more for his good, or if he should be longer chastised by divine providence with this illness, that he might patiently bear and endure the pain in a calm spirit. Then he did, as he purposed in his mind, and supporting his feeble limbs on a stick, proceeded to the church; and stretching himself out in prayer at the body of the man of God, with

pious intent, prayed the Lord through his help to be gracious and merciful to him. And there during his prayers and supplications he fell asleep for a little. Then he felt, as he himself said afterwards, as though a great broad hand had touched his head, at the part where the pain and illness were, and with the same touch passed over all that part of his body, where he was affected with the attack, while the pain gradually disappeared and healing followed. When this had taken place, immediately on awaking he arose hale and sound. Then once more he thanked the Lord for his cure and the saint for the favour of his support; and he made it also known to the brethren and said what had been done to him; and at this all rejoiced and were glad. And he, all the more purified by this affliction, returned again to his duties, which he had previously observed and attended to well and carefully. Also the wrappings and robes, which clothed the body of Cuthberht thus consecrated to God, either before his life's end or afterwards when deceased, then also did not fail in the gift of healing, as anyone who reads and studies will find in the book concerning his life and virtues.

XXXIII. We must not also pass over in silence a cure, which took place just three years ago by means of his relics, and lately made known to me by the same brother, in whose case it was performed. This took place at the monastery built by the river Dacre and named from the stream, which Swithberht, a man of piety, presided over with the powers of an abbot. There was at that monastery a young man suffering from a fearful and unsightly tumour, which was destroying and disfiguring his eyelid. And it daily increased and threatened the loss of the eye. His doctors tried and were anxious to soothe the tumour with salves and fomentations; but they could not. Some advised that it should be cut away; some opposed this for fear of greater danger. And when the aforesaid brother had suffered for a long time from the inconvenience of this, and man's hand failed to cure the danger that threatened the eye, and it ever daily grew worse and worse, it then happened to him suddenly, by the grace of the divine goodness, that he was healed through the relics of the holy father Cuthberht. For when the brethren

many years after his burial found his body uncorrupted and undecayed, they took a portion of his hair for themselves as relics, to give to friends who asked for it or to exhibit in token of the miracle. A priest of the monastery, Thrydred by name, subsequently its abbot, had at that time with him a portion of these relics. When he went one day into the church and opened the box of the relics to give a portion to a friend who asked for it, it happened that the same young man, who was suffering from his eye, was then present in this church. Now when the priest had given his friend the portion he desired, he gave the rest to the young man, directing him to put it away and restore it to its proper place. On receiving the hair from the sacred head, he was warned by a salutary inspiration to apply it to the affected eyelid; and for some time he pressed and soothed the angry tumour with it. Having done so he put the relics into their box as directed, and had faith that his eye would soon be cured because of the hair of the man of God, with which he had been touched. Nor did his faith disappoint him. It was the second hour of the day, as he himself said, when he did this; and for that day he continued to do, what he had previously intended. And when noon on the same day had come, then suddenly he touched his eye; and then he found it with the lid as whole and sound, as if no swelling or disfigurement had appeared there.

BOOK V.

I. The successor of Cuthberht, the man of God, in carrying on the hermit's life, which he pursued in the island of Farne before the time of his episcopate, was the venerable Æthelwald, who many years before, at the monastery which is called Ripon, sanctified the office of the priesthood, which he had received, by deeds worthy of the position. The merit of this good man and the nature of his life will appear more evidently, if I relate one of his miracles reported to me by one of the brethren, for whom and on whom it was performed. And this was Cuthfrith, the venerable servant and priest of Christ, who also later ruled with the powers of an abbot over the brethren of the church at Lindisfarne, where he was brought up. He said:- 'I came with two other brethren to the island of Farne, desiring to speak to the venerable father Æthelwald. Now when I was well refreshed with his conversation, and had begged his blessing, and we were returning home, as we were in the middle of the sea, then suddenly there was an interruption of the calm weather, in which we had put out; and such a violent tempest fell upon us, and such a boisterous storm came on, that we could not make any way sailing or rowing, and we expected nothing else for ourselves but actual death. Now when we had for a very long time striven and struggled in vain against wind and sea, then at last we looked back, to see whether there was any hope of even regaining the island in any way, from which we had previously put out. Wherever we turned, we found ourselves closed in and cut off by the same storm, and no hope of safety left in our own hands. When after along time we raised up our eyes and looked to a distance, we saw on the island of Farne Æthelwald, the

father beloved of God, issuing from his retirement to watch our passage and see what happened to us; for he heard the dashing of the storm and of the seething sea. Now as he watched us also and saw that we were in a position of distress and desperation, he bowed his knees to the Father of our Lord and Saviour Christ, and prayed for our safety and our life. And when he had ended the prayer, he then at the same time calmed the swollen sea and stilled the storm, so that altogether the fury of the storm ceased and favouring breezes carried us to the land over the calmest of seas. Now when we had landed and had also drawn up our boat out of reach of the waves, immediately this storm returned again, which had been still a short while for our sake, and was so great and violent all that day, that men could clearly see, that the short interval of calm, which then came, had been divinely vouchsafed for our safety and in answer to the prayers of the man of God.' This man of God dwelt twelve years on the island of Farne and there died; but he is buried in Lindisfarne, beside the bodies of the aforementioned bishops in the church of the apostle St. Peter. These things took place in the time of king Aldfrith, who succeeded his brother Ecgrith, and ruled over the people of Northumbria as king for nineteen years.

II. In the beginning of this king's reign bishop Eata died, and the holy John succeeded to the bishopric of the church at Hexham. About this bishop many marvels of spiritual power are related by those, who knew him familiarly, especially by the venerable Berhthun, a truthful man, who was his deacon and afterwards abbot of the monastery, which is called Beverley. It seemed to us proper to record some of these marvels in this book. There are some retired habitations surrounded with a rampart and forest, not far from the church of Hexham, that is, about a mile and a half; the river Tyne flows between. These buildings comprise an oratory and a church of St. Michael the archangel, at which the man of God often stayed with a few brethren as his companions in retirement, to pursue his studies and holy prayer, especially at the season of the forty days' fast before Easter. On coming to stay there once at the beginning of the Easter fast, he bade his companions to look out for a poor man in a

needy condition, suffering at once from great infirmity and poverty, whom they might keep with them during those days and make the object of their almsgiving. For it was his wont ever to do so. There was in a hamlet at no great distance a young man in needy circumstances, dumb and leprous, who was well known to the bishop, as he had often previously come before him and received alms. He never could speak a single word: and had so much sore and scurf on his head, that no hair could ever grow on the top of his head, but round about it there stood rough locks. Then the bishop directed this man to be brought to him, and ordered a small hut to be erected for him within the enclosure, where he might dwell and receive his daily maintenance. When a week of the fast was done, on the second Lord's day he directed the poor man to come in. As soon as he was within, he told him to put his tongue out of his mouth and show it to him: he then took him by the chin and made over it the sign of the holy cross. When he had thus made the sign of the cross over it, he told him to draw it back into his mouth and to speak; and the bishop said, 'Speak some word; say now Yea.' Then immediately, on the spot, the band of his tongue was loosed, and he spoke what he was told. The bishop further ordered him to say the names of the letters. 'Say now A.' He said A. 'Say now B.' And he said it. When he had gone through the various names of the letters after the bishop, the bishop ordered syllables and words to be pronounced to him, and in all he returned suitable answers. Then the bishop ordered longer sentences to be pronounced to him. And he always repeated them properly: and besides that, he never ceased all that day and the following night, as long as he could keep awake-as those reported who were present there-ever uttering something and disclosing to others the secrets of his will and of his thoughts, which he never before could do; just like the man, who had long been halt and was so born from his mother's womb, that his parents must carry him and he could not walk. When the apostles Peter and John healed him, the book says that he stood up and began to leap, and went with the apostles into the temple, and ever was walking and leaping and praising God. He took a pleasure, and it is no wonder, in the use of his feet, of which he had been so long deprived. Then the bishop, who

shared in the joy at his recovery, directed his doctor also to attend to and cure the leprosy of his head. And he did so; and was aided by the bishop's blessing and prayers, so that the youth became sound in body, of fair appearance and fluent in speech, and had fine curly locks, though he had been previously unsightly, needy, leprous and dumb. And he exulted in the recovery of his health; and the bishop also offered him the choice of remaining in his household, if he liked, but he preferred to return home.

III. The same Berhthun related another marvel concerning the aforesaid bishop. When the venerable bishop Wilfrid after long exile was again admitted to his bishopric in the church at Hexham, and the same John, after the death of bishop Bosa, a man of great sanctity and humility, was put in his place at York, he came once to a convent called Watton, over which the abbess Hereburh then held authority. 'On coming there,' said Berhthun, 'and being received with much joy by all, the abbess told us that a virgin among the number of nuns, her own daughter according to the flesh, was suffering from severe illness. She said she had lately been bled in the arm, and at the operation had been seized with an attack; and this soon grew and became more severe, so that the arm was turned into a great tumour and so swollen, that one could not span it with two hands; and that she was lying in bed and her life was despaired of. The abbess therefore begged the bishop, that he would condescend to visit her and give his blessing: she said, that she believed she would soon be well after his blessing. Then the bishop asked when she was first bled. When he heard that it was done on the fourth night of the moon, he said, "You acted very unwisely and unskilfully in letting blood on the fourth night of the moon. For I remember that bishop Theodore of blessed memory said, that blood-letting at such a time was very dangerous, when the moon's light and the tide of the sea are on the increase. But what can I now do for the maiden, if she is on the point of death?" But still she earnestly entreated and besought him for her daughter, for she loved her very much, and intended to appoint her as abbess in her place. Then at last the bishop consented to visit the sick person. On going in to

the maiden, who lay there, he took me with him. She was convulsed with great pain, as I said before, and the arm was so very large and swollen, that there was no power of bending in the elbow. Then the bishop stood by her, and repeated a prayer over her, gave his blessing, made the sign of the cross, and went out. Now when we in due time sat at table at our meal, one of the household came, called me and told me to come out and said: "Cwœnburh begs you"-that was the maiden's name-"to go back quickly to her." On doing so and going in, I found her with cheerful face hale and sound. And when I sat down beside her, she said: "Would you like us to ask for something to drink?" I said: "I would like, and I am glad if you can." Then they brought us out a cup, and we both drank. Then she began to talk to me, and said: "Immediately after the bishop repeated a prayer over me, blessed me, and made the sign of the cross and went out, there was at once a change, and I was well. And though I as yet have not my former strength, yet all the pain and ache was taken away completely from my arm, where it was hotter and more burning, and from the whole of my body, just as if the bishop carried out with him the ache and the pain. And though the swelling of the arm is still apparent, yet the pain is completely gone." At the time of our departure the swelling had rapidly subsided, and the maiden was whole and sound and saved from death. And she gave praise and glory for this to the Lord our Saviour along with the other servants of God who were there.'

IV. The same abbot told me another marvel about the aforesaid bishop. His story was this: 'The residence of a certain gesith, named Pub, was not far from our monastery, about the distance of two miles. His wife had suffered for about forty days from a violent illness, so that for three full weeks she could not leave the house in which she lay. It happened at that time, that the man of God was invited there by this gesith to consecrate a church. After the church was consecrated, and he had sung mass, the gesith begged him to go into his house and take refreshment there. The bishop refused, saying that his monastery was near, and that he ought to go there. Then the gesith became urgent in his entreaties, promising that he would give alms to the poor and discharge due fasts,

provided he would condescend to enter his house and take refreshment. I also joined in his request, and also promised to give alms to the needy, provided he consented and went into the house of the gesith, blessed it, and partook of a meal there. When we carried our point, after a long time and with difficulty, that he would agree to this, we went in to the meal. Then the bishop sent to the woman, who lay there ill, a portion of the holy water, which he had consecrated for the church, by the hands of one of the brethren, who had come there with me, directing him to give her the water to taste, and that she should be washed with the water, wherever there was most need and pain and ache. On this being done, the woman at once rose whole and sound: and she was not only freed from her long illness, but at the same time also fully recovered her lost strength: and she went in and brought drink to the bishop and served us all, and poured it out for us, till the meal was finished. She imitated the mother-in-law of the apostle St. Peter, when she was afflicted with the heat and burning of fever, who at the same time received healing and strength at the touch of the Lord's hand, and arose and ministered to the Saviour.'

V. Again on another occasion the bishop was invited to consecrate the church of a gesith, who was called Addi. When he had completed the required ministrations, the gesith begged him to go in to one of his attendants, who was oppressed and suffering from a very violent disorder, so that he was lame and deprived and cut off from all use of his limbs, and, as men thought, was at the point of death. A coffin also had been made and got ready for him, in which when dead he should be buried. The gesith also, along with his request, shed tears and wept and besought him to visit the sick man and pray for him, saying he was dear and his life necessary to him: he declared that he believed, if the bishop put his hand on him and would bless him, he would soon recover. Then the bishop went in there to him, and saw him near death, and the men all in sorrow who were present, and the coffin set by him, in which he should be placed for his burial. Then he recited prayers over him and blessed him and signed him with the cross. And when about to go out,

he spoke the usual words in which people offer comfort: 'May you soon get well and strong.' After this, as they sat at table at their meal, the sick man sent to his lord, begging that he would send him wine to drink, and said that he was thirsty. Then he was very glad that he could drink, and sent him a glassful of wine, which the bishop had blessed. As soon as he had drunk it, he got up at once and was cured of the old infirmity, dressed himself in his clothes and came out. And going in to the bishop, he saluted him and those that sat with him, and said that he desired to eat and drink with them. Then they bade him sit down with them to their meal and rejoiced much at his recovery and health. He took his seat, partook of the meal, drank and was merry with them; and he lived many years after this, continuing in the same health, which he then retained. The aforesaid abbot said that this miracle did not take place as described in his presence, but was reported to him by persons there present.

VI. We cannot pass over in silence the marvel, which Herebald, servant of Christ, stated to have been also performed by him on himself. He was then living among the bishop's clergy and afterwards was abbot in the monastery at the mouth of the river Tyne. His story is this: 'The bishop's life, as far as it is right for men to judge, I have found in all points worthy of a bishop, and I speak from full personal knowledge: but also in what esteem he was held by Him that knows men's hearts, I learnt in the case of many others and especially in my own. For he recalled me, so to speak, from the threshold of death and by his prayer and blessing led me to the way of life. In the earliest times of my youth I lived among his clergy and was given over to him, that I might study books and music; but as yet I did not fully restrain my mind from youthful licences. It happened one day, when we were travelling with him, that we came to a smooth, spacious plain; and it formed a suitable race-course. Then the young men who were with the bishop, being chiefly laymen, began to ask the bishop's permission to run races, and try which of their horses was best. At first the bishop refused, and said their prayer and desire was idle and useless. But at last he was prevailed upon by the unanimous desire of so many. He said: " Do so if you will: yet in any case let

Herebald hold aloof from the contest." Then I begged and entreated earnestly, that leave should be given to me also to race and contend with them; for I had much confidence in my horse, a very excellent one given me by the bishop. But though I begged earnestly, I could not in any way obtain leave. Now as I turned often this way and that and the bishop always kept his eye upon me, then they raced awhile and turned back. And I was overpowered by wantonness of spirit, so that I could not restrain myself, in spite of the bishop's prohibition, but mingled in the sport and began to race along with them. While doing this, I heard the bishop behind me say with a sigh "Ah, what trouble and vexation you cause me with your racing." And I heard the words and yet did not any the sooner stop racing. Then without delay, while my horse ran swiftest and grows excited, in a violent rush it sprang and leaped over a slough on the road. Then I slipped and fell from it, and at once I lay as dead, and lost my senses and all power of movement. There was at that place a stone, uniform with the ground, with a coating of thin turf, and no other stone could be found in the whole plain. Then it happened through divine providence, in punishment of my sin of disobedience, that, when I was falling, I came driving with my head and hand on the stone. And the thumb was broken, and the sutures of my skull were also fractured and opened; and, as I said, I was like a dead man and could not stir a limb. Then they spread a tent over me, in which I lay. It was about the seventh hour of the day, that is one hour past midday: from that hour till evening I lay still and remained as though dead. And when it was evening, I revived a little, and my companions carried me home; and I remained speechless all the night and spat blood, for my internal parts were wrenched in the fall. And the bishop was grievously afflicted at my fall and my injuries; for he regarded me with especial affection; and he would not that night remain with his clergy as his wont was: but he continued alone in prayer, and remained awake the whole night. I imagine that he was praying the heavenly goodness for my recovery. And at once at early morning he came in to me; and he recited a prayer over me and called me by my name. Then at once, as it were, I awoke from heavy sleep. Then he asked me, whether I knew who it was who

was speaking to me. Then I opened my eyes, looked at him and said: "I know well that you are my dearest bishop." He said to me: "What do you think? Can you survive it?" I said: "I can through your prayers, if the Lord will." Then he put his hand on my head, signed me with the cross, blessed me and returned to his prayers; and after a short time he visited me again and made enquiries. Then he found me sitting up, and I could talk. Then he began to question and ask me, whether I knew if I was duly baptized without any defect. He was admonished by divine inspiration, as was soon after evidenced. I answered him and said, that I knew beyond a doubt that I had been washed in the laver of baptism for the remission of sins; and I told him the name of the priest, by whom I knew I had been baptized. Then said the bishop: "If you were baptized by this priest, then you are not perfectly or duly baptized. For I knew him when he was consecrated priest, and he from his stupidity and dullness never could rightly learn the office of catechizing or baptizing. Therefore I forbade him to minister, as he could not perform the service rightly." Having said this, at once at that very hour he catechized me. When this was done, after he had breathed on my face, at once I felt myself growing better and recovering. Then he summoned a doctor to him, and directed him to set the opened sutures from the wound in my head and to bind them up. And as soon as I had received his blessing, I recovered health and strength, so that next morning I sprang upon my horse and travelled elsewhere with him to another hamlet. And after a short time, on my full recovery, I was also duly bathed with the water of life, that is, the laver of baptism, and was baptized.' This man of God remained a bishop for thirty-three years, and then ascended to the kingdom of heaven, and was buried in the chapel of St. Peter at his monastery called Beverley. For when owing to advanced age he could no longer administer the episcopate, his priest, Wilfrid, was ordained to the episcopate at York; and John retired to the aforesaid monastery, and there living worthily ended his days in the Lord.

VII. Then in the third year of king Aldfrith's reign Ceadwalla, king of Wessex, after reigning over his people vigorously for two years, resigned

his earthly kingdom for the Lord's sake and for the eternal kingdom in heaven, and went to Rome, desiring to obtain for himself especially this glory, that he might be washed in the baptismal font in the home of the apostles, whereby alone he had learnt that entrance into the kingdom of heaven is opened to mankind. He also hoped, that immediately on baptism he should be released from the body, and pass pure to the eternal joys of the glory of the kingdom of heaven. And both objects, as he proposed in his mind, were by God's help fulfilled. For he arrived there and was baptized by pope Sergius, on the holy day of the Easter sabbath; and while still wearing the chrisom robe he was immediately attacked with illness, and on the 20th of April was released from the body and died, and was associated with the kingdom of the blessed in heaven. Also at the time of baptism the aforesaid pope gave him the name of Peter, that he might also be associated, by sharing his name, with the most blessed prince of the apostles, to whose most holy body he had come from afar with pious love even from the ends of the earth. And he was buried in his church: and the pope directed an inscription to be written on his tomb, that in it both the record of his devotion might abide permanently for all time, and also that men, on reading or hearing the inscription, might be inflamed by the example of his conduct to the pursuit of piety. When Ceadwalla departed to Rome, Ina succeeded him on the throne of Wessex, being also of the royal family. And when he had reigned over the people for thirty-seven years, he also resigned the throne, and giving it over to younger men, proceeded to the home of the blessed apostles. The pope at that time was called Gregory. He desired for a time to be a pilgrim upon earth, in the neighbourhood of the saints' abode that he might more certainly merit to be received by the saints in heaven. At that time many English out of emulation acted thus, gentle and simple, lay and tonsured, men and women.

VIII. Then next year, after the death of Ceadwalla at Rome, archbishop Theodore of blessed memory died, old and full of days, that is, when he was eighty-eight years of age. He had often foretold to his people that, as he had learnt by revelation in a dream, he should attain to just this

number of years. He had occupied the episcopate for twenty-two years, and was buried in the church of St. Peter, in which the bodies of all bishops of Canterbury are deposited. About him, as well as about all those who held the same position, it may rightly and truly be said, that their bodies are buried in peace, and their names live for ever in eternity. And to speak briefly, at the time of his episcopate, such progress began in the Church of England, as never before had been possible. Berhtwold succeeded Theodore in the episcopate, who was abbot in the monastery called Reculver. The man was well instructed in the knowledge of the Scriptures, and at the same time also excellently trained in ecclesiastical and monastic discipline, but still not to be compared with his predecessor. He was chosen bishop on the first day of July, when Wihtred and Swefheard were kings in Kent. He was consecrated in the following year on the 29th of June, being the Lord's day, by Godwin the metropolitan of Gaul. And he was enthroned in Kent on the last day of August, which was the Lord's day. He consecrated among many other bishops Tobias, in place of Gefmund who died as bishop of the church at Rochester, Tobias had received a varied training in Latin, Greek and English, and was a good scholar.

IX. At this time Christ's venerable servant and priest, the holy Ecgberht, of whom we have already said, that he lived as an exile in the land of Ireland to make atonement for the sake of the eternal home in heaven, now proposed and thought in his mind to benefit many, being desirous to imitate the work of the apostles, by teaching and preaching God's word and gospel to some of the nations who had not yet heard it. He knew that there were many of those tribes in Germany, from which had come the Angles and Saxons, who now inhabit Britain. These were the Frisians, the Rugini, the Danes, the Huns, the Old Saxons, the Bructeri. There were also many other nations in those parts, still addicted to heathen worship, to whom the aforesaid champion of Christ desired to come by sailing round Britain, in hopes that he there might rescue some from the devil, and bring them over to Christ; or if this might not be, he intended to visit Rome by this way and see the holy places of the blessed

apostles and martyrs of Christ, and pray there. But he was prevented from achieving or carrying out either object by revelations and practical obstacles interposed by heaven. When he had chosen companions, who both in conduct and learning were energetic and sagacious to teach and preach God's word, and when all things had been prepared which seemed necessary for voyagers, there came to him one day early in the morning one of the brethren, who formerly in Britain had been a pupil and attendant of Boisel, the priest well beloved of God, when prior of the monastery at Melrose under abbot Eata, as already mentioned. He related to him his vision, which had appeared to him that night, in these words: 'When we had finished matins and prayers and I had stretched my limbs on the bed and a light sleep had come over me, then my former master and fosterfather, my dearest Boisel, appeared to me and asked me, whether I could recognise him. " Yes," said I, " you are my Boisel." Then he said: "I have come here to deliver the errand of our Lord and Saviour to Ecgberht, which you however must report and make known to him. Tell him of a truth, that he may not carry out the journey which he proposed; for God's will is, that he should proceed to the monastery of St. Columb and teach there.'" Columb was the first teacher of the faith of Christ in the moorlands, which are in the north of the Pictish dominions. And he first built and established the monastery at Iona, which long remained an object of veneration to many tribes of the Picts and Scots. This was the same Columb, whom the Scots afterwards called Columcille. When Ecgberht heard the words of the vision, he charged the brother to tell the vision to no man, saying that it might easily have appeared to him through illusion. Yet, when he considered the matter in silence, he feared it was true; still he did not any the more relax his preparations for the journey, on which he proposed proceeding to instruct the nations. But after a few days the aforesaid brother came to him once more, and reported to him, that Boisel had appeared that same night to him, when matins were over and had said: 'Why did you report so carelessly and in such a lukewarm spirit, what I directed you to tell Ecgberht? But go now and say to him; whether he will or no, he is to go to the monastery of Columb, for their ploughs go not straight; and he

shall direct them into the right course.' On hearing these words, he again charged the brother not to disclose or make it known further to anyone. And though assured by the appearance of the vision, nevertheless he prepared for his journey with the aforesaid brethren. When they had loaded the ship with the things, which the needs of so long a journey required, and had waited many days for wind and weather, there arose one night a storm so furious and violent, that many things on board ship were lost, and the ship was cast away and lay on her side in the waves. Then the man of God perceived that he might not proceed, and said: 'I know that this storm is come and was sent on my account.' And he withdrew from the expedition and returned home dispirited. However one of his companions-he was named Wihtberht, who had renounced the world, and was celebrated for his knowledge of the word of God, and had lived as an exile and hermit for many years in Ireland a life of great perfection-embarked and arrived in Friesland; and for two years uninterruptedly preached and taught the word of God and of salvation to the people and their king Røedbedd. Yet he could not gain any fruit for such long toil among the barbarians. Then he returned back to the well-loved place of his exile and lived to the Lord in his wonted retirement. And as he might not be of use to those without in the faith, he made it his care to be all the more of use to his companions by the benefit and example of his virtues.

X. Now when the man of God, Ecgberht, saw that he was not permitted to preach to the nations the word of God, but was kept for other services to the holy church, about which he was forewarned by divine revelation, and that Wihtberht had accomplished nothing, though he visited those countries, he still undertook to send forth, for the work of the Word, twelve holy and earnest men, whose chief was Wilbrord, a priest of high merit. When they landed in the country, they turned first to Pippin king of the Franks, and were gratefully welcomed by him. And as he had lately overrun the further Frisian districts and driven thence their king Røedbedd, he sent them there to preach and teach the word of God. He also supported them with his royal authority, that they might not receive

any annoyance or injury, and conferred many favours on those, who were willing to receive the faith of Christ. And so by God's grace and help it came to pass, that they soon converted many from idols to the faith of Christ.

XI. Their example was followed by two priests of English descent, who had long lived in exile in Ireland for love of the kingdom of heaven. They came to the country of the Old Saxons, in hopes that they might win some there to Christ by their teaching. They were both called by one and the same name, as they were one also in devotion. Both were called Heawald. There was however this distinction, that owing to the different colour of their hair, the one was called the black Heawald, the other the white. Both of them had been piously educated; however the black Heawald had received more training in knowledge of Scripture. When they came to the Old Saxons, they sought hospitality from a certain bailiff, and begged him to forward them on to the chief, who was his superior; they said they had an important errand and important business to convey to him. For these Old Saxons had no proper king; but many chiefs were set over the people. And whenever it was time of strife and war, they then came with lots to the chiefs, and whichever of them was marked out by the lot, they then chose as general and leader, following and obeying him. And when the war and strife were at an end, all again were equal in power, and were chiefs. Then the bailiff entertained them and promised to send them to his chief, as they requested; and he kept them there some days with him. When the barbarians perceived that they were of another religion, for they always sung their psalms and served God in holy prayer, daily offering sacrifice to God and celebrating mass-they had with them consecrated vessels and a consecrated table in place of an altar-then the heathen took counsel with one another and said: if they came to the chief and conversed with him, they would turn him away from their gods, and convert him to the new religion of Christ's faith; so gradually all their country would be obliged to forsake their old worship and adopt the new. Then suddenly they seized the men of God and killed them; slaying at once with the sword the white

Heawald, but slowly putting to death and torturing in every limb the black Heawald. Now when they were slain, they threw their bodies out into the river Rhine. Now when the chief heard how they had dealt with the men who wished to see and visit him, he was very angry; he sent troops there and told them to put all of that town to death and burn the town. The aforesaid servants of Christ and priests suffered on the 11th of October. Nor were heavenly marvels wanting at their martyrdom. For when they were slain and their bodies, as we said before, had been cast by the heathen into the river, it happened that the bodies were carried against the current of the downward stream, through quite forty miles, to the place in which their acquaintances and companions were. Also a very great beam of heavenly light shone every night above the place, where their bodies happened to come; and this also the heathen saw and beheld, who had slain them. But then one of the martyrs appeared in a vision by night to one of their companions, named Tilmon. He was a man of note, of noble birth also in the world, at first an active follower of the king and afterwards a monk. The vision told him, he might find their bodies at the place, where he saw the light shine from heaven to earth. And this also was fulfilled. Then at once their bodies were found and buried with the honour due to martyrs; and the day of their passion and the day of the finding of their bodies are celebrated in those places with suitable honour. When Pippin, king of the Franks, heard and learnt of this, he sent a host and directed their bodies to be brought to him, and to be buried with great glory and distinction in the church of Cologne, the town on the Rhine. It is also said that at the place, where they were slain, a spring rose up, which up to this day flows and discharges abundance of water, at that same place, for the service and benefit of man.

XII. At once in the very first days, after the teachers came to Friesland, and Wilbrord obtained the king's leave to teach there, he desired forthwith to visit Rome, where pope Sergius was at that time bishop of the apostolic see, desiring with his permission and blessing to begin and carry out the devout work of teaching the gospel to the nations. At the same time he wished to receive from him relics of the blessed apostles

and martyrs of Christ, that when he overthrew idolatry and built and reared churches among the people whom he was teaching, he might have relics of the saints ready to place in them, and that he might consecrate suitable places to the honour of the saints, a separate place for each saint, whose relics were contained there. There were many other matters also, which he sought and desired either to learn there or to receive thence. And when he succeeded in all points according to his wish, he returned again to the teaching of the Word. At that time the brethren, who were with him in Friesland engaged in the ministry of God's word, chose out of their number a man, modest in character, and of gentle disposition, named Swithberht, that he might be consecrated as their bishop. They sent him then to Britain, and he was consecrated at their request by the venerable bishop Wilfrid, who was at that time an exile from his native country and serving in the land of Mercia, for at that time there was no bishop in Kent. Bishop Theodore had died, and his successor Berhtwald, having been sent over the sea for ordination, had not yet come to his episcopal seat. When Swithberht had received the episcopate, he returned again from Britain, and after a short time departed to the people of the Bructeri, and by his teaching converted many of them to the way of truth. But then after a short time this people was conquered by the Old Saxons; and the believers, who had received the word of God, were dispersed far and wide. And the bishop, with some of his companions, visited Pippin, king of the Franks; and through the interposition of the queen Blithryth, the king gave them a dwelling on an island by the Rhine, which in their language is called and named In Litore (Kaiserwerth), on which he built a monastery, which his heirs still possess. And he lived there for some time an ascetic life and there ended his days. After his companions had taught the word of God for some years in Friesland, Pippin, with the consent of all, sent the venerable Wilbrord to pope Sergius at Rome, begging that he might be consecrated archbishop for the Frisian people. And the pope did as the king asked. Wilbrord was ordained in the church of the holy virgin and martyr St. Cecilia, on the day of her commemoration; and the pope surnamed him Clement. Immediately after his ordination, that is, at the end of fourteen

days after he came to the city of Rome, the pope sent him back to his see. Pippin gave and assigned to him a bishop's seat in the famous town which is called Wiltaburg, an old appellation among this people; the Gauls call it Traiectum; we call it Utrecht. Close by, the venerable bishop built a church and preached and taught the word of God, concerning faith in Christ, far and wide; and recalled many from the heathen error of their life. And he built many monasteries and churches in that land, and after a time consecrated many others as bishops there, from among the number of the brethren, who came with him or after him to preach the word of God; many of whom departed in the Lord. But Wilbrord, named by the pope Clement, enjoyed a long and venerable old age. He lived thirty six years as bishop, and after manifold struggles in heavenly warfare obtained as possession the meed of reward above.

XIII. At this time a memorable miracle, like to the miracles of old, occurred in Britain. For, in order to rouse the living from the death of the soul, a man after being for some time dead rose again to the life of the body and recounted many memorable things, which he saw, some of which we will here briefly report, state and transcribe. There was a householder at the head of a household, in a district of Northumbria, which is called Cunningham (in Scotland), living piously with all his house. He was attacked by and suffered from a bodily distemper; and it grew worse daily, till he was brought to death's door and departed at the beginning of the night. But at dawn he revived again and suddenly sat up; and all who sat weeping by his body were stricken with infinite terror and fled out, save his wife only, who loved him best; she alone remained within, though much frightened and trembling. Then he comforted her and said: 'Be not afraid, for truly I have risen from death, and am permitted to live among men once more, yet not as I lived before, but from this time on I must live very differently.' And then at once he got up and went to the chapel in the village and remained in prayer till broad daylight. And soon after that he divided all his property into three shares; one he gave to his wife, a second to his children, the third, which fell to him, he distributed on the spot to the

poor: and after a short time renounced all worldly things and came to the monastery of Melrose, which is for the most part surrounded by a bend of the river Tweed. And he there entered into God's service and received the tonsure, and proceeded to a retired hermitage, provided for him by the abbot; and there, up to the day of his death, endured and continued in such contrition and continence of mind and body, that men could see, that he had witnessed much, both terrible and desirable, that is hidden from others, as his life declared, though his tongue were silent. He reported what he had seen on this wise, and said: 'Radiant in face and look, and in bright apparel, was he who guided me. We proceeded in silence, as I thought and it seemed, towards the north-east quarter of the heavens, where the sun rises at midsummer. And during the time we were going, we arrived at a valley of great breadth and depth, and of infinite length, lying on our left. One part was very dreadful, being full of boiling flames, the other was not less intolerable through the chill of hail and snow. Both were full of men's souls, which seemed to be cast to either side in turn, as though by the overpowering violence of a great storm. When they could not endure the force of the excessive heat, they sprang away in their misery into the midst of the excessive cold. And when they could find no rest there, they sprang back into the midst of the burning fire and the unquenchable flame. And while they were tortured with the innumerable crowd of dark spirits, without an interval of any rest in this wretched change, far and wide as could be seen, then I began to think and supposed it was hell, of which intolerable torments I had often heard stories. Then my guide, who was going before me, answered my thought; and thus spoke: "This is not hell, as you conclude and imagine." Now, when I was very much frightened and terrified by this dreadful spectacle, he led me gradually on to a district further on. Then suddenly I saw the parts before us begin to darken and all filled with a thick darkness. On our entering into this darkness it gradually became so great and so dense, that I could not see anything, only the appearance and robes of my guide were bright and shining. And as we advanced under the shadow of the dark night, there suddenly appeared before us many masses of black flames, rising up as out of a great pit,

and again falling back and retiring into the pit. As I was being led there, suddenly my guide disappeared, I knew not where, leaving me in the middle of the darkness and the fearful vision. And while these masses of fire incessantly, now shot up on high, now sank down again into the abyss of the pit, I looked and saw, that all the points of the ascending flames were full of men's spirits, which, like ashes ascending with smoke, were now cast up on high, now again, as the fiery vapour contracted, slipped back once more to the abyss at the bottom. Also an intolerable foulness steamed up with the fiery vapour, and filled all the place of darkness. When I had stood there for a long time in terror, and knew not what to do, where to go, or what end was coming to me, I suddenly heard behind me a loud sound of violent and piteous weeping, as well as also loud cackling laughter, as if of a rude mob mocking their captive foes. And when the sound came nearer me, I saw a crowd of accursed spirits dragging and bringing into the midst of the darkness five men's souls, lamenting and mourning, and they exulted and laughed very much at that. One of these persons was, as far as I could perceive, a tonsured priest, one was a layman, one was a woman. The accursed spirits dragged them on and sank down with them into the middle of the abyss of burning flame. When they had sunk far, and I could not clearly distinguish the cries of the men and the laughter of the devils, yet I still had in my ears the mingled sound. Meantime there rose up some of the dark spirits out of the abyss and place of torment, and encompassed me. They had fiery eyes and blew foul fire out of mouth and nostrils; and they held in their hands fiery tongs, and they beset me, and threatened to seize me with them and hurl me into destruction. And though they thus terrified and frightened me, still they durst not touch me. While I was encompassed on all sides by my foes, and enclosed from without by the blind darkness, then I lifted up my eyes and looked hither and thither, to see whether any help was coming, that I might be saved. Then there appeared to me along the road, on which I had before come, as it were a bright shining star amid the darkness. And this light grew greater and greater, and hastened quickly to me; and when it came near me, all the accursed spirits dispersed and fled away, which had previously

threatened me with their tongues. It was my guide who had conducted me. Then he at once turned to the right, and began to lead me south east, to the quarter where the sun rises in winter. Then we were soon carried out of the darkness, and he led me into fair serene light, After he had led me into the open light, I saw before us a very great wall, of whose length on either hand and height no end was visible. Then I began to wonder, why we were advancing to the wall, as I could not see in it any door, nor any ascent anywhere on either side. When we had come up to the wall, then at once, I know not how it was so ordered, we found ourselves above on the top of the wall. And then I saw there a plain most spacious and most fair, and it was all full of one sweetness of springing blossoms. And the wondrous sweetness of the strong scent at once drove away all the foulness of the foul and dark furnace, which had pervaded me. And a light and radiance so strong streamed throughout the whole place, that it seemed brighter than the brightness of the whole day or of the beams of the midday sun. In this plain were countless gatherings of men, white and fair, and many an assemblage of hosts rejoicing and exulting. As he led me there amid the bands of those blessed hosts, I began to consider, and I thought perhaps this was the kingdom of heaven, which I had often heard spoken of. Then he answered my thought and said: "This is not," said he, "the kingdom of heaven, as you conclude and suppose." As we were passing on, and had got beyond the mansions of the blessed spirits, I saw before us a much more gracious light and brightness than I had seen before, in which I also heard voices most sweet of those that sang God's praise. Also from that place there issued such sweetness of wondrous odour, that the sweetness, which I had before experienced and had thought so great, seemed but slight and moderate in comparison with the succeeding light and brightness. Also the light and brightness of the blossoming plain seemed but moderate in the delight of that place. When I supposed we should have gone in, then suddenly my guide halted and without delay retraced his steps: and led me back by the same road, on which we had come before. When on our way back we came to the joyous mansions of the white and fair spirits, he said to me: "Do you know what all these things are, which you have seen and beheld?" I

answered him: "No," said I, "I know them not." He said: " The place where the valley was, which you saw to be terrible through boiling flame and violent cold, is the place in which are to be tried and cleansed the souls of men, who delayed to confess and atone for the sin and wickedness, which they did: and yet at last, in the very hour of death, fled to repentance, and so passed away from the body. These however, because they confessed and repented at the moment of death, attain at doomsday to the kingdom of heaven; and many too are aided by the supplications and prayers of living men, by their alms and fasting, and above all by celebration of mass, so that they are rescued before doomsday. And know that the pit which foamed up with flame and was so foul, which you saw, was the mouth of hell's torment, and whatever man at any time falls into it, is never rescued from it throughout eternity. Then the place covered with blossoms, in which you saw that fairest host shining with youth and taking their delight, is the place in which are received the souls of the just, who depart from the body while doing good works, and yet are not so perfect as to be led at once into the kingdom of heaven. Yet all these at doomsday attain to the vision of Christ and the joy of the heavenly kingdom. For as many as are perfect, in every word, deed and thought, immediately on issuing from the body attain to the heavenly kingdom. To its neighbourhood belongs the place, where you heard the sound of the pleasant song accompanying the odour of sweetness, and saw the brightness of the great light. But you however, as you are now to return to the body and live again among men, if you will zealously maintain in righteousness and innocence your conduct, your character, and your words, then you will receive after death your place of habitation among the exultant hosts of the blessed spirits, which you but now saw and beheld last of all. And know also, that when I left you for a time, I did so to enquire and know what should be done about you." When he said to me, that I should return again to the body, I marvelled much and detested it, and the thought was hateful. For I found pleasure in the sweetness and beauty of the place, which I had seen there, and at the same time in the enjoyment of the society and bliss of those I saw in the place. And yet I did not dare to

make any request of my guide. And now amid all this, I know not how it was so ordered, I see myself now living among men.' These things and others too, which the man of God saw, he would not tell to all everywhere, if slothful and careless in their life; but only to those who either were afraid out of dread of torment, or rejoiced in hope of eternal joy and bliss, would he make known and relate these matters out of love of piety. There was a monk and priest living in the neighbourhood of his hut, whose name was Hamgels, and whose good deeds were on an equality with his sacred rank; he afterwards in Ireland, as a hermit, supported the last years of his life with a little bread and cold water. At that time he often visited the man, and by his earnest questions learnt from him what he had seen, when he was divested of the body. By his disclosures and statements also the few particulars we have set down here came to our knowledge. He also related his vision to king Aldfrith, who was excellently trained in holy prayers. And he was heard by him with such pleasure and earnestness, that at the king's request he was taken into the aforesaid monastery, and received tonsure as a monk. And whenever the king came into that part of the country, he repeatedly visited him to hear his words and his story. In this monastery at that time there was an abbot and priest of pious and modest life, named Æthelwald, who afterwards filled and held the bishop's seat of the church at Lindisfarne with a conduct worthy of his rank. In this monastery the man of God received a retired dwelling-place, that he might there freely obey and serve his Creator in continual prayer. And because this place lay on the bank of the river, it was his wont out of great love for bodily purification often to enter the stream, and there to continue in psalm-singing and in prayer, remaining unmoved, at times standing up to his waist, at times up to his neck; and he plunged his body and dived in the river, as long as it seemed he could endure. And when he came out on land, he never would lay aside his wet and cold garments, till they grew warm and dry from his own body. When in mid-winter, as the pieces of half-broken ice flowed about him, which he himself often broke up and crushed, that he might have a place in the river to stand, or to plunge himself in, men who saw it said to him: 'Well,

that is a marvel, brother Drythelm-this was the man's name-that you can at all endure such great severity of cold:' he replied simply, for he was a man of simple sense and modest nature, and said: 'I have seen colder.' And when they said: 'It is a wonder that you choose such severe and hard asceticism:' he answered them: 'I have seen what is harder and severer.' And so he, up to the day of his summons from earth, with unwearying desire for heavenly blessings, amid daily fasts, exhausted and tamed the old body; and he, by his words and by the example of his life, was the means of salvation to many.

XIV. As a contrast to this story, there was a man in the land of Mercia, whose vision and words, but not his conduct and life, profited many, but not himself. In the time of Cenred, king of Mercia, who succeeded Æthelred on the throne, there was a layman, who served under the king. And in proportion as he was acceptable to the king for his external zeal in worldly things, so he was, because of his inward carelessness in obeying God, unacceptable to himself. The king often admonished him to confess and reform and renounce his sin and wickedness, before he should suddenly by the advent of death lose all time for repentance and amendment. And though often admonished he disregarded the words of salvation, with which he warned him, promising at a later time, when older, to repent and confess his sins. Meantime he was suddenly attacked and seized with illness: and at once threw himself on his bed and began to suffer violent pain. Then the king visited him, for he loved him much, comforted him and warned him to repent and confess his sins before he died. He answered him and said that he would not yet confess his sins, but afterwards, when he was older and got up from his sick bed, lest his companions should rebuke him and make it a reproach, that he did out of fear of death, what he would not before when in health. He thought, and it seemed to him, that he spoke boldly and bravely; but he was miserably deceived by the wiles of the devil, as it was afterwards proved. When the illness increased much and grew severe, the king again went to him to visit and to warn him. Then at once he cried in a piteous voice: 'What would you have, or why did you come here? for after this day you

cannot give me any help or aid.' The king said: Do not speak so; see that you are in your senses.' He said: 'I am not mad; but I see for myself and have before my eyes the most dreadful consciousness.' The king asked him what that was. He said: 'A little before you came, there came in to me in this house two young men fair and bright, and sat down by me, one at my head, the other at my feet. Then one of them drew out a fair but very small book and gave it to me to read. And when I looked on the book, I found written there all the good that ever I did. But these acts were very few and slight. Then they took back the book from me and said nothing to me. Then came here suddenly a great host of accursed spirits, and were of very dreadful shape and appearance. And they encompassed this house without; and the greater part sat down within and filled it. One of them there was of dark appearance and more terrible than the rest, who was chief of those that sat; and it seemed and appeared to me, that he was their head. Then he drew forth a book of dreadful appearance and monstrous size, and almost intolerable burden; this he gave to one of his companions and bid him bring it to me to read. Then as I read the book, I found in it, written clearly in black and terrible letters, all the sins that I ever committed; and not only all my transgressions in deed and in word, but even in my slightest thought, were every one written there. Then said the head of the accursed spirits to the fair and bright men who sat by me: Why do you sit here? Surely you know well that this is our man? They answered: " You speak the truth; but take him and carry him away to fill up the measure of your damnation." With these words they at once vanished from my sight. Then rose up two of the dreadful spirits, having daggers in their hands; and they smote me, one in the head and the other in the feet. And the wounds now with great pain and torment are penetrating together into the inner parts of my body, and as soon as they unite I shall die; and the devils are waiting, ready for the time to seize me and carry me to hell prison.' When the wretched man had spoken thus in despair, he died soon after in his sins. And the repentance, which he had delayed to practise for a short time with fruits of forgiveness, he now carries out in eternity without fruit and subject to punishment. And whereas he said

that he saw books of unequal size brought to him by the good spirits or the evil, this was done by the divine dispensation of God Almighty, that we might remember that our deeds and thoughts do not flow away idly into the wind, but are all reserved for the judgment of the supreme judge, and are shown to us afterwards at the end, either by the friendly angels or by our enemies. Whereas he said that the angels brought forth first the fair and white book, and after that devils the black book, and the angels a very small and the others a monstrous one, by this we are to understand that he did some good in the first years of his life, which in middle age he obscured and blotted out completely by his unrighteous deeds. If he then on the contrary had been careful to correct the errors of his boyhood in youth and divert them from the sight of God by good deeds, then he might have been added to the number of those of whom the psalmist says: 'Beati quorum remissae sunt, et cetera,' Blessed are they whose transgressions are pardoned and whose sins are covered. I heard this story from the venerable bishop Pehthelm, and I have written it down and related it plainly for the saving of those, who should read or hear it.

XV. I myself know a brother whom I should be glad never to have known, whose name too I can mention, if it be any advantage. He was placed in a noble monastery, but yet he passed his life ignobly. He was often rebuked by the brethren and the chief men of the place, who admonished and warned him to change his life and purge away his sins. And though he refused to listen, still he was tolerated by all with patience, from need of his practical work, as he was specially well trained in the craft of a smith. He was very much devoted to drunkenness and many other licences of a loose life; and it was more his habit to sit or lie day and night in his smithy, than to join in song and prayer at church, and listen to the word of life and heavenly teaching among the other brethren. Then it befell him, as some are wont to say: 'He that will not voluntarily and humbly enter the church door, shall of necessity against his will be led as one of the damned in at hell's door.' Then was the man stricken and afflicted with severe illness; and it increased and grew

worse, till he was brought to the last day. Then he called and summoned the brethren in to him. And he very sorrowfully, and like to one of the damned, began to tell them that he saw hell open, and Satan, the old enemy of mankind, sunk in the depths of hell's torment. And he said that he saw also there Caiaphas, the chief of the priests, with the others who slew the Lord Christ, given over with him to the avenging flames. 'And in their neighbourhood,' said he, 'woe is me, unhappy man, I see a place of eternal perdition prepared for me.' When the brethren heard this they began earnestly to encourage and warn him to repent and confess his sins, while still remaining in the body. He answered in despair: 'There is not now,' said he, 'time for me to change my life, now that I myself see my doom to be pronounced. Having thus spoken he departed from the world without the viaticum; and his body was buried at the farthest end of the monastery. And no man durst sing psalms or mass for him, nor even pray for him. Lo, with what distinction God has divided the light from the darkness! The first martyr the blessed Stephen, when suffering death for the truth, saw the heavens open, saw God's glory and the Saviour standing on God's right hand. And where he himself was to come after death, there he directed his eyes before death, that he might suffer the more cheerfully. But on the contrary, this smith of dark spirit and dark deeds, when he came near death, saw hell's torment open, saw the damnation of the devil and his followers. He saw also the place of his own unhappiness and his prison among such, so that he should perish the more miserably, even in this life despairing of salvation; but by his perdition he left for the living, who heard of it, a motive for salvation. This lately took place in the province of Bernicia, and was celebrated far and wide; and he stirred up many to repent their sins without delay, the thing which I also desire from this time on likewise from the reading of our account.

XVI. Then after 705 years subsequent to our Lord's incarnation, Alhfrith, king of Northumbria, died after a reign of twenty years, one of which however was not complete. His son Osred succeeded to the throne, being an eight-year-old child, and he filled the throne for eleven years.

In the beginning of this king's reign Hoëdde, bishop of Wessex, died and departed to the heavenly life. He was a good and just man; and carried on the life and teaching of a bishop, aided by his love of spiritual virtues, more than by the training he had received from study. As to this bishop it was generally repeated by the venerable bishop Pehthelm, who, along with his successor Aldhelm, was for a long time still monk and deacon, that at the place, where the bishop died, many miracles were wrought, owing to the merits of his sanctity. And the men of the province commonly took the dust, as a cure for disease and disorders, and put it into water; and when the water was tasted or sprinkled, it brought health to many who were ill, both men and animals. And owing to the frequent removal of the holy dust a great pit was formed there. After his death the episcopate of the province was divided into two sees. One was given to Daniel, which he still directs, the other to Aldhelm, over which he presided with energy for four years. Both were abundantly instructed in ecclesiastical matters and in knowledge of the holy Scripture. The proof is that Aldhelm, while still priest and abbot of the monastery called Malmesbury, wrote, by order of a synod of his people, an excellent book against the error of the Britons, as they did not celebrate the correct Easter in its season, and did much besides opposed to the purity and peace of the church. And by the reading of these books he drew over and brought to the correct observance of the Dominical Easter many of the Britons who were subject to Wessex. He wrote also a noble and excellent book *De Virginitate*, and this, following the example of Sedulius, in a double form, composing it in metre and also drawing it up in prose. He composed also many other writings. He was in every way a man of perfect scholarship; he was clear and brilliant in style, as he was admirable for the scholarship of his writings, both profane and ecclesiastical. On his death Forthhere succeeded him in the episcopate, who, says the writer, is still alive at this day. This man also was well instructed in the Holy Scriptures. While these men were discharging episcopal duties, it was determined and decreed in a synod, that the province of the South Saxons should have a bishop of their own, and an episcopal seat among their people. They had formerly belonged to the

diocese of Winchester, which bishop Daniel ruled over. Then Eadberht was first consecrated as their bishop, who was abbot of the monastery of bishop Wilfrid, of blessed memory, which is called Selsey. On his death Eolla succeeded to the episcopal office, and after a few years was carried away from this world. And the bishopric was vacant for many years after.

XVII. In the fourth year of the reign of Osred, Cenred, who for some time nobly ruled over the realm of Mercia, much more nobly resigned the authority over his kingdom. For he went to Rome and there received the tonsure, and became a monk in the time of pope Constantine; and continued in the home of the apostles, praying and fasting and giving alms, up to his last day. He was succeeded on the throne of Mercia by Ceollred, son of Æthelred, who had occupied the throne before Cenred. Cenred was accompanied to Rome by a son of Sigeheri, king of the East Saxons, already mentioned, whose name was Offa. He was in his youth, amiable from his years and beauty, and all his people desired that he should succeed and fill the throne. But he had the same devoutness of spirit as king Cenred: he forsook wife, and land, and kindred, and country, for love of Christ and for his gospel, that he might in this life receive reward a hundred-fold, and in the world to come life everlasting. As soon as he came to the holy places at Rome, he received the tonsure, and ended his life as a monk, and attained to the vision of the blessed apostles in heaven, which he had long sought and desired in his mind. In the same year in which the kings left Britain, the great bishop, holy Wilfrid, forty-five years after he received the episcopate, closed his last days and died in the district, which is called Oundle. And his body was put in a coffin and carried north over the border, to his monastery which is called Ripon, and with the honour due to so great a bishop was buried in the church of the apostle St. Peter. With regard to the early circumstances of this bishop's life, we shall mention in a few words what befell him. As he was a boy of good abilities and of a character beyond his years, and maintained a modest and circumspect behaviour in all points, he was deservedly loved by his superiors, and respected as if one

of themselves. As he grew up, at the age of fourteen, he preferred and loved monastic life to a life in the world. On declaring this to his father, for his mother had died previously, he readily assented to and supported his desire and his heavenward aspirations, directing and warning him earnestly to pursue the path of salvation. Then without delay he went to Lindisfarne, and placed himself in service there with the monks. And he began zealously to study and to carry out what he knew to belong to monastic purity and religion; and as he was possessed of an acute understanding, he quickly learnt his psalms and many other books. However he was not yet tonsured, but still, in the virtues of humility and obedience, he was not lower or inferior to those who were his superiors in the tonsure. For this reason he was sincerely beloved by the elders as well as by those of his own age. After serving God for some years in the monastery, being a youth of sagacity, he gradually perceived that this was not the perfect way of spiritual virtues, which was set forth and laid down for him by the Scots. Then he thought and purposed in his mind to visit Rome, and see there what ecclesiastical or monastic usages were observed at the apostolic seat. On repeating this to the brethren, they praised his thought and purpose, urging him and warning him to carry out the journey, which he desired in his heart. And he quickly went to queen Eanflœd, for he was known to her, and had been brought in and attached to the aforesaid monastery by her advice and aid. Then he told her his desire and wish, that he longed to go and visit the home of the blessed apostles. The queen at once rejoiced in the good intent and desire of the youth. She sent him then to king Erconberht in Kent, who was her uncle's son, begging that he would forward him honourably to Rome. At that time Honorius was archbishop in Kent, being one of the disciples of the blessed pope St. Gregory, a man excellently instructed and trained in ecclesiastical matters. When the youth had been staying some time with him, with quick intelligence he studied earnestly all he saw and observed. At the same time also came there another young man, named Biscop and surnamed Benedict, of a noble English family, whom we have already mentioned. He also desired to visit Rome. Then the king attached Wilfrid to this man's retinue and charged him to bring him to

Rome. On their arrival at Lyons, Wilfrid was detained by Dalfinus, bishop of the town: Benedict pushed on vigorously to Rome, on the journey he had undertaken. Then the bishop began to take pleasure in the sagacity and wise words of the youth, and the fairness of his person, and the cheerfulness of his behaviour, and the gravity of his mind. Accordingly he gave and supplied to him in abundance all that he and his companions needed, as long as they continued with him; and also offered to give him a large portion of the realm of Gaul to hold and rule, and to bestow a maiden, who was his brother's daughter, on him in marriage, and to treat him always with the love due to a son. Then he thanked him earnestly for the kindness he had shown him, being a foreigner: but he answered that he rather chose and desired another life than a life in the world, and for that reason had left his native soil and undertaken a journey to Rome. When the bishop heard this, he dispatched him with a guide to Rome, and supplied him well for the journey: and he bade him, on his return home to pay him a visit, that he might supply him well for the home journey. On his coming to Rome, and there with daily zeal devoting himself to prayer and the study of ecclesiastical matters, as he had proposed in his mind, he acquired the friendship of the holy and most learned Boniface, the archdeacon, who was also counsellor and adviser of the apostolic pope. Under his instruction he studied in order the four Gospels, and the computation of the correct Easter-tide, and many other points pertaining to church discipline, which he could not learn in his own country. And this same master gave him both books and teaching. And when he had zealously occupied himself for many months there in successful study, he returned again to Gaul to his friend bishop Dalfinus and remained with him for three years. And from him he received priestly tonsure, and was treated with such affection, that the bishop intended to make him his heir. But yet this might not be, for the bishop was carried off by a cruel death, and Wilfrid was reserved instead to be bishop to the English. Queen Balthild sent a large force and ordered the bishop to be slain. And when he was led to the place, where his head should be struck off, he was followed by Wilfrid as his priest and attendant. And Wilfrid desired to die along with him, though the

bishop strongly opposed it. But on the executioners hearing that he was a foreigner and from England, they spared him and would not put him to death with the bishop, though he desired it. So Wilfrid returned to Britain and attached himself in friendship to Ealfrith. Now this king had learnt ever to follow and prefer the orthodox rules of God's Church. And when he found Wilfrid both orthodox and wise, he gave and made over to him at once ten hides of land, at the place which is called Stamford Bridge. And a short time after, he assigned him a monastery with thirty hides, at the place which is called Ripon. This place he had previously given to men, who followed the teaching of the Scots, for the erection of a monastery. But as they after a time, on the choice being given them, preferred rather to retire from the place, than observe the right Easter-tide, and accept also canonical usages in accordance with rites of the Roman and apostolic church, for this reason he gave the place to him, whom he saw to be instructed in better discipline and usage. About this time, at the bidding of the aforesaid king, Wilfrid was consecrated as priest, at the same monastery by Ægelberht, bishop of Wessex, whom we have already mentioned. It was the king's wish that a man of such learning and piety should specially be his priest and teacher, with undivided attendance. And after a short time he sent him to Gaul with the counsel and consent of his father Oswio begging that he might be consecrated as his bishop, Wilfrid being then thirty years old. This same Ægelberht was at that time bishop of Paris. Along with him came eleven other bishops-he was the twelfth-to Wilfrid's consecration; and they performed the service with great pomp. While he still delayed beyond the sea, king Oswio directed the holy Chad to be consecrated bishop at York, as already mentioned; and for three years Chad nobly ruled and directed the church; after which he retired to the charge of his monastery, which is at Lastingham. Then Wilfrid took over the episcopal charge of the province of all Northumbria: but later, during the reign of Ecgfrith he was driven from his diocese, and other bishops consecrated in his place, whom we mentioned before. Then he was about to proceed to Rome and plead his cause before the apostolic pope. Immediately on his going on board and embarking the west wind blew; and he was

driven out of his course and landed in Friesland. And he was received with honour by the barbarians and their king Ealdgils. Immediately he began to preach and teach them the faith of Christ, and instructed many thousands of them in the word of truth, and washed them in baptism from the foulness of their sins. And what after a time Wilbrord, the venerable bishop of Christ, completed with great devotion, he first began, that is, the work of teaching Christ's gospel. And he spent the winter there well and happily with the new people whom he had won over; and then arranged his journey and came to Rome. And when his cause was enquired into before pope Agatho and a number of bishops, in the judgment of all he was found to be innocent and pure, without offence in those matters which were brought forward and alleged against him; and also that he was fully worthy of the episcopate. Then just at this time pope Agatho assembled at Rome a synod of 125 bishops to oppose the heretics, who preached and taught that there was one will and one operation in our Lord and Saviour. Then the pope directed bishop Wilfrid also to be invited to the synod; and they assigned him a seat among other bishops, and bid him declare his belief, as well as that of the island and the people from which he came. And when he and his companions were found orthodox in belief, among other acts of this synod, it was determined to add to the synodical documents and insert among them as follows:

'Wilfrid the well-beloved of God, bishop at York, visited the apostolic seat to plead his cause, and was absolved by the apostolic power in regard to things certain and uncertain; and with 125 of his fellow bishops, took his seat at the synod on the seat of judgment: and on behalf of all the north part of Britain and the island of Ireland, occupied by the nations of the English and Britons, and Scots, and Picts, confessed the true and orthodox faith and confirmed it with his signature.' After this he returned again to Britain and converted the province of the South Saxons from the worship of idols to the faith of Christ; and also sent ministers of God's word to the Isle of Wight. And in the second year of the reign of king Ealdfrith, Ecgrith's successor on the throne, he returned to his see on the invitation of king Ealdfrith. Five years later he

was again accused by the same king and many bishops; was again driven from his diocese, and visited Rome; and obtained leave to defend and plead his cause in the presence of his adversaries. Many bishops were sitting there along with the apostolic pope John, and in the judgment of all it was declared that his accusers and adversaries had in great part got up and brought against him false and calumnious charges. Then the aforesaid pope directed a letter to be written to Æthelred and Ealdfrith kings of the English, and in this directed that they should certainly cause Wilfrid to be received into his diocese: for he had been unfairly deprived of it. When he set out on his return to Britain, on arriving in the districts of Gaul he was suddenly seized and attacked with illness. And this increased so much and became so severe, that at last he could neither walk nor ride, but was carried in a litter by the hands of his attendants, and so was brought to Meaux, a town in Gaul. And he there lay four days and four nights like one dead, only showing that he was alive by a feeble breathing. When he had thus continued full four days and nights without meat or drink, speaking or hearing, at last on the dawn of the fifth day he awoke, as if out of heavy sleep, raised himself and sat up, and opening his eyes saw about him companies of brethren chanting and weeping. And he sat for some time and sighed. Then he asked and enquired where Acca the priest was. He was at once called; and he went in to him and saw that he was better and could speak; and the priest bent his knee and thanked God with all the brethren who were in there by him. When they had sat together for some time and began timidly to talk a little about the divine decrees of God Almighty, then the bishop bade the other brethren to go out for a while, and thus spoke to the priest Acca. 'There appeared to me,' said he, 'a short time ago a dreadful vision, which I will relate and make known to you; and I bid you to conceal and keep it back, till I know what it is God's will to do with me. There came and stood by me a man very bright and shining in white raiment: he said that he was Michael the archangel: "and I am sent for this, that I should rescue and deliver you from death. The Lord has given you life through the prayers and tears of your disciples and your brethren, and the intercession of his blessed mother the immaculate

virgin St. Mary. Therefore I tell you that you will now be soon cured of this disorder. But be ready; for after four years I will return again and visit you. You will reach your country, and recover the greatest part of your property, that was taken from you, and will end your life in peace and tranquillity.'" Well then the bishop quickly recovered, and all his companions rejoiced at this and gave thanks to God; and continuing the journey he arrived in Britain. And he delivered the letter which he brought from the apostolic pope, first to archbishop Berhtwald to read and afterwards to Æthelred, formerly king, but then abbot at Bardney. And they both readily and with one consent supported him as the pope directed; and Æthelred at once invited to him king Cenred, to whom he had made over the kingdom of Mercia. And he prayed and charged him to be a sincere friend to the bishop: and he was so. But Ealdfrith king of Northumbria scorned to receive him: but he did not live long after this. Then immediately on the accession of his son Osfrith, a synod was assembled by the river Nidd. And after some conflict on both sides, at last, with unanimous support, Wilfrid was admitted to the episcopate of his church. And so for four years, that is till the day of his death, he spent his life in peace and quiet, and with joy ascended and entered into the kingdom of heaven. He died at his monastery, which he had in the district of Oundle, under the government of abbot Cuthbald; and by the care of the brethren was conveyed to his former monastery, called Ripon, and was laid with honour and buried in the church of the apostle St. Peter, to the south of the altar, as we have already said and recorded.

XVIII. Next year after the death of the aforesaid father, that is in the fifth year of the reign of king Osred, died the venerable abbot Adrian, who was fellow worker in God's word with archbishop Theodore of blessed memory; and he was buried at his monastery in the church of the blessed virgin St. Mary, forty-one years after he was sent here with bishop Theodore by pope Vitalianus. Among other testimonies to the teaching of the abbot, as well as of bishop Theodore, it is said of Albinus the abbot's disciple, who succeeded him in the rule of the monastery, that he was so deeply learned in the study of holy scripture, that he in great part knew

the Greek language, and that Latin was as familiar and fluent to him as English, which was his native tongue. Then in place of Wilfrid his priest Acca succeeded to the episcopate of the church at Hexham. He was a most energetic man and great in the sight of God and man. And he built his church, which is consecrated in honour of the apostle St. Andrew, with rich ornament, enlarging and giving variety to it by admirable workmanship. And he showed much zeal in acquiring from every quarter, a great quantity of relics of the blessed apostles and martyrs, and he set up altars in their honour and built chapels, distributing them for this purpose within the walls of that church. He also collected the history of their passions along with other ecclesiastical books very zealously, bringing together there a large and noble collection of books. He also was diligent in procuring sacramental vessels and lamps and much besides of this kind pertaining to the ornament of God's house. He also got an excellent church singer called Mafa, who had been taught singing in Kent by the successors of the disciples of the blessed pope Gregory; and he kept him with him twelve years. And he not only taught them some church music, previously unknown to them, but also by his teaching restored to its previous condition the music which they had formerly known, but which was already becoming obsolete owing to long neglect. Bishop Acca himself was also an excellently trained musician; he was also deeply learned in holy scripture, and unexceptionable in confession of the right faith; and he was most careful in observing the rules of ecclesiastical law. And in this he never slackened, till he received from God the reward of his pious devotion. In his boyhood he was first educated and trained among the clergy of the bishop of York, the holy Bosa, well beloved of God. Subsequently he came to bishop Wilfrid, with aspirations after higher objects, and till the bishop's death passed all his years and life in his service. With him too he visited Rome, and there saw and learnt many useful points of ecclesiastical ordinance, which he could not in his native country, and these he carefully kept and carried out to the end of his life.

XIX. At this time Naitan king of the Picts, who occupy the north of Britain, was admonished by frequent meditation and study of ecclesiastical writings, to renounce and forbid the error, which up to that time was maintained among his people, with regard to the observance of the correct Easter. And he brought over himself and his people to celebrate and honour the orthodox time of the Lord's resurrection. And that he might carry this out and settle it with more authority, he sought support from England, where he well saw and knew the people had learnt and received their religion after the pattern of the holy and apostolic Roman church. He sent envoys to the venerable Ceolfrith, abbot of the monastery of the blessed apostles Peter and Paul, which is at Wearmouth and by the river Tyne, in the place called Jarrow. Ceolfrith ruled in the office of abbot with great fame, as successor to Benedict, of whom we have already spoken. The king begged the abbot to send him hortatory letters and writings, to refute more effectually those, who dared to observe and celebrate Easter otherwise than at the right time. He also enquired as to the mode and method of the tonsure, which should mark God's servants and priests. The king also prayed him to send an architect for stone work, to build a church according to the usage of Rome: and he promised that he would consecrate it in honour of St. Peter the blessed chief of the apostles. He also promised that he himself and all his people would ever follow and maintain the usage of the Roman church, 'in as far as we can best ascertain it.' The venerable abbot Ceolfrith lent his support to the pious desires and prayers of the king. He sent him skilled workmen to build a stone church, sending also letters and writings with regard to the observance of the right Easter and with regard to the tonsure of God's servants, as well as other ordinances of God's church. Now when this letter was read before the king and many learned men, and was carefully interpreted to him in his own tongue, by those who could understand it, it is said that he rejoiced greatly at its exhortations and teaching and rose from his seat among his chief men and councillors; and bending his knee to the earth he thanked God, that he had been found worthy to receive such a gift from England. And he spoke thus: 'I knew well and understood before, that this was the right

celebration of the true Easter. But so fully do I now understand the method of observing this time, that whatever I knew and understood previously seems to me utterly poor and petty. Therefore I now openly confess and declare to you, who here sit in my presence, that I will observe for ever with all my people this time of Easter, which I now rightly perceive and understand; and all priests and servants of God, who are in my kingdom shall receive the tonsure, which we hear to be full of all reasonableness.' And he there without delay by his royal authority carried out what he said; and at once sent throughout his realm, and gave directions to copy out and study and observe throughout all the province of the Picts, the cycles of nineteen years belonging to the correct Easter. And he ordered to be utterly obliterated the erroneous cycles of eighty-four years. Then all monks and priests received the tonsure according to the form of St. Peter's crown. And they, and all the people being reformed, rejoiced and took pleasure in being as it were subject to fresh discipline, under St. Peter the most blessed prince of the apostles and protected by his patronage.

XX. It was not long till also the monks of Scottish descent, who inhabited and occupied the island of Iona, along with the monasteries subject to them, were led by the grace of the Lord to the canonical usage of the correct Easter and tonsure. It was about 716 years from our Lord's incarnation, in the year in which king Osred was slain and Cynred, as his successor, took over the government of the kingdom of Northumbria, when there came to the isle of Iona, from Ireland, the father and priest, beloved of God and to be named with all honour, the holy Ecgberht already mentioned often before. And he was received by them with respect and much joy, as he was the sweetest and most delightful of teachers, and the most devoted follower and observer himself of all that he taught others to do: and all heard him gladly. And by his pious exhortations and his zeal he changed the old usage and ordinance of their elders, of whom the apostolical words may be repeated, that they had zeal for God but not according to wisdom.' And he, according to the apostolical custom, admonished and instructed them to observe and

carry out the celebration of the chief solemnity, as we said, under the type of an endless circlet. It was so ordered by a wondrous dispensation of the divine goodness, that, as the people cheerfully and without jealousy made known and imparted to the nations of the English The wisdom of the divine knowledge which they possessed, so then they after a time through the English should attain to the perfect measure of a right life, in those matters in which they were deficient. Just as the Britons, on the contrary, who never would reveal and make known to the English race the knowledge of the christian faith which they had, nay now again when the English tribes believe and are in all points well instructed and trained in the rule of right faith, they still as now, maintain their old habits and halt from the right path; and display their heads without the crown of St. Peter's tonsure; and observe and solemnize the due festival of Christ's Easter not in community with all the churches of God. Then the monks inhabiting Iona through the teaching of Ecgberht received the orthodox usa-e to live by, under abbot Dunchad, eighty years after they had sent bishop Aidan as teacher to the English. Ecgberht the man of God remained twelve years in the island, which he consecrated by a new irradiance of grace in ecclesiastical unity and peace. And 729 years after our Lord's incarnation, in the year in which the Dominical Easter was celebrated and solemnized, on the 24th of April, as he celebrated and solemnized the Lord's rising with the festival of mass, on that very day he departed to the Lord. And he with the Lord and the holy apostles and the other inhabitants of heaven finished the rejoicings of that high festival, which he had begun with the brethren, whom he converted to the grace of unity; or it is still more true, that he ceases not to celebrate and solemnize it ever without end. It was a wonderful dispensation of divine providence, that the venerable man not only departed from this earth to God the Father on Easter day, but also when Easter was being celebrated on a day, which never before had been usual for the solemnity at that place. So then the brethren exulted in the knowledge of the certain and orthodox Eastertide. And they were rejoiced by the patronage of the father now departed to the Lord, by whom they had been reformed. And he rejoiced in this, that he

was kept in the body, till he saw these hearers receive the Easter day and hold it in honour with him, which they had ever before refused to receive. And so the venerable father, being certain of their reformation, 'rejoiced to see the Lord's day, and he saw it and was glad.'

XXI. It was then about 725 years after our Lord's incarnation, being the seventh year of the reign of Osric, king of Northumbria and successor of Cenred, when Wihtred, son of Ecgberht king of Kent died on the 23rd of April; and he left three heirs to the kingdom, which he had held for thirty-four and a-half years, namely his sons Æthelbert, Eadberht and Æthelric. Next year after this died Tobias bishop of Rochester. He was profoundly learned, and a disciple of archbishop Theodore of blessed memory and the abbot Adrian. And he therefore, as it is said, along with instruction in ecclesiastical and profane writings, also studied Greek and Latin so deeply, that they were as familiar to him as his own tongue, wherein he was born. He was buried in the chapel of the apostle St. Paul, which is in the church of St. Andrew, where he himself had erected a tomb. After him Aldwulf received the office of bishop, being consecrated by archbishop Berhtwald. After this, in the 729th year from our Lord's incarnation, there appeared two stars about the sun, which in books are called comets; and they caused much alarm to the persons who saw and beheld them. The one of them preceded the sun in the morning, when rising, the other followed the sun in the evening, when setting, as if they were prophets of dire disaster at sunrise as well as sunset, betokening the coming of much ill to men at both times both by day and by night. A beam stood out from them, like a torch of fire, towards the north of the earth. These stars appeared in the month of January and remained two weeks. At that season, soon after, that most grievous pest, the Saracens, wasted and destroyed the realm of Gaul with grievous and miserable carnage; but they soon after received and suffered the due punishment for their perfidy in that same province. The same year also the holy man of God Ecgberht, as already mentioned, departed to the Lord on Easter day itself: and soon after Easter, that is, on the ninth of May, Osric king of Northumbria departed this life, after holding and governing the

kingdom for eleven years. He desired, and had decreed, that Ceolwulf should be king after him and his successor on the throne. He was brother of king Cenred, who had reigned before Osric. The early part of this king's reign and its progress are troubled and confused with so many violent commotions and adversities, that it cannot yet be determined, what should be said of it, or what issue various things are to have.

XXII. About 731 years from our Lord's incarnation archbishop Berhtwald was carried off by old age, and died on the 9th of January. He had occupied the episcopal seat for thirty-seven years six months and fourteen days. In the same year Tatwini was made archbishop in his room: he came from the province of Mercia, and had formerly been priest at the monastery which is called Bredon. He was consecrated in Canterbury by the venerable prelates Daniel bishop of Winchester, Ingwald bishop of London, Aldwin bishop of Lichfield, and Aldulf bishop of Rochester, on the 20th of June, being a Sunday. This man was noted for his piety, sagacity and wisdom, and was also excellently instructed and trained in the holy scriptures. At present the bishops of the churches in Kent are Tatwini and Aldwulf; Ingwald is bishop of the East Saxons; the bishops of the East Angles are Aldberht and Heatholac; the bishops of the West Saxons are Daniel and Forthhere; Aldwini is bishop of Mercia. And Wealhstod is bishop of the tribes which dwell west of the Severn; Wilfrid is bishop of the Hwiccas. Cyneberht is bishop of Lindsey. The episcopal charge of the Isle of Wight falls to Daniel bishop of Winchester. The province of the South Saxons remained for many years without a bishop, obtaining episcopal ministrations from a bishop of Wessex. And all these provinces and also other southern provinces, as far as the boundary of the river Humber, with their kings also, are subject in obedience to Æthelbald, king of Mercia. And in the province of Northumbria, over which king Ceolwulf reigns, four bishops now have sees, bishop Wilfrid in the church of York, Æthelwald at Lindisfarne, Acca at Hexham, Pehthelm at the place which is called Whiterne. This place lately owing to the multiplication of believers was added on as the seat of a bishop's see, and he was the first bishop of the

place. The race of the Picts also at this time are at peace and have a treaty with the English, and also rejoice in sharing the orthodox peace and truth with all God's churches. The Scots, who dwell in Britain, content with their boundaries, contrive neither plots nor rapine against the English. Moreover the Britons, though in great part they oppose with inward hate and hostility the English and the institutions of the whole Catholic church of God, in the observance of the wrong Easter and in reprobate usages, yet are prevented by divine and human power, from being able to maintain or carry out their desires in either point. And though they are in a large measure independent, yet they are in a large measure too given over and subject to the dominion of the English. Owing to the peace and tranquillity of these times, many in Northumbria, both gentle and simple, are more desirous to give up themselves and their children to monastic life and God's service, than they are to pursue worldly warfare. What end this matter will have, the next generation will see and witness. This is now at the present time the condition of all Britain 285 years after the coming of the English into the island of Britain. And now 731 years after our Lord's incarnation the whole earth is rejoicing in the eternal kingdom of the Lord; and while Britain shares the joy in his faith, many islands also rejoice and acknowledge the memory of his holiness. These things concerning the history of the church of England in Britain, as far as I could formerly learn it from the writings of men of old, or from the tradition of elder men, or from my own knowledge, with the help of the Lord, I Bede have written, who am servant of Christ and priest in the monastery of the blessed apostles Peter and Paul, that is at Wearmouth and in Jarrow. I was born on land, which is private property of this monastery. When I was seven years old, by the care of my kindred I was given over to be brought up and trained by the venerable abbot Benedict and afterwards by Ceolfrith. And I spent the whole time of my life afterwards in the precincts of the monastery; and I gave all zeal to study and meditate on Holy Scripture. And while observing regular discipline, with the daily charge of singing in church, it was ever sweet and delightful to me to study, teach or write. And then in the nineteenth year of my life, I took deacon's orders and became a priest at thirty, in both

cases by the ministrations of the venerable bishop John, at the bidding and direction of abbot Ceolfrith. From the time that I entered the priesthood till the 59th year of my life, for my own needs and those of my friends I have written and composed these books out of the works of the venerable fathers, and I have also added thereto, conformably to the sense and spiritual interpretation.

First on the beginning of Genesis up to the birth of Isaac and rejection of Ishmael I composed four books.

About the tabernacle and its vessels and priestly robes three books.

On the first part of Samuel, that is up to the death of king Saul, four books.

On the building of the temple and its figurative interpretation two books.

Again on the books of the Kings thirty questions.

On the proverbs of Solomon three books.

On the Song of Songs six books.

On Ezra and Nehemiah three books.

On the Song of Habakkuk one book.

On the book of the blessed father Tobias of figurative interpretation as to Christ and his church one book.

On the gospel of Mark four books.

On the gospel of Luke six books.

Of homilies on the gospel two books.

On the apostle, whatever I have found in the works of St. Augustine, I have written all out in order.

On the Acts of the Apostles two books.

On the seven canonical Epistles sundry books.

On the Revelation of St. John three books.

On the six ages of the world one book.

On the 'mansiones' of the children of Israel one book.

About the words of Isaiah: 'et claudentur ibi in carcerem et post multos dies uisitabuntur.'

About the proper Leap-year one book.

About the Equinox, in accordance with the explanation of Anatolius one.

On the histories of Saints.

A book of the life and passion of the confessor St. Felix.

The book of Paulinus, I turned out of verse into prose.

The book of the life and passion of St. Anastatius martyr, which was ill translated out of Greek into Latin and still worse revised by some illiterate person, I corrected by the sense, as well as I could.

The life of the holy father St. Cuthbert, who was both monk and bishop, I first composed in heroic metre and after a time in prose.

The history and account of the abbots of this monastery, in which I rejoice to serve the divine goodness, that is Benedict, Ceolfrith and Hwætberht, I composed in two books.

The ecclesiastical history of our island and people I composed in five books.

A Martyrology concerning the festivals of the holy martyrs, in which all that I could find, not only on what day, but also in what form of strife and under what judge they prevailed over the world, I carefully wrote.

Books of hymns in varied metre.

A book of epigrams in heroic metre.

On the nature of things and on times sundry books.

Again on times one large book.

A book on orthography arranged in alphabetical order.

A book on metre, to which is appended another book on figures and tropes.

Upon the forms and modes of speech, in which the canon of holy scripture is composed.

And now I pray thee, our good Saviour, that you will mercifully grant me to drink in sweetly the words of thy wisdom, that you will also graciously grant that I may at last come to thee, the fount of all wisdom and appear for ever before thy face. Now also I humbly pray of all to whom this history of our race may come, either as readers or hearers, that they oft and earnestly pray to the divine goodness of God Almighty for my infirmities of mind and body, and grant me in each of their provinces this meed of reward, that I who have zealously endeavoured

to write about the separate provinces and the more famous places, what I believed to be memorable or acceptable to their inhabitants, may obtain among all the fruit of pious intercession.