

**BEDE'S
ECCLESIASTICAL HISTORY
OF ENGLAND**



Book Five

A REVISED TRANSLATION

By

A. M. SELLAR

1907

**BEDE'S
ECCLESIASTICAL HISTORY
OF ENGLAND**

A REVISED TRANSLATION

**WITH INTRODUCTION, LIFE,
AND NOTES BY**

A. M. SELLAR

**LATE VICE-PRINCIPAL
OF
LADY MARGARET HALL,
OXFORD**

BOOK V

CHAPTER I

How Ethelwald, successor to Cuthbert, leading a hermit's life, calmed a tempest by his prayers when the brethren were in danger at sea.

[687-699 A.D.]

THE venerable Ethelwald succeeded the man of God, Cuthbert, in the exercise of a solitary life, which he spent in the isle of Fame before he became a bishop. After he had received the priesthood, he consecrated his office by deeds worthy of that degree for many years in the monastery which is called Inhrypum. To the end that his merit and manner of life may be the more certainly made known, I will relate one miracle of his, which was told me by one of the brothers for and on whom the same was wrought; to wit, Guthfrid, the venerable servant and priest of Christ, who also, afterwards, as abbot, presided over the brethren of the same church of Lindisfarne, in which he was educated.

"I came," says he, "to the island of Fame, with two others of the brethren, desiring to speak with the most reverend father, Ethelwald. Having been refreshed with his discourse, and asked for his blessing, as we were returning home, behold on a sudden, when we were in the midst of the sea, the fair weather in which we were sailing, was broken, and there arose so great and terrible a tempest, that neither sails nor oars were of any use to us, nor had we anything to expect but death. After long struggling with the wind and waves to no effect, at last we looked back to see whether it was possible by any means at least to return to the island whence we came, but we found that we were on all sides alike cut off by the storm, and that there was no hope of escape by our own efforts. But looking further, we perceived, on the island of Fame, our father Ethelwald, beloved of God, come out of his retreat to watch our course; for, hearing the noise of the tempest and raging sea, he had come forth to see what would become of us. When he beheld us in distress and despair, he bowed his knees to the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, in prayer for our life and safety; and as he finished his prayer, he calmed the swelling water, in such sort that the fierceness of the storm ceased on all sides, and fair winds attended us over a smooth sea to the very shore. When we had landed, and had pulled up our small vessel from the waves, the storm, which had ceased a short time for our sake, presently returned, and raged furiously during the whole day; so that it plainly appeared that the brief interval of calm had been granted by Heaven in answer to the prayers of the man of God, to the end that we might escape."

The man of God remained in the isle of Fame twelve years, and died there; but was buried in the church of the blessed Apostle Peter, in the isle of Lindisfarne, beside the bodies of the aforesaid bishops.' These things happened in the days of King Aldfrid, who, after his brother Egfrid, ruled the nation of the Northumbrians for nineteen years.

CHAPTER II

How Bishop John cured a dumb man by his blessing. [687 A.D.]

IN the beginning of Aldfrid's reign, Bishop Eata died, and was succeeded in the bishopric of the church of Hagustald by the holy man John, of whom those that knew him well are wont to tell many miracles, and more particularly Berthun, a man worthy of all reverence and of undoubted truthfulness, and once his deacon, now abbot of the monastery called Inderauuda, that is, "In the wood of the Deiri": some of which miracles we have thought fit to hand on to posterity. There is a certain remote dwelling enclosed by a mound, among scattered trees, not far from the church of Hagustald, being about a mile and a half distant and separated from it by the river Tyne, having an oratory dedicated to St. Michael the Archangel, where the

man of God used frequently, as occasion offered, and specially in Lent, to abide with a few companions and in quiet give himself to prayer and study. Having come hither once at the beginning of Lent to stay, he bade his followers find out some poor man labouring under any grievous infirmity, or want, whom they might keep with them during those days, to receive alms, for so he was always used to do.

There was in a township not far off, a certain youth who was dumb, known to the bishop, for he often used to come into his presence to receive alms. He had never been able to speak one word; besides, he had so much scurf and scab on his head, that no hair could ever grow on the top of it, but only some rough hairs stood on end round about it. The bishop caused this young man to be brought, and a little hut to be made for him within the enclosure of the dwelling, in which he might abide, and receive alms from him every day. When one week of Lent was over, the next Sunday he bade the poor man come to him, and when he had come, he bade him put his tongue out of his mouth and show it him; then taking him by the chin, he made the sign of the Holy Cross on his tongue, directing him to draw it back so signed into his mouth and to speak. "Pronounce some word," said he; "say 'gae,' " which, in the language of the English, is the word of affirming and consenting, that is, yes. The youth's tongue was immediately loosed, and he spoke as he was bidden. The bishop then added the names of the letters: "Say A." He said A. "Say B;" he said B also. When he had repeated all the letters after the bishop, the latter proceeded to put syllables and words to him, and when he had repeated them all rightly he bade him utter whole sentences, and he did it. Nor did he cease all that day and the next night, as long as he could keep awake, as those who were present relate, to say something, and to express his private thoughts and wishes to others, which he could never do before; after the manner of the man long lame, who, when he was healed by the Apostles Peter and John, leaping up, stood and walked, and entered with them into the temple, walking, and leaping, and praising the Lord, rejoicing to have the use of his feet, which he had so long lacked. The bishop, rejoicing with him at his cure, caused the physician to take in hand the healing of the sores of his head. He did as he was bidden, and with the help of the bishop's blessing and prayers, a goodly head of hair grew as the skin was healed. Thus the youth became fair of countenance, ready of speech, with hair curling in comely fashion, whereas before he had been ill-favoured, miserable, and dumb. Thus filled with joy at his recovered health, notwithstanding that the bishop offered to keep him in his own household, he chose rather to return home.

CHAPTER III

How he healed a sick maiden by his prayers. [705 A.D.]

THE same Berthun told another miracle concerning the said bishop. When the most reverend Wilfrid, after a long banishment, was admitted to the bishopric of the church of Hagustald, and the aforesaid John, upon the death of Bosa, a man of great sanctity and humility, was, in his place, appointed bishop of York, he himself came, once upon a time, to the monastery of nuns, at the place called Wetadun, where the Abbess Heriburg then presided. "When we were come thither," said he, "and had been received with great and universal joy, the abbess told us, that one of the nuns, who was her own daughter after the flesh, laboured under a grievous sickness, for she had been lately let blood in the arm, and whilst she was under treatment, was seized with an attack of sudden pain, which speedily increased, while the wounded arm became worse, and so much swollen, that it could scarce be compassed with both hands; and she lay in bed like to die through excess of pain. Wherefore the abbess entreated the bishop that he would vouchsafe to go in and give her his blessing; for she believed that she would soon be better if he blessed her or laid his hands upon her. He asked when the maiden had been let blood, and being told that it was on the fourth day of the moon, said, 'You did very indiscreetly and unskilfully to let blood on the fourth day of the moon; for I remember that Archbishop Theodore, of blessed memory, said, that blood-letting at that time was very dangerous, when the light of the moon is waxing and the tide of the ocean is rising. And what can I do for the maiden if she is like to die?'

"But the abbess still earnestly entreated for her daughter, whom she dearly loved, and designed to make abbess in her stead, and at last prevailed with him to go in and visit the sick maiden. Wherefore he went in, taking me with him to the maid, who lay, as I said, in sore anguish, and her arm swelling so greatly that it could not be bent at all at the elbow; and he stood and said a prayer over her, and having given his blessing, went out. Afterwards, as we were sitting at table, at the usual hour, some one came in and called me out, saying, 'Quoenburg' (that was the maid's name) 'desires that you should immediately go back to her.' This I did, and entering the chamber, I found her of more cheerful countenance, and like one in good health. And while I was sitting beside her, she said, "Shall we call for something to drink? —' Yes,' said I, 'and right glad am I, if you can.' When the cup was brought, and we had both drunk, she said, 'As soon as the bishop had said the prayer for me and given me his blessing and had gone out, I immediately began to mend; and though I have not yet recovered my former strength, yet all the pain is quite gone both from my arm, where it was most burning, and from all my body, as if the bishop had carried it away with him; notwithstanding the swelling of the arm still seems to remain.' But when we departed thence, the cure of the pain in her limbs was followed by the assuaging of the grievous swelling; and the maiden being thus delivered from pains and death, returned praise to our Lord and Saviour, in company with His other servants who were there.

CHAPTER IV

How he healed a thegn's wife that was sick, with holy water.

THE same abbot related another miracle, not unlike the former, of the aforesaid bishop. "Not very far from our monastery," he said, "to wit, about two miles off, was the township of one Puch, a thegn, whose wife had lain sick of a very grievous disease for nearly forty days, insomuch that for three weeks she could not be carried out of the chamber where she lay. It happened that the man of God was, at that time, called thither by the thegn to consecrate a church; and when that was done, the thegn desired him to come into his house and dine. The bishop declined, saying that he must return to the monastery, which was very near. The thegn, entreating him more earnestly, vowed he would also give alms to the poor, if so be that the bishop would vouchsafe to enter his house that day and break his fast. I joined my entreaties to his, promising in like manner to give alms for the relief of the poor, if he would but go and dine at the thegn's house, and give his blessing. Having at length, with much difficulty, prevailed, we went in to refresh ourselves. The bishop had sent to the woman that lay sick some of the holy water, which he had blessed for the consecration of the church, by one of the brothers who had come with me, ordering him to give her some to drink, and wash that part of her where he found that her pain was greatest, with some of the same water. This being done, the woman immediately got up whole and sound, and perceiving that she had not only been delivered from her long sickness, but at the same time had recovered the strength which she had lost for so great a time, she presented the cup to the bishop and to us, and continued serving us with meat and drink as she had begun, till dinner was over; following the example of the blessed Peter's wife's mother, who, having been sick of a fever, arose at the touch of our Lord's hand, and having forthwith received health and strength, ministered to them."

CHAPTER V

How he likewise recalled by his prayers a thegn's servant from death.

AT another time also, being called to consecrate the church of a thegn named Addi, when he had performed the required duty, he was entreated by the thegn to go in to one of his servants, who lay dangerously ill, insomuch that having lost all use of his limbs, he seemed to be at the point of death; and moreover the coffin had been made ready wherein to bury him after his death. The thegn urged his entreaties with tears, earnestly beseeching him that he would go in and pray for the servant, because his life was of great moment to him; and he believed that if the bishop would lay his hand upon him and give him his blessing, he would

soon mend. So the bishop went in, and saw him very near death, and by his side the coffin in which he was to be laid for his burial, whilst all mourned. He said a prayer and blessed him, and going out, spake the wonted words of comfort, "Good health be yours and that speedily." Afterwards, when they were sitting at table, the servant sent to his lord, desiring that he would let him have a cup of wine, because he was thirsty. The thegn, rejoicing greatly that he could drink, sent him a cup of wine, blessed by the bishop; and, as soon as he had drunk it, he immediately got up, and, shaking off the heaviness of his infirmity, dressed himself and went forth, and going in to the bishop, saluted him and the other guests, saying that he also would gladly eat and drink with them. They bade him sit down with them at table, greatly rejoicing at his recovery. He sat down, ate and drank and made merry, and behaved himself like the rest of the company; and living many years after, continued in the same health which he had gained. The aforesaid abbot says this miracle was not wrought in his presence, but that he had it from those who were present.

CHAPTER VII

How Caedwalla, king of the West Saxons, went to Rome to be baptised; and his successor Ini, also devoutly journeyed to the same threshold of the holy Apostles. [688 A.D.]

IN the third year of the reign of Aldfrid, Caedwalla, king of the West Saxons, having most vigorously governed his nation for two years, quitted his crown for the sake of the Lord and an everlasting kingdom, and went to Rome, being desirous to obtain the peculiar honour of being cleansed in the baptismal font at the threshold of the blessed Apostles, for he had learned that in Baptism alone the entrance into the heavenly life is opened to mankind; and he hoped at the same time, that being made clean by Baptism, he should soon be freed from the bonds of the flesh and pass to the eternal joys of Heaven; both which things, by the help of the Lord, came to pass according as he had conceived in his mind. For coming to Rome, at the time that Sergius was pope, he was baptized on the Holy Saturday before Easter Day, in the year of our Lord 689, and being still in his white garments, he fell sick, and was set free from the bonds of the flesh on the 20th of April, and obtained an entrance into the kingdom of the blessed in Heaven. At his baptism, the aforesaid pope had given him the name of Peter, to the end, that he might be also united in name to the most blessed chief of the Apostles, to whose most holy body his pious love had led him from the utmost bounds of the earth. He was likewise buried in his church, and by the pope's command an epitaph was written on his tomb, wherein the memory of his devotion might be preserved for ever, and the readers or hearers thereof might be stirred up to give themselves to religion by the example of what he had done.

The epitaph was this :— "High estate, wealth, offspring, a mighty kingdom, triumphs, spoils, chieftains, strongholds, the camp, a home; whatsoever the valour of his sires, whatsoever himself had won, Caedwal, mighty in war, left for the love of God, that, a pilgrim king, he might behold, Peter and Peter's seat, receive at his font pure waters of life, and in bright draughts drink of the shining radiance whence a quickening glory streams through all the world. And even as he gained with eager soul the prize of the new life, he laid aside barbaric rage, and, changed in heart, he changed his name with joy. Sergius the Pope bade him be called Peter, himself his father, when he rose born anew from the font, and the grace of Christ, cleansing him, bore him forthwith clothed in white raiment to the heights of Heaven. wondrous faith of the king, but greatest of all the mercy of Christ, into whose counsels none may enter! For he came in safety from the ends of the earth, even from Britain, through many a nation, over many a sea, by many a path, and saw the city of Romulus and looked upon Peter's sanctuary revered, bearing mystic gifts. He shall walk in white among the sheep of Christ in fellowship with them; for his body is in the tomb, but his soul on high. Thou mightest deem he did but change an earthly for a heavenly sceptre, whom thou seest attain to the kingdom of Christ."

"Here was buried Caedwalla, called also Peter, king of the Saxons, on the twentieth day of April, in the second indiction, aged about thirty years, in the reign of our most pious lord, the Emperor Justinian, in the fourth year of his consulship, in the second year of the pontificate of our Apostolic lord, Pope Sergius."

When Caedwalla went to Rome, Ini succeeded to the kingdom, being of the blood royal; and having reigned thirty-seven years over that nation, he in like manner left his kingdom and committed it to younger men, and went away to the threshold of the blessed Apostles, at the time when Gregory was pope, being desirous to spend some part of his pilgrimage upon earth in the neighbourhood of the holy places, that he might obtain to be more readily received into the fellowship of the saints in heaven. This same thing, about that time, was wont to be done most zealously by many of the English nation, nobles and commons, laity and clergy, men and women,

CHAPTER VIII

How, when Archbishop Theodore died, Bertwald succeeded him as archbishop, and, among many others whom he ordained, he made the learned Tobias bishop of the church of Rochester. [690 A. D.]

THE year after that in which Caedwalla died at Rome, that is, 690 after the Incarnation of our Lord, Archbishop Theodore, of blessed memory, departed this life, being old and full of days, for he was eighty-eight years of age; which number of years he had been wont long before to foretell to his friends that he should live, the same having been revealed to him in a dream. He held the bishopric twenty-two years, and was buried in St. Peter's church, where all the bodies of the bishops of Canterbury are buried. Of whom, as well as of his fellows of the same degree, it may rightly and truly be said, that their bodies are buried in peace, and their names shall live to all generations. For to say all in few words, the English Churches gained more spiritual increase while he was archbishop, than ever before. His character, life, age, and death, are plainly and manifestly described to all that resort thither, by the epitaph on his tomb, in thirty-four heroic verses. The first whereof are these:

"Here in the tomb rests the body of the holy prelate, called now in the Greek tongue Theodore. Chief pontiff, blest high priest, pure doctrine he set forth to his disciples."

The last are as follows:

"For September had reached its nineteenth day, when his spirit went forth from the prison-bars of the flesh. Mounting in bliss to the gracious fellowship of the new life, he was united to the angelic citizens in the heights of Heaven."

Bertwald succeeded Theodore in the archbishopric, being abbot of the monastery called Raculfe, which stands at the northern mouth of the river Genlade. He was a man learned in the Scriptures, and perfectly instructed in ecclesiastical and monastic teaching, yet in no wise to be compared to his predecessor. He was chosen bishop in the year of our Lord 692, on the first day of July, when Wictred and Suaebhard were kings in Kent; but he was ordained the next year, on Sunday the 29th of June, by Godwin, metropolitan bishop of Gaul, and was enthroned on Sunday the 31st of August. Among the many bishops whom he ordained was Tobias, a man instructed in the Latin, Greek, and Saxon tongues, and otherwise of manifold learning, whom he consecrated in the stead of Gedmund, bishop of the Church of Rochester, who had died.

CHAPTER IX

How the holy man, Egbert, would have gone into Germany to preach, but could not; and how Wictbert went, but because he availed nothing, returned into Ireland, whence he came. [Circ. 688 A.D.]

AT that time the venerable servant of Christ, and priest, Egbert, who is to be named with all honour, and who, as was said before, lived as a stranger and pilgrim in Ireland to obtain hereafter a country in heaven, purposed in his mind to profit many, taking upon him the work of an apostle, and, by preaching the Gospel, to bring the Word of God to some of those nations that had not yet heard it; many of which tribes he knew to be in Germany, from whom the Angles or Saxons, who now inhabit Britain, are known to have derived their race and origin; for which reason they are still corruptly called "Garmans" by the neighbouring nation of the Britons. Such are the Frisians, the Rugini, the Danes, the Huns, the Old Saxons, and the Boructuari. There are also in the same parts many other peoples still enslaved to pagan rites, to whom the aforesaid soldier of Christ determined to go, sailing round Britain, if haply he could deliver any of them from Satan, and bring them to Christ; or if this might not be, he was minded to go to Rome, to see and adore the thresholds of the holy Apostles and martyrs of Christ.

But a revelation from Heaven and the working of God prevented him from achieving either of these enterprises; for when he had made choice of most courageous companions, fit to preach the Word, inasmuch as they were renowned for their good deeds and their learning, and when all things necessary were provided for the voyage, there came to him on a certain day early in the morning one of the brethren, who had been a disciple of the priest, Boisil, beloved of God, and had ministered to him in Britain, when the said Boisil was provost of the monastery of Mailros, under the Abbot Eata, as has been said above. This brother told him a vision which he had seen that night. "When after matins," said he, "I had laid me down in my bed, and was fallen into a light slumber, Boisil, that was sometime my master and brought me up in all love, appeared to me, and asked, whether I knew him? I said, 'Yes, you are Boisil.' He answered, 'I am come to bring Egbert a message from our Lord and Saviour, which must nevertheless be delivered to him by you. Tell him, therefore, that he cannot perform the journey he has undertaken; for it is the will of God that he should rather go to teach the monasteries of Columba.' Now Columba was the first teacher of the Christian faith to the Picts beyond the mountains northward, and the first founder of the monastery in the island of Hii, which was for a long time much honoured by many tribes of the Scots and Picts. The said Columba is now by some called Columcille, the name being compounded from "Columba" and "Cella." Egbert, having heard the words of the vision, charged the brother that had told it him, not to tell it to any other, lest haply it should be a lying vision. But when he considered the matter secretly with himself, he apprehended that it was true, yet would not desist from preparing for his voyage which he purposed to make to teach those nations.

A few days after the aforesaid brother came again to him, saying that Boisil had that night again appeared to him in a vision after matins, and said, "Why did you tell Egbert so negligently and after so lukewarm a manner that which I enjoined upon you to say? Yet, go now and tell him, that whether he will or no, he must go to Columba's monasteries, because their ploughs are not driven straight; and he must bring them back into the right way." Hearing this, Egbert again charged the brother not to reveal the same to any man. Though now assured of the vision, he nevertheless attempted to set forth upon his intended voyage with the brethren. When they had put aboard all that was requisite for so long a voyage, and had waited some days for fair winds, there arose one night so violent a storm, that part of what was on board was lost, and the ship itself was left lying on its side in the sea. Nevertheless, all that belonged to Egbert and his companions was saved. Then he, saying, in the words of the prophet, "For my sake this great tempest is upon you," withdrew himself from that undertaking and was content to remain at home.

But one of his companions, called Wictbert, notable for his contempt of the world and for his learning and knowledge, for he had lived many years as a stranger and pilgrim in Ireland, leading a hermit's life in great perfection, took ship, and arriving in Frisland, preached the Word of salvation for the space of two whole years to that nation and to its king, Rathbed; but reaped no fruit of all his great labour among his barbarous hearers. Returning then to the chosen place of his pilgrimage, he gave himself up to the Lord in his wonted life of silence, and since he could not be profitable to strangers by teaching them the faith, he took care to be the more profitable to his own people by the example of his virtue.

CHAPTER X

How Wilbrord, preaching in Frisand, converted many to Christ; and how his two companions, the Hewalds, suffered martyrdom. [690 A.D.]

WHEN the man of God, Egbert, perceived that neither he himself was permitted to go and preach to the nations, being withheld for the sake of some other advantage to the holy Church, whereof he had been forewarned by a revelation; nor that Wictbert, when he went into those parts, had availed to do anything; he nevertheless still attempted to send holy and industrious men to the work of the Word, among whom the most notable was Wilbrord, a man eminent for his merit and rank as priest. They arrived there, twelve in number, and turning aside to Pippin, duke of the Franks, were gladly received by him; and as he had lately subdued the nearer part of Frisland, and expelled King Rathbed, he sent them thither to preach, supporting them at the same time with his sovereign authority, that none might molest them in their preaching, and bestowing many favours on those who consented to receive the faith. Thus it came to pass, that with the help of the Divine grace, in a short time they converted many from idolatry to the faith of Christ.

Following their example, two other priests of the English nation, who had long lived as strangers in Ireland, for the sake of the eternal country, went into the province of the Old Saxons, if haply they could there win any to Christ by their preaching. They were alike in name as in devotion, Hewald being the name of both, with this distinction, that, on account of the different colour of their hair, the one was called Black Hewald and the other White Hewald. They were both full of religious piety, but Black Hewald was the more learned of the two in Scripture. When they came into the province, these men took up their lodging in the guesthouse of a certain township-reeve, and asked of him that he would conduct them to the ealdorman who was over him, for that they had a message concerning matters of importance to communicate to him. For those Old Saxons have no king, but many ealdormen set over their nation; and when any war is on the point of breaking out, they cast lots indifferently, and on whomsoever the lot falls, him they all follow and obey during the time of war; but as soon as the war is ended, all those ealdormen are again equal in power. So the reeve received and entertained them in his house some days, promising to send them to the ealdorman who was over him, as they desired.

But when the barbarians perceived that they were of another religion,—for they continually gave themselves to singing of psalms and prayer, and daily offered up to God the Sacrifice of the saving Victim, having with them sacred vessels and a consecrated table for an altar,— they began to grow suspicious of them, lest if they should come into the presence of their ealdorman, and converse with him, they should turn his heart from their gods, and convert him to the new religion of the Christian faith; and thus by degrees all their province should be forced to change its old worship for a new. Wherefore on a sudden they laid hold of them and put them to death; and White Hewald they slew outright with the sword; but they put Black Hewald to lingering torture and tore him limb from limb in horrible fashion, and they threw their bodies into the Rhine. The ealdorman, whom they had desired to see, hearing of it, was very angry that strangers who desired to come to him had not been suffered to come; and therefore he sent and put to death all those villagers and burned their village. The aforesaid priests and servants of Christ suffered on the 3rd of October.

Miracles from Heaven were not lacking at their martyrdom. For their dead bodies, having been cast into the river by the pagans, as has been said, were carried against the stream for the space of almost forty miles, to the place where their companions were. Moreover, a long ray of light, reaching up to heaven, shone every night above them wheresoever they chanced to be, and that too in the sight of the very pagans that had slain them. Moreover, one of them appeared in a vision by night to one of his companions, whose name was Tilmon, a man of renown and of noble birth in this world, who having been a thegn had become a monk, telling him that he might find their bodies in that place, where he should see rays of light reaching from heaven to the earth. And so it befell; and their bodies being found, were buried with the honour due to martyrs; and the day of their passion or of the finding of their bodies, is celebrated in those parts with fitting veneration. Finally, Pippin, the most glorious duke of the Franks, learning these things, caused the bodies to be brought to him, and buried them with much honour in the church of the city of Cologne, on the Rhine. And it is said that a spring burst forth in the place where they were killed, which to this day affords a plentiful stream in that same place.

CHAPTER XI

How the venerable Suidbert in Britain, and Wilbrord at Rome, were ordained bishops for Frisland. [692 A.D.]

AT their first coming into Frisland, as soon as Wilbrord found that he had leave given him by the prince to preach there, he made haste to go to Rome, where Pope Sergius then presided over the Apostolic see, that he might undertake the desired work of preaching the Gospel to the nations, with his licence and blessing; and hoping to receive of him some relics of the blessed Apostles and martyrs of Christ; to the end, that when he destroyed the idols, and erected churches in the nation to which he preached, he might have the relics of saints at hand to put into them, and having deposited them there, might accordingly dedicate each of those places to the honour of the saint whose relics they were. He desired also there to learn or to receive many other things needful for so great a work. Having obtained his desire in all these matters, he returned to preach.

At which time, the brothers who were in Frisland, attending on the ministry of the Word, chose out of their own number a man of sober life, and meek of heart, called Suidbert, to be ordained bishop for them. He, being sent into Britain, was consecrated, at their request, by the most reverend Bishop Wilfrid, who, having been driven out of his country, chanced then to be living in banishment among the Mercians; for Kent had no bishop at that time, Theodore being dead, and Bertwald, his successor, who had gone beyond the sea to be ordained, having not yet returned to his episcopal see.

The said Suidbert, being made bishop, returned from Britain, and not long after departed to the Boructuari; and by his preaching brought many of them into the way of truth; but the Boructuari being not long after subdued by the Old Saxons, those who had received the Word were dispersed abroad; and the bishop himself with certain others went to Pippin, who, at the request of his wife, Blithryda, gave him a place of abode in a certain island on the Rhine, called in their tongue, Inlitore; there he built a monastery, which his successors still possess, and for a time dwelt in it, leading a most continent life, and there ended his days.

When they who had gone thither had spent some years teaching in Frisland, Pippin, with the consent of them all, sent the venerable Wilbrord to Rome, where Sergius was still pope, desiring that he might be consecrated archbishop over the nation of the Frisians; which was accordingly done, as he had made request, in the year of our Lord 696. He was consecrated in the church of the Holy Martyr Cecilia, on her festival; and the said pope gave him the name of Clement, and forthwith sent him back to his bishopric, to wit, fourteen days after his arrival in the city.

Pippin gave him a place for his episcopal see, in his famous fort, which in the ancient language of those people is called Wiltaburg, that is, the town of the Wilts; but, in the Gallic tongue, Trajectum. The most reverend prelate having built a church there, and preaching the Word of faith far and near, drew many from their errors, and built many churches and not a few monasteries. For not long after he himself constituted other bishops in those parts from the number of the brethren that either came with him or after him to preach there; of whom some are now fallen asleep in the Lord; but Wilbrord himself, surnamed Clement, is still living, venerable for his great age, having been thirty-six years a bishop, and now, after manifold conflicts of the heavenly warfare, he longs with all his heart for the recompense of the reward in Heaven.'

CHAPTER XII

How one in the province of the Northumbrians, rose from the dead, and related many things which he had seen, some to be greatly dreaded and some to be desired. [Circ. 696 A.D.]

AT this time a memorable miracle, and like to those of former days, was wrought in Britain; for, to the end that the living might be roused from the death of the soul, a certain man, who had been some time dead, rose again to the life of the body, and related many memorable things that he had seen; some of which I have thought fit here briefly to describe. There was a certain householder in that district of the Northumbrians which is called Incuneningum, who led a godly life, with all his house. This man fell sick, and his sickness daily increasing, he was brought to extremity, and died in the beginning of the night; but at dawn he came to life again, and suddenly sat up, whereat all those that sat about the body weeping fled away in great terror, only his wife, who loved him better, though trembling and greatly afraid, remained with him. And he comforting her, said, "Fear not, for I am now in very deed risen from death whereof I was holden, and permitted again to live among men; nevertheless, hereafter I must not live as I was wont, but after a very different manner." Then rising immediately, he went to the oratory of the little town, and continuing in prayer till day, forthwith divided all his substance into three parts; one whereof he gave to his wife, another to his children, and the third, which he kept himself, he straightway distributed among the poor. Not long after, being set free from the cares of this world, he came to the monastery of Mailros, which is almost enclosed by the winding of the river Tweed, and having received the tonsure, went apart into a place of abode which the abbot had provided, and there he continued till the day of his death, in so great contrition of mind and mortifying of the body, that even if his tongue had been silent, his life would have declared that he had seen many things either to be dreaded or coveted, which were hidden from other men.

Thus he related what he had seen. "He that led me had a countenance full of light, and shining raiment, and we went in silence, as it seemed to me, towards the rising of the summer sun. And as we walked we came to a broad and deep valley of infinite length; it lay on our left, and one side of it was exceeding terrible with raging flames, the other no less intolerable for violent hail and cold snows drifting and sweeping through all the place. Both sides were full of the souls of men which seemed to be tossed from one side to the other as it were by a violent storm; for when they could no longer endure the fervent heat, the hapless souls leaped into the midst of the deadly cold; and finding no rest there, they leaped back again to be burnt in the midst of the unquenchable flames. Now whereas an innumerable multitude of misshapen spirits were thus tormented far and near with this interchange of misery, as far as I could see, without any interval of rest, I began to think that peradventure this might be Hell, of whose intolerable torments I had often heard men talk. My guide, who went before me, answered to my thought, saying, 'Think not so, for this is not the Hell you believe it to be.'

"When he had led me farther by degrees, sore dismayed by that dread sight, on a sudden I saw the place before us begin to grow dark and filled with shadows. When we entered into them, the

shadows by degrees grew so thick, that I could see nothing else, save only the darkness and the shape and garment of him that led me. As we went on 'through the shades in the lone night,' lo! on a sudden there appeared before us masses of foul flame constantly rising as it were out of a great pit, and falling back again into the same. When I had been led thither, my guide suddenly vanished, and left me alone in the midst of darkness and these fearful sights. As those same masses of fire, without intermission, at one time flew up and at another fell back into the bottom of the abyss, I perceived that the summits of all the flames, as they ascended were full of the spirits of men, which, like sparks flying upwards with the smoke, were sometimes thrown on high, and again, when the vapours of the fire fell, dropped down into the depths below. Moreover, a stench, foul beyond compare, burst forth with the vapours, and filled all those dark places.

"Having stood there a long time in much dread, not knowing what to do, which way to turn, or what end awaited me, on a sudden I heard behind me the sound of a mighty and miserable lamentation, and at the same time noisy laughter, as of a rude multitude insulting captured enemies. When that noise, growing plainer, came up to me, I beheld a crowd of evil spirits dragging five souls of men, wailing and shrieking, into the midst of the darkness, whilst they themselves exulted and laughed. Among those human souls, as I could discern, there was one shorn like a clerk, one a layman, and one a woman. The evil spirits that dragged them went down into the midst of the burning pit; and it came to pass that as they went down deeper, I could no longer distinguish between the lamentation of the men and the laughing of the devils, yet I still had a confused sound in my ears. In the meantime, some of the dark spirits ascended from that flaming abyss, and running forward, beset me on all sides, and with their flaming eyes and the noisome fire which they breathed forth from their mouths and nostrils, tried to choke me; and threatened to lay hold on me with fiery tongs, which they had in their hands, yet they durst in no wise touch me, though they assayed to terrify me. Being thus on all sides encompassed with enemies and shades of darkness, and casting my eyes hither and thither if haply anywhere help might be found whereby I might be saved, there appeared behind me, on the way by which I had come, as it were, the brightness of a star shining amidst the darkness; which waxing greater by degrees, came rapidly towards me: and when it drew near, all those evil spirits, that sought to carry me away with their tongs, dispersed and fled.

"Now he, whose approach put them to flight, was the same that led me before; who, then turning towards the right, began to lead me, as it were, towards the rising of the winter sun, and having soon brought me out of the darkness, led me forth into an atmosphere of clear light. While he thus led me in open light, I saw a vast wall before us, the length on either side, and the height whereof, seemed to be altogether boundless. I began to wonder why we went up to the wall, seeing no door in it, nor window, nor any way of ascent. But when we came to the wall, we were presently, I know not by what means, on the top of it, and lo! there was a wide and pleasant plain full of such fragrance of blooming flowers that the marvellous sweetness of the scents immediately dispelled the foul stench of the dark furnace which had filled my nostrils. So great was the light shed over all this place that it seemed to exceed the brightness of the day, or the rays of the noontide sun. In this field were innumerable companies of men clothed in white, and many seats of rejoicing multitudes. As he led me through the midst of bands of happy inhabitants, I began to think that this perchance might be the kingdom of Heaven, of which I had often heard tell. He answered to my thought, saying, 'Nay, this is not the kingdom of Heaven, as you think.'

"When we had also passed those mansions of blessed spirits, and gone farther on, I saw before me a much more beautiful light than before, and therein heard sweet sounds of singing, and so wonderful a fragrance was shed abroad from the place, that the other which I had perceived before and thought so great, then seemed to me but a small thing; even as that wondrous brightness of the flowery field, compared with this which I now beheld, appeared mean and feeble. When I began to hope that we should enter that delightful place, my guide, on a sudden stood still; and straightway turning, led me back by the way we came.

"In our return, when we came to those joyous mansions of the white-robed spirits, he said to me, 'Do you know what all these things are which you have seen?' I answered, 'No,' and then he said, 'That valley which you beheld terrible with flaming fire and freezing cold, is the place in which the souls of those are tried and punished, who, delaying to confess and amend their crimes, at length have recourse to repentance at the point of death, and so go forth from the body; but nevertheless because they, even at their death, confessed and repented, they shall all be received into the kingdom of Heaven at the day of judgement; but many are succoured before the day of judgement, by the prayers of the living and their alms and fasting, and more especially by the celebration of Masses. Moreover that foul flaming pit which you saw, is the mouth of Hell, into which whosoever falls shall never be delivered to all eternity.

This flowery place, in which you see this fair and youthful company, all bright and joyous, is that into which the souls of those are received who, indeed, when they leave the body have done good works, but who are not so perfect as to deserve to be immediately admitted into the kingdom of Heaven; yet they shall all, at the day of judgement, behold Christ, and enter into the joys of His kingdom; for such as are perfect in every word and deed and thought, as soon as they quit the body, forthwith enter into the kingdom of Heaven; in the neighbourhood whereof that place is, where you heard the sound of sweet singing amidst the savour of a sweet fragrance and brightness of light. As for you, who must now return to the body, and again live among men, if you will seek diligently to examine your actions, and preserve your manner of living and your words in righteousness and simplicity, you shall, after death, have a place of abode among these joyful troops of blessed souls which you behold. For when I left you for awhile, it was for this purpose, that I might learn what should become of you.' When he had said this to me, I much abhorred returning to the body, being delighted with the sweetness and beauty of the place which I beheld, and with the company of those I saw in it. Nevertheless, I durst not ask my guide anything; but thereupon, on a sudden, I found myself, I know not how, alive among men."

Now these and other things which this man of God had seen, he would not relate to slothful men, and such as lived negligently; but only to those who, being terrified with the dread of torments, or ravished with the hope of everlasting joys, would draw from his words the means to advance in piety. In the neighbourhood of his cell lived one Haemgils, a monk, and eminent in the priesthood, whose good works were worthy of his office: he is still living, and leading a solitary life in Ireland, supporting his declining age with coarse bread and cold water. He often went to that man, and by repeated questioning, heard of him what manner of things he had seen when out of the body; by whose account those few particulars which we have briefly set down came also to our knowledge. And he related his visions to king Aldfrid, a man most learned in all respects, and was by him so willingly and attentively heard, that at his request he was admitted into the monastery above-mentioned, and received the crown of the monastic tonsure; and the said king, whensoever he came into those parts, very often went to hear him. At that time the abbot and priest Ethelwald, a man of godly and sober life, presided over that monastery. He now occupies the episcopal see of the church of Lindisfarne, leading a life worthy of his degree.

He had a place of abode assigned him apart in that monastery, where he might give himself more freely to the service of his Creator in continual prayer. And inasmuch as that place was on the banks of the river, he was wont often to go into the same for the great desire he had to do penance in his body, and oftentimes to plunge in it, and to continue saying psalms or prayers in the same as long as he could endure it, standing still, while the waves flowed over him, sometimes up to the middle, and sometimes even to the neck in water; and when he went ashore, he never took off his cold, wet garments till they grew warm and dry on his body. And when in the winter the cracking pieces of ice were floating about him, which he had himself sometimes broken, to make room to stand or plunge in the river, and those who beheld it would say, "We marvel, brother Drythelm (for so he was called), that you are able to endure such severe cold;" he answered simply, for he was a simple and sober-spirited man, "I have seen greater cold." And when they said, "We marvel that you choose to observe so hard a rule of continence," he replied, "I have seen harder things." And so, until the day of his calling hence, in his unwearied desire

of heavenly bliss, he subdued his aged body with daily fasting, and forwarded the salvation of many by his words and life.

CHAPTER XIII

How another contrarywise before his death saw a book containing his sins, which was shown him by devils. [704-709 A.D.]

BUT contrarywise there was a man in the province of the Mercians, whose visions and words, but not his manner of life, were of profit to others, though not to himself. In the reign of Coenred, who succeeded Ethelred, there was a layman who was a king's thegn, no less acceptable to the king for his outward industry, than displeasing to him for his neglect of his own soul. The king diligently admonished him to confess and amend, and to forsake his evil ways, lest he should lose all time for repentance and amendment by a sudden death. But though frequently warned, he despised the words of salvation, and promised that he would do penance at some future time. In the meantime, falling sick he betook himself to his bed, and was tormented with grievous pains. The king coming to him (for he loved the man much) exhorted him, even then, before death, to repent of his offences. But he answered that he would not then confess his sins, but would do it when he was recovered of his sickness, lest his companions should upbraid him with having done that for fear of death, which he had refused to do in health. He thought he spoke very bravely, but it afterwards appeared that he had been miserably deceived by the wiles of the Devil.

The disease increasing, when the king came again to visit and instruct him, he cried out straightway with a lamentable voice, "What will you now? What are you come for? for you can no longer do aught for my profit or salvation." The king answered, "Say not so; take heed and be of sound mind." "I am not mad," replied he, "but I now know the worst and have it for certain before my eyes." "What is that?" said the king. "Not long since," said he, "there came into this room two fair youths, and sat down by me, the one at my head, and the other at my feet. One of them drew forth a book most beautiful, but very small, and gave it me to read; looking into it, I there found all the good actions I had ever done in my life written down, and they were very few and inconsiderable. They took back the book and said nothing to me. Then, on a sudden, appeared an army of evil spirits of hideous countenance, and they beset this house without, and sitting down filled the greater part of it within. Then he, who by the blackness of his gloomy face, and his sitting above the rest, seemed to be the chief of them, taking out a book terrible to behold, of a monstrous size, and of almost insupportable weight, commanded one of his followers to bring it to me to read. Having read it, I found therein most plainly written in hideous characters, all the crimes I ever committed, not only in word and deed, but even in the least thought; and he said to those glorious men in white raiment who sat by me, 'Why sit ye here, since ye know of a surety that this man is ours?' They answered, 'Ye speak truly; take him and lead him away to fill up the measure of your damnation.' This said, they forthwith vanished, and two wicked spirits arose, having in their hands ploughshares, and one of them struck me on the head, and the other on the foot. And these ploughshares are now with great torment creeping into the inward parts of my body, and as soon as they meet I shall die, and the devils being ready to snatch me away, I shall be dragged into the dungeons of hell."

Thus spoke that wretch in his despair, and soon after died, and now in vain suffers in eternal torments that penance which he failed to suffer for a short time with the fruits of forgiveness. Of whom it is manifest, that (as the blessed Pope Gregory writes of certain persons) he did not see these things for his own sake, since they did not avail him, but for the sake of others, who, knowing of his end, should be afraid to put off the time of repentance, whilst they have leisure, lest, being prevented by sudden death, they should perish impenitent. And whereas he saw diverse books laid before him by the good and evil spirits, this was done by Divine dispensation, that we may keep in mind that our deeds and thoughts are not scattered to the winds, but are all kept to be examined by the Supreme Judge, and will in the end be shown us either by friendly angels or by the enemy. And whereas the angels first drew forth a white book, and then the

devils a black one; the former a very small one, the latter one very great; it is to be observed, that in his first years he did some good actions, all which he nevertheless obscured by the evil actions of his youth. If, contrarywise, he had taken care in his youth to correct the errors of his boyhood, and by well-doing to put them away from the sight of God, he might have been admitted to the fellowship of those of whom the Psalm says, "Blessed are those whose iniquities are forgiven, and whose sins are covered." This story, as I learned it of the venerable Bishop Pechthelm, I have thought good to set forth plainly, for the salvation of such as shall read or hear it.

CHAPTER XIV

How another in like manner, being at the point of death, saw the place of punishment appointed for him in Hell.

I MYSELF knew a brother, would to God I had not known him, whose name I could mention if it were of any avail, dwelling in a famous monastery, but himself living infamously. He was oftentimes rebuked by the brethren and elders of the place, and admonished to be converted to a more chastened life; and though he would not give ear to them, they bore with him long and patiently, on account of their need of his outward service, for he was a cunning artificer. But he was much given to drunkenness, and other pleasures of a careless life, and more used to stop in his workshop day and night, than to go to church to sing and pray and hear the Word of life with the brethren. For which reason it befell him according to the saying, that he who will not willingly humble himself and enter the gate of the church must needs be led against his will into the gate of Hell, being damned. For he falling sick, and being brought to extremity, called the brethren, and with much lamentation, like one damned, began to tell them, that he saw Hell opened, and Satan sunk in the depths thereof; and Caiaphas, with the others that slew our Lord, hard by him, delivered up to avenging flames. "In whose neighbourhood," said he, "I see a place of eternal perdition prepared for me, miserable wretch that I am." The brothers, hearing these words, began diligently to exhort him, that he should repent even then, whilst he was still in the flesh. He answered in despair, "There is no time for me now to change my course of life, when I have myself seen my judgement passed."

Whilst uttering these words, he died without having received the saving Viaticum, and his body was buried in the farthest parts of the monastery, nor did any one dare either to say Masses or sing psalms, or even to pray for him. Oh how far asunder hath God put light from darkness! The blessed Stephen, the first martyr, being about to suffer death for the truth, saw the heavens opened, and the glory of God, and Jesus standing on the right hand of God; and where he was to be after death, there he fixed the eyes of his mind, that he might die the more joyfully. But this workman, of darkened mind and life, when death was at hand, saw Hell opened, and witnessed the damnation of the Devil and his followers; he saw also, unhappy wretch! his own prison among them, to the end that, despairing of salvation, he might himself die the more miserably, but might by his perdition afford cause of salvation to the living, who should hear of it. This befell of late in the province of the Bernicians, and being noised abroad far and near, inclined many to do penance for their sins without delay. Would to God that this also might come to pass through the reading of our words!

CHAPTER XV

How divers churches of the Scots, at the instance of Adamnan, adopted the Catholic Easter; and how the same wrote a book about the holy places.

[703 A.D.]

AT this time a great part of the Scots in Ireland, and some also of the Britons in Britain, by the grace of God, adopted the reasonable and ecclesiastical time of keeping Easter. For when Adamnan, priest and abbot of the monks that were in the island of Hii, was sent by his nation on a mission to Aldfrid, king of the English, he abode some time in that province, and saw the canonical rites of the Church. Moreover, he was earnestly admonished by many of the more learned sort, not to presume to live contrary to the universal custom of the Church, either in regard to the observance of Easter, or any other ordinances whatsoever, with those few followers of his dwelling in the farthest corner of the world.

Wherefore he so changed his mind, that he readily preferred those things which he had seen and heard in the English churches, to the customs which he and his people had hitherto followed. For he was a good and wise man, and excellently instructed in knowledge of the Scriptures. Returning home, he endeavoured to bring his own people that were in Hii, or that were subject to that monastery, into the way of truth, which he had embraced with all his heart; but he could not prevail. He sailed over into Ireland, and preaching to those people, and with sober words of exhortation making known to them the lawful time of Easter, he brought back many of them, and almost all that were free from the dominion of those of Hii, from the error of their fathers to the Catholic unity, and taught them to keep the lawful time of Easter.

Returning to his island, after having celebrated the canonical Easter in Ireland, he was instant in preaching the Catholic observance of the season of Easter in his monastery, yet without being able to achieve his end; and it so happened that he departed this life before the next year came round, the Divine goodness so ordaining it, that as he was a great lover of peace and unity, he should be taken away to everlasting life before he should be obliged, on the return of the season of Easter, to be at greater variance with those that would not follow him into the truth.

This same man wrote a book concerning the holy places, of great profit to many readers; his authority was the teaching and dictation of Arculf, a bishop of Gaul, who had gone to Jerusalem for the sake of the holy places; and having wandered over all the Promised Land, travelled also to Damascus, Constantinople, Alexandria, and many islands in the sea, and returning home by ship, was cast upon the western coast of Britain by a great tempest. After many adventures he came to the aforesaid servant of Christ, Adamnan, and being found to be learned in the Scriptures, and acquainted with the holy places, was most gladly received by him and gladly heard, insomuch that whatsoever he said that he had seen worthy of remembrance in the holy places, Adamnan straightway set himself to commit to writing. Thus he composed a work, as I have said, profitable to many, and chiefly to those who, being far removed from those places where the patriarchs and Apostles lived, know no more of them than what they have learnt by reading. Adamnan presented this book to King Aldfrid, and through his bounty it came to be read by lesser persons. The writer thereof was also rewarded by him with many gifts and sent back into his country. I believe it will be of advantage to our readers if we collect some passages from his writings, and insert them in this our History.

CHAPTER XVI

The account given in the aforesaid book of the place of our Lord's Nativity, Passion, and Resurrection.

HE wrote concerning the place of the Nativity of our Lord, after this manner: "Bethlehem, the city of David, is situated on a narrow ridge, encompassed on all sides with valleys, being a mile in length from west to east, and having a low wall without towers, built along the edge of the level summit. In the eastern corner thereof is a sort of natural half cave, the outward part whereof is said to have been the place where our Lord was born; the inner is called the manger of our Lord. This cave within is all covered with rich marble, and over the particular spot where our Lord is said to have been born, stands the great church of St. Mary." He likewise wrote about the place of His Passion and Resurrection in this manner: "Entering the city of Jerusalem on the north side, the first place to be visited, according to the disposition of

the streets, is the church of Constantine, called the Martyrium. It was built by the Emperor Constantine, in a royal and magnificent manner, because the Cross of our Lord was said to have been found there by his mother Helena. Thence, to the westward, is seen the church of Golgotha, in which is also to be found the rock which once bore the Cross to which the Lord's body was nailed, and now it upholds a large silver cross, having a great brazen wheel with lamps hanging over it. Under the place of our Lord's Cross, a crypt is hewn out of the rock, in which the Sacrifice is offered on an altar for the dead that are held in honour, their bodies remaining meanwhile in the street. To the westward of this church is the round church of the Anastasis or Resurrection of our Lord, encompassed with three walls, and supported by twelve columns. Between each of the walls is a broad passage, which contains three altars at three different points of the middle wall; to the south, the north, and the west. It has eight doors or entrances in a straight line through the three walls; four whereof face the south-east, and four the east.' In the midst of it is the round tomb of our Lord cut out of the rock, the top of which a man standing within can touch with his hand; on the east is the entrance, against which that great stone was set. To this day the tomb bears the marks of the iron tools within, but on the outside it is all covered with marble to the very top of the roof, which is adorned with gold, and bears a large golden cross. In the north part of the tomb the sepulchre of our Lord is hewn out of the same rock, seven feet in length, and three handbreadths above the floor; the entrance being on the south side, where twelve lamps burn day and night, four within the sepulchre, and eight above on the edge of the right side. The stone that was set at the entrance to the tomb is now cleft in two; nevertheless, the lesser part of it stands as an altar of hewn stone before the door of the tomb; the greater part is set up as another altar, four-cornered, at the east end of the same church, and is covered with linen cloths. The colour of the said tomb and sepulchre is white and red mingled together."

CHAPTER XVII

What he likewise wrote of the place of our Lord's Ascension, and the tombs of the patriarchs.

CONCERNING the place of our Lord's Ascension, the aforesaid author writes thus. "The Mount of Olives is equal in height to Mount Sion, but exceeds it in breadth and length; it bears few trees besides vines and olives, and is fruitful in wheat and barley, for the nature of that soil is not such as to yield thickets, but grass and flowers. On the very top of it, where our Lord ascended into heaven, is a large round church, having round about it three chapels with vaulted roofs. For the inner building could not be vaulted and roofed, by reason of the passage of our Lord's Body; but it has an altar on the east side, sheltered by a narrow roof. In the midst of it are to be seen the last Footprints of our Lord, the place where He ascended being open to the sky; and though the earth is daily carried away by believers, yet still it remains, and retains the same appearance, being marked by the impression of the Feet. Round about these lies a brazen wheel, as high as a man's neck, having an entrance from the west, with a great lamp hanging above it on a pulley and burning night and day. In the western part of the same church are eight windows; and as many lamps, hanging opposite to them by cords, shine through the glass as far as Jerusalem; and the light thereof is said to thrill the hearts of the beholders with a certain zeal and compunction. Every year, on the day of the Ascension of our Lord, when Mass is ended, a strong blast of wind is wont to come down, and to cast to the ground all that are in the church."

Of the situation of Hebron, and the tombs of the fathers, he writes thus. "Hebron, once a habitation and the chief city of David's kingdom, now only showing by its ruins what it then was, has, one furlong to the east of it, a double cave in the valley, where the sepulchres of the patriarchs are encompassed with a wall foursquare, their heads lying to the north. Each of the tombs is covered with a single stone, hewn like the stones of a church, and of a white colour, for the three patriarchs. Adam's is of meaner and poorer workmanship, and he lies not far from them at the farthest end of the northern part of that wall. There are also some poorer and smaller

monuments of the three women. The hill Mamre is a mile from these tombs, and is covered with grass and flowers, having a level plain on the top. In the northern part of it, the trunk of Abraham's oak, being twice as high as a man, is enclosed in a church."

Thus much, gathered from the works of the aforesaid writer, according to the sense of his words, but more briefly and in fewer words, we have thought fit to insert in our History for the profit of readers. Whosoever desires to know more of the contents of that book, may seek it either in the book itself, or in that abridgement which we have lately made from it;

CHAPTER XVIII

How the South Saxons received Eadbert and Eolla, and the West Saxons, Daniel and Aldhelm, for their bishops; and of the writings of the same Aldhelm. [705 A.D.]

IN the year of our Lord 705, Aldfrid, king of the Northumbrians, died before the end of the twentieth year of his reign. His son Osred, a boy about eight years of age, succeeding him in the throne, reigned eleven years. In the beginning of his reign, Haedde, bishop of the West Saxons, departed to the heavenly life; for he was a good man and a just, and his life and doctrine as a bishop were guided rather by his innate love of virtue, than by what he had gained from books. The most reverend bishop, Pechthelm, of whom we shall speak hereafter in the proper place, and who while still deacon or monk was for a long time with his successor Aldhelm, was wont to relate that many miracles of healing have been wrought in the place where he died, through the merit of his sanctity; and that the men of that province used to carry the dust thence for the sick, and put it into water, and the drinking thereof, or sprinkling with it, brought health to many sick men and beasts; so that the holy dust being frequently carried away, a great hole was made there.

Upon his death, the bishopric of that province was divided into two dioceses. One of them was given to Daniel, which he governs to this day; the other to Aldhelm, wherein he presided most vigorously four years; both of them were fully instructed, as well in matters touching the Church as in the knowledge of the Scriptures. Aldhelm, when he was as yet only a priest and abbot of the monastery which is called the city of Maildufus, by order of a synod of his own nation, wrote a notable book against the error of the Britons, in not celebrating Easter at the due time, and in doing divers other things contrary to the purity of doctrine and the peace of the church; and through the reading of this book many of the Britons, who were subject to the West Saxons, were led by him to adopt the Catholic celebration of our Lord's Paschal Feast. He likewise wrote a famous book on Virginitie, which, after the example of Sedulius, he composed in twofold form, in hexameters and in prose. He wrote some other books, being a man most instructed in all respects, for he had a polished style, and was, as I have said, of marvellous learning both in liberal and ecclesiastical studies. On his death, Forthere was made bishop in his stead, and is living at this time, being likewise a man very learned in the Holy Scriptures.

Whilst they administered the bishopric, it was determined by a synodal decree, that the province of the South Saxons, which till that time belonged to the diocese of the city of Winchester, where Daniel then presided, should itself have an episcopal see, and a bishop of its own. Eadbert, at that time abbot of the monastery of Bishop Wilfrid, of blessed memory, called Selaeseu, was consecrated their first bishop. On his death, Eolla succeeded to the office of bishop. He also died some years ago, and the bishopric has been vacant to this day.

CHAPTER XIX

How Coinred, king of the Mercians, and Offa, king of the East Saxons, ended their days at Rome, in the monastic habit; and of the life and death of Bishop Wilfrid. [709 A. D.]

IN the fourth year of the reign of Osred, Coenred, who had for some time nobly governed the kingdom of the Mercians, much more nobly quitted the sceptre of his kingdom. For he went to Rome, and there receiving the tonsure and becoming a monk, when Constantine was pope, he continued to his last hour in prayer and fasting and alms-deeds at the threshold of the Apostles.

He was succeeded in the throne by Ceolred, the son of Ethelred, who had governed the kingdom before Coenred. With him went the son of Sighere, the king of the East Saxons whom we mentioned before, by name Offa, a youth of a most pleasing age and comeliness, and greatly desired by all his nation to have and to hold the sceptre of the kingdom. He, with like devotion, quitted wife, and lands, and kindred and country, for Christ and for the Gospel, that he might "receive an hundred-fold in this life, and in the world to come life everlasting." He also, when they came to the holy places at Rome, received the tonsure, and ending his life in the monastic habit, attained to the vision of the blessed Apostles in Heaven, as he had long desired.

The same year that they departed from Britain, the great bishop, Wilfrid, ended his days in the province called Inundalum, after he had been bishop forty-five years. His body, being laid in a coffin, was carried to his monastery, which is called Inhrypum, and buried in the church of the blessed Apostle Peter, with the honour due to so great a prelate. Concerning whose manner of life, let us now turn back, and briefly make mention of the things which were done. Being a boy of a good disposition, and virtuous beyond his years, he conducted himself so modestly and discreetly in all points, that he was deservedly beloved, respected, and cherished by his elders as one of themselves. At fourteen years of age he chose rather the monastic than the secular life; which, when he had signified to his father, for his mother was dead, he readily consented to his godly wishes and desires, and advised him to persist in that wholesome purpose. Wherefore he came to the isle of Lindisfarne, and there giving himself to the service of the monks, he strove diligently to learn and to practise those things which belong to monastic purity and piety; and being of a ready wit, he speedily learned the psalms and some other books, having not yet received the tonsure, but being in no small measure marked by those virtues of humility and obedience which are more important than the tonsure; for which reason he was justly loved by his elders and his equals. Having served God some years in that monastery, and being a youth of a good understanding, he perceived that the way of virtue delivered by the Scots was in no wise perfect, and he resolved to go to Rome, to see what ecclesiastical or monastic rites were in use at the Apostolic see. When he told the brethren, they commended his design, and advised him to carry out that which he purposed. He forthwith went to Queen Eanfled, for he was known to her, and it was by her counsel and support that he had been admitted into the aforesaid monastery, and he told her of his desire to visit the threshold of the blessed Apostles. She, being pleased with the youth's good purpose, sent him into Kent, to King Earconbert, who was her uncle's son, requesting that he would send him to Rome in an honourable manner. At that time, one of the disciples of the blessed Pope Gregory, a man very highly instructed in ecclesiastical learning, was archbishop there. When he had tarried there for a space, and, being a youth of an active spirit, was diligently applying himself to learn those things which came under his notice, another youth, called Biscop, surnamed Benedict, of the English nobility, arrived there, being likewise desirous to go to Rome, of whom we have before made mention.

The king gave him Wilfrid for a companion, and bade Wilfrid conduct him to Rome. When they came to Lyons, Wilfrid was detained there by Dalfinus, the bishop of that city; but Benedict hastened on to Rome. For the bishop was delighted with the youth's prudent discourse, the grace of his comely countenance, his eager activity, and the consistency and maturity of his thoughts; for which reason he plentifully supplied him and his companions with all necessaries, as long as they stayed with him; and further offered, if he would have it, to commit to him the government of no small part of Gaul, to give him a maiden daughter of his own brother to wife, and to regard him always as his adopted son. But Wilfrid thanked him for the loving-kindness which he was pleased to show to a stranger, and answered, that he had resolved upon another course of life, and for that reason had left his country and set out for Rome.

Hereupon the bishop sent him to Rome, furnishing him with a guide and supplying plenty of all things requisite for his journey, earnestly requesting that he would come that way, when he returned into his own country. Wilfrid arriving at Rome, and daily giving himself with all earnestness to prayer and the study of ecclesiastical matters, as he had purposed in his mind, gained the friendship of the most holy and learned Boniface, the archdeacon, who was also counsellor to the Apostolic Pope, by whose instruction he learned, in their order the four Gospels, and the true computation of Easter; and many other things appertaining to ecclesiastical discipline, which he could not learn in his own country, he acquired from the teaching of that same master. When he had spent some months there, in successful study, he returned into Gaul, to Dalfinus; and having stayed with him three years, received from him the tonsure, and Dalfinus esteemed him so highly in love that he had thoughts of making him his heir; but this was prevented by the bishop's cruel death, and Wilfrid was reserved to be a bishop of his own, that is, the English, nation. For Queen Baldhild sent soldiers with orders to put the bishop to death; whom Wilfrid, as his clerk, attended to the place where he was to be beheaded, being very desirous, though the bishop strongly opposed it, to die with him; but the executioners, understanding that he was a stranger, and of the English nation, spared him, and would not put him to death with his bishop.

Returning to Britain, he won the friendship of King Alchfrid, who had learnt to follow always and love the catholic rules of the Church; and therefore finding him to be a Catholic, he gave him presently land of ten families at the place called Stanford; and not long after, the monastery, with land of thirty families, at the place called Inhrypum; which place he had formerly given to those that followed the doctrine of the Scots, to build a monastery there. But, forasmuch as they afterwards, being given the choice, had rather quit the place than adopt the Catholic Easter and other canonical rites, according to the custom of the Roman Apostolic Church, he gave the same to him whom he found to be instructed in better discipline and better customs.

At the same time, by the said king's command, he was ordained priest in the same monastery, by Agilbert, bishop of the Gewissae above-mentioned, the king being desirous that a man of so much learning and piety should attend him constantly as his special priest and teacher; and not long after, when the Scottish sect had been exposed and banished, as was said above, he, with the advice and consent of his father Oswy, sent him into Gaul, to be consecrated as his bishop, when he was about thirty years of age, the same Agilbert being then bishop of the city of Paris. Eleven other bishops met at the consecration of the new bishop, and that function was most honourably performed. Whilst he yet tarried beyond the sea, the holy man, Ceadda, was consecrated bishop of by command of King Oswy, as has been said above; and having nobly ruled that church three years, he retired to take charge of his monastery of Laestingaeu, and Wilfrid was made bishop of all the province of the Northumbrians.

Afterwards, in the reign of Egfrid, he was expelled from his bishopric, and others were consecrated bishops in his stead, of whom mention has been made above. Designing to go to Rome, to plead his cause before the Apostolic Pope, he took ship, and was driven by a west wind into Frisland, and honourably received by that barbarous people and their King Aldgils, to whom he preached Christ, and he instructed many thousands of them in the Word of truth, washing them from the defilement of their sins in the Saviour's font. Thus he began there the work of the Gospel which was afterwards finished with great devotion by the most reverend bishop of Christ, Wilbrord. Having spent the winter there successfully among this new people of God, he set out again on his way to Rome, where his cause being tried before Pope Agatho and many bishops, he was by the judgement of them all acquitted of all blame, and declared worthy of his bishopric.

At the same time, the said Pope Agatho assembling a synod at Rome, of one hundred and twenty-five bishops, against those who asserted that there was only one will and operation in our Lord and Saviour, ordered Wilfrid also to be summoned, and, sitting among the bishops, to declare his own faith and the faith of the province or island whence he came; and he and his people being found orthodox in their faith, it was thought fit to record the same among the acts

of that synod, which was done in this manner: "Wilfrid, the beloved of God, bishop of the city of York, appealing to the Apostolic see, and being by that authority acquitted of every thing, whether specified against him or not, and being appointed to sit in judgement with one hundred and twenty-five other bishops in the synod, made confession of the true and catholic faith, and confirmed the same with his subscription in the name of all the northern part of Britain and Ireland, and the islands inhabited by the nations of the English and Britons, as also by the Scots and Picts."

After this, returning into Britain, he converted the province of the South Saxons from their idolatrous worship to the faith of Christ. He also sent ministers of the Word to the Isle of Wight; and in the second year of Aldfrid, who reigned after Egfrid, was restored to his see and bishopric by that king's invitation. Nevertheless, five years after, being again accused, he was deprived of his bishopric by the same king and certain bishops. Coming to Rome, he was allowed to make his defence in the presence of his accusers, before a number of bishops and the Apostolic Pope John. It was shown by the judgement of them all, that his accusers had in part laid false accusations to his charge; and the aforesaid Pope wrote to the kings of the English, Ethelred and Aldfrid, to cause him to be restored to his bishopric, because he had been unjustly condemned.

His acquittal was much forwarded by the reading of the acts of the synod of Pope Agatho, of blessed memory, which had been formerly held, when Wilfrid was in Rome and sat in council among the bishops, as has been said before. For the acts of that synod being, as the case required, read, by order of the Apostolic Pope, before the nobility and a great number of the people for some days, they came to the place where it was written, "Wilfrid, the beloved of God, bishop of the city of York, appealing to the Apostolic see, and being by that authority acquitted of everything, whether specified against him or not," and the rest as above stated. This being read, the hearers were amazed, and the reader ceasing, they began to ask of one another, who that Bishop Wilfrid was. Then Boniface, the Pope's counsellor, and many others, who had seen him there in the days of Pope Agatho, said that he was the same bishop that lately came to Rome, to be tried by the Apostolic see, being accused by his people, and "who, said they, having long since come here upon the like accusation, the cause and contention of both parties being heard and examined, was proved by Pope Agatho, of blessed memory, to have been wrongfully expelled from his bishopric, and was held in such honour by him, that he commanded him to sit in the council of bishops which he had assembled, as a man, of untainted faith and an upright mind." This being heard, the Pope and all the rest said, that a man of so great authority, who had held the office of a bishop for nearly forty years, ought by no means to be condemned, but being altogether cleared of the faults laid to his charge, should return home with honour.

When he came to Gaul, on his way back to Britain, on a sudden he fell sick, and the sickness increasing, he was so weighed down by it, that he could not ride, but was carried in his bed by the hands of his servants. Being thus come to the city of Maeldum, in Gaul, he lay four days and nights, as if he had been dead, and only by his faint breathing showed that he had any life in him. Having continued thus four days, without meat or drink, without speech or hearing, at length, on the fifth day, at daybreak, as it were awakening out of a deep sleep, he raised himself and sat up, and opening his eyes, saw round about him a company of brethren singing psalms and weeping. Sighing gently, he asked where Acca, the priest, was. This man, straightway being called, came in, and seeing him somewhat recovered and able to speak, knelt down, and gave thanks to God, with all the brethren there present. When they had sat awhile and begun to discourse, with great awe, of the judgements of heaven, the bishop bade the rest go out for a time, and spoke to the priest, Acca, after this manner:

"A dread vision has even now appeared to me, which I would have you hear and keep secret, till I know what God will please to do with me. There stood by me a certain one, glorious in white raiment, and he told me that he was Michael, the Archangel, and said, "I am sent to call you back from death: for the Lord has granted you life, through the prayers and tears of your disciples and brethren, and the intercession of His Blessed Mother Mary, of perpetual virginity; wherefore I tell you, that you shall now recover from this sickness; but be ready, for I will return and visit

you at the end of four years. And when you come into your country, you shall recover the greater part of the possessions that have been taken from you, and shall end your days in peace and quiet." The bishop accordingly recovered, whereat all men rejoiced and gave thanks to God, and setting forward on his journey, he arrived in Britain.

Having read the letters which he brought from the Apostolic Pope, Bertwald, the archbishop, and sometime king, but then abbot, readily took his part; for the said Ethelred, calling to him Coenred, whom he had made king in his own stead, begged him to be friends with Wilfrid, in which request he prevailed; nevertheless Aldfrid, king of the Northumbrians, disdained to receive him. But he died soon after, and so it came to pass that, during the reign of his son Osred, when a synod was assembled before long by the river Nidd, after some contention on both sides, at length, by the consent of all, he was restored to the government of his own church; and thus he lived in peace four years, till the day of his death. He died in his monastery, which he had in the province of Undalum, under the government of the Abbot Cuthbald; and by the ministry of the brethren, he was carried to his first monastery which is called Inhrypum, and buried in the church of the blessed Apostle Peter, hard by the altar on the south side, as has been mentioned above, and this epitaph was written over him:

"Here rests the body of the great Bishop Wilfrid, who, for love of piety, built these courts and consecrated them with the noble name of Peter, to whom Christ, the Judge of all the earth, gave the keys of Heaven. And devoutly he clothed them with gold and Tyrian purple; yea, and he placed here the trophy of the Cross, of shining ore, uplifted high; moreover he caused the four books of the Gospel to be written in gold in their order, and he gave a case meet for them of ruddy gold. And he also brought the holy season of Easter, returning in its course, to accord with the true teaching of the catholic rule which the Fathers fixed, and, banishing all doubt and error, gave his nation sure guidance in their worship. And in this place he gathered a great throng of monks, and with all diligence safeguarded the precepts which the Fathers' rule enjoined. And long time sore vexed by many a peril at home and abroad, when he had held the office of a bishop forty-five years, he passed away and with joy departed to the heavenly kingdom. Grant, Jesus, that the flock may follow in the path of the shepherd."

CHAPTER XX

How Albinus succeeded to the godly Abbot Hadrian, and Acca to Bishop Wilfrid. [709 A.D.]

THE next year after the death of the aforesaid father, which was the fifth year of King Osred, the most reverend father, Abbot Hadrian, fellow labourer in the Word of God with Bishop Theodore of blessed memory, died, and was buried in the church of the Blessed Mother of God, in his own monastery, this being the forty-first year after he was sent by Pope Vitalian with Theodore, and the thirty-ninth after his arrival in England. Among other proofs of his learning, as well as Theodore's, there is this testimony, that Albinus, his disciple, who succeeded him in the government of his monastery, was so well instructed in literary studies, that he had no small knowledge of the Greek tongue, and knew the Latin as well as the English, which was his native language.

Acca, his priest, succeeded Wilfrid in the bishopric of the church of Hagustald, being likewise a man of zeal and great in noble works in the sight of God and man. He enriched the structure of his church, which is dedicated in honour of the blessed Apostle Andrew with manifold adornments and marvellous workmanship. For he gave all diligence, as he does to this day, to procure relics of the blessed Apostles and martyrs of Christ from all parts, and to raise altars in their honour in separate side-chapels built for the purpose within the walls of the same church. Besides which, he industriously gathered the histories of their martyrdom, together with other ecclesiastical writings, and erected there a large and noble library. He likewise carefully provided holy vessels, lamps, and other such things as appertain to the adorning of the house of God. He in like manner invited to him a notable singer called Maban, who had been taught to

sing by the successors of the disciples of the blessed Pope Gregory in Kent, to instruct himself and his clergy, and kept him twelve years, to the end that he might teach such Church music as they did not know, and by his teaching restore to its former state that which was corrupted either by long use, or through neglect. For Bishop Acca himself was a most skilful singer, as well as most learned in Holy Writ, sound in the confession of the catholic faith, and well versed in the rules of ecclesiastical custom; nor does he cease to walk after this manner, till he receive the rewards of his pious devotion. For he was brought up from boyhood and instructed among the clergy of the most holy and beloved of God, Bosa, bishop of York. Afterwards, coming to Bishop Wilfrid in the hope of a better plan of life, he spent the rest of his days in attendance on him till that bishop's death, and going with him to Rome, learned there many profitable things concerning the ordinances of the Holy Church, which he could not have learned in his own country.

CHAPTER XXI

How the Abbot Ceolfrid sent master-builders to the King of the Picts to build a church, and with them an epistle concerning the catholic Easter and the Tonsure. [710 A.D.]

AT that time, Naiton, King of the Picts, who inhabit the northern parts of Britain, taught by frequent meditation on the ecclesiastical writings, renounced the error whereby he and his nation had been holden till then, touching the observance of Easter, and brought himself and all his people to celebrate the catholic time of our Lord's Resurrection. To the end that he might bring this to pass with the more ease and greater authority, he sought aid from the English, whom he knew to have long since framed their religion after the example of the holy Roman Apostolic Church. Accordingly, he sent messengers to the venerable Ceolfrid, abbot of the monastery of the blessed Apostles, Peter and Paul, which stands at the mouth of the river Wear, and near the river Tyne, at the place called Ingyruum, which he gloriously governed after Benedict, of whom we have before spoken; desiring, that he would send him a letter of exhortation, by the help of which he might the better confute those that presumed to keep Easter out of the due time; as also concerning the form and manner of tonsure whereby the clergy should be distinguished, notwithstanding that he himself had no small knowledge of these things. He also prayed to have master-builders sent him to build a church of stone in his nation after the Roman manner, promising to dedicate the same in honour of the blessed chief of the Apostles. Moreover, he and all his people, he said, would always follow the custom of the holy Roman Apostolic Church, in so far as men so distant from the speech and nation of the Romans could learn it. The most reverend Abbot Ceolfrid favourably receiving his godly desires and requests, sent the builders he desired, and likewise the following letter:

"To the most excellent lord, and glorious King Naiton, Abbot Ceolfrid, greeting in the Lord. We most readily and willingly endeavour, according to your desire, to make known to you the catholic observance of holy Easter, according to what we have learned of the Apostolic see, even as you, most devout king, in your godly zeal, have requested of us. For we know, that whensoever the lords of this world labour to learn, and to teach and to guard the truth, it is a gift of God to his Holy Church. For a certain profane writer has most truly said, that the world would be most happy if either kings were philosophers, or philosophers were kings. Now if a man of this world could judge truly of the philosophy of this world, and form a right choice concerning the state of this world, how much more is it to be desired, and most earnestly to be prayed for by such as are citizens of the heavenly country, and strangers and pilgrims in this world, that the more powerful any are in the world the more they may strive to hearken to the commands of Him who is the Supreme Judge, and by their example and authority may teach those that are committed to their charge, to keep the same, together with themselves.

"There are then three rules given in the Sacred Writings, whereby the time of keeping Easter has been appointed for us and may in no wise be changed by any authority of man; two whereof are

divinely established in the law of Moses; the third is added in the Gospel by reason of the Passion and Resurrection of our Lord. For the law enjoined, that the Passover should be kept in the first month of the year, and the third week of that month, that is, from the fifteenth day to the one-and-twentieth. It is added, by Apostolic institution, from the Gospel, that we are to wait for the Lord's day in that third week, and to keep the beginning of the Paschal season on the same. Which threefold rule whosoever shall rightly observe, will never err in fixing the Paschal feast. But if you desire to be more plainly and fully informed in all these particulars, it is written in Exodus, where the people of Israel, being about to be delivered out of Egypt, are commanded to keep the first Passover, that the Lord spake unto Moses and Aaron, saying, 'This month shall be unto you the beginning of months; it shall be the first month of the year to you. Speak ye unto all the congregation of Israel, saying, In the tenth day of this month they shall take to them every man a lamb, according to the house of their fathers, a lamb for an house.' And a little after, 'And ye shall keep it up until the fourteenth day of the same month; and the whole assembly of the congregation of Israel shall kill it in the evening.' By which words it most plainly appears, that in the Paschal observance, though mention is made of the fourteenth day, yet it is not commanded that the Passover be kept on that day; but on the evening of the fourteenth day, that is, when the fifteenth moon, which is the beginning of the third week, appears in the sky, it is commanded that the lamb be killed; and that it was the night of the fifteenth moon, when the Egyptians were smitten and Israel was redeemed from long captivity. He says, 'Seven days shall ye eat unleavened bread.' By which words all the third week of that same first month is appointed to be a solemn feast. But lest we should think that those same seven days were to be reckoned from the fourteenth to the twentieth, He forthwith adds, 'Even the first day ye shall put away leaven out of your houses; for whosoever eateth leavened bread, from the first day until the seventh day, that soul shall be cut off from Israel;' and so on, till he says, 'For in this selfsame day I will bring your army out of the land of Egypt.'

"Thus he calls that the first day of unleavened bread, in which he was to bring their army out of Egypt. Now it is evident, that they were not brought out of Egypt on the fourteenth day, in the evening whereof the lamb was killed, and which is properly called the Passover or Phase, but on the fifteenth day, as is most plainly written in the book of Numbers: 'and they departed from Rameses on the fifteenth day of the first month, on the morrow after the Passover the Israelites went out with an high hand.' Thus the seven days of unleavened bread, on the first whereof the people of the Lord were brought out of Egypt, are to be reckoned from the 'beginning of the third week, as has been said, that is, from the fifteenth day of the first month, till the end of the one-and-twentieth of the same month. But the fourteenth day is named apart from this number, by the title of the Passover, as is plainly shown by that which follows in Exodus:" where, after it is said, 'For in this self-same day I will bring your army out of the land of Egypt;' it is forthwith added, 'And ye shall observe this day in your generations by an ordinance for ever. In the first month, on the fourteenth day of the month, ye shall eat unleavened bread, until the one-and-twentieth day of the month at even. Seven days shall there be no leaven, found in your houses.' Now, who is there that does not perceive, that there are not only seven days, but rather eight, from the fourteenth to the one-and-twentieth, if the fourteenth be also reckoned in the number? But if, as appears by diligent study of the truth of the Scriptures, we reckon from the evening of the fourteenth day to the evening of the one-and-twentieth, we shall certainly find that, while the Paschal feast begins on the evening of the fourteenth day, yet the whole sacred solemnity contains no more than only seven nights and as many days. Wherefore the rule which we laid down is proved to be true, when we said that the Paschal season is to be celebrated in the first month of the year, and the third week of the same. For it is in truth the third week, because it begins on the evening of the fourteenth day, and ends on the evening of the one-and-twentieth.

"But since Christ our Passover is sacrificed,' and has made the Lord's day, which among the ancients was called the first day of the week, a solemn day to us for the joy of His Resurrection, the Apostolic tradition has included it in the Paschal festival; yet has decreed that the time of the legal Passover be in no wise anticipated or diminished; but rather ordains, that according to the precept of the law, that same first month of the year, and the fourteenth day of the same, and the

evening thereof be awaited. And when this day should chance to fall on a Saturday, every man should take to him a lamb, according to the house of his fathers, a lamb for an house, and he should kill it in the evening, that is, that all the Churches throughout the world, making one Catholic Church, should provide Bread and Wine for the Mystery of the Flesh and Blood of the spotless Lamb 'that hath taken away the sins of the world; and after a fitting solemn service of lessons and prayers and Paschal ceremonies, they should offer up these to the Lord, in hope of redemption to come. For this is that same night in which the people of Israel were delivered out of Egypt by the blood of the lamb; this is the same in which all the people of God were, by Christ's Resurrection, set free from eternal death. Then, in the morning, when the Lord's day dawns, they should celebrate the first day of the Paschal festival; for that is the day on which our Lord made known the glory of His Resurrection to His disciples, to their manifold joy at the merciful revelation.

The same is the first clay of unleavened bread, concerning which it is plainly written in Leviticus, 'In the fourteenth day of the first month, at even, is the Lord's Passover. And on the fifteenth day of the same month is the feast of unleavened bread unto the Lord; seven days ye must eat unleavened bread. In the first day ye shall have an holy convocation.'

"If therefore it could be that the Lord's day should always happen on the fifteenth day of the first month, that is, on the fifteenth moon, we might always celebrate the Passover at one and the same time with the ancient people of God, though the nature of the mystery be different, as we do it with one and the same faith. But inasmuch as the day of the week does not keep pace exactly with the moon, the Apostolic tradition, which was preached at Rome by the blessed Peter, and confirmed at Alexandria by Mark the Evangelist, his interpreter, appointed that when the first month was come, and in it the evening of the fourteenth day, we should also wait for the Lord's day, between the fifteenth and the one-and-twentieth day of the same month. For on whichever of those days it shall fall, Easter will be rightly kept on the same; seeing that it is one of those seven days on which the feast of unleavened bread is commanded to be kept. Thus it comes to pass that our Easter never falls either before or after the third week of the first month, but has for its observance either the whole of it, to wit, the seven days of unleavened bread appointed by the law, or at least some of them. For though it comprises but one of them, that is, the seventh, which the Scripture so highly commends, saying, 'But the seventh day shall be a more holy convocation, ye shall do no servile work therein,' none can lay it to our charge, that we do not rightly keep Easter Sunday, which we received from the Gospel, in the third week of the first month, as the Law prescribes.

"The catholic reason of this observance being thus explained, the unreasonable error, on the other hand, of those who, without any necessity, presume either to anticipate, or to go beyond the term appointed in the Law, is manifest. For they that think Easter Sunday is to be observed from the fourteenth day of the first month till the twentieth moon, anticipate the time prescribed in the law, without any necessary reason; for when they begin to celebrate the vigil of the holy night from the evening of the thirteenth day, it is plain that they make that day the beginning of their Easter, whereof they find no mention in the commandment of the Law; and when they avoid celebrating our Lord's Easter on the one-and-twentieth day of the month, it is surely manifest that they wholly exclude that day from their solemnity, which the Law many times commends to be observed as a greater festival than the rest; and thus, perverting the proper order, they sometimes keep Easter Day entirely in the second week, and never place it on the seventh day of the third week. And again, they who think that Easter is to be kept from the sixteenth day of the said month till the two-and-twentieth no less erroneously, though on the other side, deviate from the right way of truth, and as it were avoiding shipwreck on Scylla, they fall into the whirlpool of Charybdis to be drowned. For when they teach that Easter is to be begun at the rising of the sixteenth moon of the first month, that is, from the evening of the fifteenth day, it is certain that they altogether exclude from their solemnity the fourteenth day of the same month, which the Law first and chiefly commends; so that they scarce touch the evening of the fifteenth day, on which the people of God were redeemed from Egyptian bondage, and on which

our Lord, by His Blood, rescued the world from the darkness of sin, and on which being also buried, He gave us the hope of a blessed rest after death.

"And these men, receiving in themselves the recompense of their error, when they place Easter Sunday on the twenty-second day of the month, openly transgress and do violence to the term of Easter appointed by the Law, seeing that they begin Easter on the evening of that day in which the Law commanded it to be completed and brought to an end; and appoint that to be the first day of Easter, whereof no mention is any where found in the Law, to wit, the first of the fourth week. And both sorts are mistaken, not only in fixing and computing the moon's age, but also sometimes in finding the first month; but this controversy is longer than can be or ought to be contained in this letter. I will only say thus much, that by the vernal equinox, it may always be found, without the chance of an error, which must be the first month of the year, according to the lunar computation, and which the last. But the equinox, according to the opinion of all the Eastern nations, and particularly of the Egyptians, who surpass all other learned men in calculation, falls on the twenty-first day of March, as we also prove by horological observation. Whatsoever moon therefore is at the full before the equinox, being on the fourteenth or fifteenth day, the same belongs to the last month of the foregoing year, and consequently is not meet for the celebration of Easter; but that moon which is full after the equinox, or at the very time of the equinox, belongs to the first month, and on that day, without a doubt, we must understand that the ancients were wont to celebrate the Passover; and that we also ought to keep Easter when the Sunday comes. And that this must be so, there is this cogent reason. It is written in Genesis, 'And God made two great lights; the greater light to rule the day, and the lesser light to rule the night.' Or, as another edition has it, 'The greater light to begin the day, and the lesser to begin the night.' As, therefore, the sun, coming forth from the midst of the east, fixed the vernal equinox by his rising, and afterwards the moon at the full, when the sun set in the evening, followed from the midst of the east; so every year the same first lunar month must be observed in the like order, so that its full moon must not be before the equinox.; but either on the very day of the equinox, as it was in the beginning, or after it is past. But if the full moon shall happen to be but one day before the time of the equinox, the aforesaid reason proves that such moon is not to be assigned to the first month of the new year, but rather to the last of the preceding, and that it is therefore not meet for the celebration of the Paschal festival.

"Now if it please you likewise to hear the mystical reason in this matter, we are commanded to keep Easter in the first month of the year, which is also called the month of new things, because we ought to celebrate the mysteries of our Lord's Resurrection and our deliverance, with the spirit of our minds renewed to the love of heavenly things. We are commanded to keep it in the third week of the same month, because Christ Himself, who had been promised before the Law, and under the Law, came with grace, in the third age of the world, to be sacrificed as our Passover ; and because rising from the dead the third day after the offering of His Passion, He wished this to be called the Lord's day, and the Paschal feast of His Resurrection to be yearly celebrated on the same; because, also, we do then only truly celebrate His solemn festival, if we endeavour with Him to keep the Passover, that is, the passing from this world to the Father, by faith, hope, and charity. We are commanded to observe the full moon of the Paschal month after the vernal equinox, to the end, that the sun may first make the day longer than the night, and then the moon may show to the world her full orb of light; inasmuch as first 'the Sun of Righteousness, with healing in His wings,' that is, our Lord Jesus, by the triumph of His Resurrection, dispelled all the darkness of death, and so ascending into Heaven, filled His Church, which is often signified by the name of the moon, with the light of inward grace, by sending down upon her His Spirit. Which order of our salvation the prophet had in his mind, when he said 'The sun was exalted and the moon stood in her order.'

"He, therefore, who shall contend that the full Paschal moon can happen before the equinox, disagrees with the doctrine of the Holy Scriptures, in the celebration of the greatest mysteries, and agrees with those who trust that they may be saved without the grace of Christ preventing them, and who presume to teach that they might have attained to perfect righteousness, though the true Light had never by death and resurrection vanquished the darkness of the world. Thus,

after the rising of the sun at the equinox, and after the full moon of the first month following in her order, that is, after the end of the fourteenth day of the same month, all which we have received by the Law to be observed, we still, as we are taught in the Gospel, wait in the third week for the Lord's day; and so, at length, we celebrate the offering of our Easter solemnity, to show that we are not, with the ancients, doing honour to the casting off of the yoke of Egyptian bondage; but that, with devout faith and love, we worship the Redemption of the whole world, which having been prefigured in the deliverance of the ancient people of God, was fulfilled in Christ's Resurrection, and that we may signify that we rejoice in the sure and certain hope of our own resurrection, which we believe will likewise happen on the Lord's day.

"Now this computation of Easter, which we set forth to you to be followed, is contained in a cycle of nineteen years, which began long since to be observed in the Church, to wit, even in the time of the Apostles, especially at Rome and in Egypt, as has been said above. But by the industry of Eusebius, who took his surname from the blessed martyr Pamphilus, it was reduced to a plainer system; insomuch that what till then used to be enjoined every year throughout all the Churches by the Bishop of Alexandria, might, from that time forward, be most easily known by all men, the occurrence of the fourteenth moon being regularly set forth in its course. This Paschal computation, Theophilus, Bishop of Alexandria, made for the Emperor Theodosius, for a hundred years to come. Cyril also, his successor, comprised a series of ninety-five years in five cycles of nineteen years. After whom, Dionysius Exiguus added as many more, in order, after the same manner, reaching down to our own time. The expiration of these is now drawing near, but there is at the present day so great a number of calculators, that even in our Churches throughout Britain, there are many who, having learned the ancient rules of the Egyptians, can with great ease carry on the Paschal cycles for any length of time, even to five hundred and thirty-two years, if they will; after the expiration of which, all that appertains to the succession of sun and moon, month and week, returns in the same order as before. We therefore forbear to send you these same cycles of the times to come, because, desiring only to be instructed respecting the reason for the Paschal time, you show that you have enough of those catholic cycles concerning Easter.

"But having said thus much briefly and succinctly, as you required, concerning Easter, I also exhort you to take heed that the tonsure, concerning which likewise you desired me to write to you, be in accordance with the use of the Church and the Christian Faith. And we know indeed that the Apostles were not all shorn after the same manner, nor does the Catholic Church now, as it agrees in one faith, hope, and charity towards God, use one and the same form of tonsure throughout the world. Moreover, to look back to former times, to wit, the times of the patriarchs, Job, the pattern of patience, when tribulation came upon him, shaved his head, and thus made it appear that he had used, in time of prosperity, to let his hair grow. But concerning Joseph, who more than other men practised and taught chastity, humility, piety, and the other virtues, we read that he was shorn when he was to be delivered from bondage, by which it appears, that during the time of his bondage, he was in the prison with unshorn hair. Behold then how each of these men of God differed in the manner of their appearance abroad, though their inward consciences agreed in a like grace of virtue. But though we may be free to confess, that the difference of tonsure is not hurtful to those whose faith is pure towards God, and their charity sincere towards their neighbour, especially since we do not read that there was ever any controversy among the Catholic fathers about the difference of tonsure, as there has been a contention about the diversity in keeping Easter, and in matters of faith; nevertheless, among all the forms of tonsure that are to be found in the Church, or among mankind at large, I think none more meet to be followed and received by us than that which that disciple wore on his head, to whom, after his confession of Himself, our Lord said, 'Thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build My Church, and the gates of Hell shall not prevail against it, and I will give unto thee the keys of the kingdom of Heaven.' Nor do I think that any is more rightly to be abhorred and detested by all the faithful, than that which that man used, to whom that same Peter, when he would have bought the grace of the Holy Ghost, said, 'Thy money perish with thee, because thou hast thought that the gift of God may be purchased with money. Thou hast neither part nor lot in this word.' Nor do we shave ourselves in the form of a crown only because Peter was so shorn; but

because Peter was so shorn in memory of the Passion of our Lord, therefore we also, who desire to be saved by the same Passion, do with him bear the sign of the same Passion on the top of our head, which is the highest part of our body. For as all the Church, because it was made a Church by the death of Him that gave it life, is wont to bear the sign of His Holy Cross on the forehead, to the end, that it may, by the constant protection of His banner, be defended from the assaults of evil spirits, and by the frequent admonition of the same be taught, in like manner, to crucify the flesh with its affections and lusts ; so also it behoves those, who having either taken the vows of a monk, or having the degree of a clerk, must needs curb themselves the more strictly by continence, for the Lord's sake, to bear each one of them on his head, by the tonsure, the form of the crown of thorns which He bore on His head in His Passion, that He might bear the thorns and thistles of our sins, that is, that he might bear them away and take them from us; to the end that. they may show on their foreheads that they also willingly, and readily, endure all scoffing and reproach for his sake; and that they may signify that they await always 'the crown of eternal life, which God hath promised to them that love him,' and that for the sake of attaining thereto they despise both the evil and the good of this world. But as for the tonsure which Simon Magus is said to have used, who is there of the faithful, I ask you, who does not straightway detest and reject it at the first sight of it, together with his magic? Above the forehead it does seem indeed to resemble a crown; but when you come to look at the neck, you will find the crown cut short which you thought you saw; so that you may perceive that such a use properly belongs not to Christians but to Simoniacs, such as were indeed in this life by erring men thought worthy of the glory of an everlasting crown; but in that which is to follow this life are not only deprived of all hope of a crown, but are moreover condemned to eternal punishment.

"But do not think that I have said thus much, as though I judged them worthy to be condemned who use this tonsure, if they uphold the catholic unity by their faith and works; nay, I confidently declare, that many of them have been holy men and worthy servants of God. Of which number is Adamnan, the notable abbot and priest of the followers of Columba, who, when sent on a mission by his nation to King Aldfrid, desired to see our monastery, and forasmuch as he showed wonderful wisdom, humility, and piety in his words and behaviour, I said to him among other things, when I talked with him, 'I beseech you, holy brother, how is it that you, who believe that you are advancing to the crown of life, which knows no end, wear on your head, after a fashion ill-suited to your belief, the likeness of a crown that has an end? And if you seek the fellowship of the blessed Peter, why do you imitate the likeness of the tonsure of him whom St. Peter anathematized? and why do you not rather even now show that you choose with all your heart the 'fashion of him with whom you desire to live in bliss for ever.' He answered, 'Be assured, my dear brother, that though I wear the tonsure of Simon, according to the custom of my country, yet I detest and abhor with all my soul the heresy of Simon; and I desire, as far as lies in my small power, to follow the footsteps of the most blessed chief of the Apostles.' I replied, 'I verily believe it; nevertheless it is a token that you embrace in your inmost heart whatever is of Peter the Apostle, if you also observe in outward form that which you know to be his. For I think your wisdom easily discerns that it is much better to estrange from your countenance, already dedicated to God, the fashion of his countenance whom with all your heart you abhor, and of whose hideous face you would shun the sight; and, on the other hand, that it beseems you to imitate the manner of his appearance, whom you seek to have for your advocate before God, even as you desire to follow his actions and his teaching.'

"This I said at that time to Adamnan, who indeed showed how much he had profited by seeing the ordinances of our Churches, when, returning into Scotland, he afterwards by his preaching led great numbers of that nation to the catholic observance of the Paschal time; though he was not yet able to bring back to the way of the better ordinance the monks that lived in the island of Hii over whom he presided with the special authority of a superior. He would also have been mindful to amend the tonsure, if his influence had availed so far.

"But I now also admonish your wisdom, O king, that together with the nation, over which the King of kings, and Lord of lords, has placed you, you strive to observe in all points those things which are in accord with the unity of the Catholic and Apostolic Church; for so it will come to

pass, that after you have held sway in a temporal kingdom, the blessed chief of the Apostles will also willingly open to you and yours with all the elect the entrance into the heavenly kingdom. The grace of the eternal King preserve you in safety, long reigning for the peace of us all, my dearly beloved son in Christ."

This letter having been read in the presence of King. Naiton and many learned men, and carefully interpreted into his own language by those who could understand it, he is said to have much rejoiced at the exhortation thereof; insomuch that, rising from among his nobles that sat about him, he knelt on the ground, giving thanks to God that he had been found worthy to receive such a gift from the land of the English. "And indeed," he said, "I knew before, that this was the true celebration of Easter, but now I so fully learn the reason for observing this time, that I seem in all points to have known but little before concerning these matters. Therefore I publicly declare and protest to you that are here present, that I will for ever observe this time of Easter, together with all my nation; and I do decree that this tonsure, which we have heard to be reasonable, shall be received by all clerks in my kingdom." Without delay he accomplished by his royal authority what he had said. For straightway the Paschal cycles of nineteen years were sent by command of the State throughout all the provinces of the Picts to be transcribed, learned, and observed, the erroneous cycles of eighty-four years being everywhere blotted out. All the ministers of the altar and monks were shorn after the fashion of the crown; and the nation thus reformed, rejoiced, as being newly put under the guidance of Peter, the most blessed chief of the Apostles, and committed to his protection.

CHAPTER XXII

How the monks of Hii, and the monasteries subject to them, began to celebrate the canonical Easter at the preaching of Egbert. [716 A. D.]

NOT long after, those monks also of the Scottish nation, who lived in the isle of Hii, with the other monasteries that were subject to them, were by the Lord's doing brought to the canonical observance with regard to Easter, and the tonsure. For in the year of our Lord 716, when Osred was slain, and Coenred took upon him the government of the kingdom of the Northumbrians, the father and priest, Egbert, beloved of God, and worthy to be named with all honour, whom we have before often mentioned, came to them from Ireland, and was honourably and joyfully received. Being a most gracious teacher, and most devout in practising those things which he taught, and being willingly heard by all, by his pious and diligent exhortations, he converted them from that deep-rooted tradition of their fathers, of whom may be said those words of the Apostle, "That they had a zeal of God, but not according to knowledge." He taught them to celebrate the principal solemnity after the catholic and apostolic manner, as has been said, wearing on their heads the figure of an unending crown. It is manifest that this came to pass by a wonderful dispensation of the Divine goodness; to the end, that the same nation which had willingly, and without grudging, taken heed to impart to the English people that learning which it had in the knowledge of God, should afterwards, by means of the English nation, be brought, in those things which it had not, to a perfect rule of life. Even as, contrarywise, the Britons, who would not reveal to the English the knowledge which they had of the Christian faith, now, when the English people believe, and are in all points instructed in the rule of the Catholic faith, still persist in their errors, halting and turned aside from the true path, expose their heads without a crown, and keep the Feast of Christ apart from the fellowship of the Church of Christ.

The monks of Hii, at the teaching of Egbert, adopted the catholic manner of conversation, under Abbot Dunchad, about eighty years after they had sent Bishop Aidan to preach to the English nation. The man of God, Egbert, remained thirteen years in the aforesaid island, which he had thus consecrated to Christ, as it were, by a new ray of the grace of fellowship and peace in the Church; and in the year of our Lord 729, in which Easter was celebrated on the 24th of April, when he had celebrated the solemnity of the Mass, in memory of the Resurrection of our Lord, that same day he departed to the Lord and thus finished, or rather never ceases endlessly to

celebrate, with our Lord, and the Apostles, and the other citizens of heaven, the joy of that greatest festival, which he had begun with the brethren, whom he had converted to the grace of unity. And it was a wonderful dispensation of the Divine Providence, that the venerable man passed from this world to the Father, not only at Easter, but also when Easter was celebrated on that day, on which it had never been wont to be celebrated in those parts. The brethren rejoiced in the sure and catholic knowledge of the time of Easter, and were glad in that their father, by whom they had been brought into the right way, passing hence to the Lord should plead for them. He also gave thanks that he had so long continued in the flesh, till he saw his hearers accept and keep with him as Easter that day which they had ever before avoided. Thus the most reverend father being assured of their amendment, rejoiced to see the day of the Lord, and he saw it and was glad.

CHAPTER XXIII

Of the present state of the English nation, or of all Britain. [725-731 A.D.]

IN the year of our Lord 725, being the seventh year of Osric, king of the Northumbrians, who had succeeded Coenred, Wictred, the son of Egbert, king of Kent, died on the 23rd of April, and left his three sons, Ethelbert, Eadbert, and Alric, heirs of that kingdom, which he had governed thirty-four years and a half. The next year Tobias, bishop of the church of Rochester, died, a most learned man, as has been said before; for he was disciple to those masters of blessed memory, Theodore, the archbishop, and Abbot Hadrian, wherefore, as has been said, besides having a great knowledge of letters both ecclesiastical and general, he learned both the Greek and Latin tongues to such perfection, that they were as well known and familiar to him as his native language. He was buried in the chapel of St. Paul the Apostle, which he had built within the church of St. Andrew for his own place of burial. After him Aldwulf took upon him the office of bishop, having been consecrated by Archbishop Bertwald.

In the year of our Lord 729, two comets appeared about the sun, to the great terror of the beholders. One of them went before the sun in the morning at his rising, the other followed him when he set in the evening, as it were presaging dire disaster to both east and west; or without doubt one was the forerunner of the day, and the other of the night, to signify that mortals were threatened with calamities at both times. They carried their flaming brands towards the north, as it were ready to kindle a conflagration. They appeared in January, and continued nearly a fortnight. At which time a grievous blight fell upon Gaul, in that it was laid waste by the Saracens with cruel bloodshed; but not long after in that country they received the due reward of their Unbelief. In that year the holy man of God, Egbert, departed to the Lord, as has been said above, on Easter day; and immediately after Easter, that is, on the 9th of May, Osric, king of the Northumbrians, departed this life, after he had reigned eleven years, and appointed Ceolwulf, brother to Coenred who had reigned before him, his successor; the beginning and progress of whose reign have been so filled with many and great commotions and conflicts, that it cannot yet be known what is to be said concerning them, or what end they will have.

In the year of our Lord 731, Archbishop Bertwald died of old age, on the 13th of January, having held his see thirty-seven years, six months and fourteen days. In his stead, the same year, Tatwine, of the province of the Mercians, was made archbishop, having been a priest in the monastery called Briudun. He was consecrated in the city of Canterbury by the venerable men, Daniel, bishop of Winchester, Ingwald of London, Aldwin of Lichfield, and Aldwulf of Rochester, on Sunday, the 10th of June, being a man renowned for piety and wisdom, and of notable learning in Holy Scripture.

Thus at the present time, the bishops Tatwine and Aldwulf preside in the churches of Kent; Ingwald is bishop in the province of the East Saxons. In the province of the East Angles, the bishops are Aldbert and Hadulac; in the province of the West Saxons, Daniel and Forthere; in the province of the Mercians, Aldwin. Among those peoples who dwell beyond the river Severn to the westward, Walhstod is bishop; in the province of the Hwiccas, Wilfrid; in the province of

Lindsey, Bishop Cynibert presides; the bishopric of the Isle of Wight belongs to Daniel, bishop of the city of Winchester. The province of the South Saxons, having now continued some years without a bishop, receives episcopal ministrations from the prelate of the West Saxons. All these provinces, and the other southern provinces, as far as the boundary formed by the river Humber, with their several kings, are subject to King Ethelbald.

But in the province of the Northumbrians, where King Ceolwulf reigns, four bishops now preside; Wilfrid in the church of York, Ethelwald in that of Lindisfarne, Acca in that of Hagustald, Pecthelm in that which is called the White House, which, as the number of the faithful has increased, has lately become an episcopal see, and has him for its first prelate. The Pictish people also at this time are at peace with the English nation, and rejoice in having their part in Catholic peace and truth with the universal Church. The Scots that inhabit Britain, content with their own territories, devise no plots nor hostilities against the English nation. The Britons, though they, for the most part, as a nation hate and oppose the English nation, and wrongfully, and from wicked lewdness, set themselves against the appointed Easter of the whole Catholic Church; yet, inasmuch as both Divine and human power withstand them, they can in neither purpose prevail as they desire; for though in part they are their own masters, yet part of them are brought under subjection to the English. In these favourable times of peace and calm, many of the Northumbrians, as well of the nobility as private persons, laying aside their weapons, and receiving the tonsure, desire rather both for themselves and their children to take upon them monastic vows, than to practise the pursuit of war. What will be the end hereof, the next age will see. This is for the present the state of all Britain; about two hundred and eighty-five years after the coming of the English into Britain, and in the 731st year of our Lord, in Whose kingdom that shall have no end let the earth rejoice; and Britain being one with them in the joy of His faith, let the multitude of isles be glad, and give thanks at the remembrance of His holiness.

CHAPTER XXIV

Chronological recapitulation of the whole work: also concerning the author himself.

I HAVE thought fit briefly to sum up those things which have been related at length under their particular dates, that they may be the better kept in memory.

In the sixtieth year before the Incarnation of our Lord, Caius Julius Caesar, first of the Romans invaded Britain, and was victorious, yet could not maintain the supreme power there. [I, 2.]

In the year of our Lord, 46, Claudius, being the second of the Romans who came to Britain, received the surrender of a great part of the island, and added the Orkney islands to the Roman empire. [I, 3.]

In the year of our Lord 167, Eleuther, being made bishop at Rome, governed the Church most gloriously fifteen years. To whom Lucius, king of Britain, sent a letter, asking to be made a Christian, and succeeded in obtaining his request. [I, 4.]

In the year of our Lord 189, Severus, being made emperor, reigned seventeen years; he fortified Britain with a rampart from sea to sea. [I, 5.]

In the year 381, Maximus, being made emperor in Britain, crossed over into Gaul, and slew Gratian. [I, 9.]

In the year 409, Rome was overthrown by the Goths, from which time the Romans ceased to rule in Britain. [I, 11.]

In the year 430, Palladius was sent by Pope Celestine to the Scots that believed in Christ to be their first bishop. [I, 13.]

In the year 449, Marcian being made emperor with Valentinian, reigned seven years; in whose time the English, being called in by the Britons, came into Britain. [I, 15.]

In the year 538, an eclipse of the sun came to pass on the 16th of February, from the first hour until the third.

In the year 540, an eclipse of the sun came to pass on the 20th of June, and the stars appeared during almost half an hour after the third hour of the day.

In the year 547, Ida began to reign; he was the founder of the royal family of the Northumbrians, and he reigned twelve years.

In the year 565, the priest, Columba, came out of Scotland, into Britain, to teach the Picts, and he built a monastery in the isle of Hii. [III, 4.]

In the year 596, Pope Gregory sent Augustine with monks into Britain, to preach the good tidings of the Word of God to the English nation. [I, 23.]

In the year 597, the aforesaid teachers arrived in Britain; being about the 150th year from the coming of the English into Britain. [I, 25.]

In the year 601, Pope Gregory sent the pall into Britain to Augustine, who was already made bishop; he sent also several ministers of the Word, among whom was Paulinus. [I, 29.]

In the year 603, a battle was fought at Degsastan. [I, 34.]

In the year 604, the East Saxons received the faith of Christ, under King Sabert, Mellitus being bishop. [II, 3.]

In the year 605, Gregory died. [II, 1.]

In the year 616, Ethelbert, king of Kent died. [II, 5.]

In the year 625, Paulinus was ordained bishop of the Northumbrians by Archbishop Justus. [II, 9.]

In the year 626, Eanfled, daughter of King Edwin, was baptized with twelve others, on the eve of Whit-Sunday. [Ib.]

In the year 627, King Edwin was baptized, with his nation, at Easter. [II, 14.]

In the year 633, King Edwin being killed, Paulinus returned to Kent. [II, 20.]

In the year 640, Eadbald, king of Kent, died. [III, 8.]

In the year 642, King Oswald was slain. [III, 9.]

In the year 644, Paulinus, formerly bishop of York, but then of the city of Rochester, departed to the Lord. [III, 14.]

In the year 651, King Oswin was killed, and Bishop Aidan died. [Ibid.]

In the year 653, the Middle Angles, under their prince, Peada, were admitted to the mysteries of the faith. [III, 21.]

In the year 655 Penda was slain, and the Mercians became Christians. [III, 24.]

In the year 664, an eclipse came to pass; Earconbert, king of Kent, died; and Colman with the Scots returned to his people; a pestilence arose; Ceadda and Wilfrid were ordained bishops of the Northumbrians. [III, 26-28, IV, 1.]

In the year 668, Theodore was ordained bishop. [IV, 1.]

In the year 670, Oswy, king of the Northumbrians, died. [IV, 5.]

In the year 673, Egbert, king of Kent, died; and a synod was held at Hertford, in the presence of King Egfrid, Archbishop Theodore presiding: the synod was of great profit, and its decrees are contained in ten articles. [Ibid.]

In the year 675, Wulfhere, king of the Mercians, when he had reigned seventeen years, died and left the government to his brother Ethelred.

In the year 676, Ethelred ravaged Kent. [IV, 12.]

In the year 678, a comet appeared; Bishop Wilfrid was driven from his see by King Egfrid; and Bosa, Eata, and Eadhaed were consecrated bishops in his stead. [ibid. V, 19.]

In the year 679, Aelfwine was killed. [IV, 21.]

In the year 680, a synod was held in the plain of Haethfelth, concerning the Catholic faith, Archbishop Theodore presiding; John, the Roman abbot, was also present. The same year also the Abbess Hilda died at

Streanaeshalch. [IV, 17, 18, 23.]

In the year 685, Egfrid, king of the Northumbrians, was slain. The same year Hlothere, king of Kent, died. [IV, 26.]

In the year 688, Caedwald, king of the West Saxons, went to Rome from Britain. [V, 7.]

In the year 690, Archbishop Theodore died. [V, 8.]

In the year 697, Queen Osthryth was murdered by her own nobles, to wit, the nobles of the Mercians. (Not in the narrative)

In the year 698, Berctred, an ealdorman of the king of the Northumbrians, was slain by the Picts. (Not in the narrative)

In the year 704, Ethelred, after he had reigned thirty-one years over the nation of the Mercians, became a monk, and gave up the kingdom to Coenred. [V, 19.]

In the year 705, Aldfrid, king of the Northumbrians, died. [V, 18.]

In the year 709, Coenred, king of the Mercians, having reigned five years, went to Rome. [V, 19.]

In the year 711, the commander Bertfrid fought with the Picts. (Not in the narrative)

In the year 716, Osred, king of the Northumbrians, was killed; and Ceolred, king of the Mercians, died; and the man of God, Egbert, brought the monks of Hii to observe the Catholic Easter and the ecclesiastical tonsure. [V, 22.]

In the year 725, Wictred, king of Kent, died. [V, 23.1]

In the year 729, comets appeared; the holy Egbert passed away; and Osric died. [Ibid.]

In the year 731, Archbishop Bertwald died. [Ibid.]

The same year Tatwine was consecrated ninth archbishop of the church of Canterbury, in the fifteenth year of the reign of Ethelbald, king of the Mercians. [Ibid.]

THUS much of the Ecclesiastical History of Britain, and more especially of the English nation, as far as I could learn either from the writings of the ancients, or the tradition of our forefathers, or of my own knowledge, with the help of the Lord, I, Bede, the servant of Christ, and priest of the monastery of the blessed Apostles, Peter and Paul, which is at Wearmouth and Jarrow, have set forth. Having been born in the territory of that same monastery, I was given, by the care of kinsmen, at seven years of age, to be educated by the most reverend Abbot Benedict, and afterwards by Ceolfrid, and spending all the remaining time of my life a dweller in that monastery, I wholly applied myself to the study of Scripture; and amidst the observance of monastic rule, and the daily charge of singing in the church, I always took delight in learning, or teaching, or writing. In the nineteenth year of my age, I received deacon's orders; in the thirtieth, those of the priesthood, both of them by the ministry of the most reverend Bishop John, and at the bidding of the Abbot Ceolfrid. From the time when I received priest's orders, till the fifty-ninth year of my age, I have made it my business, for my own needs and those of my brethren, to compile out of the works of the venerable Fathers, the following brief notes on the Holy Scriptures, and also to make some additions after the manner of the meaning and interpretation given by them:

On the Beginning of Genesis, to the birth of Isaac and the casting out of Ishmael, four books.

Concerning the Tabernacle and its Vessels, and of the Vestments of the Priests, three books.

On the first part of Samuel, to the Death of Saul, three books.

Concerning the Building of the Temple, of Allegorical Exposition, and other matters, two books.

Likewise on the Book of Kings, thirty Questions.

On the Proverbs of Solomon, three books.

On the Song of Songs, seven books.

On Isaiah, Daniel, the twelve Prophets, and Part of Jeremiah, Divisions of Chapters, collected from the Treatise of the blessed Jerome.

On Ezra and Nehemiah, three books.

On the song of Habakkuk, one book.

On the Book of the blessed Father Tobias, one Book of Allegorical Explanation concerning Christ and the Church.

Also, Chapters of Readings on the Pentateuch of Moses, Joshua, and Judges;

On the Books of Kings and Chronicles;

On the Book of the blessed Father Job;

On the Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, and the Song of Songs;

On the Prophets Isaiah, Ezra, and Nehemiah.

On the Gospel of Mark, four books.

On the Gospel of Luke, six books.

Of Homilies on the Gospel, two books.

On the Apostle, (ie Paul) whatsoever I have found in the works of St. Augustine I have taken heed to transcribe in order.

On the Acts of the Apostles, two books. On the seven Catholic Epistles, a book on each. On the Revelation of St. John, three books. Likewise, Chapters of Lessons on all the New Testament, except the Gospel.

Likewise a book of Epistles to divers Persons, of which one is of the Six Ages of the world; one of the Halting-places of the Children of Israel; one on the words of Isaiah, "And they shall be shut up in the prison, and after many days shall they be visited" ; one of the Reason of Leap-Year, and one of the Equinox, according to Anatolius. (see III,3)

Likewise concerning the Histories of Saints: I translated the Book of the Life and Passion of St. Felix, Confessor, from the metrical work of Paulinus, into prose; the Book of the Life and Passion of St. Anastasius, which was ill translated from the Greek, and worse amended by some ignorant person, I have corrected as to the sense as far as I could; I have written the Life of the Holy Father Cuthbert, (see IV, 26-32) who was both monk and bishop, first in heroic verse, and afterwards in prose.

The History of the Abbots of this monastery, in which I rejoice to serve the Divine Goodness, to wit, Benedict, Ceolfrid, and Huaetbert, in two books.

The Ecclesiastical History of our Island and Nation, in five books.

The Martyrology of the Festivals of the Holy Martyrs, in which I have carefully endeavoured to set down all whom I could find, and not only on what day, but also by what sort of combat, and under what judge they overcame the world.

A Book of Hymns in divers sorts of metre, or rhythm.

A Book of Epigrams in heroic or elegiac verse.

Of the Nature of Things, and of the Times, one book of each; likewise, of the Times, one larger book.

A book of Orthography arranged in Alphabetical Order.

Likewise a Book of the Art of Poetry, and to it I have added another little Book of Figures of Speech or Tropes; that is, of the Figures and Modes of Speech in which the Holy Scriptures are written.

And I beseech Thee, good Jesus, that to whom Thou hast graciously granted sweetly to drink in the words of Thy knowledge, Thou wilt also vouchsafe in Thy loving-kindness that he may one day come to Thee, the Fountain of all wisdom, and appear for ever before Thy face.

The Continuation of Bede.

(ie a continuation of the annotated history of Bede, written by a later hand, except, perhaps entries under the years 731, 732, 733 and 734 which Mr Plummer believes were added by Bede himself.)

IN the year 731 King Ceolwulf was taken prisoner, and tonsured, and sent back to his kingdom; Bishop Acca was driven from his see.

In the year 732, Egbert was made Bishop of York, in the room of Wilfrid. [Cynibert Bishop of Lindsey died.]

[In the year of our Lord 733, Archbishop Tatwine, having received the pall by Apostolic authority, ordained Alwic and Sigfrid, bishops.]

In the year 733, there was an eclipse of the sun on the 14th day of August about the third hour, in such wise that the whole orb of the sun seemed to be covered with a black and gloomy shield.

In the year 734, the moon, on the 31st of January, about the time of cock-crowing, was, for about a whole hour, coloured blood-red, after which a blackness followed, and she regained her wonted light. the year from the Incarnation of Christ, 734, bishop Tatwine died.

In the year 735, Nothelm was ordained archbishop; and bishop Egbert, having received the pall from the Apostolic see, was the first to be established as archbishop after Paulinus, and he ordained Frithbert, and Frithwald bishops; and the priest Bede died.

In the year 737, an excessive drought rendered the land unfruitful; and Ceolwulf, voluntarily receiving the tonsure, left the kingdom to Eadbert.

In the year 739, Edilhart, king of the West-Saxons, died, as did Archbishop Nothelm.

In the year 740, Cuthbert was consecrated in Nothelm's stead. Ethelbald, king of the Mercians, cruelly and wrongfully wasted part of Northumbria, their king, Eadbert, with his army, being employed against the Picts. Bishop Ethelwald died also, and Conwulf, was consecrated in his stead. Arnwin and Eadbert were slain.

In the year 741, a great drought came upon the country. Charles, king of the Franks, died; and his sons, Caroloman and Pippin, reigned in his stead.

In the year 745, Bishop Wilfrid and Ingwald, Bishop of London, departed to the Lord.

In the year 747, the man of God, Herefrid, died.

In the year 750, Cuthred, king of the West Saxons, rose up against king Ethelbald and Oengus; Theodor and Eanred died Eadbert added the plain of Kyle and other places to his dominions.

In the year 753, in the fifth year of King Eadbert, on the 9th of January, an eclipse of the sun came to pass; afterwards, in the same year and month, on the 24th day of January, the moon suffered an eclipse, being covered with a gloomy, black shield, in like manner as was the sun a little while before.

In the year 754, Boniface, called also Winfrid, Bishop of the Franks, received the crown of martyrdom, together with fifty-three others; and Redger was consecrated archbishop in his stead, by pope Stephen.

In the year 757, Ethelbald, king of the Mercians, was treacherously and miserably murdered, in the night, by his own guards; Beornred began his reign; Cyniwulf, king of the West Saxons, died; and the same year, Offa, having put Beornred to flight, sought to gain the kingdom of the Mercians by bloodshed.

In the year 758, Eadbert, king of the Northumbrians, receiving St. Peter's tonsure for the love of God, and to the end that he might take the heavenly country by force, left the kingdom to his son Oswulf.

In the year 755, Oswulf was wickedly murdered by his own thegns; and Ethelwald, being chosen the same year by his people, entered upon the kingdom; in whose second year there was great tribulation by reason of pestilence, which continued almost, two years, divers grievous sicknesses raging, but more especially the disease of dysentery.

In the year 761, Oengus, king of the Picts, died; who, from the beginning to the end of his reign, continued to be a blood-stained and tyrannical butcher; Oswin was also slain.

In the year 765, King Aluchred came to the throne.

In the year 766 A.D., Archbishop Egbert, of the royal race, and endued with divine knowledge,

Steven Books

League Enterprises (SB)

**27. Old Gloucester Street
London WC1N 3XX**

For books by identity authors –
Kenneth McKilliam, Ria Splinter and
Richard Porter plus many
other subjects and difficult to
obtain books.

<http://www.stevenbooks.co.uk/category/341/Religion>

**THE NEW CHRISTIAN CRUSADE
CHURCH**

CALLING THE PEOPLE OF BRITAIN

At last the bible makes sense!

At last we know its meaning.

Its the book of the RACE

**"For out of Zion shall go forth the law, and the
Word of the Lord from Jerusalem"
(Isaiah 2:3)."**

