

Reading #11 – From Benedict to Charlemagne

Bede – Ecclesiastical History of the English People

Book I

CHAPTER III

CLAUDIUS, THE SECOND OF THE ROMANS WHO CAME INTO BRITAIN, BROUGHT THE ISLANDS OR CADES INTO SUBJECTION TO THE ROMAN EMPIRE; AND VESPASIAN, SENT BY HIM REDUCED THE ISLE OF WIGHT UNDER THEIR DOMINION

IN the year of Rome 798, Claudius, fourth emperor from Augustus, being desirous to approve himself a beneficial prince to the republic, and eagerly bent upon war and conquest, undertook an expedition into Britain, which seemed to be stirred up to rebellion by the refusal of the Romans to give up certain deserters. He was the only one, either before or after Julius Caesar, who had dared to land upon the island; yet, within a very few days, without any fight or bloodshed, the greatest part of the island was surrendered into his hands. He also added to the Roman empire the Orcades, which lie in the ocean beyond Britain, and then, returning to Rome the sixth month after his departure, he gave his son the title of Britannicus. This war he concluded in the fourth year of his empire, which is the forty-sixth from the incarnation of our Lord. In which year there happened a most grievous famine in Syria, which, in the Acts of the Apostles is recorded to have been foretold by the prophet Agabus. Vespasian, who was emperor after Nero, being sent into Britain by the same Claudius, brought also under the Roman dominion the Isle of Wight, which is next to Britain on the south, and is about thirty miles in length from east to west, and twelve from north to south; being six miles distant from the Southern coast of Britain at the east end, and three only at the west. Nero, succeeding Claudius in the empire, attempted nothing in martial affairs; and, therefore, among other innumerable detriments brought upon the Roman state, he almost lost Britain; for under him two most noble towns were there taken and destroyed.

CHAPTER IV

LUCIUS, KING OF BRITAIN, WRITING TO POPE ELEUTHERUS, DESIRES TO BE MADE A CHRISTIAN

IN the year of our Lord's incarnation 156, Marcus Antoninus Verus, the fourteenth from Augustus, was made emperor, together with his brother, Aurelius Commodus. In their time, whilst Eleutherus, a holy man, presided over the Roman church, Lucius, king of the

Britons, Sent a letter to him, entreating that by his command he might be made a Christian. He soon obtained his pious request, and the Britons preserved the faith, which they had received, uncorrupted and entire, in peace and tranquillity until the time of the Emperor Diocletian.

CHAPTER V

HOW THE EMPEROR SEVERUS DIVIDED THAT PART OF BRITAIN, WHICH HE SUBDUED, FROM THE REST BY A RAMPART

IN the year of our Lord 189, Severus, an African, born at Leptis, in the province of Tripolis, received the imperial purple. He was the Seventeenth from Augustus, and reigned seventeen years. Being naturally stern, and engaged in many wars, he governed the state vigorously, but with much trouble. Having been victorious in all the grievous civil wars which happened in his time, he was drawn into Britain by the revolt of almost all the confederate tribes; and, after many great and dangerous battles, he thought fit to divide that part of the island, which he had recovered from the other unconquered nations, not with a wall, as some imagine, but with a rampart. For a wall is made of stones, but a rampart, with which camps are fortified to repel the assaults of enemies, is made of sods, cut out of the earth, and raised above the ground all round like a wall, having in front of it the ditch whence the sods were taken, and strong stakes of wood fixed upon its top. Thus Severus drew a great ditch and strong rampart, fortified with several towers, from sea to sea; and was afterwards taken sick and died at York, leaving two sons, Bassianus and Geta; of whom Geta died, adjudged a public enemy; but Bassianus, having taken the surname of Antoninus, obtained the empire.

Book II

CHAPTER XIV

KING EDWIN AND HIS NATION BECOME CHRISTIANS; PAULINUS BAPTIZES THEM.
[A.D. 627.]

KING EDWIN, therefore, with all the nobility of the nation, and a large number of the common sort, received the faith, and the washing of regeneration, in the eleventh year of his reign, which is the year of the incarnation of our Lord 627, and about one hundred and eighty after the coming of the English into Britain. He was baptized at York, on the holy day of Easter, being the 12th of April, in the church of St. Peter the Apostle, which he himself had built of timber, whilst he was catechising and instructing In order to receive baptism. In that city also he appointed the see of the bishopric of his instructor and bishop, Paulinus.

But as soon as he was baptized, he took care, by the direction of the same Paulinus, to build in the same place a larger and nobler church of stone, in the midst whereof that same oratory which he had first erected should be enclosed. Having therefore laid the foundation, he began to build the church square, encompassing the former oratory. But before the whole was raised to the proper height, the wicked assassination of the king left that work to be finished by Oswald his successor. Paulinus, for the space of six years from that time, that is, till the end of the reign of that king, by his consent and favour, preached the word of God in that Country, and all that were preordained to eternal life believed and were baptized. Among whom were Osfrid and Eadfrid, King Edwin's sons, who were both born to him, whilst he was in banishment, of Quenberga, the daughter of Ceari, king of the Mercians.

Afterwards other children of his by Queen Ethelberga were baptized, viz. Ethelhun and his daughter Etheidrith, and another, Wuscfreea, a son; the first two of which were snatched out of this life whilst they were still in their white garments, and buried in the church at York. Ifli, the son of Osfrid, was also baptized, and many more noble and illustrious persons. So great was then the fervour of the faith, as is reported, and the desire of the washing of salvation among the nation of the Northumbrians, that Paulinus at a certain time coming with the king and queen the royal country-seat, which is called Adgefrin, stayed there with them thirty-six days, fully occupied in catechising and baptizing; during which days, from morning till night, he did nothing else but instruct the people resorting from all villages and places, in Christ's saving word; and when instructed, he washed them with the water of absolution in the river Glen, which is close by. This town, under the following kings, was abandoned, and another was built instead of it, at the place called Melmin.

These things happened in the province of the Bernicians; but in that of the Deiri also, where he was wont often to be with the king, he baptized in the river Swale, which runs by the village of Cataract; for as yet oratories, or fonts, could not be made in the early infancy of the church in those parts. But he built a church in Campodonum, which afterwards the pagans, by whom King Edwin was slain, burnt, together with all the town. In the place of which the later kings built themselves a country-seat in the Country called Loidis. But the altar, being of stone, escaped the fire and is still preserved in the monastery of the most reverend abbot and priest, Thridwulf, which is in Elsiete wood.

CHAPTER XV

THE PROVINCE OF THE EAST ANGLES RECEIVES THE FAITH OF CHRIST. [A.D. 627.]

EDWIN was so zealous for the worship of truth, that he likewise persuaded Eorpwald, king of the East Saxons, and son of Redwald, to abandon his idolatrous superstitions, and with

his whole province to receive the faith and sacraments of Christ. And indeed his father Redwald had long before been admitted to the sacrament of the Christian faith in Kent, but in vain; for on his return home, he was seduced by his wife and certain perverse teachers, and turned back from the sincerity of the faith; and thus his latter state was worse than the former; so that, like the ancient Samaritans, he seemed at the same time to serve Christ and the gods whom he had served before; and in the same temple he had an altar to sacrifice to Christ, and another small one to offer victims to devils; which temple, Aldwulf, king of that same province, who lived in our time testifies had stood until his time, and that he had seen it when he was a boy. The aforesaid King Redwald was noble by birth, though ignoble in his actions, being the son of Tytilus, whose father was Uuffa, from whom the kings of the East Angles are called Uuffings.

Eorpwald was, not long after he had embraced the Christian faith, slain by one Richbert, a pagan; and from the time the province was under error for three years, till the crown came into the possession of Sigebert, brother to the same Eorpwald, a most Christian and learned man, who was banished, and went to live in France during his brother's life, and was there admitted to the sacraments of the faith, whereof he made it his business to cause all his province to partake as soon as he came to the throne. His exertions were much promoted by the Bishop Felix, who coming to Honorius, the archbishop, from Burgundy, where he had been born and ordained, and having told him what he desired, he sent him to preach the word of life to the aforesaid nation of the Angles. Nor were his good wishes in vain; for the pious husbandman reaped therein a large harvest of believers, delivering all that province (according to the signification of his name, Felix) from long iniquity and infelicity, and bringing it to the faith and works of righteousness, and the gifts of everlasting happiness. He had the see of his bishopric appointed him in the city Dommoc, and having presided over the same province with pontifical authority seventeen years, he ended his days there in peace.

Book III

CHAPTER I

HOW KING EDWIN'S NEXT SUCCESSORS LOST BOTH THE FAITH OF THEIR NATION AND THE KINGDOM; BUT THE MOST CHRISTIAN KING OSWALD RETRIEVED BOTH. [A.D. 633.]

EDWIN being slain in battle, the kingdom of the Deira, to which province his family belonged, and where he first began to reign, devolved on Osric, the son of his uncle Elfric, who, through the preaching of Paulinus, had also received the faith. But the kingdom of

the Bernicians for into these two provinces the nation of the Northumbrians was formerly divided-was possessed by Eanfrid, the son of Etheifrid, who derived his origin from the royal family of that province. For all the time that Edwin reigned, the sons of the aforesaid Etheifrid, who had reigned before him, with many of the nobility, lived in banishment among the Scots or Picts, and were there instructed according to the doctrine of the Scots, and received the grace of baptism. Upon the death of the king, their enemy, they returned home, and Eanfrid, as the eldest of them, mentioned above, became king of the Bernicians. Both those kings, as soon as they obtained the government of their earthly kingdoms, renounced and lost the faith of the heavenly kingdom, and again delivered themselves up to be defiled by the abominations of their former idols.

But soon after, the king of the Britons, Cadwalla, slew them both, through the rightful vengeance of Heaven, though the act was base in him. He first slew Osric, the next summer; for, being besieged by him in a strong town, he sallied out on a sudden with all his forces, by surprise, and destroyed him and all his army. After this, for the space of a year, he reigned over the provinces of the Northumbrians, not like a victorious king, but like a rapacious and bloody tyrant, and at length brought to the same end Eanfrid, who unadvisedly came to him with only twelve chosen soldiers, to sue for peace. To this day, that year is looked upon as unhappy, and hateful to all good men; as well on account of the apostasy of the English kings, who had renounced the faith, as of the outrageous tyranny of the British king. Hence it has been agreed by all who have written about the reigns of the kings, to abolish the memory of those perfidious monarchs, and to assign that year to the reign of the following king, Oswald, a man beloved by God. This last king, after the death of his brother Eanfrid, advanced with an army, small, indeed, in number, but strengthened with the faith of Christ; and the impious commander of the Britons was slain, though he had most numerous forces, which he boasted nothing could withstand, at a place in the English tongue called Denises-burn, that is, Denis's-brook.

CHAPTER II

HOW, AMONG INNUMERABLE OTHER MIRACULOUS CURES WROUGHT BY THE CROSS, WHICH KING OSWALD, BEING READY TO ENGAGE AGAINST THE BARBARIANS, ERECTED A CERTAIN YOUTH HAD HIS LAME ARM HEALED. [A.D. 635.]

THE place is shown to this day, and held in much veneration, where Oswald, being about to engage, erected the sign of the holy cross, and on his knees prayed to God that he would assist his worshipers in their great distress. It is further reported, that the cross being made in haste, and the hole dug in which it was to be fixed, the king himself, full of faith, laid hold of it and held it with both his hands, till it was set fast by throwing in the earth and

this done, raising his voice, he cried to his army, "Let us all kneel, and jointly beseech the true and living God Almighty, in his mercy, to defend us from the haughty and fierce enemy; for He knows that we have undertaken a just war for the safety of our nation." All did as he had commanded, and accordingly advancing towards the enemy with the first dawn of day, they obtained the victory, as their faith deserved. In that place of prayer very many miraculous cures are known to have been performed, as a token and memorial of the king's faith; for even to this day, many are wont to cut off small chips from the wood of the holy cross, which being put into water, men or cattle drinking thereof, or sprinkled with that water, are immediately restored to health.

The place in the English tongue is called Heavenfield, or the Heavenly Field, which name it formerly received as a presage of what was afterwards to happen, denoting, that there the heavenly trophy would be erected, the heavenly victory begun, and heavenly miracles be wrought to this day. The same place is near the wall with which the Romans formerly enclosed the island from sea to sea, to restrain the fury of the barbarous nations, as has been said before. Hither also the brothers of the church of Hagulstad, which is not far from thence, repair yearly on the day before that on which King Oswald was afterwards slain, to watch there for the health of his soul, and having sung many psalms, to offer for him in the morning the sacrifice of the holy oblation. And since that good custom has spread, they have lately built and consecrated a church there, which has attached additional sanctity and honor to that place: and this with good reason; for it appears that there was no sign of the Christian faith, no church, no altar erected throughout all the nations of the Bernicians, before that new commander of the army, prompted by the devotion of his faith, set up the cross as he was going to give battle to his barbarous enemy.

Nor is it foreign to our purpose to relate one of the many miracles that have been wrought at this cross. One of the brothers of the same church of Hagufstad, whose name is Bothelm, and who is still living, a few years since, walking carelessly on the ice at night, suddenly fell and broke his arm; a most raging pain commenced in the broken part, so that he could not lift his arm to his mouth for the violence of the anguish. Hearing one morning that one of the brothers designed to go to the place of the holy cross, he desired him, at his return, to bring him a bit of that venerable wood, saying, he believed that with the help of God he might thereby be healed. The brother did as he was desired; and returning in the evening, when the brothers were sitting at table, gave him some of the old moss which grew on the surface of the wood. As he sat at table, having no place to lay up that which was brought him, he put the same into his bosom; and forgetting when he went to bed to put it by, left it in his bosom. Awaking in the middle of the night, he felt something cold lying by his side, and putting his hand to feel what it was, he found his arm and hand as sound as if he had never felt any such pain.

CHAPTER III

THE SAME KING OSWALD, ASKING A BISHOP OF THE SCOTTISH NATION, HAD AIDAN SENT HIM, AND GRANTED HIM AN EPISCOPAL SEE IN THE ISLE OF LINDISFARNE. [A.D. 635.]

THE same Oswald, as soon as he ascended the throne, being desirous that all his nation should receive the Christian faith, whereof he had found happy experience in vanquishing the barbarians, sent to the elders of the Scots, among whom himself and his followers, when in banishment, had received the sacrament of baptism, desiring they would send him a bishop, by whose instruction and ministry the English nation, which he governed, might be taught the advantages, and receive the sacraments of the Christian faith. Nor were they slow in granting his request; but sent him Bishop Aidan, a man of singular meekness, piety, and moderation; zealous in the cause of God, though not altogether according to knowledge; for he was wont to keep Easter Sunday according to the custom of his country, which we have before so often mentioned, from the fourteenth to the twentieth moon; the northern province of the Scots, and all the nation of the Picts, celebrating Easter then after that manner, and believing that they therein followed the writings of the holy and praiseworthy Father Anatolius; the truth of which every skillful person can discern. But the Scots which dwelt in the South of Ireland had long since, by the admonition of the bishop of the Apostolic See, learned to observe Easter according to the canonical custom.

On the arrival of the bishop, the king appointed him his episcopal see in the isle of Lindisfarne, as he desired. Which place, as the tide flows and ebbs twice a day, is enclosed by the waves of the sea like an island; and again, twice in the day, when the shore is left dry, becomes contiguous to the land. The king also humbly and willingly in all cases giving ear to his admonitions, industriously applied himself to build and extend the church of Christ in his kingdom; wherein, when the bishop, who was not skillful in the English tongue, preached the gospel, it was most delightful to see the king himself interpreting the word of God to his commanders and ministers, for he had perfectly learned the language of the Scots during his long banishment. From that time many of the Scots came daily into Britain, and with great devotion preached the word to those provinces of the English, over which King Oswald reigned, and those among them that had received priest's orders, administered to them the grace of baptism. Churches were built in several places; the people joyfully flocked together to hear the word; money and lands were given of the king's bounty to build monasteries; the English, great and small, were, by their Scottish masters, instructed in the rules and observance of regular discipline; for most of them that came to preach were monks. Bishop Aidan was himself a monk of the island called Hii, whose monastery was for a long time the chief of almost all those of the northern Scots, and all

those of the Picts, and had the direction of their people. That island belongs to Britain, being divided from it by a small arm of the sea, but had been long since given by the Picts, who inhabit those parts of Britain, to the Scottish monks, because they had received the faith of Christ through their preaching.

CHAPTER IV

WHEN THE NATION OF THE PICTS RECEIVED THE FAITH. [A.D. 565]

IN the year of our Lord 565, when Justin, the younger, the successor of Justinian, had the government of the Roman empire, there came into Britain a famous priest and abbot, a monk by habit and life, whose name was Columba, to preach the word of God to the provinces of the northern Picts, who are separated from the southern parts by steep and rugged mountains; for the southern Picts, who dwell on this side of those mountains, had long before, as is reported, forsaken the errors of idolatry, and embraced the truth, by the preaching of Ninias, a most reverend bishop and holy man of the British nation, who had been regularly instructed at Rome, in the faith and mysteries of the truth; whose episcopal see, named after St. Martin the bishop, and famous for a stately church (wherein he and many other saints rest in the body), is still in existence among the English nation. The place belongs to the province of the Bernicians, and is generally called the White House, because he there built a church of stone, which was not usual among the Britons.

Columba came into Britain in the ninth year of the reign of Bridius, who was the son of Meilochon, and the powerful king of the Pictish nation, and he converted that nation to the faith of Christ, by his preaching and example, whereupon he also received of them the aforesaid island for a monastery, for it is not very large, but contains about five families, according to the English computation. His successors hold the island to this day; he was also buried therein, having died at the age of seventy-seven, about thirty-two years after he came into Britain to preach. Before he passed over into Britain, he had built a noble monastery in Ireland, which, from the great number of oaks, is in the Scottish tongue called Dearthach- The Field of Oaks. From both which monasteries, many others had their beginning through his disciples, both in Britain and Ireland; but the monastery in the island where his body lies, is the principal of them all.

That island has for its ruler an abbot, who is a priest, to whose direction all the province, and even the bishops, contrary to the usual method, are subject, according to the example of their first teacher, who was not a bishop, but a priest and monk; of whose life and discourses some Writings are said to be preserved by his disciples. But whatsoever he was himself, this we know for certain, that he left successors renowned for their continency, their love of God, and observance of monastic rules. It is true they followed uncertain rules

in their observance of the great festival, as having none to bring them the synodal decrees for the observance of Easter, by reason of their being so far away from the rest of the world; wherefore they only practiced such works of piety and chastity as they could learn from the prophetic, evangelical, and apostolical writings. This manner of keeping Easter continued among them for the space of 150 years, till the year of our Lord's incarnation 715.

But then the most reverend and holy father and priest, Egbert, of the English nation, who had long lived in banishment in Ireland for the sake of Christ, and was most learned in the Scriptures, and renowned for long perfection of life, came among them, corrected their error, and reduced them to the true and canonical day of Easter; the which they nevertheless did not always keep on the fourteenth moon with the Jews, as some imagined, but on Sunday, although not in the proper week. For, as Christians, they knew that the resurrection of our Lord, which happened on the first day after the Sabbath, was always to be celebrated on the first day after the Sabbath; but being rude and barbarous, they had not learned when that same first day after the Sabbath, which is now called the Lord's day, should come. But because they had not laid aside the fervent grace of charity, they were worthy to be informed in the true knowledge of this particular, according to the promise of the apostle, saying, "And if in any thing ye be otherwise minded, God shall reveal even this unto you." Of which we shall speak more fully in its proper place.

CHAPTER V

OF THE LIFE OF BISHOP AIDAN. [A.D. 635.]

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

His course of life was so different from the slothfulness of our times, that all those who bore him company, whether they were shorn monks or laymen, were employed in meditation, that is, either in reading the Scriptures, or learning psalms. This was the daily employment

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

It is reported, that when King Oswald had asked a bishop of the Scots to administer the word of faith to him and his nation, there was first sent to him another man of more austere disposition, who, meeting with no success, and being unregarded by the English people, returned home, and in an assembly of the elders reported, that he had not been able to do any good to the nation he had been sent to preach to, because they were uncivilized men, and of a stubborn and barbarous disposition. They, as is testified, in a great council seriously debated what was to be done, being desirous that the nation should receive the salvation it demanded, and grieving that they had not received the preacher sent to them. Then said Aidan, who was also present in the council, to the priest then spoken of, "I am of opinion, brother, that you were more severe to your unlearned hearers than you ought to have been and did not at first, conformably to the apostolic rule, give them the milk of more easy doctrine, till being by degrees nourished with the word of God, they should be capable of greater perfection, and be able to practice God's sublimer precepts." Having heard these words, all present began diligently to weigh what he had said, and presently concluded, that he deserved to be made a bishop, and ought to be sent to instruct the incredulous and unlearned; since he was found to be endued with singular discretion, which is the mother of other virtues, and accordingly being ordained, they sent him to their friend, King Oswald, to preach; and he, as time proved, afterwards appeared to possess all other virtues, as well as the discretion for which he was before remarkable.

CHAPTER VI

OF KING OSWALD'S WONDERFUL PIETY. [A.D. 635.]

KING OSWALD, with the nation of the English which he governed being instructed by the teaching of this most reverend prelate, not only learned to hope for a heavenly kingdom unknown to his progenitors, but also obtained of the same one Almighty God, who made heaven and earth, larger earthly kingdoms than any of his ancestors. In short, he brought

under his dominion all the nations and provinces of Britain, which are divided into four languages, viz. the Britons, the Picts, the Scots, and the English. When raised to that height of dominion, wonderful to relate, he always continued humble, affable, and generous to the poor and Strangers.

In short, it is reported, that when he was once sitting at dinner, on the holy day of Easter, with the aforesaid bishop, and a silver dish full of dainties before him, and they were just ready to bless the bread, the servant, whom he had appointed to relieve the poor, came in Qn a sudden, and told the king, that a great multitude of needy persons from all parts were sitting in the streets begging some alms of the king; he immediately ordered the meat set before him to be carried to the poor, and the dish to be cut in pieces and divided among them. At which sight, the bishop who sat by him, much taken with such an act of piety, laid hold of his right hand, and said, "May this hand never perish." Which fell out according to his prayer, for his arm and hand, being cut off from his body, when he was slain in battle, remain entire and uncorrupted to this day, and are kept in a silver case, as revered relics, in St. Peter's church in the royal city, which has taken Its name from Bebba, one of its former queens. Through this king's management the provinces of the Deiri and the Bernicians, which till then had been at variance, were peacefully united and molded into one people. He was nephew to King Edwin by his sister Acha; and it was fit that so great a predecessor should have in his Own family so great a person to succeed him in his religion and sovereignty.

CHAPTER VII

HOW THE WEST SAXONS RECEIVED THE WORD OF GOD BY THE PREACHING OF BIRINUS; AND OF HIS SUCCESSORS, AGILBERT AND ELEUTHERIUS. [A.D. 635.]

AT that time, the West Saxons, formerly called Gewissae, in the reign of Cynegils, embraced the faith of Christ, at the preaching of Bishop Birinus, who came into Britain by the advice of Pope Honorius; having promised in his presence that he would sow the seed of the holy faith in the inner parts beyond the dominions of the English. where no other teacher had been before him. Hereupon he received episcopal consecration from Asterius, bishop of Genoa; but on his arrival in Britain, he first entered the nation of the Gewissae, and finding all there most confirmed pagans, he thought it better to preach the word of God there, than to proceed further to seek for others to preach to.

Now, as he preached in the aforesaid province, it happened that the king himself, having been catechized, was baptized together with his people, and Oswald, the most holy and victorious king of the Northumbrians, being present, received him as he came forth from baptism, and by an alliance most pleasing and acceptable to God, first adopted him, thus

regenerated, for his son, and then took his daughter in marriage. The two kings gave to the bishop the city called Dorcic, there to settle his episcopal see; where having built and consecrated churches, and by his labor called many to the Lord, he departed this life, and was buried in the same city ; but many years after, when Hedda was bishop, he was translated thence to the city of Winchester, and laid in the church of the blessed apostles, Peter and Paul.

The king also dying, his son Coinwalch succeeded him in the throne, but refused to embrace the mysteries of the faith, and of the heavenly kingdom; and not long after also he lost the dominion of his earthly kingdom; for he put away the sister of Penda, king of the Mercians, whom he had married, and took another wife; whereupon a war ensuing, he was by him expelled his kingdom, and withdrew to Anna, king of the East Saxons, where living three years in banishment, he found and received the true faith, and was baptized; for the king, with whom he lived in his banishment, was a good man, and happy in a good and pious offspring, as we shall show hereafter.

But when Coinwalch was restored to his kingdom, there came into that province out of Ireland, a certain bishop called Agilbert, by nation a Frenchman, but who had then lived a long time in Ireland, for the purpose of reading the Scriptures. This bishop came of his own accord to serve this king, and preach to him the word of life. The king, observing his erudition and industry, desired him to accept an episcopal see, and stay there as his bishop. Agilbert complied with the prince's request, and presided over those people many years. At length the king, who understood none but the language of the Saxons, grown weary of that bishop's barbarous tongue, brought into the province another bishop of his own nation, whose name was Wini, who had been ordained in France; and dividing his province into two dioceses, appointed this last his episcopal see in the city of Winchester, by the Saxons called Wintancestir. Agilbert, being highly offended, that the king should do this without his advice, returned into France, and being made bishop of the city of Paris, died there, aged and full of days. Not many years after his departure out of Britain, Wini was also expelled from his bishopric, and took refuge with Wulfhere, king of the Mercians, of whom he purchased for money the see of the city of London, and remained bishop thereof till his death. Thus the province of the West Saxons continued no small time without a bishop.

During which time, the king of that nation, sustaining very great losses in his kingdom from his enemies, at length bethought himself, that as he had been before expelled from the throne for his infidelity, and had been restored when he received the faith of Christ, his kingdom, being destitute of a bishop, was justly deprived of the Divine protection. He, therefore, sent messengers into France to Agilbert, humbly entreating him to return to the bishopric of his nation. But he excused himself, and affirmed that he could not go, because

he was bound to the bishopric of his own city; however, that he might not seem to refuse him assistance, he sent in his stead thither the priest Eleutherius, his nephew, who, if he thought fit, might be ordained his bishop, saying, "He thought him worthy of a bishopric." The king and the people received him honorably, and entreated Theodore, then archbishop of Canterbury, to consecrate him their bishop. He was accordingly consecrated in the same city, and many years zealously governed the whole bishopric of the West Saxons by synodical authority.

CHAPTER XXVII

EGHERT, A HOLY MAN OF THE ENGLISH NATION, LED A MONASTIC LIFE IN IRELAND. [A.D. 664.]

IN the same year of our Lord's incarnation, 664, there happened an eclipse of the sun, on the third of May, about ten o'clock in the morning. In the same year, a sudden pestilence also depopulated the southern coasts of Britain and afterwards extending into the province of the Northumbrians, ravaged the country far and near, and destroyed a great multitude of men. To which plague the aforesaid priest Tuda fell a victim, and was honorably buried in the monastery of Pegnaeth. This pestilence did no less harm in the island of Ireland. Many of the nobility, and of the lower ranks of the English nation, were there at that time, who, in the days of the Bishops Finan and Colman, forsaking their native island, retired thither, either for the sake of Divine studies, or of a more continent life; and some of them presently devoted themselves to a monastical life, others chose rather to apply themselves to study, going about from one master's cell to another. The Scots willingly received them all, and took care to supply them with food, as also to furnish them with books to read, and their teaching, gratis.

Among these were Etheihun and Eghert, two youths of great capacity, of the English nobility. The former of whom was brother to Ethelwin, a man no less beloved by God, who also afterwards went over into Ireland to study, and having been well instructed, returned into his own country, and being made bishop in the province of Lindsey, long governed that church worthily and creditably. These two being in the monastery which in the language of the Scots is called Rathmelsigi, and having lost all their companions, who were either cut off by the mortality, or dispersed into other places, fell both desperately sick of the lame distemper, and were grievously afflicted. Of these, Egbert (as I was informed by a priest venerable for his age, and of great veracity, who declared he had heard those things from his own mouth), concluding that he was at the point of death, went out of his chamber, where the sick lay, in the morning, and sitting alone in a convenient place, began

seriously to reflect upon his past actions, and, being full of compunction at the remembrance of his sins, bedewed his face with tears, and prayed fervently to God that he might not die yet, before he could make amends for the offences which he had committed in his infancy and younger years, or might further exercise himself in good works. He also made a vow that he would, for the sake of God, live in a strange place, so as never to return into the island of Britain, where he was born; that besides the canonical times of singing psalms, he would, unless prevented by corporeal infirmity, say the whole Psalter daily to the praise of God; and that he would every week fast one whole day and a night. Returning home, after his tears, prayers, and vows, he found his companion asleep, and going to bed himself, began to compose himself to rest. When he had lain quiet awhile, his comrade awaking, looked on him, and said, "Alas, Brother Eghert, what have you done? I was in hopes that we should have entered together into life everlasting; but know that what you prayed for is granted." For he had learned in a vision what the other had requested, and that his prayer was granted.

In short, Ethelhun died the next night; but Eghert shaking off his distemper, recovered and lived a long time after to grace the priestly office, which he had received, by his worthy behavior; and after much increase of virtue, according to his desire, he at length, in the year of our Lord's incarnation 729, being ninety years of age, departed to the heavenly kingdom. He led his life in great perfection of humility, meekness, continence, simplicity, and justice. Thus he was a great benefactor, both to his own nation, and to those of the Scots and Picts among whom he lived a stranger, by his example of life, his industry in teaching, his authority in reproof, and his piety in giving away much of what he received from the bounty of the rich. He also added this to his vow above-mentioned; during Lent, he would eat but one meal a day, allowing himself nothing but bread and thin milk, and even that by measure. That milk, new the day before, he kept in a vessel, and the next day skimming off the cream, drank the rest, as has been said, with a little bread. Which sort of abstinence he likewise always observed forty days before the nativity of our Lord, and as many after the solemnity of Pentecost, that is, of the Quinquagesima.

Book IV

CHAPTER XXIV

THERE WAS IN THE SAME MONASTERY A BROTHER, ON WHOM THE GIFT OF WRITING VERSES WAS BESTOWED BY HEAVEN.

[A. D. 680]

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

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

In the morning he came to the steward, his superior, and having acquainted him with the gift he had received, was conducted to the abbess, by whom he was ordered, in the presence of many learned men, to tell his dream, and repeat the verses, that they might all give their judgment what it was, and whence his verse proceeded. They all concluded, that heavenly grace had been conferred on him by our Lord. They expounded to him a passage in holy writ, either historical, or doctrinal, ordering him, if he could, to put the same into verse. Having undertaken it, he went away, and returning the next morning, gave it to them composed in most excellent verse; whereupon the abbess, embracing the grace of God

in the 'man, instructed him to quit the secular habit, and take upon him the monastic life; which being accordingly done, she associated him to the rest of the brethren in her monastery, and ordered that he should be taught the whole series of sacred history. Thus Caedmon ' keeping in mind all he heard, and as it were chewing the cud, converted the same into most harmonious verse; and sweetly repeating the same, made his masters in their turn his hearers. He sang the creation of the world, the origin of man, and all the history of Genesis : and made many verses on the departure of the children of Israel out of Egypt, and their entering into the land of promise, with many other histories from holy writ; the incarnation, passion, resurrection of our Lord, and his ascension into heaven; the coming of the Holy Ghost, and the preaching of the apostles ; also the terror of future judgment, the horror of the pains of hell, and the delights of heaven; besides many more about the Divine benefits and judgments, by which he endeavoured to turn away all men from the love of vice, and to excite in them the love of, and application to, good actions; for he was a very religious man, humbly submissive to regular discipline, but full of zeal against those who behaved themselves otherwise; for which reason he ended his life happily.

For when the time of his departure drew near, he laboured for the space of fourteen days under a bodily infirmity which seemed to prepare the way, yet so moderate that he could talk and walk the whole time. In his neighbourhood was the house to which those that were sick, and like shortly to die, were carried. He desired the person that attended him, in the evening, as the night came on in which he was to depart this life, to make ready a place there for him to take his rest. This person, wondering why he should desire it, because there was as yet no sign of his dying soon, did what he had ordered. He accordingly went there, and conversing pleasantly in a joyful manner with the rest that were in the house before, when it was past midnight, he asked them, whether they had the Eucharist there? They answered, "What need of the Eucharist? for you are not likely to die, since you talk so merrily with us, as if you were in perfect health." " However," said he, "bring me the Eucharist." Having received the same into his hand, he asked, whether they were all in charity with him, and without any enmity or rancour? They answered, that they were all in perfect charity, and free from anger; and in their turn asked him, whether he was in the same mind towards them? He answered, "I am in charity, my children, with all the servants of God." Then strengthening himself with the heavenly viaticum, he prepared for the entrance into another life, and asked, how near the time was when the brothers were to be awakened to sing the nocturnal praises of our Lord? They answered, "It is not far off." Then he said, "Well, let us wait that hour; " and signing himself with the sign of the cross, he laid his head on the pillow, and falling into a slumber, ended his life so in silence.

Thus it came to pass, that as he had served God with a simple and pure mind, and undisturbed devotion, so he now departed to his presence, leaving the world by a quiet death; and that tongue, which had composed so many holy words in praise of the Creator, uttered its last words whilst he was in the act of signing himself with the cross, and recommending himself into his hands, and by what has been here said, he seems to have had foreknowledge of his death.

CHAPTER XXVII

CUTHBERT, A MAN OF GOD, IS MADE BISHOP; AND HOW HE LIVED AND TAUGHT WHILST STILL IN A MONASTIC LIFE.

[A.D. 685]

THE same year that King Egfrid departed this life, he (as has been said) promoted to the bishopric of the church of Lindisfarne the holy and venerable Cuthbert, who had for many years led a solitary life, in great continence of body and mind, in a very small island, called Farne, distant almost nine miles from that same church, in the ocean. From his very childhood he had always been inflamed with the desire of a religious life; but he took upon him the habit and name of a monk when he was a young man: he first entered into the monastery of Melrose, which is on the bank of the river Tweed, and was then governed by the Abbot Eata, a meek and simple man, who was afterwards made bishop of the church of Hagulstad or Lindisfarne, as has been said above, over which monastery at that time was placed Boisil, a priest of great virtue and of a prophetic spirit. Cuthbert, humbly submitting himself to this man's direction, from him received both the knowledge of the Holy Scriptures, and example of good works.

After he had departed to our Lord, Cuthbert was placed over that monastery, where he instructed many in regular life, both by the authority of a master, and the example of his own behaviour. Nor did he afford admonitions and an example of a regular life to his monastery alone, but endeavoured to convert the people round about far and near from the life of foolish custom, to the love of heavenly joys; for many profaned the faith which they had received by their wicked actions; and some also, in the time of a mortality, neglecting the sacraments of faith which they had received, had recourse to the false remedies of idolatry, as if they could have put a stop to the plague sent from God, by enchantments, spells, or other secrets of the hellish art. In order to correct the error of both sorts, he often went out of the monastery, sometimes on horseback, but oftener on foot, and repaired to the neighbouring towns, where he preached the way of truth to such as were gone astray; which had been also done by Boisil in his time. It was then the custom of the

English people that when a clerk or priest came into the town, hey all, at his command, flocked together to bear the word; willingly heard what was said, and more willingly practised those things that they could hear or understand. But Cuthbert was so skilful an orator so fond was he of enforcing his subject, and such a brightness appeared in his angelic face, that no man present presumed to conceal from him the most hidden secrets of his heart, but all openly confessed what they had done; because they thought the same guilt could not be concealed from him, and wiped off the guilt of what they had so confessed with worthy fruits of penance, as he commanded. He was wont chiefly to resort to those places, and preach in such villages, as being seated high up amid craggy uncouth mountains, were frightful to others to behold, and whose Poverty and barbarity rendered them inaccessible to other teachers; which nevertheless he, having entirely devoted himself to that pious labour, did so industriously apply himself to Polish with his doctrine, that when he departed Out of his monastery, he would often stay a week, sometimes two or three, and sometimes a whole month, before he returned home, continuing among the mountains to allure that rustic people by his preaching and example to heavenly employments.

This venerable servant of our Lord, having thus spent many years in the monastery of Melrose, and there become conspicuous by many miracles, his most reverend abbot, Eata, removed him to the isle of Lindisfarne, that he might there also, by the authority of a superior and his own example, instruct the brethren in the observance of regular discipline; for the same reverend father then governed that place also as abbot; for, from ancient times, the bishop was wont to reside there with his clergy, and the abbot with his monks, who were likewise under the care of the bishop; because Aidan, who was the first bishop of the place, being himself a monk, brought monks thither, and settled the monastic institution there; as the blessed Father Augustine is known to have done before in Kent, the most reverend Pope Gregory writing to him, as has been said above, to this effect : " But since, my brother, having been instructed in monastic rules, you must not live apart from your clergy in the church of the English, which has been lately, through the help of God I converted to the faith; you must, therefore, establish that course of life, which was among our ancestors in the primitive church, among whom, none called anything that he possessed his own; but all things were in common to them."

Book V

CHAPTER XXIII

OF THE PRESENT STATE OF THE ENGLISH NATION, OR OF ALL BRITAIN. [A.D. 725-731.]

IN the year of our Lord's incarnation 725, being the seventh year of Osric, king of the Northumbrians, who 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 died Tobias, bishop of the church of Rochester, a most learned man, as has been said before; for he was disciple to those teachers of blessed memory, Theodore, the archbishop, and Abbot Hadrian, by which means, as we have before observed, besides his erudition in ecclesiastical and general literature, 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 porch 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's incarnation 729, two comets appeared about the sun, to the great terror of the beholders. One of them went before the rising sun in the morning, the other followed him when he set at night, as it were presaging much destruction to the east and west; 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 tail towards the north, as it were ready to set the world on fire. They appeared in January, and continued nearly a fortnight. At which time a dreadful plague of Saracens ravaged France with miserable slaughter; but they not long after in that country received the punishment due to their wickedness. In which year the holy man of God, Egbert, departed to our 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 were so filled with commotions, 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's incarnation 731, Archbishop Bertwald died of old age, on the 9th 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 religion and wisdom, and notably learned in Sacred Writ.

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

But in the province of the Northumbrians, where King Ceolwulf reigns, four bishops now preside: Wilfrid in the church of York, Ethelwald in that of Lindisfarne, Acca in that of Hagulstad, Pechthelm in that which is called the White House, which, from the increased number of believers, has lately become an episcopal see, and has him for its first prelate. The Picts also at this time are at peace with the English nation, and rejoice in being united in peace and truth with the whole Catholic Church. The Scots that inhabit Britain, satisfied with their own territories, meditate no hostilities against the nation of the English. The Britons, though they, for the most part, through innate hatred, are adverse to the English nation, and wrongfully, and from wicked custom, oppose the appointed Easter of the whole Catholic Church; yet, from both the Divine and human power withstanding them, can in no way prevail as they desire; for though in part they are their own masters yet elsewhere they are also brought under subjection to the English. Such being the peaceable and calm disposition of the times, many of the Northumbrians, as well of the nobility as private persons, laying aside their weapons, rather incline to dedicate both themselves and their children to the tonsure and monastic vows, than to study martial discipline. What will be the end hereof, the next age will show. This is for the present the state of all Britain; in the year since the coming of the English into Britain about 285, but in the 731st year of the incarnation of our Lord, in whose reign may the earth ever rejoice; may Britain exult in the profession of his faith; and may many islands be glad, and sing praises in honor of his holiness!

Gregory of Tours – History of the Franks

Book I

IN CHRIST'S NAME

HERE BEGINS THE FIRST BOOK OF THE HISTORIES

As to the reckoning of this world, the chronicles of Eusebius bishop of Cæsarea, and of Jerome the priest, speak clearly, and they reveal the plan of the whole succession of years. Orosius too, searching into these matters very carefully, collects the whole number of years from the beginning of the world down to his own time. Victor also examined into this in connection with the time of the Easter festival. And so we follow the works of the writers mentioned above and desire to reckon the complete series of years from the creation of the first man down to our own time, if the Lord shall deign to lend his aid. And this we shall more easily accomplish if we begin with Adam himself.

30.

Under the emperor Decius many persecutions arose against the name of Christ, and there was such a slaughter of believers that they could not be numbered. Babillas, bishop of Antioch, with his three little sons, Urban, Prilidan and Epolon, and Xystus, bishop of Rome, Laurentius, an archdeacon, and Hyppolitus, were made perfect by martyrdom because they confessed the name of the Lord. Valentinian and Novatian were then the chief heretics and were active against our faith, the enemy urging them on. At this time seven men were ordained as bishops and sent into the Gauls to preach, as the history of the martyrdom of the holy martyr Saturninus relates. For it says: " In the consulship of Decius and Gratus, as faithful memory recalls, the city of Toulouso received the holy Saturninus as its first and greatest bishop." These bishops were sent: bishop Catianus to Tours; bishop Trophimus to Arles; bishop Paul to Narbonne; bishop Saturninus to Toulouse; bishop Dionisius to Paris; bishop Stremonius to Clermont, bishop Martial to Limoges.

And of these the blessed Dionisius, bishop of Paris, after suffering divers pains in Christ's name, ended the present life by the threatening sword. And Saturninus, already certain of martyrdom said to his two priests: "Behold, I am now to be offered as a victim and the time of my death draws near. I ask you not to leave me at all before I come to the end." But when he was seized and was being dragged to the capitol he was abandoned by them and was dragged alone. And so when he saw that he was abandoned he is said to have made this prayer; "Lord Jesus Christ, grant my request from holy heaven, that this church may never in all time have the merit to receive a bishop from among its citizens." And we know that to

the present it has been so in this city. And he was tied to the feet of a mad bull, and being sent headlong from the capitol he ended his life. Catianus, Trophimus, Stremonius, Paul and Marcial lived in the greatest sanctity, winning people to the church and spreading the faith of Christ among all, and died in peace, confessing the faith. And thus the former by martyrdom as well as the latter by confession, left the earth and were united in the heavens.

31.

One of their disciples went to the city of Bourges and carried to the people the news of Christ the lord as the saviour of all. A few of them believed and were ordained priests and learned the ritual of psalmsinging, and were instructed how to build a church and how they ought to observe the worship of the omnipotent God. But as they had small means for building as yet, the citizens asked for the house of a certain man to use for a church. But the Senators and the rest of the better class of the place were at that time, devoted to the heathen religion and the believers were of the poor, according to the word of the Lord with which he reproached the Jews saying; "Harlots and publicans go into the kingdom of God before you." And they did not obtain the house from the person from whom they asked it, but they found a certain Leocadius, [*note: Gregory's paternal grandmother was Leocadia, who traced her descent from Vectius Epagatus See Historia Francorum ed. Arndt, Introd. p. 4, in Monumenta Germaniae Historica The story related above was from Gregory's family tradition.*] the first senator of the Gauls, who was of the family of Vectius Epagatus, who, we have said above, suffered in Lyons in Christ's name. And when they had made known to him at the same time their petition and their faith he answered; "If my own house in the city of Bourges were worthy of this work I would not refuse to offer it." And when they heard this they fell at his feet and offered three hundred gold pieces on a silver dish and said the house was very worthy of this mystery. And he accepted three gold pieces from them for a blessing and kindly returned the rest, although he was yet entangled in the error of idolatry, and he became a Christian and made his house a church. This is now the first church in the city of Bourges, built with marvelous skill and made illustrious by the relics of Stephen, the first martyr.

32.

Valerian and Gallienus received the Roman imperial power in the twentyseventh place, and set on foot a cruel persecution of the Christians. At that time Cornelius brought fame to Rome by his happy death, and Cyprian to Carthage. In their time also Chrocus the famous king of the Alemanni raised an army and overran the Gauls. This Chrocus is said to have been very arrogant. And when he had committed a great many crimes he gathered the tribe of the Alemanni, as we have stated,-by the advice, it is said, of his wicked mother,-and overran the whole of the Gauls, and destroyed from their foundations all the temples which

had been built in ancient times. And coming to Clermont he set on fire, overthrew and destroyed that shrine which they call Vasso Galatæ in the Gallic tongue. It had been built and made strong with wonderful skill. And its wall was double, for on the inside it was built of small stone and on the outside of squared blocks. The wall had a thickness of thirty feet. It was adorned on the inside with marble and mosaics. The pavement of the temple was also of marble and its roof above was of lead.

[33. Martyrs of Clermont. 34. The bishop of Gévaudan is maltreated by the Alemanni.]

35.

Under Diocletian, who was emperor of Rome in the thirty-third place, a cruel persecution of the Christians was kept up for four years, at one time in the course of which great numbers of Christians were put to death, on the sacred day of Easter, for worshipping the true God. At that time Quirinus, bishop of the church of Sissek, [*note:In Hungary*] endured glorious martyrdom in Christ's name. The cruel pagans cast him into a river with a millstone tied to his neck, and when he had fallen into the waters he was long supported on the surface by a divine miracle, and the waters did not suck him down since the weight of crime did not press upon him. And a multitude of people standing around wondered at the thing, and despising the rage of the heathen they hastened to free the bishop. He saw this and did not permit himself to be deprived of martyrdom, and raising his eyes to heaven he said: "Jesus lord, who sittest in glory at the right hand of the Father, suffer me not to be taken from this course, but receive my soul and deign to unite me with thy martyrs in eternal peace." With these words he gave up the ghost, and his body was taken up by the Christians and reverently buried.

36.

Constantine was the thirty-fourth emperor of the Romans, and he reigned prosperously for thirty years. In the eleventh year of his reign, when peace had been granted to the churches after the death of Diocletian, our blessed patron Martin was born at Sabaria, a city of Pannonia, of heathen parents, who still were not of the lowest station.

This Constantine in the twentieth year of his reign caused the death of his son Crispus by poison, and of his wife Fausta by means of a hot bath, because they had plotted to betray his rule. In his time the venerated wood of the Lord's cross was found, through the zeal of his mother Helen on the information of Judas, a Hebrew who was called Quiriacus after baptism. The historian Eusebius comes down to this period in his chronicle. The priest Jerome continues it from the twenty-first year of Constantine's reign. He informs us that the priest Juvencus wrote the gospels in verse at the request of the emperor named above.

[37. James of Nisibis and Maximin of Trèves. 38. Hilarius bishop of Poitiers.]

39.

At that time our light arose and Gaul was traversed by the rays of a new lamp, that is, the most blessed Martin then began to preach in the Gauls, and he overcame the unbelief of the heathen, showing among the people by many miracles that Christ the Son of God was the true God. He destroyed heathen shrines, crushed heresy, built churches, and while he was glorious for many other miracles, he completed his title to fame by restoring three dead men to life. At Poitiers, in the fourth year of Valentinian and Valens, Saint Hilarius passed to heaven full of sanctity and faith, a priest of many miracles; for he too is said to have raised the dead.

[40. Melania's journey to Jerusalem.]

41.

After the death of Valentinian, Valens, who succeeded to the undivided empire, gave orders that the monks be compelled to serve in the army, and commanded that those who refused should be beaten with clubs. After this the Romans fought a very fierce battle in Thrace, in which there was such slaughter that the Romans fled on foot after losing their horses, and when they were being cut to pieces by the Goths, and Valens was fleeing with an arrow wound, he entered a small hut, the enemy closely pursuing, and the little dwelling was burned over him. And he was deprived of the burial he desired. And thus the divine vengeance finally came for shedding the blood of the saints. Thus far Jerome; from this period the priest Orosius wrote at greater length.

Book II

2.

After this the Vandals left their own country and burst into the Gauls under king Gunderic. And when the Gauls had been thoroughly laid waste they made for the Spains. The Suebi, that is, Alamanni, following them, seized Gallicia. Not long after a quarrel arose between the two peoples, since they were neighbors And when they had gone armed to the battle, and were already at the point of fighting, the king of the Alemanni said: "Why are all the people involved in war? Let our people, I pray, not kill one another in battle, but let two of our warriors go to the field in arms and fight with one another. Then he whose champion wins shall hold the region without strife." To this all the people agreed, that the whole multitude might not rush on the edge of the sword. In these days king Gunderic had died

and in his place Thrasamund held the kingdom. And in the conflict of the champions the side of the Vandals was overcome, and, his champion being slain, Thrasamund promised to depart, and so, when he had made the necessary preparations for the journey, he removed from the territories of Spain.

About the same time Thrasamund persecuted the Christians, and by torture and different sorts of death tried to force all Spain to consent to the perfidy of the Arian sect. And it so happened that a certain maiden bound by religious vows was brought to trial. She was very rich and of the senatorial nobility according to the ranking of the world, and what is nobler than all this, strong in the catholic faith and a blameless servant of Almighty God. And when she was brought before the eyes of the king he first began to coax her with kind words to be baptized again. And when she repelled his venomous shaft by the armor of the faith, the king commanded that wealth be taken from her who already in her heart possessed the kingdom of paradise, and later that she should be tortured without hope of this life. Why make a long story? After long examinations, after losing the treasure of earthly riches, when she could not be forced to attack the blessed Trinity she was led against her will to be rebaptized. And when she was being forcibly immersed in that filthy bath and was crying loudly; "I believe that the Father and the holy Spirit are of one substance With the Son," when she said this she stained the water with a worthy ointment [*note: For qua sanguine cuncta infecit read digne aquas unguine infecit. See Bonnet, Le Latin de Gregoire de Tours, p. 457.*], that is, she defiled it with excrement. Then she was ; taken to the examination according to the law, and after the needle, flame and claw, she was beheaded for Christ the lord. After this the Vandals crossed the sea, the Alemanni following as far as Tangier, and were dispersed throughout all Africa and Mauritania.

6. Now the Huns left Pannonia and, as certain say, on the very watchnight of holy Easter arrived at the city of Metz, after devastating the country, and gave the city over to burning, slaying the people with the edge of the sword and killing the very priests of the Lord before the holy altars. And there remained in the city .no place unburned except the oratory of the blessed Stephen, the deacon and first martyr. And I do not hesitate to tell what I have heard from certain persons about this oratory. For they say that before these enemies came, a man of the faith saw in a vision the blessed levite Stephen as if conferring with the holy apostles Peter and Paul, and speaking as follows about this disaster: " I beg you, my lords, to prevent by your intercession the burning of the city of Metz by the enemy, because there is a place in it in which the relics of my life on earth are preserved; rather let the people learn that I have some influence with God. But if the wickedness of the people has grown too

great, so that nothing else can be done except deliver the city to burning, at least let this oratory not be consumed." And they replied to him: " Go in peace, beloved brother, your oratory alone the fire shall not burn. But as for the city shall not prevail, because the sentence of the will of the Lord has already gone out over it. For the sin of the people has grown great, and the outcry of their wickedness ascends to the presence of God; therefore this city shall be burned with fire." Whence it is certain that it was by the intercession of these that when the city was burned the oratory remained unharmed.

7.

And Attila king of the Huns went forth from Metz and when he had crushed many cities of the Gauls he attacked Orleans and strove to take it by the mighty hammering of battering rams. Now at that time the most blessed Annianus was bishop in the city just mentioned, a man of unequaled wisdom and praiseworthy holiness, whose miracles are faithfully remembered among us. And when the people, on being shut in, cried to their bishop, and asked what they were to do, trusting in God he advised all to prostrate themselves in prayer, and with tears to implore the ever present aid of God in their necessities. Then when they prayed as he had directed, the bishop said: "Look from the wall of the city to see whether God's mercy yet comes to your aid." For he hoped that by God's mercy Ætius was coming, to whom he had recourse before at Arles when he was anxious about the future. But when they looked from the wall, they saw no one. And he said: "Pray faithfully, for God will free you this day." When they had prayed he said: "Look again." And when they looked they saw no one to bring aid. He said to them a third time: "If you pray faithfully, God comes swiftly." And they besought God's mercy with weeping and loud cries. When this prayer also was finished they looked from the wall a third time at the old man's command, and saw afar off a cloud as it were arising from the earth. When they reported this the bishop said: "It is the aid of the Lord." Meanwhile, when the walls were now trembling from the hammering of the rams and were just about to fall, behold, Ætius came, and Theodore, king of the Goths and Thorismodus his son hastened to the city with their armies, and drove the enemy forth and defeated him. And so the city was freed by the intercession of the blessed bishop, and they put Attila to flight. And he went to the plain of Moirey and got ready for battle. And hearing this, they made manful preparations to meet him....

Ætius with the Goths and Franks fought against Attila. And the latter saw that his army was being destroyed, and escaped by flight. And Theodore, king of the Goths, was slain in the battle. Now let no one doubt that the army of Huns was put to flight by the intercession of the bishop mentioned above. And so Ætius the patrician, along with Thorismodus, won the victory and destroyed the enemy. And when the battle was finished, Ætius said : to

Thorismodus: "Make haste and return swiftly to your native land, for fear you lose your father's kingdom because of your brother." The latter, on hearing this, departed speedily with the intention of anticipating his brother, and seizing his father's throne first. At the same time Ætius by a stratagem caused the king of the Franks to flee. When they had gone, Ætius took the spoils of the battle and returned victoriously to his country with much booty. And Attila retreated with a few men. Not long after Aquileia was captured by the Huns and burned and altogether destroyed. Italy was overrun and plundered.

Thorismodus, whom we have mentioned above, overcame the Alans in battle, and was himself defeated later on by his brothers, after many quarrels and battles, and put to death.

[8. The history of Renatus Frigeridus is quoted for the character of Ætius and an account of his death.]

9.

The question who was the first of the kings of the Franks is disregarded by many writers. Though the history of Sulpicius Alexander tells much of them, still it does not name their first king, but says that they had dukes. However, it is well to relate what he says of them. For when he tells that Maximus, losing all hope of empire, remained within Aquileia, almost beside himself, he adds: "At that time the Franks burst into the province of Germany under Genobaud, Marcomer, and Sunno, their dukes, and having broken through the boundary wall they slew most of the people and laid waste the fertile districts especially, and aroused fear even in Cologne. And when word was carried to Trèves, Nanninus and Quintinus, the military officers to whom Maximus had intrusted his infant son and the defense of the Gauls, assembled an army and met at Cologne. Now the enemy, laden with plunder after devastating the richest parts of the provinces, had crossed the Rhine, leaving a good many of their men on Roman soil all ready to renew their ravages. An attack upon these turned to the advantage of the Romans, and many Franks perished by the sword near Carbonnière. And when the Romans were consulting after their success whether they ought to cross into Francia, Nanninus said no, because he knew the Franks would not be unprepared and would doubtless be stronger in their own land. And since thi displeased Quintinus and the remainder of the officers, Nanninus returned to Mayence, and Quintinus crossed the Rhine with his army near the stronghold of Neuss, and at his second camp from the river he found dwellings abandoned by their occupants and great villages deserted. For the Franks pretended to be afraid and retired into the more remote tracts, where they built an abattis on the edge of the woods. And so the cowardly soldiers burned all the dwellings, thinking that to rage against them was the winning of victory, and they passed a wakeful night under the burden of their arms. At the first glimmer of dawn they entered the wooded country under Quintinus as commander of the battle, and wandered in safety till

nearly midday, entangling themselves in the winding paths. At last, when they found everything solidly shut up by great fences, they struggled to make their exit into the marshy fields which were adjacent to the woods, and the enemy appeared here and there, and sheltered by trunks of trees or standing on the abattis as if on the summit of towers, they sent as if from engines a shower of arrows poisoned by the juices of herbs, so that sure death followed even superficial wounds inflicted in places that were not mortal. Later the army was surrounded by the enemy in greater number, and it eagerly rushed into the open places which the Franks had left unoccupied. And the horsemen were the first to plunge into the morasses, and the bodies of men and animals fell indiscriminately together, and they were overwhelmed by their own confusion. The foot soldiers also who had escaped the hoofs of the horses were impeded by the mud, and extricated themselves with difficulty, and hid again in panic in the woods from which they had struggled a little before. And so the ranks were thrown into disorder and the legions cut in pieces. Heraclius, tribune of the Jovinians, and nearly all the officers were slain, when night and the lurking places of the woods offered a safe escape to a few." This he narrated in the third book of his History.

And in the fourth book, when he tells of the killing of Victor son of Maximus, the tyrant, he says: "At that time Carietto and Sirius who had been appointed in place of Nanninus, were absent in the province of Germany with the army opposed to the Franks". And a little later when the Franks had taken booty from Germany, he added: "Arbogastes, wishing no further delay, warned Cæsar that the punishment due must be exacted from the Franks, unless they speedily restored all the plunder they had taken the previous year when the legions were destroyed, and delivered up the instigators of the war to be punished for their treachery in breaking the peace." He related that this had been done under the leadership of dukes and says further: "A few days later he held a hasty conference with Marcomer and Sunno, princes [*note: 'Regalabus'*] of the Franks and required hostages of them as usual, and then retired to Treves to spend the winter." But when he calls them princes, we do not know whether they were kings or held in the place of kings. Still the same writer, when he told of the hard straits of the emperor Valentinian, added this: "While events of various sorts were taking place in the East throughout Thrace, the public order was disturbed in Gaul. Valentinian the emperor was shut up in Vienne in the palace, and reduced almost below the position of a private person, and the military command was given over to the Frankish allies, and even the civil offices fell under the control of Arbogast's faction, and no one of all the oathbound soldiery was found to dare to heed the familiar speech or obey the command of the emperor." Then he says: "In the same year Arbogast pursued with heathenish hate the princes of the Franks, Sunno and Marcomer, and hastened to Cologne in the depth of winter, since he knew that all the retreats of Francia could be safely

penetrated and ravaged with fire when the woods, left bare and dry by the fall of the leaves, could not conceal men lying in ambush. And so he gathered an army and crossed the Rhine, and devastated the country of the Bricтори, near the bank, and also the district which the Chamavi inhabit, and no one met him any where, except that a few of the Ampsivarii and Chatti appeared with Marcomer as duke on the ridges of distant hills." At another time this writer, no longer mentioning dukes and princes, openly asserts that the Franks had a king, and without mentioning his name he says: " Then the tyrant Eugenius undertook a military expedition, and hastened to the Rhine to renew in the customary way the old alliances with the kings of the Alemanni and the Franks and to threaten the barbarian nations at that time with a great army." So much the historian mentioned above wrote about the Franks.

Renatus Profuturus Frigeridus, whom we have already mentioned, in his story of the capture and destruction of Rome by the Goths, says: "Meantime when Goare had gone over to the Romans, Respendial, king of the Alamanni, turned the army of his people from the Rhine, since the Vandals were getting the worse of the war with the Franks, having lost their king Godegisil, and about 20,000 of the army, and all the Vandals would have been exterminated if the army of the Alamanni [*note: Alamanni for Alani*] had not come to their aid in time." It is surprising to us that when he names the kings of the other nations he does not name the king of the Franks as well. However, when he says that Constantine, after seizing imperial power, commanded his son Constantius to come to him from the Spains, he speaks as follows: "The tyrant Constantine summoned from the Spains his son Constans, also a tyrant, in order to consult with him about their general policy; and so Constans left at Saragossa his court and his wife, and gave Gerontius charge over all in the Spains, and hastened to his father without breaking his journey. And when they met, many days passed and there was no danger from Italy, and Constantine gave himself up to gluttony and urged his son to return to Spain. And while Constans was sending his troops forward, being still with his father, news came from Spain that Maximus, one of his clients, had been given imperial authority by Gerontius, and was securing a following of the barbarians. Alarmed at this, they sent Edobeccus forward to the German tribes, and Constans and Decimus Rusticus, now a prefect,-he had been master of the offices,-hastened to the Gauls, with the intention of presently returning to Constantinewith the Franks and Alamanni and all the soldiers."

Again, when he writes that Constantine was being besieged, he uses these words: "The fourth month of the siege of Constantine was scarcely yet under way, when news came suddenly from farther Gaul that Iovinus had assumed royal state, and was threatening the besiegers with the Burgundians, Alamanni, Franks, Alans, and all his army. So the attack on the walls was hastened, the city opened its gates, and Constantine surrendered. He was

sent hastily into Italy, and was slain at the river Mincio by assassins sent to meet him by the emperor." And a little later the same writer says: "At the same time Decimus Rusticus, prefect of the tyrants, Agroetius, one of the chief secretaries of Jovinus, and many nobles, were captured in Auvergne by the commanders of Honorius and cruelly put to death. The city of Trèves was plundered and burnt in a second inroad of the Franks." And when Asterius had been made a patrician by an imperial letter, he adds this: "At the same time Castinus, count of the bodyguard, undertook an expedition against the Franks and was sent into the Gauls." This is what these have told of the Franks. And the historian Horosius says in the seventh book of his work: "Stilico gathered the nations, crushed the Franks, crossed the Rhine, wandered through the Gauls, and made his way as far as the Pyrenees."

This is the evidence that the historians who have been named have left us about the Franks, and they have not mentioned kings. Many relate that they came from Pannonia and all dwelt at first on the bank of the Rhine, and then crossing the Rhine they passed into Thuringia, and there among the villages and cities appointed longhaired kings over them from their first or, so to speak, noblest family. This title Clovis' victories afterwards made a lasting one, as we shall see later on. We read in the *Fasti Consulares* that Theodomer, king of the Franks, son of Richimer, and Ascylla his mother, were once on a time slain by the sword. They say also that Chlogio, a man of ability and high rank among his people, was king of the Franks then, and he dwelt at the stronghold of Dispargum which is within the borders of the Thuringians. And these parts, that is, towards the south, the Romans dwelt as far as the Loire. But beyond the Loire the Goths were in control; the Burgundians also, who belonged to the sect of the Arians, dwelt across the Rhone in the district which is adjacent to the city of Lyons. And Chlogio sent spies to the city of Cambrai, and : they went everywhere, and he himself followed and overcame the : Romans and seized the city, in which he dwelt for a short time, and he seized the land as far as the river Somme. Certain authorities assert that king Merovech, whose son was Childeric, was of the family of Chlogio.

10.

Now this people seems to have always been addicted to heathen worship, and they did not know God, but made themselves images of the woods and the waters, of birds and beasts and of the other elements as well. They were wont to worship these as God and to offer sacrifice to them. O ! would that that terrible voice had touched the fibers of their hearts which spoke through Moses to the people saying, "Thou shalt have no other gods before me. Thou shalt not make unto thee any graven image nor worship any likeness of anything that is in heaven or on earth or in the water; thou shalt not make them and shalt not worship them." . . .

And in Isaiah he speaks a second time: "I am the first, and I am the last, and besides me there is no god and creator whom I do not know. They that fashion a graven image are all of them vanity, and the things that they delight in shall not profit them. They are themselves witnesses of what they are, that they do not see nor have understanding, and they are confounded in them. Behold all his fellows shall be put to shame, for the workmen are of men. On the coals and with hammers did he form it, and he worked it with his strong arm. In like manner, too, the carpenter fashioned it with compasses, and made the likeness of a man as if of a comely man dwelling in a house. He hewed down the wood, he worked and made a graven image, and worshipped it as a god, he fastened it with nails and hammers so that it should not fall to pieces. They are carried because they cannot walk; and the remainder of the wood is prepared by men for the hearth and they are warmed. And from another he made a god, and a graven image for himself. He bends before it and worships it and prays, saying: 'Deliver me, for thou art my god. I burned half of it with fire; and baked bread upon its coals; I baked flesh and ate, and from the residue I shall make an idol, I shall worship before a wooden trunk; part of it is ashes.' The foolish heart worshipped it, and did not deliver his soul. And he does not say: 'Perhaps there is a lie in my right hand?'" The nation of the Franks did not understand at first; but it understood later, as the following history relates.

16.

Now after the death of the bishop Rusticus, saint Namatius became the eighth bishop of Clermont. He undertook the task of building the older church which is still standing and is contained within the walls of the city, one hundred and fifty feet in length, sixty in width,- that is, the nave,-fifty in height to the vault, with a round apse in front and on each side aisles finely built, the whole building is laid out in the form of a cross; it has forty-two windows, seventy columns, eight doors. The fear of God is in it and a great brightness is seen, and in the spring a very pleasant fragrance as if of spices is perceived there by the devout. It has near the altar walls of variegated work adorned with many kinds of marble. The blessed bishop on finishing the building in the twelfth year, sent priests to Bologna in Italy, to procure relics of saints Agricola and Vitalis, who we know very certainly were crucified in the name of Christ our God.

17.

His wife built the church of Saint Stephen in the outskirts of the city. And wishing to adorn it with colors she used to carry a book in her bosom, reading the histories of ancient times

and describing to the painters what they were to represent on the walls. It happened one day that while she sat in the church and read, a certain poor man came to pray, and seeing her in black clothing, already an old woman, he thought she was one of the needy, and he took out part of a loaf and put it in her lap and went off. But she did not disdain the gift of the poor man who did not know her, but took it and thanked him and put it away, and setting it before her at meals used it as holy bread until it was used up.

18.

Now Childeric fought at Orleans and Odoacer came with the Saxons to Angers. At that time a great plague destroyed the people. Egidius died and left a son, Syagrius by name. On his death Odoacer received hostages from Angers and other places. The Britanni were driven from Bourges by the Goths, and many were slain at the village of Déols. Count Paul with the Romans and Franks made war on the Goths and took booty. When Odoacer came to Angers, king Childeric came on the following day, and slew count Paul, and took the city. In a great fire on that day the house of the bishop was burned.

27. After these events Childeric died and Clovis his son reigned in his stead. In the fifth year of his reign Siagrius, king of the Romans, son of Egidius, had his seat in the city of Soissons which Egidius, who has been mentioned before, once held. And Clovis came against him with Ragnachar, his kinsman, because he used to possess the kingdom, and demanded that they make ready a battlefield. And Siagrius did not delay nor was he afraid to resist. And so they fought against each other and Siagrius, seeing his army crushed, turned his back and fled swiftly to king Alaric at Toulouse. And Clovis sent to Alaric to send him back, otherwise he was to know that Clovis would make war on him for his refusal. And Alaric was afraid that he would incur the anger of the Franks on account of Siagrius, seeing it is the fashion of the Goths to be terrified, and he surrendered him in chains to Clovis' envoys. And Clovis took him and gave orders to put him under guard, and when he had got his kingdom he directed that he be executed secretly.; At that time many churches were despoiled by Clovis' army, since he was as yet involved in heathen error. Now the army had taken from a certain church a vase of wonderful size and beauty, along with the remainder of the utensils for the service of the church. And the bishop of the church sent messengers to the king asking that the vase at least be returned, if he could not get back any more of the sacred dishes. On hearing this the king said to the messenger: "Follow us as far as Soissons, because all that has been taken is to be divided there and when the lot assigns me that dish I will do what the father [*note: papa. The word was used in*

the early Middle Ages in unrestricted, informal sense, and applied widely to bishops. Cf. Du Cange, Glossarium] asks." Then when he came to Soissons and all the booty was set in their midst, the king said: "I ask of you, brave warriors, not to refuse to grant me in addition to my share, yonder dish," that is, he was speaking of the vase just mentioned. In answer to the speech of the king those of more sense replied: "Glorious king, all that we see is yours, and we ourselves are subject to your rule. Now do what seems wellpleasing to you; for no one is able to resist your power." When they said this a foolish, envious and excitable fellow lifted his battleax and struck the vase, and cried in a loud voice: "You shall get nothing here except what the lot fairly bestows on you." At this all were stupefied, but the king endured the insult with the gentleness of patience, and taking the vase he handed it over to the messenger of the church, nursing the wound deep in his heart. And at the end of the year he ordered the whole army to come with their equipment of armor, to show the brightness of their arms on the field of March. And when he was reviewing them all carefully, he came to the man who struck the vase, and said to him "No one has brought armor so carelessly kept as you; for neither your spear nor sword nor ax is in serviceable condition." And seizing his ax he cast it to the earth, and when the other had bent over somewhat to pick it up, the king raised his hands and drove his own ax into the man's head. "This," said he, "is what you did at Soissons to the vase." Upon the death of this man, he ordered the rest to depart, raising great dread of himself by this action./ He made many wars and gained many victories In the tenth year of his reign he made war on the Thuringi and brought them under his dominion.

28.

Now the king of the Burgundians was Gundevech, of the family of king Athanaric the persecutor, whom we have mentioned before. He had four sons; Gundobad, Godegisel, Chilperic and Godomar. Gundobad killed his brother Chilperic with the sword, and sank his wife in water with a stone tied to her neck. His two daughters he condemned to exile; the older of these, who became a nun, was called Chrona, and the younger Clotilda. And as Clovis often sent embassies to Burgundy, the maiden Clotilda was found by his envoys. And when they saw that she was of good bearing and wise, and learned that she was of the family of the king, they reported this to King Clovis, and he sent an embassy to Gundobad without delay asking her in marriage. And Gundobad was afraid to refuse, and surrendered her to the men, and they took the girl and brought her swiftly to the king. The king was very glad when he saw her, and married her, having already by a concubine a son named Theodoric.

29.

He had a first-born son by queen Clotilda, and as his wife wished to consecrate him in baptism, she tried unceasingly to persuade her husband, saying: "The gods you worship are nothing, and they will be unable to help themselves or any one else. For they are graven out of stone or wood or some metal. And the names you have given them are names of men and not of gods, as Saturn, who is declared to have fled in fear of being banished from his kingdom by his son; as Jove himself, the foul perpetrator of all shameful crimes, committing incest with men, mocking at his kinswomen, not able to refrain from intercourse with his own sister as she herself says: *Jovisque et soror et conjunx*. What could Mars or Mercury do? They are endowed rather with the magic arts than with the power of the divine name. But he ought rather to be worshipped who created by his word heaven and earth, the sea and all that in them is out of a state of nothingness, who made the sun shine, and adorned the heavens with stars, who filled the waters with creeping things, the earth with living things and the air with creatures that fly, at whose nod the earth is decked with growing crops, the trees with fruit, the vines with grapes, by whose hand mankind was created, by whose generosity all that creation serves and helps man whom he created as his own." But though the queen said this the spirit of the king was by no means moved to belief, and he said: "It was at the command of our gods that all things were created and came forth, and it is plain that your God has no power and, what is more, he is proven not to belong to the family of the gods." Meantime the faithful queen made her son ready for baptism; she gave command to adorn the church with hangings and curtains, in order that he who could not be moved by persuasion might be urged to belief by this mystery. The boy, whom they named Ingomer, died after being baptized, still wearing the white garments in which he became regenerate. At this the king was violently angry, and reproached the queen harshly, saying: "If the boy had been dedicated in the name of my gods he would certainly have lived; but as it is, since he was baptized in the name of your God, he could not live at all." To this the queen said: "I give thanks to the omnipotent God, creator of all, who has judged me not wholly unworthy, that he should deign to take to his kingdom one born from my womb. My soul is not stricken with grief for his sake, because I know that, summoned from this world as he was in his baptismal garments, he will be fed by the vision of God."

After this she bore another son, whom she named Chlodomer at baptism; and when he fell sick, the king said: "It is impossible that anything else should happen to him than happened to his brother, namely, that being baptized in the name of your Christ, should die at once." But through the prayers of his mother, and the Lord's command, he became well.

30.

The queen did not cease to urge him to recognize the true God and cease worshipping idols. But he could not be influenced in any way to this belief, until at last a war arose with

the Alamanni, in which he was driven by necessity to confess what before he had of his free will denied. It came about that as the two armies were fighting fiercely, there was much slaughter, and Clovis's army began to be in danger of destruction. He saw it and raised his eyes to heaven, and with remorse in his heart he burst into tears and cried: "Jesus Christ, whom Clotilda asserts to be the son of the living God, who art said to give aid to those in distress, and to bestow victory on those who hope in thee, I beseech the glory of thy aid, with the vow that if thou wilt grant me victory over these enemies, and I shall know that power which she says that people dedicated in thy name have had from thee, I will believe in thee and be baptized in thy name. For I have invoked my own gods but, as I find, they have withdrawn from aiding me; and therefore I believe that they possess no power, since they do not help those who obey them. I now call upon thee, I desire to believe thee only let me be rescued from my adversaries." And when he said thus, the Alamanni turned their backs, and began to disperse in flight. And when they saw that their king was killed, they submitted to the dominion of Clovis, saying: "Let not the people perish further, we pray; we are yours now." And he stopped the fighting, and after encouraging his men, retired in peace and told the queen how he had had merit to win the victory by calling on the name of Christ. This happened in the fifteenth year of his reign.

31.

Then the queen asked saint Remi, bishop of Rheims, to summon Clovis secretly, urging him to introduce the king to the word of salvation. And the bishop sent for him secretly and began to urge him to believe in the true God, maker of heaven and earth, and to cease worshipping idols, which could help neither themselves nor anyone else. But the king said: "I gladly hear you, most holy father; but there remains one thing: the people who follow me cannot endure to abandon their gods; but I shall go and speak to them according to your words." He met with his followers, but before he could speak the power of God anticipated him, and all the people cried out together: "O pious king, we reject our mortal gods, and we are ready to follow the immortal God whom Remi preaches." This was reported to the bishop, who was greatly rejoiced, and bade them get ready the baptismal font. The squares were shaded with tapestried canopies, the churches adorned with white curtains, the baptistery set in order, the aroma of incense spread, candles of fragrant odor burned brightly, and the whole shrine of the baptistery was filled with a divine fragrance: and the Lord gave such grace to those who stood by that they thought they were placed amid the odors of paradise. And the king was the first to ask to be baptized by the bishop. Another Constantine advanced to the baptismal font, to terminate the disease of ancient leprosy and wash away with fresh water the foul spots that had long been borne. And when he entered to be baptized, the saint of God began with ready speech: "Gently bend your neck, Sigamber; worship what you burned; burn what you worshipped." The holy

bishop Remi was a man of excellent wisdom and especially trained in rhetorical studies, and of such surpassing holiness that he equalled the miracles of Silvester. For there is extant a book of his life which tells that he raised a dead man. And so the king confessed all-powerful God in the Trinity, and was baptized in the name of the Father, Son and holy Spirit, and was anointed with the holy ointment with the sign of the cross of Christ. And of his army more than 3000 were baptized. His sister also, Albofled, was baptized, who not long after passed to the Lord. And when the king was in mourning for her, the holy Remi sent a letter of consolation which began in this way: "The reason of your mourning pains me, and pains me greatly, that Albofled your sister, of good memory, has passed ; away. But I can give you this comfort, that her departure from the world was such that she ought to be envied rather than e mourned." Another sister also was converted, Lanthechild by name, who had fallen into the heresy of the Arians, and she confessed that the Son and the holy Spirit were equal to the Father, and was anointed.