Beautiful Britain: Canterbury eBook

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CHAPTER I

THE PILGRIM'S APPROACH TO THE CITY

It was on April 24, 1538, that a writ of summons was sent forth in the name of Henry VIII., "To thee, Thomas Becket, some time Archbishop of Canterbury"—who had then been dead for 368 years—"to appear within thirty days to answer to a charge of treason, contumacy, and rebellion against his sovereign lord, King Henry II." But the days passed, and no spirit having stirred the venerated bones of the wonder-working saint, on June 10 judgment was given in favour of Henry, and it was decreed that the Archbishop's bones were to be burnt, and his world-famous shrine overlaid with gold and sparkling with jewels was to be forfeited to the Crown. Further than this went the sentence, for Thomas of Canterbury was to be a saint no longer, and his name and memory were to be wiped out. The remains were not burned, but throughout the land every statue, wall-painting, and window to the said Thomas Becket was rigorously searched out and destroyed, and from every record his name was carefully erased. And so it came about that the year 1538 saw the last pilgrimage to the shrine of St. Thomas the Martyr.

A growing incredulity had prepared the way for this wave of iconoclasm, and the shrine once destroyed ended for ever this first phase of the Canterbury pilgrimages. It might have been truly thought, if anyone ever gave a moment to such speculations a century ago, when Englishmen cared little for the landmarks of their island story, that the last pilgrim who would ever wend his way along the old road to Canterbury had died in the sixteenth century, and yet how profoundly untrue would that impression have been in the light of the new enthusiasm for the site of the shrine! A considerable literature on the Pilgrims' Way from Winchester has already sprung up, and this little book is itself a souvenir for the pilgrim to carry away as evidence of the journey he has made, provided he cares to write inside the cover his name, the date of his visit, and the two words "at Canterbury."

Now, I do not disguise the fact that many of the twentieth-century pilgrims are not possessed of the true spirit of the devotee, and instead of approaching the object of their journey by the old-time way, along the beautiful hills of Surrey and Kent, they use the iron road which rushes them all unprepared into the city of the saint-martyr. But who will maintain that all those who formed the motley throng of the medieval pilgrimages came with their minds properly attuned, and who is prepared to say that because the majority of modern pilgrims consummate their aim by using the convenience of the railway they are less devout than Chaucer's merchant, serjeant-at-law, doctor of physic, and the rest who rode on horseback—the most convenient, rapid, and comfortable method of travel then available?

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There is, however, a material disadvantage suffered by those who use the railway, in that they miss the first view of the Cathedral city set in the midst of soft-swelling eocene hills, which comes as the first stage of the gradual unfolding of the tragic story. The lukewarm pilgrim should therefore remember that he will add vastly to the richness of his impressions if he deserts his train at Selling or Chartham and walks the rest of the way over Harbledown, where he will see the little city of the Middle Ages encircled with its ancient wall and crowned by the towers of its cathedral very much as did the cosmopolitan groups of travel-soiled men and women who for century after century feasted their eyes from the selfsame spot.

[Illustration: *Christ church gateway*, *Canterbury*. This beautiful entrance to the Cathedral precincts was built between 1507 and 1517. The richly sculptured stone has weathered exceedingly.]

CHAPTER II

THE STORY OF CANTERBURY

It would be a mistake to imagine that it solely was due to that bloody deed perpetrated on a certain December afternoon back in Norman times that Canterbury occupies a place of such pre-eminence in English history, for the city was ancient before the days of Thomas of Canterbury; and in this short chapter it is the writer's endeavour to indicate the position of that tragic occurrence in the chronology of the former Kentish capital.

The earliest people who have left evidence of their existence near Canterbury belong to the Palaeolithic Age; but as it is not known whether this remote prehistoric population occupied the actual site, or even whether the valley may not have then been a salt-water creek, it is wiser in this brief sketch to pass over these primitive people and the lake-dwellers who, after a considerable interval, were possibly their successors, and come to the surer ground of history. This brings us to the early Roman invasions of Britain and Julius CA|sar's description of the people of Kent, whose civilization he found on a higher level than in the other parts he penetrated. He described them as being little different in their manner of living from the Gauls, whose houses were built of planks and willow-branches, roofed with thatch, and were large and circular in form, but he adds:

All the Britons dye themselves with woad, which gives them a bluish colour, and so makes them very dreadful in battle. They have long hair, and shave all the body except the head and upper lip.

These people, owning allegiance to various chiefs and living in camps or villages defended by earthen ramparts, were attacked by the Roman expeditions which invaded

Britain in the opening years of the Christian Era, and there is evidence for believing that there was a British settlement of considerable importance on the site of Canterbury. Of this there remains

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a lofty artificial mound, now known as the Dane John—another form of the familiar donjon. The Romans called it Durovernum, a name perhaps derived from the British Derwhern, and although their historians are curiously silent in regard to the place there cannot be any doubt that the town rose to great importance in the later years of the four centuries of the Roman occupation of Britain. A glance at a map of the Roman roads in Kent shows Durovernum as a centre for five great ways leading from the coast towns of Portus Lemanis (Lymne), Portus Dubris (Dover), Portus Ritupis (Richborough, near Sandwich), Regulbium (Reculver), and also the Isle of Thanet, and from this important centre the Watling Street ran straight to Londinium. These roads all converge upon the spot where the River Stour became a tidal estuary and where it was fordable, and all who arrived or departed from the ports nearest to Gaul would therefore of necessity pass that way. Another indication of the size of the town is found in the five Roman burial-places discovered close to Canterbury, and if anything else were needed it is only necessary to look at the walls of St. Augustine's Abbey and many other buildings of the Middle Ages to see the large quantities of Roman material then available. Wherever any excavation has taken place in the heart of the present city, the foundations of Roman buildings with tesselated pavements and quantities of pottery, small objects of domestic use, and coins have been brought to light. These remains are all far beneath the present surface, a most significant fact in relation to the transition period between Roman and Saxon Canterbury.

The Romans having finally abandoned Britain early in the fifth century, the invasions of the Anglo-Saxons began to take a permanent form, and the Jutes gained possession of the south-eastern corner of England. During the period of struggle between the rival groups of invaders Durovernum must have been entirely abandoned by the Britons, and the conquerors, having reduced the city to a shapeless ruin, appear to have allowed it to become over-grown to such an extent that when, after a lapse of perhaps a whole century, the town was rebuilt, no attempt was made to dig down to the former surface. The new buildings therefore arose with their foundations some feet above the original level of the Romano-British city. So complete was the gap between the destroyed Durovernum and the Saxon town which eventually grew up that men had had time to forget the old name, and, finding it necessary to invent one, called it Cantwarabyrig, which meant the city of the men of Kent. This title reveals the fact that the new settlers had by this time fixed their limits in Kent, and that they had found this site at the junction of all the Roman roads the most convenient for their capital. It was probably not until Ethelbert had begun to reign in 561 that Canterbury became the most important place in Kent, and at that time the site of the Cathedral was outside the town walls. Ethelbert, it should be mentioned, had extended his power so far beyond the confines of Kent that he had authority as far north as the Humber, and Bede writes of "the city of Canterbury, which was the metropolis of all his dominions."

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Up to the year 597 this Saxon capital, of practically all south-eastern England, was completely heathen, saving only the King's Frankish wife Bertha and Bishop Luidhard, who had come over as her chaplain about the year 575, when the marriage with the heathen Ethelbert had taken place. But in the year 597, that famous landmark in the Christianizing of Saxon England, Augustine, landed—if Bede may be trusted for a topographical detail of this character—on the island of Ebbsfleet, where Hengist and Horsa had previously found a haven for their vessels. This is now part of the corner of Kent, called Thanet, and is an island no longer. There Ethelbert, in that generous and broad-minded speech, familiar to all students of English history, while expressing himself as content with the gods of his forefathers (these included Thor, Woden, Freya, and the rest), yet would place no obstacles in the way of these missionaries of new and strange ideas. He even provided them with quarters in Canterbury, and in the old church of St. Martin outside the city, where Queen Bertha had been in the habit of worshipping with her chaplain, Augustine and his monks began to preach and instruct all who cared to listen. It seems unlikely that the influence of the queen and her good chaplain should have been entirely without results, and it is quite possible that Augustine found the ground prepared for the seed he diligently began to sow. Bishop Luidhard, whose name should always be linked with that of St. Augustine, appears to have died soon after the arrival of Pope Gregory's mission, and his remains were eventually placed in a golden chest in the church of Saints Peter and Paul, afterwards St. Augustine's.

The zeal and enthusiasm of the band of missionaries began to bring in many converts. Ethelbert himself consented to be baptized on June 2 in the year of Augustine's landing, and the Saxons soon began to embrace the new faith in thousands, so that in a very few years the Christianizing of England had made such progress that Canterbury became the headquarters of the Christian Church in England, a position it has held without interruption ever since—a period of over 1,300 years. It took England nearly nine centuries to make up its mind to rid itself of the stultifying authority of the Bishop of Rome and to shake itself free from monasticism and the various forms of idolatrous worship which grew up in the sultry atmosphere of the Papal Church; but these great changes have been evolved, and still the ancient city of Canterbury, hallowed with so many memories of saintly lives, continues to be the metropolis of the Established Church of England. And the imminence of further change carries with it no danger of any break in this long association of Canterbury with ecclesiastical control, for if in the slow grinding of the wheels of Time there should cease to be a State Church in this land, the organization of the churches holding to the Elizabethan form of worship will no doubt continue to be centred and focussed at Canterbury.

[Illustration: *Canterbury cathedral from the north west*. The state central or "Bell Harry" Tower is one of the most beautiful works of the Perpendicular period in existence.]

As the first church mentioned in history associated with Christian worship St. Martin's occupies a unique position, and yet the fabric of the little building does not conclusively prove that it is even in part the actual church of this fascinating period. Cautious archaeologists, represented by Mr. J. T. Micklethwaite, regard the earliest work in St. Martin's as belonging to the Saxon period, Roman materials having merely been worked up by the later builders. On the other hand, there are various careful antiquaries who are willing to accept the oldest parts of the church as Roman, and claim that St. Martin's is a Christian church put up during the Roman occupation. Perhaps the problem will be solved by further discoveries, but until then it seems wiser to regard St. Martin's as being in part a very early Saxon building, very probably standing on the site of the restored Roman church in which Queen Bertha worshipped before Augustine's arrival. Even if it were possible to state that parts of the walls were Roman, it would not be an easy matter to say whether the building were older than the two early Christian churches of North Cornwall, preserved through the ages by the drifting sand of that exposed coastline; therefore, to write, as so many have done, that St. Martin's is the oldest Christian church in England, is not justified by the facts. Besides St. Martin's, William Thorne, a fourteenth century chronicler, makes mention of "a temple or idol-place where Ethelbert had been wont to pray and to sacrifice to demons," and this building, instead of being destroyed, was purged from its defilements and idols and hallowed by Augustine when he dedicated it to St. Pancras the Roman boy-martyr. When the site, about halfway between St. Martin's and St. Augustine's, was excavated in 1901, it was found to possess a nave about 47 feet long by 26 feet wide, with an apsidal chancel nearly the same width and depth separated from the nave by four Roman columns, and Mr. W.H. St. John Hope, of the Society of Antiquaries, who carried out the operations with Canon Routledge, has suggested that this may be the first church built by Augustine out of Roman materials ready to hand, while the larger one, dedicated to Saints Peter and Paul, a little to the west, was slowly being constructed. It was not finished when, in 605, Augustine died, and eventually the dedication included the canonized first archbishop of the English Church, who was buried in the building when it was finished. The other great figures of the period—-Ethelbert and his Queen, and her chaplain—were also laid to rest in the church. A few years ago it was only possible to form an idea of this large structure from the Norman north wall of the nave and part of the north-west tower, but now that nearly the whole

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of the eastern end has been excavated one can see the underground portion of practically all the east end and part of the north transept. Ethelbert's son, Eadbald, having been converted two years after his accession, built another church east of that of Saints Peter and Paul, and this was joined on to the abbey church when the east end was extended about the time of the Norman Conquest. At the same time as he began the monastery subsequently called after him, Augustine appears to have made his headquarters close to another early Christian church within the walls of the Saxon city. This, according to Bede, was hallowed "in the name of the Holy Saviour," and thus arose the name Christ Church—the name the cathedral now bears. In these early times there were therefore five Christian churches either restored or under construction, and they were all roughly in a line running east and west. First there was Christ Church and Augustine's residence—eventually the priory—within the walls, then the embryo abbey of Saints Peter and Paul, with the chapel of St. Mary a little to the east. Farther still was the church of St. Pancras, and farthest from the city walls, on its little hill, St. Martin's. There are other traces of Saxon work in the church of St. Mildred near the castle, but this is much later than anything that has been discovered on the other sites, and Dr. Cox points out what he claims as pre-Conquest work in St. Dunstan's outside the city, on the Whitstable Road.

Canterbury appears to have grown and prospered in spite of various attacks made by the Danes until the year 1011, when the city, after a defence lasting nearly three weeks, fell into the hands of the invaders through treachery from within. Alphege, the good old archbishop, was obliged to witness the savagery of the Danes when they burst through the gates and began a horrible slaughter, which included the monks of Christ Church, and it is said that about 7,000 Saxons perished. Not content with all this butchery, they burnt the cathedral. Archbishop Alphege was carried off by the victorious Danes, who at Greenwich gave way to drunken excesses, and in brutal fashion killed their prisoner. The body was brought from London, where it had been buried, back to Canterbury ten years later by Canute, the first Danish King of England, who made what atonement he could by lending his freshly painted state barge for the ceremonious translation of the martyr's remains. Arrived at Canterbury, the King proceeded to further demonstrate his submission to the Church his people had devastated by hanging up his crown in the cathedral which Alphege's successor, Archbishop Living, had reroofed. Canute, having made a journey to Rome in 1031, among other pious resolutions, declared that he would amend his life and conversation, and it was with his help that the Saxon cathedral was properly repaired and decorated.

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During the year following the Norman Conquest a fire began in Canterbury, which, besides destroying many houses, reduced the unfortunate cathedral to a roofless ruin once more. Three years later, in 1070, when Lanfranc was made the first Norman archbishop, he decided that the Saxon walls were worthless, and he swept away every trace of the building, which may have been partially Roman, before proceeding to erect a larger and grander pile in the Norman style familiar to him. One feature of the original church has, nevertheless, left its mark on the Norman cathedral. This was a crypt described by Eadmer, the monkish historian, who, as a boy, saw the Saxon church being demolished. It was only a small affair, but it must have been the most remarkable feature of the comparatively small oblong building, for it was not, properly speaking, a crypt at all, but an undercroft beneath the eastern altars. "To reach these altars," says Eadmer, "a certain crypt, which the Romans call a confessionary, had to be ascended by means of several steps from the choir of the singers. Thus the Norman archbishop, in planning a larger cathedral, constructed a crypt under the choir of his new building, and the steps one ascends to-day are there as the direct outcome of the structural methods of rude Saxon times."

Lanfranc completed his new cathedral in 1077, and in his lifetime he also founded the great Benedictine priory of Christ Church, whose considerable remains add so much medievalism to the surroundings of the vast cathedral. Anselm succeeded Lanfranc after an interval of a few years, during which Rufus found it exceedingly desirable to keep the see vacant while the revenues were diverted into the royal coffers, and scarcely twenty years after his predecessor's church was finished, Prior Ernulph pulled down the east end and constructed in its place the magnificent Norman choir, with its transepts and chapels standing with various alterations to-day. This great work was finished by Prior Conrad, who succeeded Ernulph, and the noble work, which became known as Conrad's Choir, was consecrated in 1130 by Archbishop de Corbeuil. To make this bald statement and omit to mention the ceremony attending it would be misleading; for not only were Henry I. and David of Scotland present, but Canterbury saw such a gathering of dignitaries of Church and State with their splendid retinues that the historian found nothing to compare with it but Solomon's dedication of the Temple!

This splendid church, representing the finest achievement of Norman master-builders and workmen, rising high above the domestic quarters of the monastery and standing forth conspicuously from every part of the little walled city, then consisting, to a considerable extent, of low wooden houses, had now reached the stage in its development when it was to be the scene of the murder which was to make Canterbury the most famous resort of pilgrims in Europe. This occurred forty years later; but no change in the great Norman church had taken place in that period.

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So thrilling is the whole story of Becket's murder that there is every temptation to tell again the tale of Henry II.'s hasty exclamation, and the headlong journey from Normandy to Canterbury made by those four knights whose foul deed history has not ceased to condemn; but for a full account the reader is advised to turn to Dean Stanley's "Historical Memorials of Canterbury." It was in the same year and the same month as his death that Becket had returned from exile to Canterbury after an absence of six years, and at the close of a decade of continual struggle with the King. The Archbishop, having landed at Sandwich on his arrival from France, had been received with the greatest enthusiasm, and the people of Canterbury showed their delight in every possible manner. There were imposing banquets, and hangings of silk were put up in the cathedral for the great occasion; but at the end of this December, on the gloomy afternoon of the 29th, the four murderers arrived in the city. The day was a Tuesday, the day on which all the great events of Becket's life had taken place; for not only had he been born on a Tuesday, but on that day he had been exiled, on that day he had been warned of his impending martyrdom, and on that day he had returned from exile.

[Illustration: *The "Angel" Or "Bell Harry" Tower and the baptistery*. The massive Norman work is seen here in strong contrast with the lightness and delicacy of the Perpendicular tower.]

While leaving the long story to be told with the amazingly ample detail Dean Stanley was able to employ, one is tempted to quote his account of the first interview between Becket and the four knights, for too often the memory recalls nearly every fact of the murder except the indictment, if it may be so called. The four knights had discarded their weapons and concealed their armour under the cloak and gown of ordinary life on entering the cathedral precincts, so that on their first appearance in the Archbishop's private room their aspect was sinister without being immediately threatening. Becket had just finished dinner, and was seated on his couch talking to his friends when the four knights were announced, and he pointedly continued, his conversation with the monk who sat by him and on whose shoulder he was leaning.

They on their part entered without a word, beyond a greeting exchanged in a whisper to the attendants who stood near the door, and then marched straight to where the Archbishop sate, and placed themselves on the floor at his feet, among the clergy who were reclining around. Radulf the archer sate behind them, on the boards. Becket now turned round for the first time, and gazed steadfastly on each in silence, which he at last broke by saluting Tracy by name. The conspirators continued to look mutely at each other, till Fitzurse, who throughout took the lead, replied with a scornful expression, "God help you!" Becket's

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face grew crimson, and he glanced round at their countenances, which seemed to gather fire from Fitzurse's speech. Fitzurse again broke forth: "We have a message from the King over the water—tell us whether you will hear it in private, or in the hearing of all." "As you wish," said the Archbishop. "Nay, as *you* wish," said Fitzurse. "Nay, as *you* wish," said Becket. The monks, at the Archbishop's intimation, withdrew into an adjoining room; but the doorkeeper ran up and kept the door ajar, that they might see from the outside what was going on.

Before the knights began the recital of their complaints, however, Becket appears to have become alarmed at the demeanour of the four men, who afterwards admitted that they thought of killing him then and there with the only weapon that was handy—a cross-staff that lay at his feet.

The monks hurried back, and Fitzurse, apparently calmed by their presence, resumed his statement of the complaints of the King. The complaints—which are given by the various chroniclers in very different words—were three in number. "The King over the water commands you to perform your duty to the King on this side of the water, instead of taking away his crown." "Rather than take away his crown," replied Becket, "I would give him three or four crowns." "You have excited disturbances in the kingdom, and the King requires you to answer for them at his court." "Never," said the Archbishop, "shall the sea again come between me and my Church, unless I am dragged thence by the feet." "You have excommunicated the bishops, and you must absolve them." "It was not I," replied Becket, "but the Pope, and you must go to him for absolution."

[Illustration: *The chapel of "Our Lady" In the undercroft of the
            cathedral*.
Being entirely above the ground this is not a crypt as it is so often miscalled. The morning light in winter fills the spaces between the massive Norman piers.]

After some more stormy words the knights became irritated by Becket's contradictions, and swore "by God's wounds" that they had endured enough, but Becket, putting aside John of Salisbury's suggestion that he should speak privately to the angry knights, began to complain of the grievances and insults he had himself received during the preceding week: "They have attacked my servants," he said; "they have cut off my sumpter-mule's tail; they have carried off the casks of wine that were the King's own gift." To this Hugh de Moreville, who was the least aggressive of the four, replied: "Why did you not complain to the King of these outrages? Why did you take upon yourself to punish them by your own authority?" But Becket, turning sharply towards him, said: "Hugh! how proudly you lift up your head! When the rights of the Church are violated, I shall wait for no man's permission to avenge them. I will give to the King the things that are the King's, but to God the things that are God's. It is my business, and I alone will see to it." Taking up such an attitude in front of four men who had come hot-foot to

Canterbury with the express determination to seek an excuse for killing him, Becket was sealing his own fate.

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For the first time in the interview the Archbishop had assumed an attitude of defiance; the fury of the knights broke at once through the bonds which had partially restrained it, and displayed itself openly in those impassioned gestures which are now confined to the half-civilized nations of the South and East, but which seem to have been natural to all classes of medieval Europe. Their eyes flashed fire, they sprang upon their feet, and, rushing close up to him, gnashed their teeth, twisting their long gloves, and wildly threw their arms above their heads. Fitzurse exclaimed: "You threaten us—you threaten us! are you going to excommunicate us all?"

Becket sprang up from his couch at this insulting demonstration, and in the state of great excitement into which he could fall when roused, he flung down his defiant challenge that all the swords in England could not shake his obedience to the Pope. The four knights, goaded to fury by other passionate words, left him, shouting, "To arms! to arms!" They made their way with an excited throng to the great gateway, where they armed, while the doors were closed to shut off the monastery from communication with the town. The Archbishop seems to have been fully alive to his danger, and yet he persistently refused to take the smallest measure for his safety, opening with his own hands the door from the cloisters into the north transept which some of the monks had closed and barred immediately after they had dragged the Archbishop into the nearly dark building.

Vespers had just begun when the murderers entered, but the singing of that service was never completed. The fear of sacrilege induced the knights to try to drag the defenceless Archbishop out of the Cathedral, but he struggled with such vigour, flinging one of the men down on the stone floor, that they gave up the attempt and killed him with three or four sword strokes, the last of which, as he lay prone, was delivered by Richard le Bret, or the Breton, and so tremendous was the force with which it was delivered that the crown of the head was severed from the skull and the sword broke in two on the pavement.

Canterbury being much divided in its attachment to Becket, the murderers found escape easy, and the general regrets most expressed seem to have been at the sacrilege rather than at the murder.

It is almost incredible how rapidly Becket became St. Thomas of Canterbury. Within a few hours of the tragic scene, when, night having fallen and the great church being closed and deserted, Osbert, the Archbishop's chamberlain, entering with a light in his hand, found his master's body lying on its face, with the frightful wound exposed, the monks had kissed the hands and feet of the corpse and called him by the name of Saint Thomas. What appears to have raised the fraternity to this enthusiastic anticipation of the canonization, officially announced at Westminster in 1173, was the discovery that Becket

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had on beneath his outer robes, and the many other garments he wore, the black cowled cloak of the Benedictines, and next to his skin a hair-cloth shirt of unusual roughness. When the body was being prepared for the tomb this shirt was found to be easily removable for the daily scourging Becket had been in the habit of enduring, the marks of the stripes administered on the previous day being plainly visible. Dean Stanley adds another fact not easy to be believed by those who have never become intimate with the practices of medieval monasticism:

Such austerity had hitherto been unknown to English saints, and the marvel was increased by the sight—to our notions so revolting—of the innumerable vermin with which the hair-cloth abounded—boiling over with them, as one account describes it, like water in a simmering cauldron. At the dreadful sight all the enthusiasm of the previous night revived with double ardour. They looked at one another in silent wonder, then exclaimed, "See, see what a true monk he was, and we knew it not!" and burst into alternate fits of weeping and laughter, between the sorrow at having lost such a head and the joy of having found such a saint.

[Illustration; *the chapel of st. Michael or the warriors' chapel*. It is one of the most interesting Chapels in the Cathedral, containing the tomb of Stephen Langton and in the centre of the drawing that of Lady Margaret Holland and her two husbands.]

Almost immediately the superstitious belief in the efficacy of a martyr's blood made everyone who was permitted to approach Becket's body anxious to obtain a scrap of a blood-stained garment to soak in water with which to anoint the eyes! In a short time many parts of the clothes had been given away to the poor folk of Canterbury; but as soon as the miracle-working properties came to be properly understood these precious shreds of the Archbishop's voluminous garments ran up in value until the possession of such a fragment meant wealth to the owner. Any relic of the body itself had still greater value, its efficacy in curing the multifarious ailments of the pilgrims who began to flock to Canterbury being immeasurable. And when the neighbouring monastery of St. Augustine burned with desire to possess a relic of St. Thomas they offered Roger, the keeper of the "Altars of the Martyrdom," the position of Abbot of their own abbey if he would contrive to bring with him a portion of Becket's skull. Roger had been specially chosen to guard this relic, but he succumbed to the temptation offered by the rival establishment outside the city walls, and having purloined the coveted fragment of the martyr, was duly installed in the highest office of St. Augustine's. Whether the whole affair was public property at the time does not fully appear, but those who recorded events at St. Augustine's did not hesitate to glory in the success of their scheme!

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So great was the popular execration of the murder that the autocratic Archbishop who had not inspired universal admiration in his lifetime was soon to become the most frequently invoked of all the calendar of saints, and the King himself, finding that his submission to the Papal legate at Avranches, two years after the crime, was not sufficient to avert the wrath of Heaven, which seemed to be visiting him in the form of rebellions and disasters in every part of his dominions, came to Canterbury in 1174 and went through a penance of extreme severity. Landing at Southampton, he came by the Pilgrims' Way to Harbledown, and so entered the ancient city. At the church of St. Dunstan, outside the walls, he took off his ordinary dress and walked barefoot through the streets to the monastery of Christ Church. It was a wet day, but being in the month of July the wearing of a shirt only with a cloak to keep off the rain could not have been the cause of very great physical discomfort apart from the cutting of his feet by stones on the road. At the Cathedral they took Henry to the tomb of the man whose death he had caused, and there he knelt and shed bitter tears, groaning and lamenting. After again regretting his rash words in an address read by Gilbert Foliot, Bishop of London, and promising to restore the rights and property of the Church, the King, kneeling at the tomb, wearing a hair-shirt with a woollen one above it, placed his head and shoulders in one of the openings in the tomb and there received five strokes with a monastic rod from each of the bishops and abbots present, and afterwards the eighty monks each administered three strokes. Henry was now quite absolved, but he remained for the whole night with his bare feet still muddy and in the same penitential garb.

[Illustration: *The scene of the martyrdom in the north-west transept
        of the cathedral*.
Since the tragic death of Becket in 1170 practically everything in this portion of the Cathedral has been re-constructed.]

Arriving in London, the King took to his bed, suffering from a dangerous fever, but a few days later, hearing from Richmond in Yorkshire that the Scots had been defeated and driven north, he recovered rapidly, believing implicitly, after the manner of his age, that this success was attributable to the penance he had undergone on the day before the battle.

And so, through the savage murder of an archbishop and the severe penance of a king the archiepiscopal capital of England began to resound all over Europe, and the annual procession of pilgrims commenced to traverse the hills along the old road from Winchester to the little Norman city. Not by that way only did the vast crowds reach Canterbury, for there was scarcely a road that at some period of the year did not send its contribution to the throng which jostled through the gates into the narrow streets leading to the monastery gateway. Year after year wealth poured into the Cathedral coffers, and pilgrims went away lighter in spirits and in purse, but each carrying with them the little leaden bottle in which the infinitely diluted blood of the martyr mixed with water was distributed.

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Scarcely two months after Henry's penance the splendid choir of the Cathedral caught fire, and the townsfolk, in a state between grief and rage, found themselves unable to stay the progress of the flames until nearly everything that could burn had vanished. The nave suffered less than Conrad's splendid choir, and in that less ruined portion of the building a temporary altar was erected. But for this fire it might have been possible for the modern pilgrim to see the building as it appeared during the stirring events just recounted; for, notwithstanding the wealth of the monastery of Christ Church, it would have probably been thought desirable to retain the fabric as much as possible as it appeared in Becket's time. The fire came, however, and the choir was to a great extent rebuilt, but fortunately the chapels were only slightly affected.

After careful inquiry the monastery decided to employ William of Sens as architect for the reconstruction, and the excellent work of this clever Norman craftsman lives to-day in the eastern portion of the cathedral church. He set to work soon after the fire; but, after four years of labour, was so much injured by a fall from the scaffolding that he was obliged to abandon his unfinished work and return to his native Normandy. Upon an Englishman named William devolved the task of completing the work.

Either following the Frenchman's plans or adapting them to his own ideas, he finished the eastern parts of the church as they stand to-day in the year 1184. To one or both of these architects is due the unusual device of narrowing the choir to avoid altering the site of the Trinity Chapel of Becket's time. When the reconstruction of Conrad's Norman choir began, the Gothic style was just beginning to appear—an incipient tendency towards a pointed arch here and there which grew into what is called the Transitional Period; and to this style—in between the Romanesque semicircular arch, with its accompanying massiveness, and the first style of Gothic known as Early English, distinguished by the pointed arch, detached pillars decorating the triforium and clerestory, and elaborate mouldings and capitals—the choir belongs.

When the whole of the east end of the cathedral was finished, nearly two centuries elapsed before any further change took place beyond the beginning of the chapter-house. At the commencement of that period, however, one of Canterbury's most magnificent scenes of ecclesiastical pomp occurred in connection with the remains of Becket. The summer of 1220 saw the completion of the new shrine, and on July 7, the translation of the saint's remains was accomplished amid scenes of the most astonishing splendour, described by those who were present as being without a parallel in the history of England, the crowds including people from many foreign countries. Money was spent so lavishly on the entertainment of the innumerable persons of distinction who were present or took part in the

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great ceremony that for several years the finances of the see were unpleasantly reminiscent of the vast expenditure. Henry III. was present, but he was not old enough to be a bearer of the great iron-bound chest containing the poor remnants of Becket's human guise. In the presence of nearly every ecclesiastical dignitary in the land the remains were placed in the newly finished shrine all aglow with jewels set in gold and silver.

Throughout the centuries succeeding this crowning glory of Canterbury, the little walled city saw many great functions apart from the yearly stream of pilgrims of every grade of society, and the huge doles of food and drink given away by the two great monasteries and the lesser houses of the city must have brought together an unwholesome concourse of the needy.

Every fifty years after the translation of Becket's remains to the great shrine there was a special festival on July 7, when the people of the archiepiscopal city would find their resources strained to the very uttermost in feeding and housing the great assemblage. The martyrdom took place on December 29, but owing to the time of the year this festival did not draw so many as the summer one. All through the year the pilgrims came and went, and instead of falling off in numbers as the martyrdom receded, the popularity of the saint did not reach its zenith until the fifteenth century. Royal visits were of frequent occurrence, and of all the cities of England, after London, Canterbury would appear to have entertained more distinguished personages than any other.

Between 1378 and 1411 Prior Chillenden pulled down Lanfranc's Norman nave and transept, which had survived the fire, and rebuilt them in the Perpendicular style, then prevailing. When this work was finished and the south-western tower had been completed, in 1481, there was not much left of the Norman priory church built by Lanfranc. The north-western or Arundel Tower, the last survival of Lanfranc's church, was rebuilt in 1840 and made to match its Perpendicular neighbour and the central tower—the external masterpiece of the cathedral—commenced by Prior Molashe in 1433, and completed by Prior Selling in the closing years of the century. The piers supporting this tower are Norman with a later casing, and the foundations of the nave walls belong to the same period.

Having reached its greatest glories, Canterbury began to decline, and the dissolution of the two great monasteries and the demolishing of Becket's shrine must have been to the city, on a much larger scale, what the sweeping away of all the Shakespearean landmarks and relics from Stratford-on-Avon of to-day would imply. Nevertheless the city could afford to present Queen Elizabeth with l. 30 in a scented purse when she came thither in 1564, and the fact that Canterbury remained the chief centre of the authority and state of the English Church prevented the city from decaying. And even if this dignity had not remained the position of the town in relation to the comings and

goings between England and France would have saved it from any sudden fall from its opulence and greatness before the dissolution.

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To touch even lightly on the subsequent history of Canterbury is not possible here, but its remarkably interesting story has been woven into a connected narrative by Dr. Cox, whose admirable book should be procured by all who may, by reading this little sketch, feel some of the glamour which the old city has for the writer.

CHAPTER III

THE CATHEDRAL

From the swelling green hills that look over Canterbury the distant glimpses of the Cathedral towers gleaming in that opalescent light that is the joy of a summer's morning in Kent, are so hauntingly beautiful that it is hard to believe that no disillusionment need be anticipated when the ancient city is entered and the great church seen at close quarters in the midst of a little city whose busy streets are agog with twentieth-century interests; and yet apprehension is entirely needless. From St. Dunstan's Church, where Henry II. stripped himself to a shirt and cloak on entering as a penitent, the road is lined with houses whose quietly picturesque frontages improve as the city proper is neared, and at the end of a most pleasing perspective stands the West Gate, a great stone gateway with round towers. Passing through the archway, one is at once in the narrow, jostling familiarity of the medieval St. Peter's Street. This crosses one at the arms of the Stour, and continues as High Street, becoming increasingly rich in overhanging storeys and curious sixteenth and seventeenth century fronts. One's eye glances rapidly from side to side, until, on the left, an exceedingly narrow turning gives a peep—such a peep as no other city can give unless it be Rouen—of the Cathedral's western towers rising above a sumptuously enriched stone gateway framed by tall, timbered houses, which nod towards one another in the neighbourly fashion of old cronies. It might be that the modern pilgrim, whose course is thus arrested by the vision he sees in this cleft called Mercery Lane, might have had some intention of going straight through the city to St. Martin's Church outside the walls to the east; but, if so, he is a strong man who resists the appeal of that narrow way belonging altogether to the world of romance. He stands for a moment transfixed, and then plunges into the opening, forgetful of his original purpose in the vivid reality before him. He walks down the lane trodden century after century by countless pilgrims and enters the Cathedral precincts through the weather-worn gateway, Prior Goldstone II. built between 1507 and 1517.

From the archway the first near vision of the vast pile is unfolded, nearly the whole of the south side being visible. Immediately opposite are the two western towers, the nearer one finished in 1451 and the further rebuilt seventy years ago. The heavily buttressed nave, in the same Perpendicular style, stretches away to the transept, where the eye mounts up higher and higher until it rests on the clustered

pinnacles of the *campanilis Angeli*—the Angel Tower, as Prior Molashe by some happy inspiration chose to call the imposing feature he added to his priory church. Beyond the south-west transept appears the plain Norman work of the larger and more massive transept to the east, with its beautiful staircase tower built into the inner angle, a part of Conrad's "glorious" choir. The remaining eastern parts of the Cathedral are not visible from this point, but as one walks eastwards—the other way is closed by the Archbishop's Palace—St. Anselm's Tower and Trinity Chapel with its corona, or semicircular extension, successively appear. Armed even with such brief information as that given in the preceding chapter, one gazes on these weathered cliffs of wrought stone with quickened breath, reading into the Transitional Norman work the strange story of the historic murder which brought so much wealth to this spot that the Cathedral in its present form is due to little else. To wipe out Becket's name completely Henry VIII. would have needed to demolish the whole church.

[Illustration: *The doorway into the transept of martyrdom from the
          cloisters*.
It was through this doorway that Becket was followed by his murderers on that fatal afternoon in 1170 when the winter twilight was deepening.]

The smooth turf along the south side of the Cathedral was used by the monks as a lay cemetery, and the fairly extensive space to the south-east shaded by old elms was their own burial-ground. All the monastic buildings were, contrary to the usual custom, on the north, for having only a narrow space between the south side of their church and the wall which Lanfranc built to secure the whole monastery, they naturally built on their extensive piece of ground running right up to the city wall to the north. Rounding the east end of the Cathedral, therefore, one finds under its ample shadow the remains of many of the domestic offices of the great priory. The great hall, with its kitchen and offices, is now part of the house of one of the prebendaries, and is not accessible to the public, but to the west are the interesting ruins of the infirmary. This was a long building with aisles, having a chapel opening out of it to the east, so that the sick brethren while lying in their beds could listen to the services. The south arcade of this chapel, consisting of four Norman arches with an ivy-grown clerestory, is still standing, and there are also some arches of the south side of the hall still showing the orange-pink colour produced on the stone by the disastrous fire in 1174, when Conrad's choir was reduced to a ruin. Adjoining the western end of the infirmary hall, and now a part of the Cathedral, is the beautiful Transitional-Norman treasury built on to St. Andrew's Chapel. Going to the right through a passage called the Dark Entry, one has the site of the prior's lodging

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on the right and on the left the infirmary cloister, and north of it the smaller dormitories of the monks. This passage-way leads through the vaulted Prior's Gate to the Green Court, a wide grassy space shaded by great limes and other trees. Framed between the spreading branches appears one of the most perfect groupings of the Angel Steeple with the piled-up roofs of the library, chapter house, and north-west transept as steps leading up to the vast tower, whose presence has an uplifting effect on the mind, scarcely equalled by the solemn immensity of the nave when one first enters—but the interior must wait for a little, while the remaining portions of the precincts are seen.

Adjoining the Prior's Gate to the east is the building now used as the Deanery. It was built by Prior Goldstone in late Perpendicular times as a guest-house for the reception of strangers, but has been much altered since that time. At the north-west corner of the court is a very fine Norman gateway, now surrounded by the modern buildings of the King's School, and a little to the right is a Norman staircase, which by the goodness of Providence was allowed to remain when other destruction was in progress. This beautiful and unique example of a staircase of this early period is the most remarkable feature of the monastic remains. Beyond the Green Court Gate stood the almonry and a granary, and south of these buildings was the Archbishop's Palace, so ruined in Puritan times that the remains of a gateway in Palace Street is practically all that can now be seen. The present palace is quite modern. Coming back to the Cathedral, the remarkably picturesque little circular Lavatory Tower standing on late Norman open arches is noticeable in its shadowy seclusion among the lofty walls of the choir chapels. This is generally known as the Baptistery, but the name only began to be used when the font Bishop Warner presented to the Cathedral was placed there. In the little garden in front of the Lavatory Tower are two Roman columns brought from Reculver more than a century ago when the church there became a ruin. West of this tower is the library, standing on part of the site of the great dormitory, and opening on to the cloisters is the chapter house, commenced in 1304 by Prior Estria and finished in 1378 by Prior Chillenden. The windows at the east and west ends are the largest in the Cathedral.

The great cloister, like the chapter house, largely owes its present appearance to Prior Chillenden, and is of exceedingly beautiful Perpendicular work with a splendid roof of lierne vaulting. Part of the south walk, with the doorway into the north transept—the successor to the Norman one through which Becket passed to his death—is shown in Mr. Biscombe Gardner's drawing facing page 43. If one enters the Cathedral from this point, especially if it should be in the twilight of a gloomy day, the atmosphere of the murder seems to be all about one, notwithstanding the rebuilding at a later period of the actual scene, but the historic entrance is by the south porch facing the great gate of the priory, and as it is still the usual place of entry this short account of the interior will begin at that point.

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[Illustration: *The Greyfriars' house in Canterbury*. This picturesque house of the Franciscans, who came to the town in 1220, stands on a branch of the Stour near Stour Street.]

The porch belongs to the great period of rebuilding under Prior Chillenden, and, with its double row of canopied niches containing statues, is a beautiful feature, even with the central space which contained a representation of the martyrdom of Becket still vacant since the days of Henry VIII. There is in the first view of a vast Cathedral nave something almost overpowering in its sense of ordered beauty. It may be that average lives are so planless, so haphazard and without order that an achievement of such magnitude representing years of labour and concentrated thought in steadily following out a preconceived plan cannot fail to be a tremendous contrast to the smallness and pettiness of the majority—a contrast so great that it is mentally and spiritually a glimpse of the world of new possibilities attainable when once the feverish clinging to the ideals of the totem post is abandoned. This vast nave, reminiscent in many ways of Winchester, but far more satisfying, is generally bathed in a cool, greenish light, and is, in reality, a magnificent vestibule to the crowded interest beyond the transept. The effect of emptiness existing to-day is vastly different to what the pilgrims used to gaze upon while waiting their turn to be sprinkled with holy water, for before the Reformation and the complete sweeping away of the enrichments of Roman Catholic times the roof and walls were brilliant with paintings, the windows glowed with the warm colour of medieval glass, sumptuous hangings were suspended in many places and the altars twinkling with lighted candles added much gilding and colour to the aisles. All this barbarous crowding of colour and ornament, all this splendour of a ritual that appealed to an age capable of stilling the voice of conscience with an absolution obtainable for a few pence has passed away, but the vast building remains to tell of the reality of endeavour of one side of monastic life.

[Illustration: *The picturesque gabled houses of the Canterbury Weavers*.
The houses are reflected in the Stour just by King's Bridge, which joins the High Street to St. Peter's Street.]

Across the great arch opening into the base of the tower is the supporting arch inserted by Prior Goldstone II., who, as already stated, built the Angel Steeple above the roof-line where it had been left by Chillenden. The arch has been called a disfigurement, and as it was not originally intended such an opinion may be justifiable, and yet the beauty of the reticulated stonework and the consummate skill which conceived the bold simplicity of design is so satisfying that it is scarcely possible to wish that it were absent. Beneath this flying arch appears the splendid western

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screen, approached by the flight of steps necessitated by the crypt or undercroft, for, being on perfectly level ground, there would have been no need for this unique feature. Among the monuments in the nave aisles those on the south include the memorial to Dean Farrar, who is buried in the great cloister, and William Broughton, Bishop of Sydney and Adelaide, who was a scholar at the King's School. In the north aisle the Tudor monument to Sir T. Hales showing his burial at sea is curious and picturesque, and other memorials are to Charles I.'s organist, Orlando Gibbons, and to the Archbishops Boyes and Sumner.

The north-west transept, on the left as the steps to the choir are ascended, is the scene of Becket's martyrdom, and the vergers show the traditional spot where he fell. From the opposite transept, steps lead down to the undercroft, and also up to the south choir aisle—the way the pilgrims approached the shrine of St. Thomas. Also opening from the south-west transept is St. Michael's or the Warrior's Chapel, as it is now popularly called. In the illustration facing p. 30, the tomb of Lady Margaret Holland and her two husbands, John Beaufort, Earl of Somerset, and Thomas, Duke of Clarence, is shown occupying the centre of the chapel, but it just misses a more interesting, if much less beautiful, tomb, that of Stephen Langton, the courageous Archbishop who took such a leading part in forcing John to sign Magna Charta. The plain sarcophagus is partly within and partly outside the chapel, for when it was rebuilt in the fourteenth century it was extended so much to the east that it became necessary either to move Langton's tomb or else to make an arch in the wall, and the latter course was taken, with the curious result still to be seen. An astonishing contrast to the clear-sighted action of this Norman Archbishop was the attitude of Archbishop Howley (1828-1848) whose bitter hostility to the Reform Bill in 1831 so raised the anger of the people of Canterbury that they greeted his next arrival in the city with showers of stones and rotten eggs. In the midst of a howling mob the archiepiscopal carriage slowly struggled to the Deanery, bearing in it the amiable Churchman who was convinced that the Reform Bill was "mischievous in its tendency, and extremely dangerous to the fabric of the constitution." Such words are deeply interesting at the present day, when many people think they see, in progress on the same lines, dangers of an equally unfounded order.

Passing along the south aisle of the choir, one gradually sees the whole of the elaborately devised eastern parts of the Cathedral as they were reconstructed by William of Sens and his English successor. The arcades of alternately circular and octagonal pillars have richly carved foliated capitals, and there is a lightness in form and a profusion of carving that tells of the coming of the Gothic style—indeed, so far in advance of the plain Norman work of Conrad

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is the present choir that the change to pure Early English is slight in comparison. In its great length this choir is unique, and in the lowness of its vaulted roof is also unusual, but this is accounted for by the undercroft beneath. From the centre of the choir the remarkable inward bend of the walls, necessitated through the determination not to alter the plan of the Trinity Chapel so hallowed by the memory of the Blessed St. Thomas, is very noticeable: to some extent it helps to give one an impression of the great length of the whole choir, with the chapel beyond. The eastern transepts and chapels still have their apsidal chapels almost as they were built by Conrad.

Ascending some more steps, the modern pilgrim reaches Trinity Chapel, where his eyes, instead of falling upon a shrine encrusted with jewels and precious metals, merely look between the pillars upon an empty space. A vacant spot, however, can be eloquent enough, and to those who have read Chaucer's "Canterbury Tales" or the late Mr. Snowden Ward's "Canterbury Pilgrimages," if they have gone no farther in the study of this fascinating cult, the site of the shrine whose fame was European is able to give almost as deep a thrill as any experienced by the wayworn folk of the Middle Ages.

By going closer and examining the pavement, a shallow groove appears marking the exact position of the base of the shrine. This was worn by the endless stream of pilgrims as they knelt in ecstasy before the object their eyes had longed to feast upon. To the west is a fine thirteenth-century mosaic pavement similar to that in the Confessor's Chapel at Westminster Abbey, to which it is very fitting to compare this chapel, for if it is not quite a "Chapel of the Kings" it has a King—Henry IV.—and a king's eldest son—the Black Prince—on either side, and after Westminster Abbey there was scarcely a more sacred spot in the kingdom than this.

It was fitting that Henry IV. should be buried here, for he had taken a considerable amount of interest in the rebuilding of the nave, and had been liberal in his financial aid. The effigies of Henry and his second wife, Joan of Navarre, are believed to be faithful representations. Of the tomb of Edward the Black Prince, if space permitted, much could be said, for it is a magnificent piece of work apart from the historical interest that attaches to the soldier Prince, whose two great victories at Crecy and Poitiers have thrilled every English schoolboy during all the subsequent centuries. The strong iron railing has prevented any damage to the bronze or latten effigy, and except for the tarnishing and general deterioration of gilding and paint, one looks on the monument as it was erected in the days of chivalry. All the details of this tomb had been arranged by the Black Prince himself, and it was he who chose the Norman-French inscription all can plainly read to-day. Above the tomb is suspended a flat canopy of wood with an embattled moulding, and on the underside a much decayed painting of the Trinity, if one may call it such when the Dove is not represented. On the beam from which the canopy is suspended are hung the shield, helmet, velvet coat, brass gauntlets, and empty

sword sheath which are the survivals of two complete suits, one for peace, and one for war, which were carried at the funeral as the Prince had ordered in his will.

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The eastern extension of the chapel is called Becket's Crown, a name tradition associates with the preservation in this chapel of a portion of St. Thomas's skull. One window contains old glass, and in the centre of the floor is placed the chair of Purbeck marble in which the Archbishops are enthroned. As it is no longer considered as old as the days of Augustine the title St. Augustine's Chair must be regarded as a figure of speech.

By the most marvellous good fortune the wonderful series of windows in Trinity Chapel, illustrating the many cures wrought at the Shrine of St. Thomas, have come down to the present time almost unharmed, and this magnificent range of thirteenth-century glass is finer than anything else of its period in England. This glass is all prior to 1220, and without it there would have been no representation of the first shrine at all. The colour in these windows is all subservient to the careful drawing of the pictures in the medallions, but in the north choir aisle there are some windows almost of the same period where the colour is as splendid as in any of the early windows at Chartres. For any description of the tombs of the archbishops there is, unfortunately, no space here. In the splendid crypt, besides the interest of the various periods of Norman and Transitional work, there is the rich Perpendicular screenwork of the Chapel of Our Lady of the Undercroft, and the Huguenot Chapel in what was the Black Prince's Chantry. In Tudor times the whole of the undercroft was given up to the French Protestant refugees, who, besides worshipping there, set up their looms in this hallowed portion of the Cathedral where the martyr was laid until his translation in 1220 and where Henry II. had passed the night after his severe penance. This very short description of such a building must be regarded as a mere introduction to the study of a vast subject, for in the space available nothing more is remotely possible.

CHAPTER IV

THE CITY

A walled city generally holds more easily that elusive quality of romance for which the intelligent mind so often hungers than a town that has long ago discarded its old tower-studded girdle. And among the half-dozen or more English towns still possessed of their old mural defences Canterbury holds a high place, because within its walls there are still, in spite of railways and motors and the horrors of twentieth-century advertising, a hundred byways and nooks where the atmosphere of Elizabethan and pre-Reformation England still lurks. The wall itself does not stand out with the splendid completeness of York or Conway, and on the western side it has vanished altogether, while of the seven or eight gates, one only—the West Gate—has been saved; yet, while walking in the narrow, picturesque streets, it is difficult to forget that Canterbury is a walled city. Until well into last century all the gates were standing; but one by one these ornaments

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were destroyed by the city until one only was left, and even that would have been wantonly sacrificed to facilitate the entry of some circus caravans when, in 1850, Wombwell's menagerie visited the city! This vandal showman actually dared to request the Corporation to demolish the gate on account of the difficulty of getting his procession through the low arch. This is hard to believe, but it is infinitely more difficult to understand the aboriginal minds of some of the members of the Corporation when the records unblushingly reveal that the showman's preposterous request not only found both a proposer and a seconder, but that the votes were equally divided on the matter, and it was only the Mayor's casting vote which has preserved for the city its noble entry. Such a searchlight as this, throwing into dazzling clearness the almost entire lack of appreciation for its historic buildings possessed by the controllers of the city must make one grateful for the happy chances which have permitted so much that is old and picturesque to survive.

[Illustration: *Westgate*, *Canterbury*, *from within*. This is the only survivor of the gates which studded the mediaeval walls of the city.]

From the East Station there extends as far as the site of the old Riding Gate a well-preserved length of the wall with semicircular towers at intervals, and from opposite Lady Wootton's Green to St. Mary's Church, standing close to the site of North Gate, lengths of the wall, with a tower at intervals, form thrillingly medieval foregrounds for the Cathedral towers. In Pound Lane the wall continues in a furtive and rather desultory fashion until it ends at the West Gate. Opposite Lady Wootton's Green there still remain indications of a narrow postern, which is generally accepted as that through which Queen Bertha was wont to pass on her way to her devotions at St. Martin's Church. This, however, presupposes that the portion of the wall immediately surrounding this particular point is Roman or very Early Saxon, and also that the walls of the city occupied the same position, at least as far as this point, as those built at the end of the twelfth century.

Mr. T. Godfrey Faussett's plan of Roman Canterbury appears to carry the wall just as far as this point, and then turns at an acute angle towards the south side of the Cathedral. Following the direction Queen Bertha would have taken brings one to the great gateway of St. Augustine's Abbey, the Benedictine monastery founded by Augustine on the land given for that purpose by Ethelbert. It was at first dedicated to St. Peter and St. Paul, and the original buildings were finished in 613. Having become the place of burial for the Kings of Kent and the Archbishops, the Abbey quite overshadowed the Priory of Christ Church, until in 758 Archbishop Cuthbert was secretly buried within the claustral confines of his own priory. At the Dissolution Henry converted the stately buildings into a palace, so that the royal visits, which had been of no infrequent occurrence in the days of monastic hospitality, continued; and while the lordly pile passed through the

hands of various owners, Elizabeth, Charles I., and Charles II. paid visits on various occasions.

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A century ago, when appreciation of the architecture of the dead centuries when Englishmen built with superlative skill had ebbed to its lowest, the Abbey had sunk to inconceivably debased uses. The monastic kitchen had been converted into a public-house, and the great gateway—the finest structural relic of the Abbey—had become the entrance to a brewery, while cock-fighting took place in the state bedroom above. The pilgrims' guest hall, now the college dining-hall, had become a dancing-hall, and the ground, unoccupied by buildings, soil hallowed by the memories of so many saintly lives and associated with the momentous days when England was being released from the toils of pagan ignorance became known as "the Old Palace Tea-gardens." The popular mind had seemingly forgotten the original uses of the place they were desecrating with fireworks and variety shows.

At last, in 1844, Mr. Beresford Hope rescued the half-destroyed remnants of the abbey-palace, and through his generosity the present missionary college was founded, and the buildings restored or reconstructed. A more happy idea could scarcely have been suggested than that of associating the abbey founded by the first missionary of Christianity to England with modern efforts to carry the light into the dark places of the earth. The much-restored gateway, built by Abbot Fyndon at the beginning of the fourteenth century, the guest-hall, and part of the memorial chapel, are the chief portions of the old structures incorporated into the buildings that surround three sides of the college quadrangle. Standing apart to the south is one of the huge walls of the nave of the abbey church, and to the east are the extensive excavations of the east end of the crypt and other fascinatingly early remains of the historic churches mentioned in an earlier chapter (p. 17).

Leaving the Abbey grounds, and continuing to the east, one reaches in a few minutes the little church of St. Martin set on the knoll to which Queen Bertha directed her steps. It is, however, a disappointingly familiar type of Early English village church to the casual glance, and until the fabric and the remarkable font have been examined and discussed in the light of modern scientific archaeology it is difficult to appreciate the hoary antiquity of at least parts of the structure. To understand the indications of the Saxon, or possibly Roman, work in the fabric, and to know the reasons for considering the font a relic of Saxon times, it is scarcely possible to find a better instructor than Canon Routledge, whose little book is all one can desire.

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When the Cathedral, the Abbey, and St. Martin's Church have been visited, it is too often thought that Canterbury has yielded up all her treasures, but this is an amazingly mistaken idea. There still remain to be seen the Castle, the walls, the old inns, the many interesting examples of early domestic architecture, the remains of the lesser religious houses and hospitals, a wonderful array of interesting churches, and the excellent museum. Of the Castle the great Norman keep, completed about 1125, still stands, having been allowed to remain because the walls were found to be too hard to easily destroy; but up to the time of writing the Corporation has not purchased the immense shell, and it therefore remains a storage place for the coal of the adjoining gasworks. The remains of the buildings of the Black, or Preaching, Friars, and those of the Grey Friars, who belonged to the rule of St. Francis, are on islands formed by the Stour, and are marked in nearly every plan of the town. The hospitals include that of St. John the Baptist in North Gate Street, Eastbridge Hospital in St. Peter Street, and the Poor Priests' Hospital near Stour Street. Outside the city, at Harbledown, is the interesting old Hospital of St. Nicholas, a home for lepers, who were separately housed.

Of the churches it would be easy to write a great deal, but there is merely space to point out that the only one lacking in interest is All Saints' in High Street. At St. Dunstan's the head of Sir Thomas More is preserved in a vault, but it is never possible to see it, and one must be content with the picturesque brick gateway of the Roper house in St. Dunstan's Street.

[Illustration: *Plan of Canterbury castle*.

Key to numbers.
  1. Door to Cloisters.
  2. Door In Cloisters.
  3. Dean's (or Lady) Chapel.
  4. St. Michael's Chapel.
  5. Baptistery.
  6. Library (Howleian).
  7. Treasury.
  8. Chapel of King Henry IV.
  9. Arundel Tower (N.W.).
  10. Dunstan Tower (S.W.).
  11. Entrance to French Church.
  12. Archbishop Benson.
  13. Bishop Parry.
  14. Archbishop Sumner.
  15. Sir T. Hales.
  16. Colonel Stuart.
  17. Dr. Beaney.
  18. Dean Fotherbye.
  19. Archbishop Chicheley.

20. Archbishop Bourchier.
21. Archbishop Kemp.
22. Archbishop Sudbury.
23. St. Dunstan (site).
24. Archbishop Tait.
25. King Henry IV.
26. Edward, the Black Prince.
27. Becket's Shrine (site).
28. Cardinal Pole.
29. Unknown.
30. Archbishop Mepham.
31. Archbishop Winchelsey.
32. Henry de Estria.
33. Stephen Langton.
34. Archbishop's ancient Chair.
35. Memorial to Dean Farrar.
36. Wm. Broughton, Bishop of Sydney and Adelaide.
37. Archbishop Boyes.
38. Tomb of Dean Farrar.
39. Tomb of Archbishop Temple.
40. Two columns from Reculver.]

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