



Part II

The Story of the Light that Never Went Out



**By Augusta Cook and
W. Stanley Martin**

1903

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The death of the Venerable Bede

Continued from part 1: far as Chapter vi. 9, into our own tongue, for the benefit of the church---When Tuesday before the ascension of our Lord came, he began to suffer still more in his breath, and a small swelling appeared in his feet, but he passed all that clay, and dictated cheerfully; and now and then, among other things, he said, "Go on quickly, I know not how long I shall hold out, and whether my maker will not soon take me away!" But to us he seemed very well to know the time of his departure, and so he spent the night awake in thanksgiving. And when the morning appeared, that is, Wednesday, he ordered us to write with all speed what he had begun---There was one among us who said to him, "Most clear master, there is still one chapter wanting(of his translation of St. John's Gospel), do you think it troublesome to be asked any more questions?" He answered, "It is no trouble. Take your pen, and make ready, and write fast."---

Having said much more, he passed the day joyfully till the evening, and the boy above-mentioned said, "Dear master, there is yet one sentence not written." He answered "Write quickly." Soon after, the boy said, "The sentence is now finished." He replied, "It is well, you have said the truth. It is finished. Receive my head into your hands, for it is a great satisfaction to me to sit facing my holy place, where I was wont to pray that I may also sit calling upon my Father!" And thus, on the pavement of his little cell, singing, Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost, when he had named the Holy Ghost, he breathed his last; and so departed to the heavenly kingdom.

All who were present at the death of the blessed Father, said "they had never seen any other person expire with so much devotion, and in so tranquil a frame of mind. For as you have heard, so long as the soul animated his body, he never ceased to give praise to the true and living God, with expanded hands."

The writer of the above was Cuthbert, a pupil of Bede. We must not confound him with the "Saint" (so-called) of that name, who died when Bede was only about thirteen years old. Saint Cuthbert belonged to the hardy race of the Northumbrians, and, it is said, at eight years old desired to dedicate himself to God's service.

When he grew up, he became a famous and fearless Evangelist. Bede says of him, "He was wont to preach in remote villages, far from the world, in wild and horrible mountain regions." Where Aidan had laboured on the Island of Lindisfarne, St. Cuthbert continued to work. The peasantry flocked to hear him, but his special efforts were directed in seeking to reform the monks.

In this he met with much opposition; yet he struggled on with unwearied patience, says his biographer, "Amidst all distress, bearing a cheerful countenance." In that superstitious time, people were foolishly taught that the highest holiness is to be sought and found in a life of absolute solitude. So Cuthbert retired to a lonely islet called Farne, and there resided in a rude dwelling he had built for himself. Many childish legends are connected with his name; many absurd miracles are said to have been wrought by him, or for him.

For example, we are told that two crows, who had been mischievously picking the thatch of his hermit's abode, humbly besought his pardon. The lives of these seventh century "Saints" give us an idea of the fearful superstition that was fast corrupting Christianity. How far the preaching of men, whose religion was mixed up with so much dross, was really effective for good, it is difficult to say. What light they had, flickered with uncertain flame in the deepening darkness, and was not powerful enough to scatter the night shadows, that were gradually enshrouding the land. When St. Cuthbert died, his remains were removed to Durham, and his shrine became the most famous in the North Country, and a constant scene of idolatry, until the glorious Reformation dawned, centuries later.

One of the most famous men of the eighth century was Alcuin. He was a pupil of Egbert, Archbishop of York, who died in 767. Egbert was a patron of learning, and collected a library of rare and beautiful books. Alcuin was thus able to acquire the best education that the times afforded.



The Emperor Charlemagne

In those days a great Emperor flourished on the Continent—Charlemagne, who also earnestly sought to revive learning in his dominions. Alcuin having been sent to his court on an embassy, Charlemagne soon discovered, that the talented pupil of the English Archbishop was the very one to aid him, in his efforts to provide instruction for his people. So Alcuin was attached to his court, and thus we find that the learning which was establishing itself among some of our Anglo-Saxon forefathers found a yet wider field for development on the Continent.[1]

But in his foreign home, Alcuin remembered that splendid library where he had

studied at York. Those who love reading know what a pleasure it is to find oneself in the Midst of just the books that treat on the subject we wish to study ; but what- a luxury such a library must have been in that unlettered age! No wonder Alcuin longs for his pet volumes! We find him writing to Charlemagne, from Tours in France, "Give me those exquisite books of erudition which I had in my own country, by the good and devout industry of my master, Egbert, the Archbishop. If it shall please your wisdom, I will send some of our youths, who shall copy from thence whatever is necessary, and carry back into France the flowers of Britain, that the garden may not be shut up in York, but the fruits of it may be placed in the paradise of Tours."[2]

Alcuin's school at Tours became famed, though the severe monkish rules of the monastery there (of which he was the Abbot) hindered in a large measure the pursuit of some branches of study, such as science and the classics. Yet numbers of students flocked to the school at Tours. Those from England were especially welcome, and generally attained to distinction. It is said many of the great men in the ninth century, whose names are famed in connection with the cause of learning, had been pupils of Alcuin.[3] Nor was Alcuin the only scholar of Egbert's cathedral school at York who carried the light of learning to the Continent.

"The pupils of the school of York," says Stubbs, "taught the schools and universities of Italy, of Germany, and of France."[4]

To the Protestant, Alcuin is more interesting in his connection with a work entitled, "Four Caroline Books," which condemned the worship of images. In order to explain the reason for the publication of these important books, we must digress a little, and take a swift glimpse at the curious history of images and image-worship. Idolatry was a subject of fierce dispute between the eastern and western churches. How small and foolish is the human mind, when it can believe that the Almighty God can be worshipped through pictures, or images, or that supposed representations of Him can in any way be pleasing to the God, Who has so strictly forbidden us to make them. But, like Israel of old, the Christian Church has been prone to idolatry. At first, pictures of sacred subjects were set up merely for the purpose of instructing the ignorant, but gradually they became objects of superstitious reverence, and the very images that were erected as aids to devotion became snares and stumbling-blocks, for they were aids—and very efficient aids—to idolatry. From time to time the spread of image-worship was protested against, especially in the Eastern Church. As early as the fifth century, we find the Emperors Valens and Theodosius II. forbidding the using, or even the making of images for religious purposes. Their edict is well worth noting:—"

Valens and Theodosius, Emperors, unto the Captain of the Army: Whereas we have a diligent care to maintain the religion of God above, in all things, we will grant to no more to set forth, grave, carve, or paint the image of our Saviour, Jesus Christ, in colours, stone, or any other matter ; but in what place so ever it shall be found, we command that it be taken away, and that all such as shall attempt anything contrary to our decrees or commandment herein, shall be most sharply punished."[5]

The popes of Rome have always been favourers of idolatry. In the sixth century, we find Gregory the Great advocating images in churches. As we have seen, Augustine and his monks, sent to our shores by this pope, were the first to introduce this superstition into England. The contest about images continued fast and furious between the Eastern and Western churches, and was at last the cause of the rise and spread of the Mohammedan religion, whose terrible wars were carried on against image-worshippers only.[6] Yes! images always have been, and ever will continue to be, the direct source of divisions and controversies and quarrels wherever they are allowed to be set up, for they are the works of darkness, and light and darkness can never agree.

One of the Emperors, whose zeal was especially directed against idolatry, was Leo III., who reigned in the eighth century. This Emperor rightly caused a heap to be made of all images found

in the city of Constantinople, and publicly burnt. Also, all pictures painted on the walls, etc., of churches, were whited over. When the pope heard of these doings, he was, of course, very enraged, and constituted himself a zealous champion for the idols of wood, stone, and paint, that can neither hear, see, walk, nor talk. Leo's son, Constantine V., followed in his father's footsteps. In his reign, a great assembly was held of all the learned men and bishops of Asia and Greece, at which it was decreed that "It is not lawful for them that believe in God through Jesus Christ, to have any images, neither of the Creator, nor of His creatures, set up in churches to be worshipped; but rather that all images, by the law of God, and for the avoidance of offence, ought to be taken out of the churches." [7]

Later on, however, when Irene became Empress, the worship of images was established. She caused the bones of Constantine to be dug up and burnt, because he had destroyed the idols she loved. In her reign was held the Council of Nicea, which was presided over by legates sent by the pope; so we need not be surprised that at that Council a decree was made sanctioning image-worship, and that in a short time Constantinople became as much a stronghold of idolatry as Rome itself; and which it continued to be until God's judgment descended against it by means of the Mohammedan Turks.

We have gone a little out of our way on this matter, because we want our young readers to understand the importance of those "Four Caroline Books" supposed to have been written by our English Alcuin, with the authority of the great Charlemagne. These books, which condemned the worship of images, boldly protested against, and set aside, the decree of that Nicene Council. Charlemagne also held an important Council at Frankfort, in Germany, in 794, at which the subject was discussed, and the adoration of images was condemned. Alcuin was in all probability present at that Council, and though those famous "Caroline Books" against image worship were issued under the name of the Emperor Charlemagne, there is evidence to lead us to believe that our English Alcuin was the author, "the only known writer equal to the task," says Dean Milman. [8] Though the books did not protest against all the superstitions of the age, but rather sanctioned some of them, yet it condemned the adoration, or even the reverence for images and pictures. "You may keep lights burning before your pictures," wrote Alcuin; "we will be diligent in studying the Holy Scriptures."

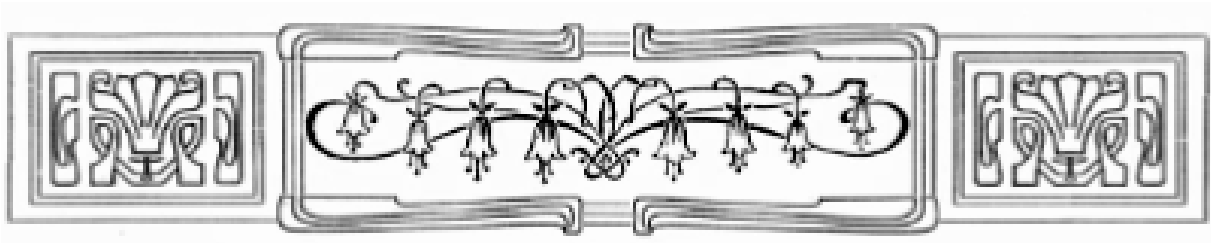
In spite of these protestations, the shadows of advancing corruptions in the professedly Christian Church continued to gather. In our own land, the light, which in centuries gone by had shone brightly, became dimmer, and more blurred, as time rolled on.

The sad condition of his native land was often in the mind of Alcuin. From his adopted home in Tours, letters were addressed by him to the Northumbrian king, and to other persons in authority in England, earnestly beseeching them to stay the flood of ungodliness that threatened to plunge the country into darkness and distress. Very little attention, if any, was given to his pleadings; his warnings were almost unheeded, till at last the Divine scourge fell on the unfaithful custodians of His Light of Truth: a foreign enemy, the Dane, invaded the land. The Torch of God's Word burned low in those troublous years; but in the latter half of the ninth century, England's greatest king, Alfred the Wise, was raised up to fan it again into a bright flame.

Notes to Chapter 4

1. "*History of the Church of England*," by Dr. J. Boulton, see page 88..
2. Ibid., page 83.
3. "*The Age of Charlemagne*," by Wells, Ph.D.
4. Ibid., page 318.

5. See Homily on the "*Peril of Idolatry*."
6. Ibid.
7. See Homily on the "*Peril of Idolatry*."
8. Latin Christianity, v 1



Chapter V

ENGLAND'S GREATEST KING



ENGLAND and her people are greatly changed since the ninth century, when King Alfred's greatest external enemy was the invading Dane. With a daughter of Denmark for our Queen, we regard Danes to-day as friends and allies.

The most enduring results are those brought about by prayer, drawn forth by circumstances in which the powerful "hand of the Lord" is craved and received by a man who feels his weakness. It is so certain that King Alfred was a man of prayer concerning other matters, that it is impossible to believe his wonderful victory over Guthrum, the Danish leader, at Ethandene in A.D. 878 could have been accomplished without it.

The secret of Alfred's success was that he felt his own weakness, and so had to lean on the strength of God. How did he come to know Him? It is said that he learned to read in order to become the happy possessor of a Psalter in Latin that his mother had promised to give him as soon as he could read it. The lad won the prize, and thus it was that his love for learning began in his childhood. May we not also hope that his love for God's Word and Will commenced as early?

On the death of his father and some elder brothers he was elected King of the West Saxons at the age of 22. His kingdom included (before he died) all the counties south of the Thames and Kent, while the Danes of East Anglia and Mercia were time and again his vassals.

At Wantage, in Berkshire, where he was born in 849, there is a statue erected to his memory. It is executed by our late Queen's cousin, Count Gleichen, and must be purely imaginary, as there is no authentic portrait of Alfred. But its inscription is excellent: "Alfred found learning dead, and he restored it; education neglected, and he revived it ; the laws powerless, and he gave them force ; the Church debased, and he raised it; the land ravaged by a fearful enemy, from which he delivered it."

His kingdom needed far more than to be cleared of the Danes. The necessity of repelling these sea warriors laid the foundation of our English navy. England's first naval victory was gained

over them in 875. Alfred's ships were manned, too, by enterprising men. The story of a voyage round the North Cape into the White Sea, and of another in the Baltic is on record.

Alfred encouraged learning, inviting learned men to live in the colleges he had started or helped. In those days hardly any-one south of the Thames could understand the Church services or translate a Latin letter. He remarked that "every free-born youth should know how to read English correctly." Besides encouraging the translation of books from Latin into Anglo-Saxon by others, he did some translating himself and wrote prefaces. They can be read now. He himself compiled or wrote a kind of "Daily Light"—wise and spiritual sentences and portions of Scripture—known as Alfred's Handbook, or Manual. The University of Oxford owes much to him also. He was in fact the founder of that ancient seat of learning.



Statue of King Alfred the Great, at Wantage

The anecdote of King Alfred and the cakes is very well known, it happened when the Danes had landed at Wareham in 872, and overran Wilts. and Somerset. Poor Alfred had to disband his army and hide himself. How well he concealed his identity the incident proves. More interesting than the part about the cakes is the story of his visit to the camp of the Danes. It illustrates his dogged perseverance under bitter discouragement, and also shows us that he was a man of courage and resource. The narrative is as follows:-

After a long winter of exile, 877-8, the camp of King Alfred became at the approach of Spring the rallying point of bands of patriotic Saxon soldiers, eager to fight again under his leadership against the hated intruder. Waiting until sufficient numbers had gathered around him, Alfred, it is said, made his way, disguised as a minstrel, and accompanied only by one faithful servant, into the camp of the Dan-

ish chief, Guthrum—by far the most powerful Viking that had as yet appeared in England. The camp was then situated on the summit of Bratton Hill, in Wiltshire. He delighted the Danes by his skill in playing and singing the songs of his native land. During his stay in camp he contrived to penetrate into the privacy of the chiefs tent, and note with sharp eye the plans and proceedings of his enemies. On his return to his people, he immediately assembled all his available force, and advancing silently, he fell, without any warning, upon the Danish camp. Deep trenches, high banks, and other strong defences enabled the Danes for some days to stand against the attack ; but at last food grew scarce, and the reinforcements of the encouraged Saxons growing greater around the camp day by day, the enemy sought for peace.

The list of his doings and sayings left us by Asser, the contemporary chronicler, sounds incredible, especially when we remember his ill-health, and that he died at 52 years of age.

His anxiety to "work while it is clay" by a methodical arrangement of his time caused him to invent a way of calculating it, by the burning of candles of a certain weight, designed to last it given number of hours. Of course, a lantern to protect them from the wind (especially in castles where the windows were narrow slits in the thick walls) was soon added.



King Alfred translating portions of the Scriptures

The story of his ill-health is certainly true in some form. It is said that he felt the passions, and vanities of youth, so strong an enemy to his soul's health, that he prayed God to send him something, that should keep the corruption of his heart in check. His prayer was heard, and a painful disease, unknown in those days, came upon him. Again he prayed that "God would in His boundless compassion exchange it for some lighter malady that would in no wise hinder him in the work where to he was called, and cause his people to despise him. For on King Alfred two heavy tasks were pressed--to rid his kingdom of enemies, and teach his people civilisation and the claims of God and His -Word. Hard fighting, and hard thinking lay before him." This prayer was heard also, and he walked out of the lonely church, where he had spent hours in communion with God, a healed man. A year passed away, and his health remained good, but on his wedding-day (he married a woman worthy of him) new pains came, and the rest of his life-work was clone "at such cost to himself as none knew."

"Afore his clay," wrote his old chronicler, "all English books were written in poesy, and the all was but a few. He rendered good and wise books (the Psalms and other parts of the Bible among them) into the English tongue. He devised ships, he builded churches and cities, designed jewels, invented lanterns, and having done all he writ him down almost useless for every duty." England could do very well with some more men of this "useless" stamp! His nickname was the "Truth teller," being so straightforward and simple in his words and ways.

One of Alfred's few biographers has raised the question—Was Alfred in favour with the Pope? And proceeds to give reasons why he was not noticed and flattered by him. Here are some of them. He went straight to God with his needs and sorrows, perplexities and difficulties—no monk or priest came between. He preferred to leave bishoprics vacant rather than receive the Pope's nominees, and the Pontiff actually let him alone! He supported a Commision against images, circulated the Scriptures, invited what learned men he chose, without asking advice from Rome, entertained Scotus Erigena when his bold philosophy brought persecution on him,

rendering his abode on the Continent unsafe. He encouraged learning, and "walked with too much knowledge and understanding, and was not easily led by the Pope, as was his father"—a ninth century Protestant, in fact!

The eulogies of Alfred that come from different men and minds are remarkable. Freeman, the historian, calls him "the most perfect character in history." One writer has described Alfred thus: "A profound scholar for those times, a grammarian, a rhetorician, a philosopher, historian, musician, an excellent architect and .geometrician." Another says: "A man to whose character romance has clone no more than justice, and who appears in exactly the same light in history as in fable. No other man, on record, has ever so thoroughly united all the virtues, both of the ruler, and of the private man. A saint without superstition, a scholar without ostentation, a warrior whose wars were all fought in defence of his country, a conqueror whose laurels were never stained by cruelty, a prince never cast down by adversity, never lifted up to insolence in the hour of triumph ; there is no other name in history to compare with his."

Truly Alfred the Great was one of those who, in early clays, kept the torch of truth burning in this England of ours. "Thy Word is a lamp to my feet," wrote David, and England's greatest king made it, not only the light of his private life, but bore it aloft as the guiding star of the people he ruled. This is shown by the fact that the Ten Commandments and a part of the Law of Moses were prefixed to his code, and became a portion of the law of the land. So great was his reverence for the Sabbath, that to labour on that clay met with severe punishment. With Alfred's reign true English history begins. Some of our modern British laws can be traced to his wise legislation: for example, trial by jury, the important safeguard to our personal rights.

His son—Eadward—who succeeded him, proved one of the ablest rulers of those times. He is the reputed founder of the University of Cambridge. His successor—Athelstane placed in every church a copy of the Anglo-Saxon Bible, which he had caused to be translated. Thus we perceive that the Light, kindled in Alfred's clays, shone on even after he had passed away.



Alfred the Great and his Witan

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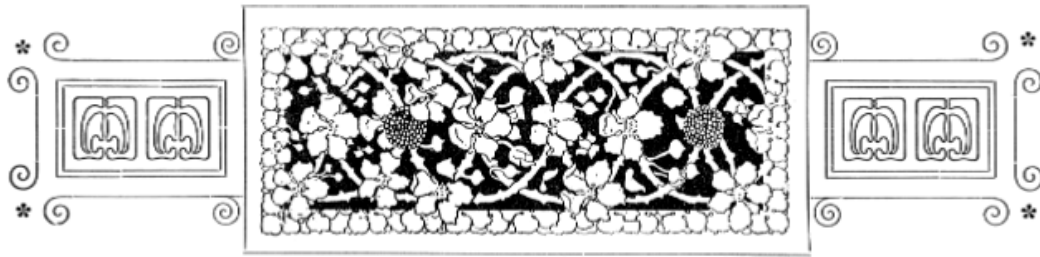
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Chapter VI

WILLIAM THE CONQUEROR AND THE NORMAN PERIOD



VEN in boyhood -William of Normandy revealed a strong and remarkable character. He was still a lad when his father, Duke Robert, left home on a long pilgrimage. He never returned, so young William took his place as ruler over one of the most turbulent baronages on the Continent. The boy-warrior grew up amid scenes of constant anarchy and rebellion, and these fierce experiences formed his naturally brave spirit. His savage temper never brooked defeat; his voice could rally his troops on the field of battle; his lance seldom, if ever, missed its mark. As he grew older, the ferocity of his nature gave way, before the nobler qualities of a great statesman. Such was the man who visited our shores in 1051, and returned to our land a few years later; and who, by his victory over our Saxon forefathers in 1066, gained the title of *The Conqueror*.

But it was not merely his triumph over the English that made him a conqueror, but also his successful resistance against the increasing usurpations of the Papacy.

It has been said there have been four ascending steps to Protestantism in England—William the Conqueror, Edward III., Wycliffe, and the Reformation.

Let us now note the first.

Two mighty men stood forth in the eleventh century; one was Hildebrand, or Gregory VII., the Pope of Rome; the other was William the Conqueror, King of England.

Hildebrand was the greatest pope Rome had then produced. His daring ambition aimed at nothing less than the conquest of the whole world to the papacy. "The pope's name," said he, "is the chief name in the world: his decision is to be withstood by none; but he alone may annul those of all men." [1]

In a large measure Hildebrand realised his proud ideal. Great men were prostrate before him. For example, we find the Emperor Henry IV. of Germany barefoot, clothed in sackcloth, amid the winter snow, waiting outside the Castle of Canossa for the pope's forgiveness.

But in England the haughty Hildebrand found his match; the Norman Conqueror could not be brought under his sway. In vain he sought to exact submission from the English king, bidding him do homage to the pope for his realm of England. William gave this manly reply, "Fealty I have never willed to do, nor will I do it now. I have never promised it, nor do I find that my predecessors did it to yours." [2]

This is memorable as being the first definite claim of the pope for supremacy in England. Hitherto English kings had never recognised the pope's temporal rule. Their free-born liberty was dear to them as a direct gift of God: "That the king of England," said Edgar the Pacific, who

reigned from 959 to 975, " held the sword of Constantine; that he was, in his own dominions, the Lord's husbandman, the pastor of pastors, and the representative of Christ upon earth."[3].

This English birth right of liberty was challenged when Hildebrand demanded the submission of William the Conqueror; but it was a challenge that only fanned the Light into a brighter flame.

The Conqueror further showed his independence by refusing to submit to the pope's command that priests should not marry, and that those who had married should put away their wives. William, at the council of Winchester in 1076, caused a decree to be passed permitting priests in England to marry. The mighty Hildebrand was furious, and summoned Lanfranc, Archbishop of Canterbury, to appear before him at Rome, to answer for the rebellious conduct of the English king. The Conqueror, who had forbidden his clergy to recognise the pope, wisely refused to let him go. William, in fact, ruled supreme over Church and State, and would brook no interference from the pope; and even letters from the court of Rome could not be received without his permission.[4] So Hildebrand's efforts to put out the Light of Liberty in England failed.

On the first of August, 1086, an imposing assembly of all the great men of England met on the great plain of Salisbury. They had come together for a very important purpose, viz., to take the oath of allegiance, not to the pope of Rome, but to the English king. It was a memorable gathering, and a distinct foreshadowing of our Lords and Commons. There were found the Witan, or wise men of the realm; there, too, were the "land-sitting" men, as the land-owners were called, and the heavy gold signet-rings on the fingers of others would mark them out as the clergy.



THE EMPEROR WHOM THE POPE HUMBLLED

**The Emperor Henry IV
of Germany, barefoot
and clothed in sackcloth,
amid the winter snow
waiting outside the castle
of Canossa for the pope's
forgiveness**

On that day each man took the oath of allegiance to the English king. From that hour England became one indivisible kingdom, [5] a united nation, to stand or fall together ; and hence, as one people, responsible before God for guarding the heaven-kindled Light of Freedom from all attempts of Hildebrand, or his successors, to put it out.

The pope sought to console himself for the Conqueror's stubbornness by demanding the payment of "Peter's Pence." This tribute had been paid to the

popes since the days of Offa, who reigned in the eighth century.[6] William consented to pay the money, because his predecessors had done so before him ; but he did not do so in the spirit of servile humility which Hildebrand desired. "What value can I set on money which is contributed with so little honour?" exclaimed the pope.

Courage always commands respect. Hildebrand had subdued other princes by severity; he tried "mildness and reason"[7] to win the unbending Conqueror. Rome invariably acts thus; her force is displayed towards the feeble, her "mildness" is reserved for the strong. Is she not acting thus towards England to-day, the mightiest Empire of the world?



Battle Abbey

William never bowed before the Papacy, yet we must not fall into the mistake of thinking him a Protestant as we now understand the word. That the otherwise Conqueror never overcame the superstitions of the times, is plain from the fact that he built a monastery near Hastings called "Battle Abbey," where the monks were required to offer up prayers for his soul.[8] He also left £60,000 to be distributed among the poor after his death as an expiation for his sins. Nor was he actuated solely by a single-hearted desire for the glory of God. He would not suffer his kingdom to sink beneath the bondage of Rome, but he did not hesitate to enslave it to *himself*! The conquered Saxons were oppressed beneath the tyranny of the Conqueror. Bishops deprived of their ecclesiastical offices were consigned to dungeons or imprisoned in convents, while Normans were nominated in their place by the king, who boasted that he held in his hand all the pastoral staves of his kingdom, and filled his coffers with money robbed from churches and monasteries.[9] Wulstan of Worcester was the only undeposed bishop; and the story goes, that at a synod in Westminster, William desired him to give up his crozier. There is a sad pathos in the aged man's reply. He rose and laid it on the tomb of Edward the Confessor, declaring that only to him, from whom he had received it, would he return. it.

William, conqueror at home, was not the man to bend before the pope of Rome, but his reign was not an unmixed blessing to the cause of Truth. While he overcame all papal attempts to gain political ascendancy in England, the spiritual power of the Church of Rome was gaining ground in our land. It is said that if gold sovereigns and coppers are shut up together in one purse, the golden pieces, not the coppers, will lose their brightness. So it was with the English Church. The fine gold of Scriptural doctrines became more and more dimmed during the Norman period,

because of the increased intercourse with the Church of Rome: legates from the pope were more frequently in England; and they required more and more deference to be paid to themselves as the representatives of the pontiff.



He laid his crozier on the tomb of Edward the Confessor

Among the errors introduced into the English Church during the reign of William I. was the doctrine of Transubstantiation. This terribly long word has a queer meaning. It signifies that when the priest at the altar has pronounced the words "This is my Body," over the wafer made of flour and water, or "This is my Blood" over the wine, that the wafer and the wine are transubstantiated, or changed into the actual body and blood of Christ, and are worshipped as God Himself. This astounding dogma was the invention of monk named Paschasius Radbertus; and it seems incredible that he was able to find anyone to believe him. However, error always finds disciples, and the darkness of the ninth century was a convenient soil for the growth of this poisonous weed in the garden of the Church.

The priests welcomed the fable which so much added to their influence. If a man can create the Creator out of a wafer, and then eat Him up, he must, of course, be a miracle monger, and altogether a marvellous being. The Church of Rome, which loves to be thought great and powerful, made the most of this queer new invention. The dogma was not, however, made an Article of Faith, nor was it called by the name of 'Transubstantiation, until 1215, at the Fourth Lateran Council in Rome, during the Pontificate of Innocent III.

In the eleventh century one man at least Berengarius of Tours-was found bold enough to publicly oppose transubstantiation: and great was the commotion at his audacity. Council after council of bishops condemned him, yet there were numbers in many parts of Christendom emboldened by his example, and who declared war against the monstrous dogma. In England there were some who believed, and some who denied it. Lanfranc, Archbishop of Canterbury, was the great advocate of the strange doctrine. We can imagine the wrangling, and quarrelling, which took place between (his followers of Lanfranc, who blindly accepted the error as truth, and those who, like Berengarius, considered it a myth.

In the days of William I. the English Church was truly a National Church; cleric and layman, bishop and earl, sat together to make laws for the benefit of Church and State. But, gradually, this unity gave way before papal claims; by degrees the clergy became a distinct class from the people, and, step by step, the ministers of the Church asserted their independence of the laws of

the land. An incident in the closing days of William I shows us, that this division had materially gained ground.

The king- had appointed Odo, his brother, to rule in his place, while he was absent in Normandy. But Odo betrayed the trust placed in him, and on his return to England, the king arraigned him before an assembly of his wise men, and desired them to pass judgment upon him. None answered, so the monarch himself seized the culprit and ordered him to prison. Odo was the Earl of Kent, and also a bishop and when condemned pleaded his privileges as a bishop. Was he not above the Civil Law? Who but the pope had the right to judge him? To this appeal William gave the memorable reply: "I do not seize a cleric or a bishop. I seize my earl whom I set over my kingdom." [10]

This answer showed that he was judged as a layman only; it did not deny, but it acknowledged that a cleric was above the law of the land. [11]



I do not seize a cleric or a bishop. I seize my earl whom I set over my kingdom

William's successor, the "Red King" (William II) shewed the same independent spirit towards Rome as the Conqueror had done. When Anselm, the successor of Lanfranc in the See of Canterbury, asked permission to go to Rome to receive the pallium [12] from pope Urban, he was bluntly refused. "Either swear," said Rufus, "never to refer to the Papal Court for any cause whatever, or have the kingdom at once." [13] Anselm preferred the latter course.

Before his return the "Red King" had died, and I Henry I. was on the English throne. The bone of contention this time, was about investiture. The meaning of Investiture was as follows: When a priest was made a bishop he was obliged to go through two ceremonies, viz., first, he received a ring and crozier from the king; this was called "Investiture," and was supposed to confer spiritual dignity; and second, the ceremony of Homage, or the submission of the bishop to the king as the vassals under the feudal law did Homage to their prince for the temporal properties and privileges which he accorded them. But Rome aspired to total independence, and claimed all spiritual and temporal rights. Anselm refused to do homage to the king, and the pope, Paschal II., supported him in his refusal, and even threatened to excommunicate the king. However,

England was not under the absolute rule of Rome, and Henry's power was so great that the pontiff was obliged to consent to a compromise. Investitures were abolished, but homage to the king was still retained.[14]

Among the changes introduced by the Normans was that of more substantial and ornamental architecture. Beautiful stone for the purpose of erecting finer buildings was shipped from Normandy, and caused wonder and delight to the Saxons, as it was slowly drawn in barges up the Thames. Churches, handsome in outward adorning, were erected in place of the more primitive and simple structures; and worshippers proportionately forgot that God looks not on the outward appearance, but upon the heart.



During the Norman period the influence of the monks increased. They spread themselves over the moors and forests of the north, and monasteries arose in many a spot. The story of Matilda, daughter of Malcolm, king of Scotland, deserves to be recorded as an example of life within convent walls. This princess had been sent, when but a child, to a nunnery, and had been compelled against her will to take the veil. The lady-abbess was evidently of a tyrannical disposition. Matilda managed to secure an interview with Archbishop Anselm. In her rough garb of a nun, her face be-dewed with passionate tears, the princess gave him a graphic description of her miserable life under the cruel abbess, who did not hesitate even to strike the nuns." As often as I stood in her presence," said the princess, "I wore the veil, trembling as I wore it with indignation and grief. But as soon as I could get out of her sight, I used to snatch it away from my head, fling it on the ground and trample it under foot. That was the way, and no other, in which I was veiled." [15]

Anselm freed her from the convent vows, and she was married to Henry I. of England, and no doubt found the responsibilities of the throne far less burdensome than the bondage and misery of life within the convent walls.

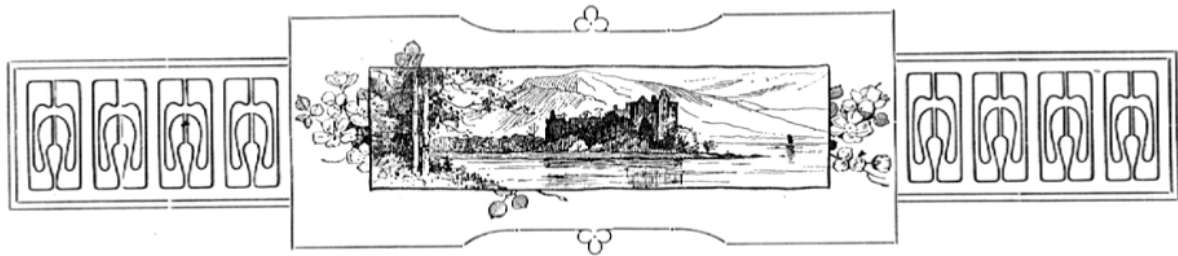
The reign of Stephen, the last king of the Norman period, was full of much confusion; yet, in spite of difficulties, the king forbade any appeal from his authority to that of Rome,[16]: and any infringement of this rule met with heavy penalties.

The story of the Norman period shows us how Rome sought to gain supremacy in England—to be in the first place, above King and State. Each encroachment was an effort on her part to blow out the Light on our shores; each resistance of her arrogant claims was a sturdy English safe-guarding of our rights and liberties.

Notes to Chapter VI

1. From "*The Dictatus*" of Hildebrand.
2. Green's "*Short History of the English People.*"
3. Green's "*Short History of the English People,*"
4. chapter ii.
5. Freeman's "*William the Conqueror.*"
6. The payment of "Peter's Pence" originated in the eighth century. It was paid to the pope by Offa, as a means whereby he hoped to atone for his sins, especially the murder of Ethelbert, King of the East Angles. Every house possessed of thirty pence a year was taxed a penny a year, and the money was intended for the support of an English college at Rome. It was at first conferred as a gift, but was afterwards claimed as a tribute, by the pope (Hume).
7. D'Aubigne, vol. V.
8. Hume. "Middle Ages."
- 9' D'Aubigne.
10. Freeman's "*William the Conqueror.*"
11. Ibid .
12. Palium, see page 11
13. Paton's "*British History and Papal Claims,*" vol. I
14. Hume.
15. Green's "*History of the English People.*"
16. The Anglican Reformation," by W. Clark, M.A., Hon. LL.D., etc.





Chapter VII. GATHERING SHADOWS



AMONG the favourites of Henry II. (the successor of Stephen) was a man remarkable for wit, vivacity of conversation, charm of manner, and dauntless courage. His name was Thomas Becket. The king made him Chancellor of England, and, surrounded with riches, Becket lived in the most extravagant luxury. England never before had witnessed such grandeur. His dress was of the gayest; his table the most sumptuous; his retinue attended him with pomp; knights were proud to be in his service, and the greatest in the land partook of his generous hospitality. The guests were often so numerous that many, unable to find seats, contented themselves on the dried grass and sweet herbs which, spread on the floor, served, in those days, in lieu of carpets. The king entrusted to him the education of his son, and congratulated himself that he possessed so devoted a subject, and so astute an adviser.

But a change came. Becket was appointed Archbishop of Canterbury, being the first Englishman advanced to that See since the Norman Conquest. By this appointment the king hoped to avert the troubles which his predecessors had experienced, through the Norman primates, Lanfranc, Anselm, and Theobald; but he soon found out his mistake.

Thomas Becket had no idea of bending his will to that of his sovereign. His brilliant attire and luxurious style of living were discarded for garments of sackcloth, and a life of penance and self-mortification. Instead of entertaining the nobles of the land, he daily washed the feet of beggars, and with a long, mournful face in place of his former cheerfulness tried to look as holy as possible.

In the year 1163 the pope, Alexander III., called a council which met in Tours, in France. There were then two rivals for the Pontificate, and Alexander summoned this council in the hope that it would make matters pleasanter for himself. The chief business, however, was not only to settle the quarrels of the popes, but also to establish the "liberties of the clergy," viz., to give them complete independence of all civil authority; the papacy was by degrees seeking to rule all the kingdoms of the world, but to be ruled by none of them.

Becket was present at this council, and was so impressed by the proceedings that he secretly resigned his archbishopric, which had been conferred upon him by the king, that he might take it from the pope.[1] At this council he applied to the pope for the canonisation of Anselm, a former archbishop of Canterbury, because that prelate had given the first blow to the authority of the kings of England.

On his return to England, Becket claimed the first place in the kingdom, and delegated only the second to the king. The English monarch resented such usurpation of his supremacy, and thus began a fierce struggle between Henry the Second, and the Church of Rome.

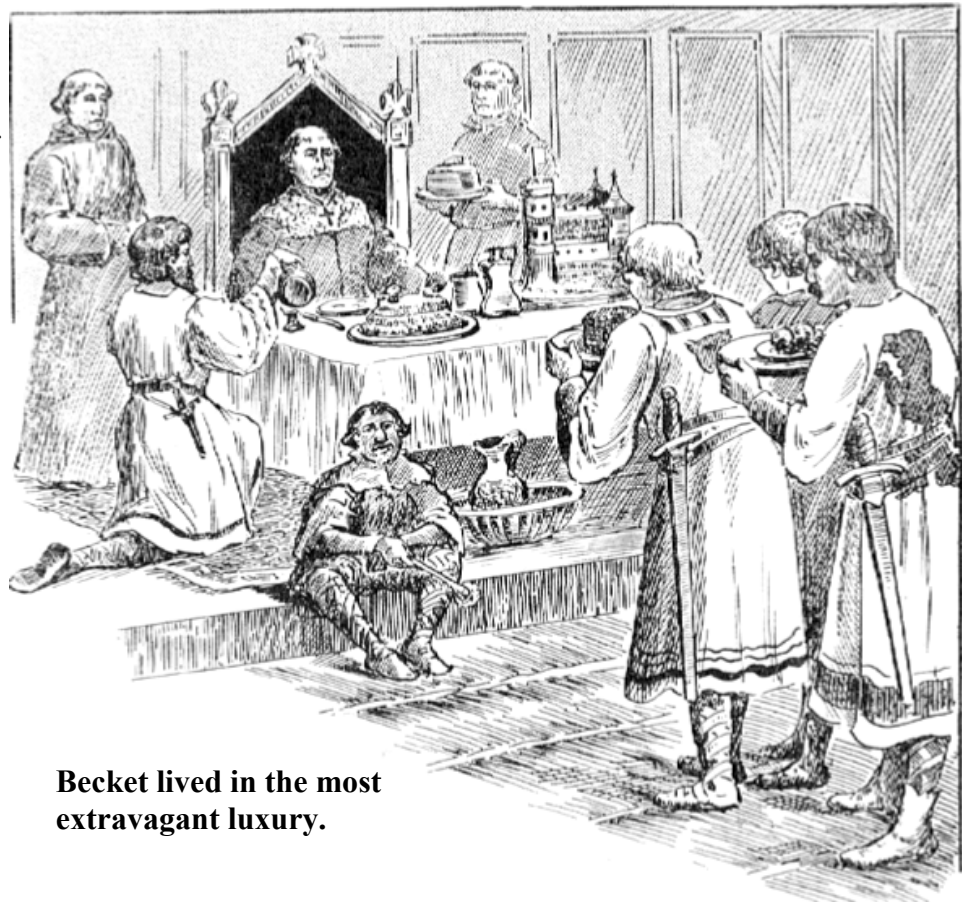
In order to settle these disputes, an assembly of the bishops was held, and the king plainly asked them if they were willing to submit to the ancient Jaws of England. To this question they gave the wary reply that they were willing--"saving their order". This meant that, as ecclesiastics, they considered themselves above the law.

In those days the priests were not better than in other ages. Many of them were guilty of the worst crimes; but the bishops, instead of punishing the delinquents, sought to protect them from the justice of the law. To remedy this grievance the Convention of Clarendon was held in 1164. It was a memorable gathering of archbishops, bishops, abbots, priors, earls, barons, and other nobles of the realm. Then were passed the famous "Constitutions of Clarendon," a distinct anticipation of the more notable Magna Charta of half-a-century later.

Among other things the Clarendon Constitutions provided that clerics convicted of crime should not be protected by the church; and that no archbishop, bishop, or priest should leave the country without the king's permission. Thomas Becket passionately resisted the restrictions thus imposed upon the church; but the king would take no denial, so the archbishop reluctantly set his seal to the Constitutions, and then retired to mourn over his fate:—

**"And when he sign'd, his face was stormy—red-
Shame, wrath, I know not what.
He sat clown there
And dropt it in his hands, and then
A paleness
Like the wan twilight after sunset, crept
Up even to the tonsure, and he groan'd,
'False to myself! It is the will of God!'"[2]**

But, later, Becket retracted this submission; and, finally, at the Council of Northampton, refused to set his seal to the "Constitutions." He was condemned for contempt of the king's court, and for lack of loyalty to the sovereign. Nothing daunted, the rebellious prelate, arrayed in priestly vestments and bearing aloft a cross, marched into the presence of the king, forbidding the nobles to condemn him, and declaring he appealed only to the pope.



**Becket lived in the most
extravagant luxury.**

"Traitor! Traitor!" was shouted after him.

"If I were a knight," exclaimed Becket, in whom the spirit of the soldier never died, "my sword should answer that foul taunt!" Such audacity might have cost him his life had he not fled in the night, disguised as a monk, to France.

We may be sure Henry was well pleased to get rid of so troublesome a subject; but his departure did not heal the quarrel. Legates from Rome (representatives of the pope) arrived in England to settle an agreement between the king and the exiled archbishop. Angry scenes ensued. Henry threatened the legates with severe measures, but was quickly met with the reply: "Sir, threaten not: we fear no threatening, for we belong to a court that is used to command emperors and kings."

These haughty words did not overawe the king at first. He still resolutely refused to restore the archbishop to his See, unless he agreed to observe the laws of the land.

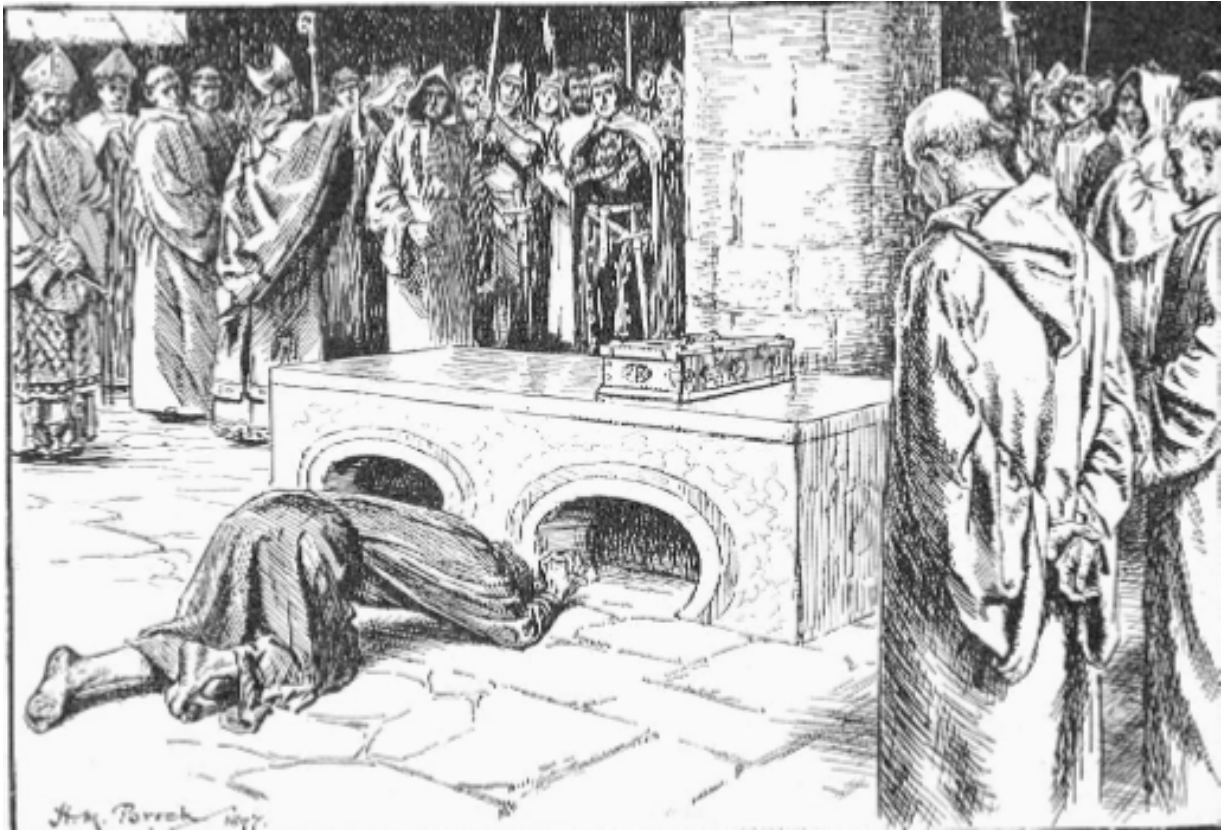
Extreme measures were next tried. The pope (Alexander) had humbled the Emperor Frederick of Germany, and he determined also to subdue the English king; so England was menaced with all the horrors of an Interdict. To avert this danger Henry consented that Becket and his followers should return to his dominions without binding themselves by any promise of obedience to the civil authority.

Haughtier than ever after this success, and elated by the enthusiastic, welcome of the people on his return, Becket soon showed himself more unruly than ever.



Nothing daunted the rebellious prelate, arrayed in priestly vestments and bearing aloft a cross, marched into the presence of the King, forbidding the nobles to condemn him, and declaring he appealed only to the pope.

During his absence the king's son, the young prince Henry, had been crowned, the monarch hoping by this means to make his throne more secure against the efforts of the pope. By the way, he must have been a pert young lad, this boy-king. At the coronation banquet, he turned to his royal father, who stood behind his chair, and made the saucy remark: "The son of an earl may well wait on the son of a prince."



Henry II doing penance at the tomb of Thomas Becket

The ceremony was performed in June, 1170, and the crown was placed on the boyish head by the Archbishop of York. Becket was then in exile, and, at his desire, the pope suspended the archbishop, and excommunicated the two bishops who had assisted him in the coronation, because the right of crowning was considered to belong solely to Becket, as Archbishop of Canterbury.

En passant, we may refer to an amusing incident which occurred nearly fifty years previously, and which settled the supremacy of Canterbury over York. The scene was Westminster Abbey, where was seated, in all his dignity, the legate of the pope. The seat of honour was at his right hand, and this distinguished place was coveted, by both Richard of Canterbury, and Roger of York. A quarrel ensued, and Richard, perhaps more agile than Roger, first took possession of the longed-for chair, and sat down in it. But Roger would not part with the privilege without a struggle. The next moment saw him also on the same chair—in fact, the Archbishop of York was sitting on the lap of the Archbishop of Canterbury. What an undignified position! Poor Roger was soon unseated, however, for Richard pushing him from behind, and others pulling him from the front, he was dragged from the lap of his rival, and fled to pour out his grievance into the ears of the king, Henry I. The dispute was finally settled by the pope, who issued an edict bestowing the primacy on Richard of Canterbury, as primate of all England.

Thomas Becket, therefore, as Archbishop of Canterbury, resented the crowning of the young prince by any but himself. The king promised the ceremony should again be performed; but Becket's violent displeasure was not so easily calmed. Henry the Second was in Normandy when

the news reached him of the archbishop's haughty behaviour. The indignant sovereign exclaimed: "Among all who partake of my favours, is there not one to rid me of this turbulent priest, who so troubles me and my kingdom?"

Thinking these words to be a reproach against his loyal courtiers, four knights secretly swore to cross to England and slay the rebellious primate. No doubt we have all heard the story, how the monks, terrified by the threats of the assassins, hurried the archbishop into the cathedral of Canterbury, and hid themselves behind the pillars, while Becket alone—all his dauntless courage rising to the occasion—faced his adversaries. A fierce attack followed, and blow after blow was struck till the once proud prelate received a mortal wound, and his blood and brains lay scattered on the pavement of the transept steps.

So he died. But the cause of truth is never aided by such foul deeds. God's Light needs no such unhallowed handling to keep it from being put out. The darkness of superstition fell thicker as the result of this terrible crime. Thomas Becket was applauded as a martyr by the Church of Rome ; pilgrimages were made to the tomb of the so-called "saint," and Rome reaped a rich harvest from the fables and "lying wonders" which were said to be performed there.



**Building near
Farnham, Surrey, of
the time of Henry
II, photographed in
1875.**

The king was not guilty of the murder, but Rome determined to treat him as if he had been. He was obliged to set his seal to certain articles which placed him completely under the power of the pope.[3] The humiliated monarch got nothing in return for this surrender. The

legates merely gave him absolution for the murder of Becket, having first made him swear he was not guilty of it. No doubt there were some, even in those stern times, who smiled at this humorous incident. Certainly it does seem strange, to first make a man say he had not committed a fault, and then forgive him for having done it! But it shows us how Rome was obtaining the upper hand of the king, and how zealously she sought to snuff out the Light of Liberty.

But Henry sank still lower. Barefoot walked the monarch to Canterbury Cathedral, prostrated himself before the tomb of the murdered archbishop, fasted for a whole day, kept a night's vigil by the ashes of the dead, and suffered himself to be whipped on the bare back by some eighty monks, some of whom gave him three lashes, others five—the higher in rank being privileged to scourge him more than the others. The instrument of punishment was called a "discipline," a kind of knotted cat-o'-nine-tails, and which, till the end of the eleventh century, was unknown in the Christian Church. To-day it is much in vogue in the Romish church, and also by the Ritualists in England, who do not realise that the sinner is healed, not by his own scourging, but solely by the stripes which Christ has borne in his stead.

Such then is the story of the humiliation of the king of England under the iron heel of the pope of Rome, whose kingdom is of this world only. Truly the shadows had gathered in those days—dark shadows, thick and lowering.

The subjugation of Ireland to the papacy is yet another black page in the reign of Henry the Second.

The head of the Roman church was then an Englishman, named Nicholas Breakspear, who reigned as pope under the title of Adrian IV. We may well regret that our country ever gave one of its sons to swell the succession of Antichrist; yet we are glad it never produced more than one man to fill that office.

The Church of Ireland had long protested against the increasing errors of Rome. The Bible was an open book. We learn from Bede's "*Ecclesiastical History*" that the knowledge of Latin was kept up in that country by the meditation of the Scriptures. In those days commerce was prosperous—that of Dublin rivalling even that of London. Had we visited the country in those times, we should have found the peasants contentedly caring for their farms, living primitive lives in their – **To be continued in part III.**

Notes to Chapter 7

1. Inett's "*Origines Anglicanae*," vol, 1
2. Tennyson's "*Becket*," Act 1, sc. 3. The struggles between Henry and Becket are strikingly set forth in this great drama.
3. The Articles can be read in Inett's "*Origines Anglicanae*"

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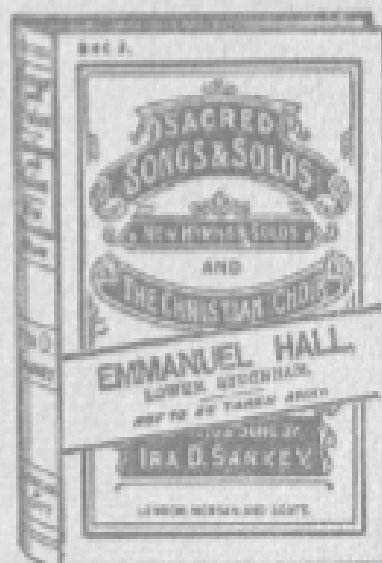
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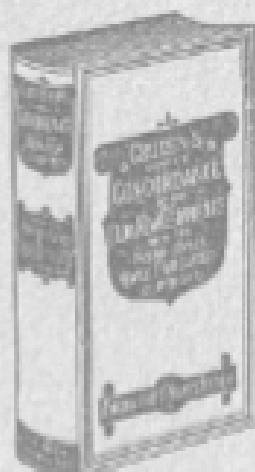
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