

Chronicles (1 of 6): The Historie of England (7 of 8) eBook

Chronicles (1 of 6): The Historie of England (7 of 8) by Raphael Holinshed

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OF THE

Historie of England.

* * * * *

Egelred succeedeth Edward the martyr in the kingdoms of England, the decaie of the realme in his reigne, Dunstane refusing to consecrate him is therevnto inforced, Dunstans prophesies of the English people and Egelred their king, his slouth and idlenes accompanied with other vices, the Danes arriue on the coasts of Kent and make spoile of manie places; warre betwixt the king and the bishop of Rochester, archbishop Dunstans bitter denunciation against the king because he would not be pacified with the bishop of Rochester without moneie; Dunstans parentage, his strange trance, and what a woonderfull thing he did during the time it lasted, his education and bringing vp, with what good qualities he was indued, an incredible tale of his harpe, how he was reuoked from louing and lusting after women whereto he was addicted, his terrible dreame of a rough beare, what preferments he obtained by his skill in the expounding of dreames.

The first chapter.

[Sidenote: *Egelred.*] In the former booke was discoursed the troubled state of this land by the manifold and mutinous inuasions of the Danes; who though they sought to ingrosse the rule of euerie part and parcell therof into their hands; yet being resisted by the valiantnesse of the gouernors supported with the aid of their people, they were disappointed of their expectation, and receiued manie a dishonorable or rather reprochfull repulse at their aduersaries hands. Much mischief doubtlesse they did, and more had doone, if they had not beene met withall in like measure of extremitie as they offred, to the offense and ouerthrow of great multitudes. Their first entrance into this land is controuersed among writers, some saieng that it was in the daies of king Britricus, other some affirming that it was in the time of king Egbert, &c: about which point (sith it is a matter of no great moment) we count it labour lost to vse manie woords: onelie this by the waie is notewoorthie, that the Danes had an vnperfect or rather a lame and limping rule in this land, so long as the gouernors were watchfull, diligent, politike at home, and warlike abroad. But when these kind of kings discontinued, and that the raines of the regiment fell into the hands of a pezzant not a puissant prince, a man euill qualified, dissolute, slacke and licentious, not regarding the dignitie of his owne person, nor fauoring the good estate of the people; the Danes who before were coursed from coast to coast, and pursued from place to place, as more willing to leaue the land, than desirous to tarrie in the same; tooke occasion of stomach and courage to reenter this Ile, & waxing more bold and confident, more desperate and venturous, spared no force, omitted no opportunitie, let slip no aduantage that they might possiblie take, to put in practise and fullie to accomplish their long conceiued purpose.

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Now because the Danes in the former kings daies were reencountred (and that renowned) so often as they did encounter, and seeking the totall regiment, were dispossessed of their partile principallitie, which by warlike violence they obtained; and for that the Saxons were interested in the land, and these but violent incrochers, vnable to keepe that which they came to by constreint; we haue thought it conuenient to comprise the troubled estate of that time in the sixt booke; the rather for the necessarie consequence of matters then in motion: and heere deeme it not amisse, at so great and shamefull loosenesse (speciallie in a prince) ministring hart and courage to the enimie, to begin the seuenth booke. Wherin is expressed the chieftest time of their flourishing estate in this land; if in tumults, vprores, battels, and bloudshed, such a kind of estate may possiblie be found. For heere the Danes lord it, heere they take vpon them like souereignes, & heere (if at anie time they had absolute authoritie) they did what they might in the highest degree: as shall be declared in the vnfortunate affaires of vngracious Egelred or Etheldred, the sonne of king Edgar, and of his last wife queene Alfred, who was ordeined king in place of his brother Edward, after the same Edward was dispatched out of the waie, and began his reigne ouer this [Sidenote: 979. *Simon Dun.*] realme of England, in the yeere of our Lord 979, which was in the seuenth yeere of the emperor Otho the second, in the 24 of Lothaire K. of France, and about the second or third yeere of Kenneth the third [Sidenote: *Simon Dun.*] of that name king of Scotland.

This Egelred or Etheldred was the 30 in number from Cerdicus the first king of the Westsaxons: through his negligent gouernment, the state of the commonwealth fell into such decaie (as writers doo report) that vnder him it may be said, how the kingdome was come to the vttermost point or period of old and feeble age, which is the next degree to the graue. For wheras, whilst the realme was diuided at the first by the Saxons into sundrie dominions, it grew at length (as it were increasing from youthfull yeeres) to one absolute monarchie, which passed vnder the late remembred princes, Egbert, Adelstane, Edgar, and others, so that in their daies it might be said, how it was growne to mans state, but now vnder this Egelred, through famine, pestilence, and warres, the state thereof was so shaken, turned vpside downe, and weakened on ech part, that rightlie might the season be likened vnto the old broken yeeres of mans life, which through feeblennesse is not able to helpe it selfe. Dunstane archbishop of Canturburie was thought to haue foreseene this thing, and therefore refused to annoint Egelred king, which by the murther of his brother should atteine to the gouernment: but at length he was compelled vnto it, and so he consecrated him at Kingston vpon Thames, as the maner then was, on the 24 day of Aprill, assisted by Oswald archbishop of Yorke, and ten other bishops.

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[Sidenote: *Will. Malmes.*] But (as hath beene reported) Dunstane then said that the English people should suffer condigne punishment generallie, with losse of ancient liberties, which before that time they had inioied. Dunstane also long before prophesied of the slouthfulnesse that should remaine in this Egelred. For at what time he ministred the sacrament of baptisme to him; shortlie after he came into this world, he defiled the font with the ordure of his wombe (as hath beene said:) whervpon Dunstane being troubled in mind, "By the Lord (saith he) and his blessed mother, this child shall prooue to be a slouthfull person." It hath beene written also, that when he was but ten yeeres of age, and heard that his brother Edward was slaine, he so offended his mother with weeping, bicause she could not still him, that hauing no rod at hand, she tooke tapers or sizes that stood before hir, and beat him so sore with them, that she had almost killed him, whereby he could neuer after abide to haue anie such candels lighted before him.

[Sidenote: *Polydor.*] This Egelred (as writers say) was nothing giuen to warlike enterprises, but was slouthfull, a louer of idlenesse, and delighting in riotous lusts, which being knowne to all men, caused him to be euill spoken of amongst his owne people, and nothing feared amongst strangers. Heerevpon the Danes that exercised rouing on the seas, began to conceiue a boldnesse of courage to disquiet and molest the sea-coasts of the realme, in so much that in the second yeere of [Sidenote: *Ran. Higd.* 980.] this Egelreds reigne, they came with seuen ships on the English coasts [Sidenote: *Simon Dun.*] of Kent, and spoiled the Ile of Tenet, the towne of Southampton, and in the yeere following they destroyed S. Petroks abbeie in Cornwall, Porthland in Deuonshire, and diuerse other places by the sea side, speciallie in Deuonshire & Cornwall. Also a great part of Cheshire was destroyed by pirats of Norway.

[Sidenote: 982.] The same yeere by casualtie of fire, a great part of the citie [Sidenote: 983. Alfer or Elfer duke of Mercia departed this life.] of London was burnt. In the yeere of our Lord 983, Alfer duke of Mercia departed this life, who was coosen to king Edgar, & his [Sidenote: Alfrike or Elfrike duke of Mercia. *Fabian. Wil. Malm. Matt. West.*] sonne Alfrike tooke vpon him the rule of that dukedome, and within three yeeres after was banished the land. About the eight yeere of his reigne, Egelred married one Elgina or Ethelgina, daughter of earle Egbert. In the ninth yeere of his reigne, vpon occasion of strife betweene him and the bishop of Rochester, he made warre against the same bishop, wasted his lordships, and besieged the citie of Rochester, till Dunstan procured the bishops peace with paiment of an hundred pounds in gold. And bicause the K. would not agree with the bishop without moneie at the onelie request of Dunstane, the said Dunstane did send him woord, that sithens he made more account of gold than of God, more of monie than of S. Andrew, patrone of the church of Rochester, and more of couetousnesse than of him being the archbishop, the mischiefs which the Lord had threatned would shortlie fall and come to passe, but the same should not chance whilst he was aliue, who died in the yeere following, on the 25 of Maie, being saturday.

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[Sidenote: *Vita Dunstani.*] Of this Dunstane manie things are recorded by writers, that he should be of such holinesse and vertue, that God wrought manie miracles by him, both whilest he liued heere on earth, and also [Sidenote: *Iohn Capgr. Osborne. Ran. Higd.*] after his deceasse. He was borne in Westsaxon, his father was named Heorstan, and his mother Cinifride, who in his youth set him to schoole, where he so profited, that he excelled all his equals in age. Afterward he fell sicke of an ague, which vexed him so sore that it draue him into a frensie: and therefore his parents appointed him to the cure and charge of a certeine woman, where his disease grew so on him, that he fell in a trance, as though he had beene dead, and after that he suddenlie arose, & by chance caught a staffe in his hand, and ran vp and downe through hils and dales, and laid about him as though he had beene afraid of mad dogs. The next night (as it is said) he gat him to the top of the church (by the helpe of certeine ladders that stood there for woorkemen to mend the rooffe) and there ran vp and downe verie dangerouslie, but in the end came safelie downe, and laid him to sleepe betweene two men that watched the church that night, & when he awaked, he maruelled how he came there. Finallie, recouering his disease, his parents made him a priest, and placed him in the abbeie of Glastenburie, where he gaue himselfe to the reading of scriptures and knowledge of vertue. But as well his kinsmen as certeine other did raise a report of him, that he gaue not himselfe so much to the reading of scriptures, as to charming, coniuring and sorcerie, which he vtterlie denied: howbeit learned he was in deed, & could doo manie pretie things both in handie woorke and other deuises: he had good skill in musicke and delighted much therein. At length he grew in such fauour, that he was aduanced into the seruice of king Adelstane.

Vpon a time, as he came to a gentlewomans house with his harpe, and hoong the same on the wall, while he shaped a priests stole, the harpe suddenlie began to plaie a psalme, which draue the whole houshold in such feare, that they ran out and said, he was too cunning, and knew more than was expedient: wherevpon he was accused of necromancie, and so banished out of the court. After this he began to haue a liking to women, and when Elfeagus then bishop of Winchester and his coosen, persuaded him to become a moonke, he refused it, for he rather wished to haue married a yoong damesell, whose pleasant companie he dailie inioied. But being soone after stricken with such a swelling disease in his bellie, that all his bodie was brought into such state, as though he had beene infected with a foule leprosie, he bethought him selfe, and vpon his recouerie sent to the bishop, who immediatlie shore him a moonke, in which life he liued in so great opinion of holinesse, as he in time became abbat of Glastenburie: where on a time as he was in his

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praiera before the altar of S. George, he fell asleepe: and imagining in his dreame, that an vglie rough beare came towards him with open mouth, and set his forefeet vpon his shoulders readie to deuoure him, he suddenlie wakening for feare, caught his walking staffe which he commonlie went with, and laid about him, that all the church rang [Sidenote: *Polychron.*] thereof, to the great woonder of such as stood by. The common tale of his plucking the diuell by the nose with a paire of pinsors, for tempting him with women, while he was making a chalice: the great loue that the ladie Elfleda neere kinswoman to king Adelstane bare him to hir dieng day, with a great manie of other such like matters, I leaue as friuolous, and wholie impertinent to our purpose: onelie this I read, that through declaring of his dreames and visions, he obtained in the time of king Edgar, first the bishoprike of Worcester, after of London, & last of all the archbishoprike of Canturburie. But leauing Dunstane and the fond deuises depending vpon the commemoration of his life, we will now returne to the dooings of Egelred, and speake of such things in the next chapter as chanced in his time.

* * * * *

The Danes inuade England on each side, they are vanquished by the English, Goda earle of Deuonshire slaine; the Danes in a battell fought at Maldon kill Brightnod earle of Essex and the most of his armie, ten thousand pounds paid to them by composition that they should not trouble the English subjects, they cease their crueltie for a time, but within a while after fall to their bloudie bias, the English people despaire to resist them, Egelred addresseth a nauie against the Danes vnder the erles Alfrike and Tuold, Alfrike traitorouslie taketh part with the Danes, his ship and souldiers are taken, his sonne Algar is punished for his fathers offense, the Danes make great wast in many parts of this Iland, they besiege London and are repelled with dishonor, they driue king Egelred to buy peace of them for 16000 pounds; Aulafe king of Norway is honorablie interteined of Egelred, to whome he promiseth at his baptisme neuer to make warre against England, the great zeale of people in setting forward the building of Durham towne and the minster.

THE SECOND CHAPTER.

[Sidenote: *Wil. Malm. Matt. Westm.* The Danes inuade this land.] Shortlie after the decease of Dunstane, the Danes inuaded this realme on each side, wasting and spoiling the countrie in most miserable wise. They arriued in so manie places at once, that the Englishmen could not well deuise whither to go to encounter first with [Sidenote: *Alias Wecederport. H. Hunt. Simon Dun.*] them. Some of them spoiled a place or towne called Wichport, and from thence passing further into the countrie, were met with by the Englishmen, who giuing them battell, lost their capteine Goda: but yet they got the victorie, and beat the Danes

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out of the field, and so [Sidenote: Danes vanquished. *Simon Dun.*] that part of the Danish armie was brought to confusion. Simon Dunel. saith, that the Englishmen in deed wan the field here, but not without [Sidenote: Goda earle of Deuonshire slain. *Matt. West.*] great losse. For besides Goda (who by report of the same author was Earle of Deuonshire) there died an other valiant man of warre named Strenwold. In the yeere 991, Brightnod earle of Essex, at Maldon gaue battell to an armie of Danes (which vnder their leaders lustine and Guthmond had spoiled Gipswich) and was there ouercome and slaine with the most part of his people, and so the Danes obtained in that place the victorie.

[Sidenote: 991.] In the same yeere, and in the 13 yeere of, king Egelreds reigne, when the land was on each side sore afflicted, wasted and haried by the Danes, which couered the same as they had beene grasshoppers: by the aduise of the archbishop of Canturburie Siricius (which was the second of that see after Dunstane) a composition was taken with the [Sidenote: Ten thousand pounds paid to the Danes. *Danegilt.*] Danes, so that for the sum of ten thousand pounds to be paied to them by the king, they should couenant not to trouble his subjects anie further. This monie was called Danegilt or Dane monie, and was leuied of the people. Although other take that to be Danegilt, which was giuen vnto such Danes as king Egelred afterwards reteined in his seruice, to defend the land from other Danes and enimies that sought to inuade his dominions. But by what name so euer this monie (which the Danes now receiued) was called, true it is that herevpon they [Sidenote: *Wil. Malm. 992.*] ceased from their most cruell inuasions for a time. But shortlie after they had refreshed themselues, and recouered new strength, they began to play their old parts againe, dooing the like mischeefe by their semblable inuasions, as they had vsed before. By reason hereof such feare came vpon the English people, that they despaired to be able to resist the enimies.

[Sidenote: *Hen. Hunt.* A nauie set forth.] The king yet caused a nauie to be set foorth at London, whereof he appointed earle Alfrike (whome before he had banished) to be high admerall, ioining with him earle Turolde. This nauie did set forward from London toward the enimies, who hauing warning giuen them from Alfrike, escaped away without hurt. Shortly after a greater nauie of the Danes came, and incountered with the kings fleet, so that a great [Sidenote: Alfrike a traitour to his countrie. *Matth. West.*] number of the Londoners were slaine, and all the kings ships taken: for Alfrike like a traitor turned to the Danes side. ¶ *Matt. West.* maketh other report of this matter, declaring that Alfrike in deed being one of the chiefe capteins of the fleet, aduertised them by forewarning of the danger that was toward them, and that when they should come to ioining, the same Alfrike like a traitor

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fled to the Danes, and after vpon necessitie being put to flight escaped away with them: but the other capteins of the kings fleet, as Theodred, Elstan, and Escwen, pursued the Danes, tooke one of their ships, and slue all those that were found therein. The Londoners also (as the same Matt. West, saith) met with the nauie of the Danish rouers as they fled away, and slue a great number, and also tooke the ship of the traitor Alfrike with his souldiers & armor, but he himselfe escaped, though with much paine, hauing plaied the like traitorous part once [Sidenote: *Hen. Hunt.* The son punished for his fathers offense. 993.] before, and yet was reconciled to the kings fauor againe. Vpon this mischiefe wrought by the father, the king now tooke his sonne Algar, and caused his eies to be put out.

About the same time was Bambrough destroyed by the Danes, which arriued after in Humber, and wasted the countrie of Lindsey and Yorkeshire, on either side that riuier. And when the Englishmen were assembled to giue them battell, before they ioined, the capteines [Sidenote: *Simon Dun. Polydor. Matth. West.*] of the English armie, Frena, Godwin, and Fredegist, that were Danes by their fathers side began to flie away, and escaped, so giuing the occasion of the ouerthrow that lighted on their people. But by some writers it should appeere, that after the Danes had destroyed all the north parts, as they spred abroad without order and good arraie, the [Sidenote: *Aulafe king of Norway, & Swein king of Denmarke* were capteins of this fleet, as saith *Simon Dun.* 994] people of the countrie fell vpon them, and slue some of them, and chased the residue. Other of the Danes with a nauie of 94 ships entered the Thames, and besieged London about our ladie daie in September. They gaue a verie sore assault to the citie, and assaied to set it on fire: but the citizens so valiantlie defended themselues, that the Danes were beaten backe and repelled, greatlie to their losse, so that they were constreined to depart thence with dishonor. Then they fell to and wasted the countries of Essex, Kent, Sussex, and Hamshire, and ceassed not till they had inforced the king to compound [Sidenote: *Hen Hunt. Wil. Malm.* The king compounded with the Danes for monie. *Matt. West. Simon Dun.* Aufale king of Norway baptised. His promise.] with them for 16 thousand pounds, which he was glad to pay to haue peace with them.

Moreouer, whereas they wintered that yeere at Southampton, the king procured Aulafe king of the Norwegians to come vnto Andeuer (where at that time he lay) vpon pledges receiued of the king for his safe returne. Elphegus bishop of Winchester, and duke Ethelwold were appointed by king Egelred to bring Aulafe vnto him in most honorable maner. The same time was Aulafe baptised, king Egelred receiuing him at the fontstone, and so he promised neuer after to make anie war within this land. And receiuing great gifts of the king, he returned into his countrie, and kept his promise faithfullie: but the euils tooke not so an end, for other of the Danes sprang vp, as they had beene the heads of the serpent Hydra, some of them euer being readie to trouble the quiet state of the English nation. [Sidenote: *Iohn Leland. Simon Dun.* 995.]

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About this season, that is to say, in the yeere of our Lord 995, bishop Aldaine which was fled from Chester in the street (otherwise [Sidenote: The church of Durham builded.] called Cunecester) with the bodie of saint Cuthbert for feare of the inuasion of Danes, vnto Rippon, brought the same bodie now vnto Durham, and there began the foundation of a church; so that the see of that bishoprike was from thencefoorth there established, and the woods [Sidenote: Earle Vthred] were there cut downe, which before that time couered and ouergrew that place, wherevpon it began first to be inhabited. Earle Vthred, who gouerned that countrie, greatlie furthered the bishop in this [Sidenote: Durham town and minster builded.] worke, so that all the people inhabiting betweene the riuers of Coquid and Theis, came together to rid the woods, and to helpe forwards the building of the church and towne there.

* * * * *

The Danes inuading the west parts of this land make great hauocke by fire and sword, they arriue at Rochester, and conquer the Kentishmen in field, king Egelred ouercommeth the Danes that inhabited Cumberland and wasteth the countrie, the Summersetshire men are foiled; the miserable state of the realme in those daies; the English blood mixed with the Danes and Britaines, and what inconueniencies grew thervpon, the disordered gouernement of king Egelred, sicknesses vexing the people, treason in the nobles, the tribute paid to the Danes vnmercifillie inhansed, the realme brought to beggerie; king Egelred by politike persuasion and counsell marrieth Emma the duke of Normandies daughter, vpon what occasion the Normans pretended a title to the crowne of England, they conquer the whole land, what order king Egelred tooke to kill all the Danes within his kingdoms, and what rule they bare in this realme yer they were murdered, the thraldome of the English people under them, whereof the word Lordane sprang.

THE THIRD CHAPTER.

In the ninteenth yere of king Egelreds reigne, the Danes sailed about [Sidenote: 997. The Danes inuade the west parts of this land.] Cornwall, and comming into the Seuerne sea, they robbed & tooke preies in the coasts of Deuonshire & Southwales, and landing at Wicheport, they burned vp the countrie, and came about vnto Penwithstreet on the south coast, and so arriuing in the mouth of Tamer water, came vnto Lidford, and there wasted all afore them with force of fire. They burned, amongst other places, the monasterie of [Sidenote: Tauestocke.] saint Ordulfe at Essingstocke. After this they came into Dorcetshire, and passed through the countrie with flame and fire, not finding anie that offered to resist them. The same yeere also they soiourned in the Ile of Wight, and liued vpon spoiles & preies which they tooke in [Sidenote: 998.] Hampshire and Sussex. At length they came into the Thames, and so [Sidenote: 999. The Danes arriue in the Thames.] by the riuier of Medway arriued at

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Rochester. The Kentishmen assembled together and fought with the Danes, but they were overcome, and so left the field to the Danes. After this, the same Danes sailed into Normandie, and king Egelred went into Cumberland, where the Danes inhabited in great numbers, whom he overcame with sore warre, and [Sidenote: 1000.] wasted almost all Cumberland, taking great spoiles in the same. [Sidenote: 1001. Exmouth] About the same time, or shortly after, the Danes with their nauie, returning out of Normandie, came vnto Exmouth, and there assaulted the castell, but they were repelled by them that kept it. After this they spread abroad ouer all the countrie, exercising their accustomed trade of destroyeng all before them with fire and sword. The men of [Sidenote: Pentho.] Summersetshire fought with them at Pentho, but the Danes got the vpper hand.

Thus the state of the realme in those daies was verie miserable, for there wanted worthie chieftains to rule the people, and to chastise them when they did amisse. There was no trust in the noble men, for euerie one impugned others dooing, and yet would not devise which [Sidenote: Disagreement with councillors what fruit it bringeth.] way to deale with better likelihood. When they assembled in councell, and should haue occupied their heads in deuising remedies for the mischief of the common wealth, they turned their purpose vnto altercation, about such strifes, contentions and quarels as each one against other, and suffered the generall case to lie still in the dust. And if at anie time there was anie good conclusion agreed vpon, for the withstanding of the enimie, & releefe of the common wealth, anon should the enimie be aduertised thereof by such as were of aliance or consanguinitie to them. For (as Caxton, Polychr. and others say) the English blood was so mixed with that of the Danes and Britains, who were like enemies to the Englishmen, that there was almost few of the nobilitie and commons, which had not on the one side a parent of some of them.

Whereby it came to passe, that neither the secret purposes of the king could be concealed till they might take due effect; neither their assemblies proue quiet without quarelling and taking of parts. Manie also being sent forth with their powers one way (whilest the king went to make resistance another) did reuolt to his enemies, and turned their swords against him (as you haue heard of Elfrike and his complices, and shall read of manie others) so that it was no maruell that Egelred sped no better, and yet was he as valiant as anie of his predecessors, although the moonks fauour him not in their writings, because he demanded aid of them toward his warres, and was nothing fauorable to their lewd hypocrisie. But what is a king if his subiects be not loiall? What is a realme, if the common wealth be diuided? By peace & concord, of small beginnings great and famous kingdomes haue oft times proceeded; whereas by discord the greatest kingdoms haue oftner bene brought to ruine. And so it proued here, for whilest priuat quarels are pursued, the generall affaires are vtterlie neglected: and whilest ech nation seeketh to preferre hir owne aliance, the lland it selfe is like to become a desert.

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But to proceed with our monasticall writers: certes they lay all the fault in the king, saing that he was a man giuen to no good exercise, he delighted in fleshlie lustes and riotous bankettings and still sought waies how to gather of his subiects what might be got, as well [Sidenote: The misgouernement of the king.] by vnlawfull meanes as otherwise. For he would for feined or for verie small & light causes disherit his natieue subiects, and cause [Sidenote: Sicknesse vexeth the people.] them to redeeme their owne possessions for great summes of monie. Besides these oppressions, diuers kinds of sicknesses vexed the people also, as the bloodie flix, and hot burning agues which then raged through the land, so that manie died thereof. By such manner of meanes [Sidenote: Treason in the nobilitie.] therefore, what through the misgouernance of the king, the treason and disloialtie of the nobilitie, the lacke of good order and due correction amongst the people, and by such other scourges and mishaps as afflicted the English nation in that season, the land was brought into great ruine, so that, where by strength the enimie could not be kept off, there was now no hope but to appease them with monie. By [Sidenote: The inhancing of the tribute paid to the Danes.] reason hereof from time of the first agreement with the Danes for 10 thousand pounds tribute, it was inhanced to 16000 pounds, (as you haue heard) & after that to 20000 pounds, then to 24000 pounds, & so to 30000 pounds, & lastlie to 40000 pounds, till at length the relme was emptied in maner of all that monie and coine that could be found [Sidenote: The death of queene Elgina.] in it. In this meane time died Elgina or Ethelgina the queene. [Sidenote: Emma. *Hen. Hunt.*] Shortlie after it was deuised that the king should be a suter vnto Richard duke of Normandie, for his sister Emma, a ladie of such excellent beautie, that she was named the floure of Normandie. This sute was begun and tooke such good successe, that the king [Sidenote: 1002. Emma daughter of R. duke of Normandie married to K. Edgar.] obtained his purpose. And so in the yeare of our Lord 1002, which was about the 24 yeare of king Egelreds reigne, he married the said Emma with great solemnitie.

This mariage was thought to be right necessarie, honorable, and profitable for the realme of England, because of the great puissance of the Norman princes in those daies: but as things afterward came to passe, it turned to the subuersion of the whole English state: for by such affinitie and dealing as happened hereby betwixt the Normans and Englishmen, occasion in the end was ministred to the same Normans to pretend a title to the crowne of England, in prosecuting of which title, they obtained and made the whole conquest of the land, as after shall appeare. Egelred being greatlie aduanced (as he thought) by reason of his mariage, deuised vpon presumption thereof, to cause all the Danes within the land to be murdered in one

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day. Herevpon he sent priuie commissioners to all cities, burrowes and townes within his dominions, commanding the rulers and officers in the same, to kill all such Danes as remained within their liberties, at a certeine day prefixed, being saint Brices day, in the yeare 1012, and in the 34 [Sidenote: 1012. The 18 of Nouember. The murder of the Danes.] yeare of king Egelreds reigne. Herevpon (as sundrie writers agree) in one day & houre this murther began, and was according to the commission and iniunction executed. But where it first began, the same is vncerteine: some say at Wellowin in Herefordshire, some at a [Sidenote: Hownhill, or Houndhill, a place within Merchington parish beside the forest of Needwood, somewhat more than two miles from Vtoxcester.] place in Staffordshire called Hownhill, & others in other places, but whersoever it began, the dooers repented it after.

[Sidenote: The miserable state of this realme vnder the thraldome of the Danes.] But now yer we proceed anie further, we will shew what rule the Danes kept here in this realme before they were thus murdered, as in some bookes we find recorded. Whereas it is shewed that the Danes compelled the husbandmen to til the ground & doo all maner of labour and toile to be doone about husbandrie: the Danes liued vpon the fruit and gaines that came thereof, and kept the husbandmens wiues, their daughters, maids and seruants, vsing and abusing them at their pleasures. And when the husbandmen came home, then could they scarce haue such sustenance of meats and drinckes as fell for seruants to haue: so that the Danes had all their commandements, eating and drinking of the best, where the sillie man that was the owner, could hardlie come to his fill of the worst. Besides this, the common people were so oppressed by the Danes, that for feare and dread they called [Sidenote: *Hector Boet.*] them in euerie such house where anie of them sojourned, Lord Dane. And if an Englishman and a Dane chanced to meet at anie bridge or streight passage, the Englishman must staie till the Lord Dane were passed. But in processe of time, after the Danes were voided the land, this word Lord Dane was in derision and despight of the Danes turned [Sidenote: Lordane whereof the word came.] by Englishmen into a name of reproch, as Lordane, which till these our daies is not forgotten. For when the people in manie parts of this realme will note and signifie anie great idle lubber that will not labour nor take paine for his liuing, they will call him Lordane. Thus did the Danes vse the Englishmen in most vile manner, and kept them in such seruile thraldome as cannot be sufficientlie vttered.

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A fresh power of Danes inuade England to reuenge the slaughter of their countrimen that inhabited this Ile, the west parts betraied into their hands by the conspiracie of a Norman that was in gouernement, earle Edrike feined himselfe sicke when king Egelred sent vnto him to leuie a power against the Danes, and betraieth his people to the enimies; Sweine king of Denmarke arriueth on the coast of Northfolke, and maketh pitifull spoile by fire and sword; the truce taken betweene him and Vikillus is violated, and what reuengement followeth; king Sweine forced by famine returneth into his owne countrie, he arriueth againe at Sandwich, why king Egelred was vnable to preuaile against him, the Danes ouerrun all places where they come and make cruell waste, king Egelred paieth him great summes of monie for peace; the mischiefes that light vpon a land by placing a traitorous stranger in gouernement, how manie acres a hide of land conteineth, Egelreds order taken for ships and armour, why his great fleet did him little pleasure; a fresh host of Danes vnder three capteines arriue at Sandwich, the citizens of Canturburie for monie purchase safetie, the faithlesse dealing of Edrike against king Egelred for the enimies aduantage, what places the Danes ouerran and wasted.

THE FOURTH CHAPTER.

Vpon knowledge giuen into Denmarke of the cruell murder of the Danes here in England, truth it is, that the people of the countrie were greatlie kindled in malice, and set in such a furious rage against [Sidenote: *Hen. Hunt. Simon Dun.* The Danes returne to inuade England.] the Englishmen, that with all speed they made foorth a nauie full fraught with men of warre, the which in the yeare following came [Sidenote: Excester taken. 1002.] swarming about the coasts of England, and landing in the west countrie, tooke the citie of Excester, and gat there a rich [Sidenote: Hugh a Norman conspireth with the Danes.] spoile. One Hugh a Norman borne, whome queene Emma had placed in those parties as gouernour or shirife there, conspired with the Danes, so that all the countrie was ouerrun and wasted.

The king hearing that the Danes were thus landed, and spoiled the west parts of the realme, he sent vnto Edricus to assemble a power to withstand the enimies. Herevpon the people of Hampshire and Wiltshire rose and got together: but when the armies should ioine, earle [Sidenote: The counterfait sicknesse of duke Edrike.] Edricus surnamed de Streona feigned himselfe sicke, and so betraied his people, of whome he had the conduct: for they perceiuing the want [Sidenote: Wilton spoiled.] in their leader, were discouraged, and so fled. The Danes followed them vnto Wilton, which towne they rifled and ouercome. From thence they went to Salisburie, and so taking their pleasure there, returned [Sidenote: *Simon Dun.*] to their ships, because (as some write) they were aduertised that [Sidenote: 1004.] the king was comming towards them with an huge armie.

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In the yeare next insuing, that is to saie 1004, which was about the 24 yeare [Sidenote: Swein king of Denmarke.] of K. Egelreds reigne, Sweine or Swanus, king of Denmarke, with a mightie nauie of ships came on the coast of Northfolke, and there [Sidenote: Norwich taken by the Danes.] landing with his people, made toward Norwich, and comming thither tooke that citie, and spoiled it. Then went he vnto Thetford, and [Sidenote: Thetford burnt.] when he had taken and rifled that towne, he burnt it, notwithstanding [Sidenote: Vikillus or Wilfeketell gouernour of Norffolke.] a truce taken by Vikillus or Wilfketell gouernor of those parties with the same king Swaine after the taking of Norwich. In reuenge therefore of such breach of truce, the same Vikillus, or Wilfeketell, with such power as he could raise, assaulted the host of Danes as they returned to their ships, and slue a great number of them, but was not able to mainteine the fight, for his enimies ouermatched him in number of men. And so he was constrained in the end to giue backe: and [Sidenote: *Hen. Hunt.*] the enimies kept on their waies to their ships.

[Sidenote: 1005. Swaine returned into Denmarke. *Simon Dun.*] In the yeare following king Swaine returned into Denmarke with all his fleet, partlie constrained so to doo (as some write) by reason of the great famin & want of necessarie sustenance, which in that [Sidenote: 1006. *Hen. Hunt.* Swaine returned into England.] yeare sore oppressed this land. In the yeare of our Lord 1006, king Swaine returned againe into England with a mightie & huge nauie, arriuing at Sandwich, and spoiled all the countrie neere vnto the sea side. King Egelred raised all his power against him, and all the haruest time laie abroad in the field to resist the Danes, which according to their woonted maner spared not to exercise their vnmercifull crueltie, in wasting and spoiling the land with fire and sword, pilfering and taking of preies in euerie part where they came. Neither could king Egelred remedie the matter, because the enimies still conueied themselues with their ships into some contrarie quarter, from the place where they knew him to be, so that his trauell was in vaine.

[Sidenote: The Danes winter in the Ile of Wight. They inuade Hampshire, Barkeshire, &c.] About the beginning of winter they remained in the Ile of Wight, & in the time of Christmasse they landed in Hampshire, and passing through that countrie into Barkeshire, they came to Reading, and from thence to Wallingford, and so to Coleseie, and then approching to Essington, came to Achikelmeslawe, and in euerie place wheresoeuer they came, they made cleane worke. For that which they could not carie with them, they consumed with fire, burning vp their innes and sleaing their hoasts. In returning backe, the people of the west countrie gaue them battell, but preuailed not, so that they did but enrich their [Sidenote: Winchester.] enimies with the spoile of their bodies. They

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came by the gates of Winchester as it were in maner of triumph, with vittels and spoiles which they had fetched fiftie miles from the sea side. In the [Sidenote: 1007.] meane time king Egelred lay about Shrewsburie sore troubled with the newes hereof, and in the yeare next insuing, by the aduise of his counsell he gaue to king Swaine for the redeeming of peace 30000 [Sidenote: 36000 pound saith *Si. Dun.*] pounds.

[Sidenote: Edrike de Streona made duke or earle of Mercia.] In the same yeare K. Egelred created the traitor Edrike earle of Mercia, who although he had married Edgiua the kings daughter, was yet noted to be one of those which disclosed the secrets of the realme, and the determinations of the counsell vnto the enimies. But he was such a craftie dissembler, so greatlie prouided of sleight to dissemble and cloake his falshood, that the king being too much abused by him, had him in singular fauour, whereas he vpon a malicious purpose studied dailie how to bring the realme into vtter destruction, aduertising the enimies from time to time how the state of things stood, whereby they came to knowlege when they should giue place, [Sidenote: *Wil. Malm.*] and when they might safelie come forward. Moreouer, being sent vnto them oftentimes as a commissioner to treat for peace, he persuaded them to warre. But such was the pleasure of God, to haue him and such other of like sort aduanced to honor in this season, when by his diuine prouidence he meant to punish the people of this realme for their wickednesse and sinnes, whereby they had iustlie prouoked his wrath and high displeasure.

[Sidenote: *Henr. Hunt. Simon Dun.* An hundred acres is an hide of land.] In the 30 yeare of king Egelreds reigne, which fell in the yeare of our Lord 1008, he tooke order that of euerie three hundred and ten hides of land within this realme, there should one ship be builded, and of euerie eight hides a complet armor furnished. In the yeare [Sidenote: 1008] following, the kings whole fleet was brought together at Sandwich, and such souldiers came thither as were appointed to go to sea in the same fleet. There had not beene seene the like number of ships [Sidenote: Provision for ships and armour] so trimlie rigged and furnished in all points, in anie kings daies before. But no great profitable peece of seruice was wrought by them: for the king had about that time banished a noble yoong man of [Sidenote: *Matt. West.*] Sussex called Wilnot, who getting together twentie sailes, laie vpon the coasts taking prizes where he could get them. Brithrike the brother of earle Edrike, being desirous to win honor, tooke forth foure score of the said ships, and promised to bring in the enimie dead or aliue. But as he was sailing forward on the seas, a sore tempest with an outrageous wind rose with such violence, that his ships were cast vpon the shore: and Wilnot comming vpon them, set them on fire, and so burned them euerie one. The residue of the ships, when newes came to them of this mishap, returned backe to London; and then was the armie dispersed, and so all the cost and trauell of the Englishmen proued in vaine.

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[Sidenote: Danes land at Sandwich. 1009.] After this, in the haruest time a new armie of Danes, vnder the conduct of three capteines, Turkill, Henning, and Aulafe landed at Sandwich, and from thence passed forth to Canturburie, and had taken the citie but that the citizens gaue them a 1000 pounds to depart from [Sidenote: 3000 pound saith *Sim. Dun.*] thence, and to leaue the countrie in peace. Then went the Danes to [Sidenote: Sussex and Hampshire spoiled.] the Ile of Wight, and afterwards landed and spoiled the countrie of Sussex and Hampshire. King Egelred assembled the whole power of all his subiects, and comming to giue them battell, had made an end of their cruell harieng the countrie with the slaughter of them all, if earle Edrike with forged tales (deuised onelie to put him in feare) had not dissuaded him from giuing battell. The Danes by that [Sidenote: The Danes returne into Kent.] meanes returning in safetie, immediatlie after the feast of saint Martine, returned into Kent, and lodged with their nauie in the winter following in the Thames, and oftentimes assaulting the citie of London, were still beaten backe to their losse.

[Sidenote: 1010. Oxford burnt.] After the feast of Christmasse they passed through the countrie and woods of Chilterne vnto Oxford, which towne they burned, and then returning backe they fell to wasting of the countrie on both sides the Thames. But hearing that an armie was assembled at London to giue them battell; that part of their host which kept on the northside of the [Sidenote: Stanes.] riuer, passed the same riuer at Stanes, and so ioining with their fellowes marched foorth through Southerie, and comming backe to their ships in Kent, fell in hand to repare & amend their ships that were in anie wise decaied. Then after Easter, the Danes sailing about the [Sidenote: Gipswich in Suffolke. *Simon Dun.*] coast, arriued at Gipswich in Suffolke, on the Ascension day of our Lord: and inuading the countrie, gaue battell at a place called Wigmere or Rigmere, vnto Vikill or Wilfeketell leader of the English host in those parties, on the fift of Maie. The men of Northfolke and Suffolke fled at the first onset giuen: but the Cambridgeshire men sticked to it valiantlie, winning thereby perpetuall fame and commendation. There was no mindfulnessse amongst them of running awaie, so that a great number of the nobilitie and other were beaten [Sidenote: Capat formicae.] downe and slaine, till at length one Turketell Mireneheued, that had a Dane to his father, first began to take his flight, and deserued thereby an euerlasting reproch.

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The Danes obtaining the vpper hand, for the space of three moneths together went vp and downe the countries, & wasted those parties of the realme, that is to say, Northfolke, and Suffolke, with the borders of Lincolnshire, Huntingtounshire, and Cambridgeshire where the fens are, gaining exceeding riches by the spoile of great and wealthie [Sidenote: Thetford. Cambridge. *Hen. Hunt.*] abbies and churches which had their situation within the compasse of the same fens. They also destroyed Thetford, and burnt Cambridge, and from thence passed through the pleasant mountaine-countrie of Belsham, cruellie murdering the people without respect of age, degree [Sidenote: The Danes arrive in the Thames. 1011.] or sex. After this also they entred into Essex. and so came backe to their ships, which were then arriued in the Thames. But they rested not anie long time in quiet, as people that minded nothing but the destruction of this realme. So as soone after, when they had somewhat refreshed them, they set forward againe into the countrie, passing through Buckinghamshire, & so into Bedfordshire. And about saint [Sidenote: Northampton burnt by Danes.] Andrewes tide they turned towards Northampton, & comming thither set fire on that towne. Then turning through the west countrie, with fire & sword they wasted and destroyed a great part thereof, & namelie Wiltshire, with other parties. And finallie about the feast of Christmas they came againe to their ships. Thus had the Danes [Sidenote: How manie shires the Danes wasted.] wasted the most part of 16 or 17 shires within this realme, as Northfolke, Suffolke, Cambridgeshire, Essex, Middlesex, Hartfordshire, Oxfordshire, Buckinghamshire, and Bedfordshire, with a part of Huntingtounshire, and also a great portion of Northamptonshire. This was doone in the countries that lie on the northside of the riuer of Thames. On the southside of the same riuer, they spoiled and wasted Kent, Southerie, Sussex, Barkeshire, Hampshire, and (as is before said) a great part of Wiltshire.

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King Egelred offereth the Danes great summes of moneie to desist from destroyeng his countrie, their unspeakable crueltie, bloudthirstinesse, and insatiable spoiling of Canturburie betrayed by a churchman; their merciles murdering of Elphegus archbishop of Canturburie, Turkillus the Dane chiefe lord of Norfolke and Suffolke, a peace concluded betweene the Danes and the English vpon hard conditions; Gunthildis a beautifull Danish ladie and hir husband slaine, hir courage to the death.

THE FIFT CHAPTER.

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[Sidenote: The king sendeth to the Danes. *Simon Dun.*] The king and the peerres of the realme, vnderstanding of the Danes dealing in such merciles maner (as is aboue mentioned) but not knowing how to redresse the matter, sent ambassadors vnto the Danes, offering them great summes of moneie to leaue off such cruell wasting and spoiling of the land. The Danes were contented to reteine the moneie, but yet could not absteine from their cruell dooings, neither was their greedie thirst of bloud and spoile satisfied with the wasting and destroieng of so manie countries and places as they had passed [Sidenote: 1011.] through. Wherevpon, in the yeere of our Lord 1011, about the feast of S. Matthew in September, they laid siege to the cite of Canturburie, which of the citizens was valiantlie defended by the space of twentie daies. In the end of which terme it was taken by the enimies, [Sidenote: Canturburie wonne by Danes.] through the treason of a deacon named Almaricus, whome the archbishop Elphegus had before that time preserued from death. The Danes exercised passing great crueltie in the winning of that cite (as by sundrie authors it dooth and maie appeere.) For they slue of men, [Sidenote: *Fabian ex Antonino.*] women, and children, aboue the number of eight thousand. They tooke [Sidenote: The archbishop Elphegus taken. *Hen. Hunt.*] the archbishop Elphegus with an other bishop named Godwine; also abbat Lefwin and Alseword the kings bailife there. They spared no degree, in somuch that they slue and tooke 900 priests, and other men of religion. And when they had taken their pleasure of the cite, they [Sidenote: *Antoninus. Vincentius. Wil. Lamb. ex Asserio Meneuensi, & alijs.*] set it on fire, and so returned to their ships. There be some which write that they tithed the people after an inuerted order, slaieng all by nines through the whole multitude, and reserued the tenth: so that of all the moonks there were but foure saued, and of the laie people 4800, whereby it followeth that there died 43200 persons. Whereby is gathered that the cite of Canturburie, and the countrie thereabouts (the people whereof belike fled thither for succor) was at that time verie well inhabited, so as there haue not wanted (saith maister Lambert) which affirme that it had then more people than London it selfe.

[Sidenote: 1112. *Henr. Hunt.*] But now to our purpose. In the yeere next insuing, vpon the Saturday in Easter weeke, after that the bishop Elphegus had beene kept prisoner with them the space of six or seuen moneths, they cruellie in a rage led him forth into the fields, and dashed out his [Sidenote: The archbishop Elphegus murthered.] braines with stones, bicause he would not redeeme his libertie with three thousand pounds, which they demanded to haue beene leuiod of his farmers and tenants. This cruell murther was committed at Greenewich foure miles distant from London, the 19 of Aprill, where

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he lay a [Sidenote: Miracles.] certeine time vnburied, but at length through miracles shewed (as [Sidenote: Elphegus buried in London.] they say, for miracles are all wrought now by dead men, and not by the liuing) the Danes permitted that his bodie might be caried to London, and there was it buried in the church of S. Paule, where it rested for the space of ten yeeres, till king Cnute or Knought had the [Sidenote: Translated to Canturburie.] gouernment of this land, by whose appointment it was remooued to Canturburie.

[Sidenote: *Wil. Malms.* Turkillus held Norffolk and Suffolke.] Turkillus the leader of those Danes by whome the archbishop Elphegus was thus murthered, held Northfolke and Suffolke vnder his subiection, & so continued in those parties as chiefe lord and gouernor. But the residue of the Danes at length, compounding with [Sidenote: 48 thousand pound as saith *Sim. Dun.* and *M. West. Henr. Hunt.*] the Englishmen for a tribute to be paid to them of eight thousand pounds, spred abroad in the countrie, soiorning in cities, townes and villages, where they might find most conuenient harbour. Moreouer, fortie of their ships, or rather (as some write) 45 were reteined to serue the king, promising to defend the realme; with condition, that the souldiers and mariners should haue prouision of meate and drinke, with apparell found them at the kings charges. As one autor hath gathered, Swaine king of Denmarke was in England at the concluding of this peace, which being confirmed with solemne othes and sufficient hostages, he departed into Denmarke.

[Sidenote: *Matth. West.*] The same author bringeth the generall slaughter of Danes vpon S. Brices day, to haue chanced in the yeere after the conclusion of this agreement, that is to say, in the yeere 1012, at what time [Sidenote: Gunthildis the sister of K. Swaine murthered.] Gunthildis the sister of king Swaine was slaine, with hir husband & hir sonne, by the commandement of the false traitor Edrike. But bicause all other authors agree that the murther of Danes was executed about ten yeeres before this supposed time: we haue made rehearsall thereof in that place. Howbeit, for the death of Gunthildis, it maie be, that she became hostage either in the yeere 1007, at what time king Egelred paid thirtie thousand pounds vnto king Swaine to haue peace (as before you haue heard) or else might she be deliuered in hostage, in the yeere 1011, when the last agreement was made with the Danes (as aboue is mentioned.) But when or at what time soeuer she became hostage, this we find of hir, that she came hither into England with hir husband Palingus, a mightie earle, and receiued baptisme [Sidenote: *Wil. Malm.*] heere. Wherevpon she earnestlie trauelled in treatie of a peace betwixt hir brother and king Egelred: which being brought to passe chieflie by hir sute, she was contented to become an hostage for performance thereof (as before is recited.) And after by the commandement of earle Edrike she was put to death, pronouncing that the shedding of hir bloud would cause all England one day sore to rue. She was a verie beautifull ladie, and tooke hir death without all feare, not once changing countenance,

though she saw hir husband and hir onelie sonne (a yoong gentleman of much towardnesse) first murthered before hir face.

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Turkillus the Danish capteine telleth king Swaine the faults of the king, nobles, & commons of this realme, he inuadeth England, the Northumbers and others submit themselves to him, Danes receiued into seruice vnder Egelred, London assalted by Swaine, the citizens behaue themselves stoutlie, and giue the Danish host a shamefull repulse, Ethelmere earle of Deuonshire and his people submit themselves to Swaine, he returneth into Denmarke, commeth back againe into England with a fresh power, is incountred withhall of the Englishmen, whose king Egelred is discomfited, his oration to his souldiers touching the present reliefe of their distressed land, their resolution and full purpose in this their perplexitie, king Egelred is minded to giue place to Swaine, he sendeth his wife and children ouer into Normandie, the Londoners yeeld vp their state to Swaine, Egelred saileth oner into Normandie, leauing his land to the enimie.

THE SIXT CHAPTER.

[Sidenote: Turkillus discloseth the secrets of the Realme to K. Swaine.] Now had Turkillus in the meanetime aduertised king Swaine in what state things stood here within the realme: how king Egelred was negligent, onlie attending to the lusts & pleasures of the flesh: how the noble men were vnfaithfull, and the commons weake and feeble [Sidenote: *Simon Dun.*] through want of good and trustie leaders. Howbeit, some write, that Turkillus as well as other of the Danes which remained heere in England, was in league with king Egelred, in somuch that he was with him in London, to helpe and defend the citie against Swaine when he came to assalt it (as after shall appeere.) Which if it be true, a doubt may rise whether Swaine receiued anie aduertisement from Turkillus to mooue him the rather to inuade the realme: but such aduertisements might come from him before that he was accorded with Egelred.

[Sidenote: Swaine prepareth an armie to inuade England.] Swaine therefore as a valiant prince, desirous both to reuenge his sisters death, and win honor, prepared an huge armie, and a great number of ships, with the which he made towards England, and first [Sidenote: He landeth at Sandwich. 1013.] comming to Sandwich, taried there a small while, and taking eftsoones the sea, compassed about the coasts of Eastangles, and arriuing in the [Sidenote: Gainsborough.] mouth of Humber, sailed vp the water, and entering into the riuer of Trent, he landed at Gainesborough, purposing to inuade the Northumbers. But as men brought into great feare, for that they had beene subiect to the Danes in times past, and thinking therefore not to reuolt to the enimie, but rather to their old acquaintance, if [Sidenote: The Northumbers yeeld to Swaine.] they should submit themselves to the Danes, streightwaies offered to become subiect vnto Swaine, together with their duke named Wighthred. [Sidenote: The people of Lindsey yeeld themselves to him.] Also

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the people of Lindsey and all those of the northside of Watlingstreet yeelded themselves vnto him, and delivered pledges. Then he appointed his sonne Cnutus to haue the keeping of those pledges, [Sidenote: *Simon Dun.*] and to remaine vpon the safegard of his ships, whiles he himselfe [Sidenote: *South Mercia.*] passed forward into the countrie. Then marched he forward to subdue them of south Mercia: and so came to Oxford & to Winchester, making the countries subiect to him throughout wheresoeuer he came.

With this prosperous successe Swaine being greatlie encouraged, prepared to go vnto London, where king Egelred as then remained, hauing with him Turkillus the Dane, which was reteined in wages [Sidenote: *Sim. Dunel.*] with other of the Danes (as by report of some authors it maie appeare) and were now readie to defend the citie against their countriemen in support of king Egelred, together with the citizens. Swaine, bicause he would not step so farre out of the way as to go to the next bridge, lost a great number of his men as he passed through the Thames. At [Sidenote: *Swaine assaulteth London.*] his comming to London, he began to assault the citie verie fiercelie, in hope either to put his enimie in such feare that he should despaire of all reliefe and comfort, or at the least trie what he was able to doo. The Londoners on the other part, although they were brought in some feare by this sudden attempt of the enimies, yet considering with themselues, that the hazard of all the whole state of the realme was annexed to theirs, sith their citie was the chiefe and [Sidenote: *Polydor.*] metropolitane of all the kingdome, they valiantlie stood in defense of themselues, and of their king that was present there with them, beating backe the enimies, chasing them from the walles, and otherwise dooing their best to keepe them off. At length, although the Danes did most valiantlie assault the citie, yet the Englishmen to defend their prince from all iniurie of enimies, did not shrink, but boldlie sallied foorth at the gates in heapes together, and incountered with their aduersaries, and began to fight with them verie fiercelie.

Swaine whilest he went about to keepe his men in order, as one most desirous to reteine the victorie now almost gotten, was compassed so about with the Londoners on each side, that after he had lost a great number of his men, he was constrained for his safegard to breake out through the midst of his enimies weapons, and was glad that he might [Sidenote: *Wil. Malm.*] so escape: and so with the residue of his armie ceased not to iourne day and night till he came to Bath, where Ethelmere an [Sidenote: *Erle of Deuonshire as saith Matt. West.*] earle of great power in those west parts of the realme submitted [Sidenote: *Polydor.*] himselfe with all his people vnto him, who shortlie after neuerthelesse (as some write) was compelled through want of vittels to release the tribute latelie couenanted to be paied vnto him for a [Sidenote: *Swaine returneth into Denmarke.*] certeine summe of monie, which when hee had receiued, he returned into Denmarke, meaning shortlie to returne againe with a greater power.

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King Egelred supposed that by the paiment of that monie he should haue beene rid out of all troubles, of warre with the Danes. But the nobles of the realme thought otherwise, and therefore willed him to [Sidenote: Swaine returneth into England to make warre.] prepare an armie with all speed that might be made. Swaine taried not long (to proue the doubt of the noble men to be grounde of foreknowledge) but that with swift speed he returned againe into England, and immediatlie vpon his arriual was an armie of Englishmen assembled and led against him into the field. Herevpon they ioined [Sidenote: King Egelred discomfited in battell.] in battell, which was sore foughten for a time, till at length by reason of diuerse Englishmen that turned to the enimies side, the discomfiture fell with such slaughter vpon the English host, that king Egelred well perceiued the state of his regall gouernement to bee brought into vtter danger. Wherevpon after the losse of this field, he assembled the rest of his people that were escaped, and spake vnto them after this manner.

The oration of king Egelred to the remanent of his souldiers.

“I shuld for euer be put to silence, if there wanted in vs the vertue of a fatherlie mind, in giuing good aduise & counsel for the well ordering and due administration of things in the common wealth, or if there lacked courage or might in our souldiers and men of warre to defend our countrie. Trulie to die in defense of the countrie where we are borne, I confesse it a woorthie thing, and I for my part am readie to take vpon me to enter into the midst of the enimies in defense of my kingdome. But here I see our countrie and the whole English nation to be at a point to fall into vtter ruine. We are ouercome of the Danes, not with weapon or force of armes; but with treason wrought by our owne people: we did at the first prepare a nauie against the enimies, the which that false traitour Elfrike betraid into their hands. Againe, oftentimes haue we giuen battell with euill successe, and onelie through the fault of our owne people that haue beene false and disloiall: whereby we haue bin constrained to agree with the enimies vpon dishonorable conditions, euen as necessitie required, which to ouercome, resteth onelie in God. Such kind of agreement hath beene made in deed to our destruction, sith the enimies haue not sticked to breake it (they being such a wicked kind of people as neither regard God nor man) contrarie to right and reason, and beside all our hope & expectation. So that the matter is come now to this passe, that we haue not cause onlie to feare the losse of our gouernement, but least the name of the whole English nation be destroied for euer. Therefore sithens the enimies are at hand, and as it were ouer our heads, you to whom my commandement hath euer bene had in good regard, prouide, take counsell, and see to succor the state of your countrie now readie to decay and to fall into irrecoverable ruine.”

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Herevpon they fell in consultation, euerie one alledging and bringing forth his opinion as seemed to him best: but it appeared they had the woofe by the eare, for they wist not which way to turne them. If they should giue battell, it was to be doubted least through treason among themselues, the armie should be betraied into the enimies hands, the which would not faile to execute all kind of crueltie in the slaughter of the whole nation. And if they stood not valiantlie to shew themselues readie to defend their countrie, there was no shift but yeeld themselues. Which though it were a thing reprochfull and dishonorable, yet should it be lesse euill, as they tooke the matter, for thereby might manie be preserued from death, and in time to come, be able to recouer the libertie of their countrie, when occasion should be offered. This point was allowed of them all, and so in the end they rested vpon that resolution.

[Sidenote: King Egelred determineth to give place vnto Swaine.] King Egelred therefore determined to commit himselfe into the hands of his brother in law Richard duke of Normandie, whose sister (as ye haue heard) he had married. But bicause he would not doo [Sidenote: He sendeth his wife and sonnes ouer into Normandie.] this vnaduisedlie, first he sent ouer his wife queene Emma, with his sonnes which he had begotten of hir, Alfred and Edward, that by their [Sidenote: Richard duke of Normandie.] interteinment he might vnderstand how he should be welcome. Duke Richard receiued his sister and his nephues verie ioifullie, and promised to aid his brother king Egelred in defense of his kingdome. But in this meane while had Swaine conquered the more part of all England, and brought (by little and little) that which remained vnder his subiection. The people through feare submitting themselues [Sidenote: *Simon Dun. Hen. Hunt. Turkill. 1014.*] on each hand, king Egelred in this meane time (for the Londoners had submitted themselues to Swaine) was first withdrawne vnto Greenwich, and there remained for a time with the nauie of the Danes, which was vnder the gouernement of earle Turkill, and from thence sailed into the Ile of Wight, and there remained a great part of the winter, [Sidenote: King Egelred passeth into Normandie.] and finallie after Christmas himselfe sailed into Normandie, and was of his brother in law ioifullie receiued & greatlie comforted in that his time of necessitie.

* * * * *

Swaine king of Denmarke is reputed king of this land, he oppreseth the English people cruellie, and spoileth religious houses, the strange and miraculous slaughter of Swaine vaunting of his victories; the Danish chronicles write parciallie of him and his end, Cnute succeedeth his father Swaine in regiment, the Englishmen send king Egelred woord of Swaines death, Edward king Egelreds eldest sonne commeth ouer into England to know the state of the countrie and people

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of certeintie; Egelred with his power returneth into England; what meanes Cnute made to establish himselfe king of this land, and to be well thought of among the English people, Egelred burneth vp Gainesbrough, and killeth the inhabitants therof for their disloialtie; Cnutes flight to Sandwich, his cruel decree against the English pledges, he returneth into Denmarke, why Turkillus the Danish capteine with his power compounded with the Englishmen to tarrie in this land, his faithlesse seruice to Egelred, his drift to make the whole realme subiect to the Danish thraldome.

THE SEUENTH CHAPTER.

Swaine hauing now got the whole rule of the land, was reputed full king, and so commanded that his armie should be prouided of wages and vittels to be taken vp & leuied through the realme. In like maner Turkill commanded that to his armie lodged at Greenewich, wages and vittels sufficient should be deliuered, for the finding, releeuing, [Sidenote: Swaine handleth the Englishmen hardlie.] succouring, and sustaining thereof. Swaine vsed the victorie verie cruellie against the Englishmen, oppressing them on each hand; to the intent that them being brought low he might gouerne in more suertie. The yeere in which he obtained the rule thus of this realme, and that king Egelred was constrained to flie into Normandie, was in the 35 yeere of the same Egelred his reigne, and after the birth of our Lord 1014. Swaine being once established in the gouernment, did not onelie vse much crueltie in oppressing the laitie, but also stretched foorth his hand to the church, and to the ministers in the same, fleecing them and spoiling both churches and ministers, without anie remorse of conscience, insomuch that hauing a quarell against the inhabitants within the precinct of S. Edmunds land in Suffolke, he did not onelie harrie the countrie, but also rifled and spoiled the abbeie of Burie, where the bodie of saint Edmund rested.

[Sidenote: *Fabian*. S. Edmund fighteth for the wealth, but not for the slaughter of his people. *Simon Dun*. 1015.] Wherevpon shortlie after, as he was at Gainesbrough or Thetford (as some say) and there in his iollitie talked with his Nobles of his good successe in conquering of this land, he was suddenlie stricken with a knife, as it is reported, miraculously, for no man wist how or by whome: and within three daies after, to wit, on the third of Februarie he ended his life with grievous paine and torment in yelling and roring, by reason of his extreame anguish beyond all measure. There hath sproong a pleasant tale among the posteritie of that age, how he should be wounded with the same knife which king Edmund in his life [Sidenote: *Albertus Crantz*. *Saxo Grammaticus*.] time vsed to weare. Thus haue some of our writers reported, but the Danish chronicles report a farre more happie end which should chance to this Swaine, than is before mentioned out of our writers: for the said chronicles report, that after he had subdued England, he tooke order with king Egelred, whome they name amisse Adelstane, that he should not ordeine any other successor, but onlie the said Swaine. Then after this, he returned into Denmarke, where vsing himselfe like a right godlie prince, at length he there ended his life, being a verie old man.

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Notwithstanding all this, when or howsoever he died, immediatlie [Sidenote: *Wil. Malmes. H. Hunt.* Canute or Cnute.] after his deceasse the Danes elected his sonne Cnute or Knought to succeed in his dominions. But the Englishmen of nothing more desirous than to shake off the yoke of Danish thraldome besides their necks & shoulders, streightwaies vpon knowledge had of Swaines death, with all [Sidenote: Eglred sent for home.] speed aduertised king Egelred thereof, and that they were readie to receiue and assist him if he would make hast to come ouer to deliuer his countrie out of the hands of strangers. These newes were right ioiful vnto Egelred, who burning in desire to be reuenged on them that had expelled him out of his kingdome, made no longer tariance to set [Sidenote: Edmund K. Egelreds eldest sonne.] that enterprise forward. But yet doubting the inconstancie of the people, he sent his elder son (named Edmund) to trie the minds of them, and to vnderstand whether they were constant or wauering in that which they had promised.

The yoong gentleman hasting ouer into England, and with diligent inquirie perceiuing how they were bent, returned with like speed as he came into Normandie againe, declaring to his father, that all things were in safetie if he would make hast. King Egelred then conceiued [Sidenote: King Egelred returneth into England.] an assured hope to recouer his kingdom, aided with his brother in laws power, and trusting vpon the assistance of the Englishmen, returned into England in the time of Lent. His returne was ioifull and most acceptable to the English people, as to those that abhorred the [Sidenote: Canutes endeuor to establish himselfe in the kingdome.] rule of the Danes, which was most sharpe and bitter to them, although Cnute did what he could by bountifulnesse and courteous dealings to haue reteined them vnder his obeisance.

And of an intent to procure Gods fauour in the well ordering of things for the administration in the common wealth, he sought first to appease his wrath, and also to make amends to saint Edmund for his fathers offense committed (as was thought) against him: insomuch [Sidenote: S. Edmunds ditch.] that after he had obtained the kingdome, he caused a great ditch to be cast round about the land of saint Edmund, and granted manie freedoms to the inhabitants, acquiting them of certeine taskes and paiments, vnto the which other of their neighbours were contributarie. He also builded a church on the place where saint Edmund was buried, and ordeined an house of moonks there, or rather remooued the canons or secular priests that were there afore, and put moonks in their roomes. He offered vp also his crowne vnto the same S. Edmund, and [Sidenote: *Polydor. Fabian.*] redeemed it againe with a great summe of monie, which maner of dooing grew into an vse vnto other kings that followed him. He adorned the church there with manie rich iewels, and indowed the monasterie with great possessions.

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But these things were not done now at the first, but after that he was established in the kingdome. For in the meane time, after that king Egelred was returned out of Normandie, Cnute as then sojourning at Gainesbrough, remained there till the feast of Easter, and made agreement with them of Lindsey, so that finding him horsse, they should altogether go forth to spoile their neighbors. King Egelred advertised thereof, sped him thither with a mightie host, and with great crueltie burned vp the countrie, and slue the more part of the [Sidenote: Canute driven to forsake the land.] inhabitants, because they had taken part with his enimies. Cnute as then was not of power able to resist Egelred, and therefore taking his ships which lay in Humber, fled from thence, & sailed about [Sidenote: He was driven thither by force of contrarie winds as should appeare by *Matth. West.*] the coast, till he came to Sandwich, and there sore grieved in his mind to remember what mischeefe was fallen and chanced to his friends and subiects of Lindsey, onelie for his cause; he commanded that such pledges as had beene deliuered to his father by certeine noble men of this realme, for assurance of their fidelities, should haue their noses slit, and their eares stuffed, or (as some write) their hands and noses cut off. [Sidenote: The cruell decree of Cnute against the English pledges. *Will. Malmes.*]

When this cruell act according to his commandement was doone, taking the sea, he sailed into Denmarke: but yet tooke not all the Danes with him which his father brought thither. For earle Turkill perceiuing the wealthinesse of the land, compounded with the Englishmen, and [Sidenote: This Turkill was retained in seruice with Egelred, as I thinke.] chose rather to remaine in a region replenished with all riches, than to returne home into his owne countrie that wanted such commodities as were here to be had. And yet (as some thought) he did not forsake his souereigne lord Cnute for anie euill meaning towards him, but rather to aid him (when time serued) to recouer the possession of England againe, as it afterwards well appeared. For notwithstanding that he was now retained by K. Egelred with fortie ships, and the flower of all the Danes that were men of warre, so that Cnute returned but with 60 ships into his countrie: yet shortlie after, erle Turkill with 9 of those ships sailed into Denmarke, submitted himselfe vnto Cnute, counselled him to returne into England, and promised him the assistance of the residue of those Danish ships which yet remained [Sidenote: *Encomium Emmae.*] in England, being to the number of thirtie, with all the souldiers and mariners that to them belonged. To conclude, he did so much by his earnest persuasions, that Cnute (through aid of his brother Harrold king of Denmarke) got together a nauie of two hundred ships, so roially decked, furnished, and appointed, both for braue shew and necessarie furniture of all maner of weapons, armor & munition,

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as it is strange to consider that which is written by them that liued in those daies, and tooke in hand to register the dooings of that time. Howbeit to let this pompe of Cnutes fleete passe, which (no doubt) was right roiall, consider a little and looke backe to Turkill, though a sworne seruant to king Egelred, how he did direct all his drift to the aduancement of Cnute, and his owne commoditie, cloking his purposed treacherie with pretended amitie, as shall appeare hereafter by his deadlie hostilitie.

* * * * *

A great waste by an inundation or inbreaking of the sea, a tribute of 30000 pounds to the Danes, king Egelred holdeth a councell at Oxford, where he causeth two noble men of the Danes to be murdered by treason, Edmund the kings eldest sonne marieth one of their wiues, and seizeth vpon his predecessors lands; Cnute the Danish king returneth into England, the Danish and English armies encounter, both susteine losse; Cnute maketh waste of certeine shires, Edmund preuenteth Edriks purposed treason, Edrike de Streona flieth to the Danes, the Westernemen yeeld to Cnute; Mercia refuseth to be subiect vnto him, Warwikeshire wasted by the Danes; Egelred assembleth an armie against them in vaine; Edmund & Vtred with ioined forces lay waste such countries and people as became subiect to Cnute; his policie to preuent their purpose, through what countries he passed, Vtred submitteth himselfe to Cnute, and deliuereth pledges, he is put to death and his lands alienated, Cnute pursueth Edmund to London, and prepareth to besiege the citie, the death and buriall of Egelred, his wiues, what issue he had by them, his unfortunatnesse, and to what affections and vices he was inclined, his too late and bootlesse seeking to releuee his decaied kingdome.

THE EIGHT CHAPTER.

But now to returne to our purpose, and to shew what chanced in England [Sidenote: 1015. *Matt. West. Simon Dun. Wil. Malm.*] after the departure of Cnute. In the same yeare to the forsaid accustomed mischiefes an vnwoonted misaduenture happened: for the sea rose with such high spring-tides, that ouerflowing the countries next adioining, diuers villages with the inhabitants were drowned and [Sidenote: *Matt. West.*] destroyed. Also to increase the peoples miserie, king Egelred commanded, that 30000 pounds should be leuied to paie the tribute due to the Danes which lay at Greenewich. This yeare also king Egelred [Sidenote: A councell at Oxford. Sigeferd and Morcad murdered.] held a councell at Oxford, at the which a great number of noble men were present, both Danes and Englishmen, and there did the king cause Sigeferd and Morcad two noble personages of the Danes to be murdered within his owne chamber, by the traitorous practise of Edrike de Streona, which accused them of some conspiracie. But the quarell was onelie as men supposed, for that the king had a desire to their goods and possessions.

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Their seruants tooke in hand to haue reuenged the death of their maisters, but were beaten backe, wherevpon they fled into the steeple of saint Friswids church, and kept the same, till fire was set vpon the place, and so they were burned to death. The wife of Sigeferd was taken, & sent to Malmsburie, being a woman of high fame and great worthinesse, wherevpon the kings eldest sonne named Edmund, tooke occasion vpon pretense of other businesse to go thither, and there to see hir, with whome he fell so far in loue, [Sidenote: Edmund the kings eldest sonne marrieth the widow of Sigeferd.] that he tooke and married hir. That doone, he required to haue hir husbands lands and possessions, which were an earles liuing, and lay in Northumberland. And when the king refused to graunt his request, he went thither, and seized the same possessions and lands into his hands, without hauing anie commission so to doo, finding the farmers and tenants there readie to receiue him for their lord.

[Sidenote: Cnute returneth into England.] Whilest these things were a dooing, Cnute hauing made his prouision of ships and men, with all necessarie furniture (as before ye haue heard) for his returne into England, set forward with full purpose, either to recouer the realme out of Egelreds hands, or to die [Sidenote: *Encomium Emmae.*] in the quarrell. Herevpon he landed at Sandwich, and first earle Turkill obtained licence to go against the Englishmen that were assembled to resist the Danes, and finding them at a place called Scorastan, he gaue them the ouerthrow, got a great bootie, and returned therewith to the ships. After this, Edrike gouernor of Norwaie made a rode likewise into an other part of the countrie, & with a rich spoile, and manie prisoners, returned vnto the nauie. After this iournie atchiued thus by Edrike, Cnute commanded that they should not waste the countrie anie more, but gaue order to prepare all things readie to besiege London: but before he attempted that [Sidenote: *Wil. Malm. Hen. Hunt. Matth. West. Sim. Dun.*] enterprise, as others write, he marched foorth into Kent, or rather sailing round about that countrie, tooke his iournie westward, & came to Fromundham, and after departing from thence, wasted Dorsetshire, Summersetshire, & Wiltshire.

[Sidenote: King Egelred sicke. *Matth. West.*] King Egelred in this meane time lay sicke at Cossam; and his sonne Edmund had got together a mightie hoast, howbeit yer he came to ioine battell with his enimies, he was aduertised, that earle Edrike went about to betraie him, and therefore he withdrew with the armie [Sidenote: Edrike de Streona fleeth to the Danes. *Simon Dun.*] into a place of suertie. But Edrike to make his tratorous purpose manifest to the whole world, fled to the enimies with fortie of the kings ships, fraught with Danish souldiers. Herevpon, all the west [Sidenote: The west countrie] countrie submitted it selfe vnto Cnute, who receiued

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pledges of the chiefe lords and nobles, and then set forward to subdue them of [Sidenote: The people of Mercia would not yeeld. *Matth. West. Hen. Hunt.*] Mercia. The people of that countrie would not yeeld, but determined to defend the quarrell and title of king Egelred, so long as they might haue anie capteine that would stand with them, and helpe [Sidenote: 1016] to order them. In the yeare 1016, in Christmas, Cnute and earle Edrike passed the Thames at Kirkelade, & entring into Mercia, cruellie began with fire and sword to waste and destroie the countrie, and [Sidenote: Warwikeshire wasted by the Danes.] namelie Warwikeshire.

[Sidenote: King Egelred recovered of his sicknesse. He assembleth an armie in vaine.] In the meane time was king Egelred recouered of his sicknesse, and sent summons foorth to raise all his power, appointing euerie man to resort vnto him, that he might incounter the enimies and giue them battell. But yet when his people were assembled, he was warned to take heed vnto himselfe, and in anie wise to beware how he gaue battell, for his owne subiects were purposed to betraie him. Herevpon the armie brake vp, & king Egelred withdrew to London, there to abide his enimies within the walles, with whom in the field he doubted to [Sidenote: *Wil. Malm.* Edmund king Egelreds sonne.] trie the battell. His sonne Edmund got him to Vtred, an earle of great power, inhabiting beyond Humber, and persuading him to ioine his forces with his, forth they went to waste those countries that were become subiect to Cnute, as Staffordshire, Leicestershire, and Shropshire, not sparing to exercise great crueltie vpon the inhabitants, as a punishment for their reuolting, that others might take example thereby.

[Sidenote: Cnute, what countries he passed through.] But Cnute perceiuing whereabout they went, politikelie deuised to frustrate their purpose, and with dooing of like hurt in all places where he came, passed through Buckinghamshire, Bedfordshire, Huntingtongshire, and so through the fens came to Stamford, and then entred into Lincolnshire, and from thence into Notinghamshire, & so into Yorkeshire, not sparing to doo what mischiefe might be deuised in all places where he came. Vtred aduertised hereof, was constrained to depart home to saue his owne countrie from present destruction, and therefore comming backe into Northumberland, & perceiuing himselfe not [Sidenote: Earle Vtred deliuered pledges to Cnute. *Alius Egricus.*] able to resist the puissant force of his enimies, was constrained to deliuer pledges, and submit himselfe vnto Cnute. But yet was he not hereby warranted from danger, for shortlie after he was taken, and put to death, and then were his lands giuen vnto one Iricke or Iricius, whome afterward Cnute did banish out of the realme, because that he did attempt to chalenge like authoritie to him in all points as Cnute himselfe had. After that Cnute had subdued the Northumbers, he pursued Edmund, till he heard that he had taken London for his refuge, and [Sidenote: Cnute prepareth to besiege London.] staid there with his father. Then did Cnute take his ships, and came about to the coasts of Kent, preparing to besiege the citie of London.

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[Sidenote: King Egelred departed this life. *Simon Dun. Matth. West.*] In the meane time, king Egelred sore worne with long sicknesse, departed this life on the 23 of Aprill, being saint Georges day, or (as others say) on saint Gregories day, being the 12 of March, but I take this to be an error growen, by mistaking the feast-day of saint [Sidenote: He is buried in the church of S. Paul at London.] Gregorie for saint George. He reigned the tearme of 37 yeares, or little lesse. His bodie was buried in the church of saint Pauls, in the north Ile besids the queere, as by a memoriall there on the wall it maie appeare. He had two wiues (as before is mentioned.) By Elgina his first wife he had issue three sonnes, Edmund, Edwine, and Adelstane; besides one daughter named Egiua. By his second wife Emma, daughter to Richard the first of that name, duke of Normandie, and sister to Richard the second, he had two sonnes, Alfrid and Edward.

This Egelred (as you haue heard) had euill successe in his warres against the Danes, and besides the calamitie that fell thereby to his people, manie other miseries oppressed this land in his daies, not so much through his lacke of courage and slouthfull negligence, as by reason of his presumptuous pride, whereby he alienated the hearts of [Sidenote: The pride of king Egelred alienated the harts of his people.] his people from him. His affections he could not rule, but was led by them without order of reason, for he did not onlie disherit diuerse of his owne English subiects without apparant cause of offense by plaine forged cauillations; and also caused all the Danes to be murdered through his realme in one day, by some light suspicion of their euill meanings: but also gaue himselfe to lecherous lusts, in abusing his bodie with naughtie strumpets, forsaking the bed of his owne lawfull wife, to the great infamie & shame of that high degree of maiestie, which by his kinglie office he bare and susteined. To conclude, he was from his tender youth more apt to idle rest, than to the exercise of warres; more giuen to pleasures of the bodie, than to anie vertues of the mind: although that toward his latter end, being growen into age, and taught by long experience of worldlie affaires, and prooffe of passed miseries, he sought (though in vaine) to haue recouered the decaied state of his common wealth and countrie.

¶ In this Egelreds time, and (as it is recorded by a British chronographer) in the yeere of our Lord 984, one Cadwalhon, the second sonne of Ieuaf tooke in hand the gouernance of Northwales, and first made warre with Ionauall his coosen, the sonne of Meyric, and right heire to the land, and slue him, but Edwall the yoongest brother escaped awaie priuilie. The yeere following, Meredith the sonne of Owen king or prince of Southwales, with all his power entered into Northwales, and in fight slue Cadwalhon the sonne of Ieuaf, and Meyric his brother, and conquered the land to himselfe. Wherein a man maie [Sidenote:

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See the historie of Cambria pag. 62, 63.] see how God punished the wrong, which Iago and Ieuf the sonnes of Edwall Voell did to their eldest brother Meyric, who was first disherited, and afterward his eies put out, and one of his sonnes slaine. For first Ieuf was imprisoned by Iago; then Iago with his sonne Constantine, by Howell the son of Ieuf: and afterward the said Howell, with his brethren Cadwalhon and Meyric, were slaine and spoiled of all their lands.

* * * * *

Edmund Ironside succedeth his father in the kingdome, the spirituality favouring Cnute would haue him to be king, the Londoners are his backe friends, they receiue Edmund their king honorable and ioifullie, Cnute is proclaimed king at Southampton, manie of the states cleaue vnto him, he besiegeth London by water and land, the citizens giue him the foile, he incountreth with king Edmund and is discomfited, two battels fought betweene the Danes and English with equall fortune and like successe, the traitorous stratagem of Edrike the Dane, king Edmund aduisedlie defeateth Edriks trecherie, 20000 of both armies slaine, Cnute marching towards London is pursued of Edmund, the Danes are repelled, incountred, and vanquished; queene Emma prouideth for the safetie of hir sonnes; the Danes seeke a pacification with Edmund, thereby more easilie to betraie him; Cnute with his armie lieth neere Rochester, king Edmund pursueth them, both armies haue a long and a sore conflict, the Danes discomfited, and manie of them slaine; Cnute with his power assemble at Essex and there make waste, king Edmund pursuith them, Edrike traitorouslie reuolteth from the English to succour the Danes, king Edmund is forced to get him out of the field, the Englishmen put to their hard shifts and slaine by heapes; what noble personages were killed in this battell, of two dead bodies latelie found in the place where this hot and heauie skirmish was fought.

THE NINTH CHAPTER.

[Sidenote: EDMUND IRONSIDE.] After that king Egelred was dead, his eldest sonne Edmund surnamed Ironside was proclaimed king by the Londoners and others, hauing the assistance of some lords of the realme, although the more part, and [Sidenote: The kingdom goeth where the spirituality fauoreth.] speciallie those of the spirituality fauoured Cnute, bicause they had aforetime sworne fealtie to his father. Some write, that Cnute had planted his siege both by water and land verie stronglie about the citie of London, before Egelred departed this life, and immediatlie vpon his deceasse was receiued into the citie; but the armie that was within the citie, not consenting vnto the surrender made by the citizens, departed the night before the day on the which Cnute by appointment should enter, and in companie of Edmund Ironside (whome they had chosen to be their king and gouernour) they prepared to increase their numbers with new supplies, meaning eftsoones to trie [Sidenote: The author

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of the booke intituled *Encomium Emmae* saith that it was reported that Edmund offered the combate unto Cnute at this his going from the citie but Cnute refused it.] the fortune of battell against the Danish power. Cnute perceiuing the most part of all the realme to be thus against him, and hauing no great confidence in the loialtie of the Londoners, tooke order to leaue monie for the paiment of his men of warre and mariners that belonged to his nauie, left the citie, and imbarcking himselfe, sailed to the Ile of Shepie, and there remained all the winter. In which meane while, Edmund Ironside came to London, where he was ioifullie receiued of the citizens, and continuing there till the spring of the yeere, made himselfe strong against the enimies.

[Sidenote: 1016.] This Edmund for his noble courage, strength of bodie, and notable patience to indure and suffer all such hardnesse and paines as is requisite in a man of warre, was surnamed Ironside, & began his reigne in the yeere of our Lord 1016, in the sixteenth yeere of the emperor Henrie the second surnamed Claudius, in the twentieth yeere of the reigne of Robert king of France, & about the sixt yeere of Malcolme the second king of the Scots. After that king Edmund had receiued the crowne in the citie of London by the hands of the archbishop of Yorke, he assembled together such a power as he could make, and with the same marched forth towards the west parts, and made the countrie subiect [Sidenote: *Ran. Higd.*] to him. In the meane time was Cnute proclaimed and ordeined king at Southampton by the bishops and abbats, and diuerse lords also of the temporaltie there together assembled, vnto whome he sware to be their good and faithfull souereigne, and that he would see iustice trulie and vprightlie ministred.

[Sidenote: *Hen. Hunt. Simon Dun.*] After he had ended his businesse at Southampton, he drew with his people towards London, and comming thither, besieged the citie both by water and land, causing a great trench to be cast about it, so that [Sidenote: London besieged.] no man might either get in or come forth. Manie great assaults he caused to be giuen vnto the citie, but the Londoners and others within so valiantlie defended the wals and gates, that the enimies got small aduantage, and at length were constrained to depart with losse. [Sidenote: Cnute at Gillingham in Dorsetshire put to flight. *Polydor.*] Cnute then perceiuing that he might not haue his purpose there, withdrew westward, and besides Gillingham in Dorsetshire, incountred with K. Edmund in the Rogation weeke, and after sore & sharpe battell was put to the woorse, and constrained to forsake the field by the high prowesse & manhood of the said Edmund. King Cnute the same night, after the armies were seuered, departed towards Winchester, so to get [Sidenote: Salisbury besieged.] himselfe out of danger. Shortlie after, king Edmund hearing that an other armie of the Danes had besieged Salisbury, marched

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thither to succour them within, and immediatlie Cnute followed him, so that at [Sidenote: *Simon Dun. Matth. West. Wil. Malm.* A battel with equall fortune.] a place in Worcestershire called Scorastan, on the foure and twentieth of June, they incountred together, and fought a verie cruell battell, which at length the night parted with equall fortune. And [Sidenote: *An other battel with like successes.*] likewise on the next day they buckled together againe, and fought with like successe as they had doone the day before, for towards euening they gaue ouer well wearied, and not knowing to whome the victorie ought to be ascribed.

[Sidenote: *Edrike de Streona his treason. Simon Dun.*] Writers haue reported, that this second day, when duke Edrike perceiued the Englishmen to be at point to haue got the vpper hand, he withdrew aside, and hauing by chance slaine a common souldier called Osmear, which in visage much resembled king Edmund, whose head he cut off, held it vp, & shaking his swoord bloudie with the slaughter, cried to the Englishmen; “Flee ye wretches, flee and get awaie, for your king is dead, behold heere his head which I hold in my hands.” Heerewith had the Englishmen fled immediatlie, if king Edmund aduised of this stratagem, had not quicklie got him to an high ground where his men might see him aliue and lustie. Heerewith also the traitor Edrike escaped hardlie the danger of death, the Englishmen shot so egerlie at him. At length, as is said, the night parting them in sunder, they withdrew the one armie from the other, as it had beene by consent. The third day they remained in armor, but yet abstaining from battell, sate still, in taking meate and drinke to relieue their wearied bodies, and after gathered in heapes the dead carcasses [Sidenote: *Twentie thousand dead bodies.*] that had beene slaine in the former fight, the number of which on either partie reckoned, rose to the point of twentie thousand and aboue.

[Sidenote: *The armies dislodged.*] In the night following, Cnute remooued his campe in secret wise, and marched towards London, which citie in a maner remained besieged by the nauie of the Danes. King Edmund in the morning when the light had discovered the departure of his enimies, followed them by the tract, and comming to London with small adoo remooued the siege, and [Sidenote: *The Danes ouercome at Brentford. Wil. Malm. Hen. Hunt. Fabian. Caxton. Polydor.*] entered the citie like a conqueror. Shortlie after he fought with the Danes at Brentford, and gaue them a great ouerthrow. In this meane while queene Emma the widow of king Egelred, doubting the fortune of the warre, sent hir two sonnes Alfred and Edward ouer into Normandie vnto hir brother duke Richard, or rather fled thither herselfe with them (as some write.)

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Moreouer, earle Edrike, perceiuing the great manhood of king Edmund, began to feare, least in the end he should subdue and vanquish the Danes, wherefore he sought meanes to conclud a peace, and take such order with him as might stand with both their contentations, which yer long he brought about. This was doone (as you shall heare) by the [Sidenote: *Henr. Hunt.*] consent of Cnute (as some write) to the intent that Edrike being put in trust with king Edmund, might the more easilie deuise waies how to betraie him. But Cnute disappointed of his purpose at London, and fetching a great bootie and preie out of the countries next adjoining, repared to his ships, to see what order was amongst them, which a little before were withdrawen into the riuer that passeth by [Sidenote: The river of Medwaie.] Rochester called Medwaie. Heere Cnute remained certeine daies, both to assemble a greater power, and also to hearken and learne what his enimies ment to doo, the which he easilie vnderstood.

[Sidenote: King Edmund's diligence] King Edmund, who hated nothing woorse than to linger his businesse, assembled his people, and marching forward toward his enimies, approached neere vnto them, & pitcht downe his tents not farre from his enimies campe, exhorting his people to remember their passed victories, and to doo their good willes, at length by one battell so to ouerthrow them, that they might make an end of the warre, and dispatch them cleerelie out of the realme. With these and the like woords he did so incourage his souldiers, that they disdaining thus to haue the enimies dailie prouoke them, and to put them to trouble, with eger minds and fierce courages offered battell to the Danes, which Cnute had prepared to receiue whensoever the Englishmen approached: and heerewith bringing his men into araie, he came forth to meet his [Sidenote: The battell is begun.] enimies. Then was the battell begun with great earnestnesse on both sides, & continued foure houres, till at length the Danes began somewhat to shrink, which when Cnute perceiued, he commanded his horssemen to come forward into the forepart of his dawnted host.

[Sidenote: The Danes put to flight.] But whilest one part of the Danes gaue backe with feare, and the other came slowlie forward, the arraie of the whole armie was broken, & then without respect of shame they fled amaine, so that there [Sidenote: The number of Danes slaine. *Polydor. Fabian. Ran. Higd. Matt. West. Hen. Hunt. Will. Malmes.*] died that day of Cnutes side foure thousand and fiue hundred men; and of king Edmunds side, not past six hundred, and those were footmen. This battell was fought as should appeere by diuerse writers, at Okefort or Oteford. It was thought, that if king Edmund had pursued the victorie and followed in chase of his enimies in such wise as he safelie might haue doone, he had made that day an end of the warres: [Sidenote: Edriks

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counsell.] but he was counselled by Edrike (as some write) in no condition to follow them, but to staie and giue time to his people to refresh their wearie bodies. Then Cnute with his armie passed ouer the Thames into Essex, and there assembled all his power together, and began to spoile and waste the countrie on each hand. King Edmund aduertised thereof, hasted foorth to succour his people, and at Ashdone in Essex three miles from Saffron Walden, gaue battell to Cnute, where after sore and cruell fight continued with great slaughter on both sides a long time, duke Edrike fled to the comfort of the Danes, and to the discomfort of the Englishmen.

Heerevpon king Edmund was constreined in the end to depart out of the field, hauing first doone all that could be wished in a woorthie chieftaine, both by woords to encourage his men, & by deeds to shew them good example; so that at one time the Danes were at point to haue giuen backe, but that Cnute aduised thereof, rushed into the left wing where most danger was, and so relieued his people there, that finallie the Englishmen, both wearied with long fight, and also discouraged with the running awaie of some of their companie, were constreined to giue ouer, and by flight to seeke their safegard, so that king Edmund might not by anie meanes bring them againe into order. Heerevpon all the waies and passages being forelaid and stopped by the enimies, [Sidenote: [*_Sic_.]] the Englishmen wanting both carriage* to make longer resistance, and perceiuing no hope to rest in fleeing, were beaten downe and slaine in heapes, so that few escaped from that dreadfull and bloudie battell.

[Sidenote: Noble men slaine at the battell of Ashdone. *Simon Dun. Wil. Malm.*] There died on king Edmunds side, duke Edmund, duke Alfrike, and duke Goodwine, with earle Vlfekettell or Vrchell of Eastangle, and duke Aileward, that was sonne to Ardelwine late duke of Eastangle; and to be briefe, all the floure of the English nobilitie. There were also slaine at this battell manie renowned persons of the spiritualtie, as [Sidenote: King Edmund withdraweth into Glocestershire.] the bishop of Lincolne, and the abbat of Ramsey, with others: king Edmund escaping awaie, got him into Glocestershire, and there began to raise a new armie. In the place where this field was fought, are yet seuen or eight hils, wherein the carcasses of them that were slaine at the same field were buried: and one being digged downe of late, there were found two bodies in a coffin of stone, of which the one laie with his head towards the others feet, and manie chaines of iron, (like to the water-chains of the bits of horsses) were found in the same hill. But now to the matter.

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London & other great cities & townes submit themselues to Cnute, he hasteth after Edmund with his power, both their armies being readie to incounter by occasion are staied, the oration of a capteine in the hearing of both hosts; the title and right of the realme of England is put to the triall of combat betweene Cnute and Edmund, Cnute is ouermatched, his woords to king Edmund, both kings are pacified and their armies accorded, the realme diuided betwixt Cnute and Edmund, king Edmund traitorouslie slaine, the dissonant report of writers touching the maners of his death, and both the kings dealing about the partition of the realme, Cnute causeth Edrike to be slaine for procuring king Edmunds death, wherein the reward of treason is noted; how long king Edmund reigned, and where he was buried, the eclipsed state of England after his death, and in whose time it recouered some part of its brightnesse.

THE TENTH CHAPTER.

In the meane while that Edmund was busie to leauie a new armie in Glocester, and other parties of Mercia, Cnute hauing got so great a victorie (as before is mentioned) receiued into his obeisance, not onelie the citie of London, but also manie other cities and townes of great name, and shortlie after hasted forward to pursue his enimie king Edmund, who was readie with a mightie host to trie the vttermost chance of battell if they should eftsoones ioine. Heerevpon, both [Sidenote: *Polydor.*] the armies being readie to giue the onset, the one in sight of the other at a place called Dearehurst, neere to the riuier of Seuerne, by [Sidenote: *Matth. West. Simon Dun.*] the drift of duke Edrike, who then at length began to shew some token of good meaning, the two kings came to a communication, and in the end concluded an agreement, as some haue written, without anie more adoo. Others write, that when both the armies were at point to [Sidenote: *Matth. West.* saith this was Edrike.] haue ioined, one of the capteins (but whether he were a Dane or an Englishman, it is not certeinlie told) stood vp in such a place, as he might be heard of both the princes, & boldlie vttered his mind in forme following.

The oration of a capteine in the audience of the English and Danish armie.

“We haue, most woorthie capteins, fought long inough one against another, there hath beene but too much bloud shed betweene both the nations, and the valiancie of the souldiers on both sides is sufficientlie seene by triall, & either of your manhoods likewise, and yet can you beare neither good nor euill fortune. If one of you win the battell, he pursueth him that is ouercome; and if he chance to be vanquished, he resteth not till he haue recouered new strength to fight eftsoones with him that is victor. What should you meane by this your inuincible courage? At what marke shooteth your greedie desire to beare rule, and your excessive thirst to attaine honour? If you fight for a kingdome, diuide it betweene you two, which sometime was sufficient for seuen kings: but if you couet to winne fame and glorious renowme, and for the same are driuen to try the hazard whether ye shall command or obeie, devise the waie whereby

ye may without so great slaughter, and without such pitifull bloudshed of both your guiltlesse peoples, trie whether of you is most woorthie to be preferred."

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[Sidenote: The two kings appoint to try the matter by a combat.] Thus made he an end, and the two princes allowed well of his last motion, and so order was taken, that they should fight together in a singular combat within a litle lland inclosed with the riuer of [Sidenote: Oldney.] Seuerne called Oldney, with condition, that whether of them chanced to be victor, should be king, and the other to resigne his title for euer into his hands. The two princes entering into the place appointed, in faire armour, began the battell in sight of both their armies ranged in goodlie order on either side the riuer, with doubtfull minds, and nothing ioifull, as they that wauered betwixt hope and feare. The two [Sidenote: *Matt. Westm.*] champions manfullie assailed either other, without sparing. First, they went to it on horssebacke, and after on foot. Cnute was a man [Sidenote: Cnute of what stature he was.] of a meane stature, but yet strong and hardie, so that receiuing a great blow by the hand of his aduersarie, which caused him somewhat to stagger; yet recouered himselfe, and boldly stept forward to be reuenged. But perceiuing he could not find aduantage, and that [Sidenote: Cnute ouermatched.] he was rather too weake, and shrewdlie ouermatched, he spake to [Sidenote: Cnutes woords to Edmund.] Edmund with a lowd voice on this wise: "What necessitie (saith he) ought thus to mooue vs, most valiant prince, that for the obtaining of a kingdome, we should thus put our liues in danger? Better were it that laieng armour and malice aside, we should condescend to some reasonable agreement. Let vs become sworne brethren, and part the [Sidenote: *H. Hunt.*] kingdome betwixt vs: and let vs deale so friendlie, that thou maist vse my things as thine owne, and I thine as though they were mine." King Edmund with those woords of his aduersarie was so pacified, that immediatlie he cast awaie his swoord, and comming to [Sidenote: They make vp the matter betwixt themselves.] Cnute, ioined hands with him. Both the armies by their example did the like, which looked for the same fortune to fall on their countries, which should happen to their princes by the successe of that one battell. After this, there was an agreement deuised betwixt them, so that a partition of the realme was made, and that part that lieth fore against France, was assigned to Edmund, and the other [Sidenote: *Wil. Malm.*] fell to Cnute. There be that write, how the offer was made by king Edmund for the auoiding of more bloudshed, that the two princes should trie the matter thus together in a singular combat. But Cnute refused the combat, bicause (as he alledged) the match was not equall. For although he was able to match Edmund in boldnesse of stomach, yet was he farre too weake to deale with a man of such strength as Edmund was knowne to be. But sith they did pretend title to the realme by due and good direct meanes, he thought it most conuenient that the kingdome should be diuided betwixt them. This motion was allowed of both the armies, so that king Edmund was of force constreined to be contented therewith.

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¶ Thus our common writers haue recorded of this agreement, but if I should not be thought presumptuous, in taking vpon me to reprocue, or rather but to mistrust that which hath beene receiued for a true narration in this matter, I would rather giue credit vnto that [Sidenote: *Encomium Emmae*.] which the author of the booke intituled “Encomium Emmae,” dooth report in this behalfe. Which is that through persuasion of Edrike de Streona, king Edmund immediatelie after the battell fought at Ashdone, sent ambassadors vnto Cnute to offer vnto him peace, with halfe the realme of England, that is to say, the north parts, with condition that king Edmund might quietlie inioy the south parts, and therevpon haue pledges deliuered interchangeablie on either side.

Cnute hauing heard the effect of this message, staid to make answer till he heard what his counsell would aduise him to doo in this behalfe: and vpon good deliberation taken in the matter, considering that he had lost no small number of people in the former battell, and that being farre out of his countrie, he could not well haue anie new supplie, where the Englishmen although they had likewise lost verie manie of their men of warre, yet being in their owne countrie, it should be an easie matter for them to restore their decaid number, it was thought expedient by the whole consent of all the Danish capteins, that the offer of king Edmund should be accepted.

Herevpon Cnute calling the ambassadors before him againe, declared vnto them, that he was contented to conclude a peace vpon such conditions as they had offered: but yet with this addition, that their king whatsoever he should be, should paie Cnutes souldiers their wages, with monie to be leuiued of that part of the kingdome which the English king should possesse. “For (this saith he) I haue vndertaken to see them paid, and otherwise I will not grant to anie peace.” The league and agreement therefore being concluded in this sort, pledges were deliuered and receiued on both parties, and the armies [Sidenote: This is alleged touching the partiti[=o] of the kingdome.] discharged. But God (saith mine author) being mindfull of his old doctrine, that Euerie kingdome diuided in it selfe cannot long stand, shortlie after tooke Edmund out of this life: and by such meanes seemed to take pitie of the English kingdome, lest if both the kings should haue continued in life together, they should haue liued in danger. And incontinentlie herevpon was Cnute chosen and receiued for absolute king of all the whole realme of England. Thus hath he written that liued in those daies, whose credit thereby is much aduanced.

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Howbeit the common report of writers touching the death of Edmund varieth from this, who doo affirme, that after Cnute and Edmund were made friends, the serpent of enuie and false conspiracie burnt so in the hearts of some traitorous persons, that within a while after [Sidenote: K. Edmund traitorouslie slaine at Oxford. *Fabian. Simon Dun.*] king Edmund was slaine at Oxford, as he sat on a priuie to doo the necessaries of nature. The common report hath gone, that earle Edrike was the procurer of this villanous act, and that (as some write) his sonne did it. But the author that wrote "Encomium Emmae," writing of the death of Edmund, hath these words (immediatlie after he had first declared in what sort the two princes were agreed, and had made [Sidenote: This is alleged againe for the proofoe of Edmunds natural death.] partition of the realme betwixt them:) But God (saith he) being mindfull of his old doctrine, that Euerie kingdome diuided in it selfe can not long stand, shortlie after tooke Edmund out of this life: and by such meanes seemed to take pitie vpon the English kingdome, least if both the kings should haue continued in life together, they should both haue liued in great danger, and the realme in trouble. With this agreeth also Simon Dunel. who saith, that king Edmund died of naturall [Sidenote: *Fabian.*] sicknesse, by course of kind at London, about the feast of saint Andrew next insuing the late mentioned agreement.

[Sidenote: *Ranul. Hig. Hen. Hunt.*] And this should seeme true: for whereas these authors which report, that earle Edrike was the procurer of his death, doo also write, that when he knew the act to be done, he hasted vnto Cnute, and declared vnto him what he had brought to passe for his aduancement to the gouernment of the whole realme. Wherevpon Cnute, abhorring such a detestable fact, said vnto him: "Bicause thou hast for my sake, made away the worthiest bodie of the world, I shall raise thy head aboue all the lords of England," and so caused him to be put to death. [Sidenote: Some thinke that he was duke of Mercia before, and now had Essex adioined thereto.] Thus haue some bookes. Howbeit this report agreeth not with other writers, which declare how Cnute aduanced Edrike in the beginning of his reigne vnto high honor, and made him gouernor of Mercia, and vsed his counsell in manie things after the death of king Edmund, as in banishing Edwin, the brother of king Edmund, with his sonnes also, Edmund and Edward.

[Sidenote: Diuerse and discordant reports of Edmunds death. *Ran. Higd. Wil. Malm.*] But for that there is such discordance and variable report amongst writers touching the death of king Edmund, and some fables inuented thereof (as the manner is) we will let the residue of their reports passe; sith certeine it is, that to his end he came, after he had reigned about the space of one yeere, and so much more as is betweene the moneth of Iune

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and the latter end of Nouember. His bodie was buried at Glastenburie, neere his vnclie Edgar. With this Edmund, surnamed Ironside, fell the glorious maiestie of the English kingdome, the which afterward as it had beene an aged bodie being sore decaied and weakened by the Danes, that now got possession of the whole, yet somewhat recouered after the space of 26 yeers vnder king Edward, surnamed the Confessor: and shortlie therevpon as it had beene falne into a resiliuation, came to extreame ruine by the inuasion and conquest of the Normans: as after by Gods good helpe and fauorable assistance it shall appeare. So that it would make a diligent and marking reader both muse and moorne, to see how variable the state of this kingdome hath beene, & thereby to fall into a consideration of the frailtie and vncerteintie of this mortall life, which is no more free from securitie, than a ship on the sea in tempestuous weather. For as the casualties wherewith our life is inclosed and beset with round about, are manifold; so also are they miserable, so also are they sudden, so also are they vnauoidable. And true it is, that the life of man is in the hands of God, and the state of kingdoms dooth also belong vnto him, either to continue or discontinue. But to the processe of the matter.

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Cnute vndertaketh the totall regiment of this land, he assembleth a councell at London, the nobles doo him homage, be diuideth the realme into foure parts to be gouerned by his assignes; Edwin and Edward the sonnes of Edmund are banished, their good fortune by honorable mariages, King Cnute marieth queene Emma the widow of Egelred, the wise and politike conditions wherevpon this mariage was concluded, the English blood restored to the crowne and the Danes excluded, queene Emma praised for hir high wisdom in choosing an enimie to hir husband; Cnute dismiseth the Danish armie into Denmarke; Edrike de Streona bewraieth his former trecherie, and procureth his owne death through rashnesse and follie, the discordant report of writers touching the maner & cause of his death, what noble men were executed with him, and banished out of England, Cnute a monarch.

THE XJ. CHAPTER.

[Sidenote: CANUTE, KNOUGHT OR CNUTE.] Canute, or Cnute, whome the English chronicles doo name Knought, after the death of king Edmund, tooke vpon him the whole rule ouer all the realme of England, in the yeere of our Lord 1017, in the [Sidenote: 1017.] seuenteenth yeere of the emperour Henrie the second, surnamed Claudus, in the twentieth yeere of the reigne of Robert king of France, and about the 7 yeere of Malcolme king of Scotland. Cnute shortlie after the death of king Edmund, assembled a councell at London, in the which he caused all the nobles of the realme to doo him homage, in receiuing an oth of loiall obeisance. He diuided the realme into foure parts, assigning Northumberland vnto the rule of Irke or Iricius, Mercia vnto



Edrike, and Eastangle vnto Turkill, and reseruing the west part to his owne gouernance. He banished (as before is said) Edwin, the brother of king Edmund; but such as were suspected to be culpable of Edmunds death, he caused to be put to execution: whereby it should appeere, that Edrike was not then in anie wise detected or once thought to be giltie.

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[Sidenote: *Wil. Malm. Ran. Higd.* King of churles. *Wil. Malm.*] The said Edwin afterwards returned, and was then reconciled to the kings fauor (as some write) but shortlie after traitorouslie slaine by his owne seruants. He was called the king of churles. Others write, that he came secretlie into the realme after he had beene banished, and keeping himselfe closelie out of sight, at length ended his life, and was buried at Tauestocke. Moreouer, Edwin and Edward the sonnes of king Edmund were banished the land, and sent first vnto Sweno king [Sidenote: *Ran. Higd.*] of Norweie to haue bin made away: but Sweno vpon remorse of conscience sent them into Hungarie, where they found great fauor at the hands of king Salomon, insomuch that Edwin married the daughter of the same Salomon, but had no issue by hir. Edward was aduanced to marie with Agatha, daughter of the emperour Henrie, and by hir had issue two sonnes, Edmund and Edgar surnamed Edeling, and as many daughters, Margaret and Christine, of the which in place conuenient more shall be said.

[Sidenote: *Polydor.* King Cnute married to queene Emma the widow of Egelred, in Iulie, anno. 1017.] When king Cnute had established things, as he thought stood most for his suertie, he called to his remembrance, that he had no issue but two bastard sonnes Harold and Sweno, begotten of his concubine Alwine. Wherefore he sent ouer to Richard duke of Normandie, requiring to haue queene Emma, the widow of king Egelred in mariage, and so obtained hir, not a little to the woonder of manie, which thought a great ouersight both in the woman and in hir brother, that would [Sidenote: *Polydor.*] satisfie the request of Cnute herein, considering he had beene such a mortall enimie to hir former husband. But duke Richard did not onelie consent, that his said sister should be married vnto Cnute, but also he himselfe tooke to wife the ladie Hestritha, sister to the said Cnute.

¶ Here ye haue to vnderstand, that this mariage was not made without [Sidenote: The couenants made at the mariage betwixt Cnute and Emma.] great consideration & large couenants granted on the part of king Cnute: for before he could obtaine queene Emma to his wife, it was fullie condescended & agreed, that after Cnuts decease, the crowne of England should remaine to the issue borne of this mariage betwixt hir & Cnute, which couenant although it was not performed immediatlie after the deceasse of king Cnute, yet in the end it tooke place, so as the right seemed to be deferred, and not to be taken away nor abolished: for immediatlie vpon Harolds death that had vsurped, Hardicnute succeeded as right heire to the crowne, by force of the agreement made at the time of the mariage solemnized betwixt his father and mother, and being once established in the kingdome, he ordeined his brother Edward to succeed him, whereby the Danes were vtterlie excluded from all right that they had to pretend vnto the crowne

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of this land, and the English blood restored thereto, chiefly by that gracious conclusion of this marriage betwixt king Cnute and [Sidenote: The English blood restored. The praise of queene Emma for hir wisdom.] queene Emma. For the which no small praise was thought to be due vnto the said queene, sith by hir politike gouernement, in making hir match so beneficiall to hir selfe and hir line, the crowne was thus recouered out of the hands of the Danes, and restored againe in time [Sidenote: *Encomium Emmae*.] to the right heire, as by an auncient treatise which some haue intituled “Encomium Emmae,” and was written in those daies, it dooth and may appeare. Which booke although there be but few copies thereof abroad, giueth vndoubtedlie great light to the historie of that time.

[Sidenote: *Matth. West.*] But now to our purpose. Cnute the same yeare in which he was thus married, through persuasion of his wife queene Emma, sent awaie the Danish nauie and armie home into Denmarke, giuing to them fourescore and two thousand pounds of siluer, which was leuied throughout [Sidenote: *Wil. Malm.* 1018.] this land for their wages. In the yeare 1018, Edrike de Streona earle of Mercia was ouerthrowen in his owne turne: for being called before the king into his priue chamber, and there in reasoning the matter about some quarrell that was picked to him, he began verie presumptuously to vpbraide the king of such pleasures as he had before time doone vnto him; “I did (said he) for the loue which I bare towards you, forsake my souereigne lord king Edmund, and at length for your sake slue him.” At which words Cnute began to change countenance, as one maruellously abashed, and straightwaies gaue sentence against Edrike in this wise; “Thou art woorthie (saith he) of death, and die thou shalt, which art guiltie of treason both towards God and me, sith that thou hast slaine thine own souereigne lord, and my deere alied brother. Thy blood therefore be vpon thine owne head, sith thy toong hath vttered thy treason.” And immediatlie he caused his throat to be cut, and his bodie to be throwen out at the chamber window into the [Sidenote: Edrike put to death.] riuer of Thames. ¶ But others say, that hands were laid vpon him in the verie same chamber or closet where he murdered the king, & straightwaies to preuent all causes of tumults & hurleburles, he was put to death with terrible torments of fierbrands & links; which execution hauing passed vpon him, a second succeeded; for both his feet were bound together, and his bodie drawne through the streets of the citie, & in fine cast into a common ditch called Houndsditch; for that the citizens threw their dead dogs and stinking carrion with other filth into it, accounting him worthie of a worse rather than of a better buriall. In such hatred was treason had, being a vice which the verie infidels and grosse pagans abhorred, else would they not haue said, *Proditionem amo, proditorem odi*; Treason I loue, but a traitor I hate. This was the end of Edrike, surnamed de Stratten or Streona, a man of great infamie for his craftie dissimulation, falshood and treason, vsed by him to the ouerthrow of the English estate, as partlie before is touched.

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[Sidenote: *Simon Dun. Encomium Emmae.*] But there be that concerning the cause of this Edriks death, seeme partlie to disagree from that which before is recited, declaring that Cnute standing in some doubt to be betraied through the treason of Edrike, sought occasion how to rid him and others (whome he mistrusted) out of the way. And therefore on a day when Edrike craued some preferment at Cnuts hands, & said that he had deserued to be well thought of, sith by his flight from the battell at Ashendon, the victorie therby inclined to Cnutes part: Cnute hearing him speake these words, made this answer: "And canst thou (quoth he) be true to me, that through fraudulent meanes diddest deceiue thy souereigne lord and maister? But I will reward thee according to thy deserts, so as from henceforth thou shalt not deceiue anie other," and so forthwith commanded Erike one of his chiefe capteines to dispatch him, who incontinentlie cut off his head with his axe or halbert. Verelie Simon Dunelmensis saith, that K. Cnute vnderstanding in what sort both king Egelred, and his sonne king Edmund Ironside had beene betraied by the said Edrike, stood in great doubt to be likewise deceiued by him, and therefore was glad to haue some pretended quarell, to dispatch both him and others, whome he likewise mistrusted, as it well appeared. For at the same time there were put to death with Edrike earle Norman the sonne of earle Leofwin, and brother to earle Leofrike: also Adelward the sonne of earle Agelmare and Brightrike the sonne of Alfegus gouernor of Deuonshire, without all guilt or cause (as some write.) And in place of Norman, his brother Leofrike was made earle of Mercia by the king, and had in great fauour. This Leofrike is commonlie also by writers named earle of Chester. After this, Cnute likewise banished Iric and Turkill, two Danes, the one (as before is recited) gouernor of Northumberland, and the other of Northfolke and Suffolke or Eastangle.

Then rested the whole rule of the realme in the kings hands, wherevpon he studied to preserue the people in peace, and ordeined lawes, [Sidenote: *Hen. Hunt.* Lords put to death.] according to the which both Danes and Englishmen should be gouerned in equall state and degree. Diuers great lords whome he found vnfaithfull or rather suspected, he put to death (as before ye haue heard) beside such as he banished out of the realme. He raised a tax [Sidenote: *A taxe raised.*] or tribute of the people, amounting to the summe of fourescore & two thousand pounds, besides 11000 pounds, which the Londoners paid towards the maintenance of the Danish armie. But whereas these things chaunced not all at one time, but in sundrie seasons, we will returne somewhat backe to declare what other exploits were atchiued in the meane time by Cnute, not onelie in England, but also in Denmarke, and elsewhere: admonishing the reader in the processe of the discourse following, that much excellent matter is comprehended, whereout (if the same be studiously read and diligentlie considered) no small profit is to be reaped, both for the augmentation of his owne knowledge and others that be studious.

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Cnute saileth into Denmarke to subdue the Vandals, earle Goodwins good seruice with the English against the said Vandals, and what benefit accrewed vnto the Englishmen by the said good seruice, he returneth into England after the discomfiture of the enimie, he saileth ouer againe into Denmarke and incountreth with the Sweideners, the occasion of this warre or incounter taken by Olauus, his hard hap, vnluckie fortune, and wofull death wrought by the hands of his owne vnnaturall subiects; Cnuts confidence in the Englishmen, his deuout voiage to Rome, his returne into England, his subduing of the Scots, his death and interrement.

THE TWELFTH CHAPTER.

[Sidenote: 1019. King Cnute passeth into Denmarke.] In the third yeare of his reigne Cnute sailed with an armie of Englishmen and Danes into Denmarke, to subdue the Vandals there, which [Sidenote: Earle Goodwin his seruice in Denmarke.] then sore annoied and warred against his subiects of Denmarke. Earle Goodwine, which had the souereigne conduct of the Englishmen, the night before the day appointed for the battell got him forth of the campe with his people, and suddenlie assailing the Vandals in their lodgings, easilie distressed them, sleaing a great number of them, and chasing the residue. In the morning earlie, when as Cnute heard that the Englishmen were gone foorth of their lodgings, he supposed that they were either fled awaie, or else turned to take part with the enimies. But as he approched to the enimies campe, he vnderstood how the mater went; for he found nothing there but [Sidenote: Cnute had the Englishmen in estimation for their good service.] bloud, dead bodies, and the spoile. For which good seruice, Cnute had the Englishmen in more estimation euer after, and highlie rewarded their leader the same earle Goodwine. When Cnute had ordered all things in Denmarke, as was thought behoofefull, he returned againe into England: and within a few daies after, he was aduertised that the Swedeners made warre against his subiects of Denmarke, vnder the [Sidenote: 1028. Cnute passeth againe into Denmarke.] leding of two great princes, Vlfе and Vlafе. Wherefore to defend his dominions in those parts, he passed againe with an armie into Denmarke, incountred with his enimies, and receiued a sore ouerthrow, [Sidenote: *Will. Malm.*] loosing a great number both of Danes and Englishmen. But gathering together a new force of men, he set againe vpon his enimies, and ouercame them, constreining the two foresaid princes to agree vpon [Sidenote: *Matt. Westm.*] reasonable conditions of peace. Matth. West. recounteth, that at this time earle Goodwine and the Englishmen wrought the enterprise aboue mentioned, of assaulting the enimies campe in the night season, after Cnute had first lost in the day before no small number of his people: and that then the foresaid princes or kings, as he nameth them Vlfus [Sidenote: *Albertus Crantz.*]

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and Aulafus, which latter he calleth Eiglafe, were constrained to agree vpon a peace. The Danish chronicles alledge, that the occasion of this warre rose hereof. This Olauus aided Cnute (as the same writers report) against king Edmund and the Englishmen. But when the peace should be made betweene Cnute and Edmund, there was no consideration had of Olauus: whereas through him the Danes chieflie obtained the victorie. Herevpon Olauus was sore offended in his mind against Cnute, and now vpon occasion sought to be reuenged. But what soeuer the cause was of this warre betwixt these two princes, the end was thus: that Olauus was expelled out of his kingdome, and constreined to flee to Gerithaslaus a duke in the parties of Eastland, and afterward returning into Norwaie, was slaine by such of his subiects as tooke part with Cnute, in manner as in the historie of Norwaie, appeareth more at large, with the contrarietie found in the writings of them which haue recorded the histories of those north [Sidenote: Magnus Olauus.] regions.

[Sidenote: *Fabian. Polydor. Hen. Hunt.*] But here is to be remembred, that the fame and glorie of the English nation was greatlie aduanced in these warres, as well against the Swedeners as the Norwegians, so that Cnute began to loue and trust the Englishmen much better than it was to be thought he would euer [Sidenote: Other say, that he went forth of Denmarke to Rome. *Simon Dun. Anno 1031. 1032. Wil. Malm. Matth. West. 1033.*] haue doone. Shortlie after that Cnute was returned into England, that is to say (as some haue) in the 15 yeare of his reigne, he went to Rome to performe his vow which he had made to visit the places where the apostles Peter and Paule had their buriall, where he was honorablie receiued of pope Iohn the 20 that then held the see. When he had doone his deuotion there, he returned into England. In the yeare following, he made a iournie against the Scots, which as [Sidenote: Scots subdued. *Hen. Hunt. Anno 1035. Wil. Malm.*] then had rebelled; but by the princelie power of Cnute they were subdued and brought againe to obedience: so that not onelie king Malcolme, but also two other kings Melbeath and leohmare became his subiects. Finallie after that this noble prince king Cnute had [Sidenote: The death of king Cnute. *Hen. Hunt. Alb. Crantz.*] reigned the tearme of 20 yeares currant, after the death of Ethelred, he died at Shaftsburie, as the English writers affirme, on the 12 of Nouember, and was buried at Winchester. But the Danish chronicles record that he died in Normandie, and was buried at Rome (as in the same chronicles ye may reade more at large.)

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The trespuissance of Cnute, the amplexesse of his dominions, the good and charitable fruits of his voiage to Rome redounding to the common benefit of all trauellers from England thither, with what great personages he had conference, and the honour that was doone him there, his intollerable pride in commanding the waters of the flouds not to rise, he humbleth himselfe and confesseth Christ Iesus to be king of kings, he refuseth to weare the crowne during his life, he reproueth a gentleman flatterer, his issue legitimate and illegitimate, his inclination in his latter yeares, what religious places he erected, repaired, and enriched; what notable men he fauoured and reuerenced, his lawes; and that in causes as well ecclesiasticall as temporall he had cheefe and sole gouernement in this land, whereby the popes vsurped title of vniuersall supremasie is impeached.

THE XIIJ. CHAPTER.

[Sidenote: The large dominion of K. Cnute. *Hen. Hunt. Alb. Crantz.*] This Cnute was the mightiest prince that euer reigned ouer the English people: for he had the souereigne rule ouer all Denmark, England, Norwaie, Scotland, and part of Sweiden. Amongest other of his roiall acts, he caused such tolles and tallages as were demanded of way-goers at bridges and streets in the high way betwixt England and Rome to be diminished to the halfes, and againe got also a moderation to be had in the paiment of the archbishops fees of his realme, which was leuied of them in the court of Rome when they should receiue their palles, as may appeare by a letter which he himselfe being at Rome, directed to the bishops and other of the nobles of England. In the which it also appeareth, that besides the roiall interteinment, which he had at Rome of pope Iohn, he had conference there with the emperour Conrad, with Rafe the king of Burgongne, and manie other great princes and noble men, which were present there at that time: all which at his [Sidenote: Grants made to the benefit of Englishmen, at the instance of king Cnute. *Fabian. Polydor. Matt. West.*] request, in fauour of those Englishmen that should trauell vnto Rome, granted (as we haue said) to diminish such duties as were gathered of passingers.

He receiued there manie great gifts of the emperour, and was highlie honored of him, and likewise of the pope, and of all other the high princes at that time present at Rome: so that when he came home (as some write) he did grow greatlie into pride, insomuch that being [Sidenote: He caused his chaire to be set there, as *Matth. West. saith. Hen. Hunt.*] neere to the Thames, or rather (as other write) vpon the sea strand, neere to Southhampton, and perceiuing the water to rise by reason of the tide, he cast off his gowne, and wrapping it round together, threw it on the sands verie neere the increasing water, and sat him downe vpon it, speaking these or the like words to the sea: "Thou art (saith

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he) within the compasse of my dominion, and the ground whereon I sit is mine, and thou knowest that no wight dare disobeie my commandements; I therefore doo now command thee not to rise vpon my ground, nor to presume to wet anie part of thy souereigne lord and gouernour.” But the sea keeping hir course, rose still higher and higher, and ouerflowed not onelie the kings feet, but also flashed vp vnto his legs and knees. Wherewith the king started suddenlie vp, and [Sidenote: The saieng of king Cnute.] withdrew from it, saieng withall to his nobles that were about him: “Behold you noble men, you call me king, which can not so much as staie by my commandement this small portion of water. But know ye for certeine, that there is no king but the father onelie of our Lord Iesus Christ, with whome he reigneth, & at whose becke all things are [Sidenote: Zealouslie inough, if it had bin according to true knowledge.] gouerned. Let vs therefore honor him, let vs confesse and professe him to be the ruler of heauen, earth, and sea, and besides him none other.”

From thence he went to Winchester, and there with his owne hands set his crowne vpon the head of the image of the crucifix, which stood there in the church of the apostles Peter and Paule, and from [Sidenote: *Ran. Higd. Polydor. Matth. West.*] thenceforth he would neuer weare that crowne nor anie other. Some write that he spake not the former words to the sea vpon anie presumptuousnesse of mind, but onelie vpon occasion of the vaine [Sidenote: *Polydor.*] title, which in his commendation one of his gentlemen gaue him by way of flatterie (as he rightlie tooke it) for he called him the most [Sidenote: Flatterie reproued.] mightiest king of all kings, which ruled most at large both men, sea, and land. Therefore to reprocue the fond flatterie of such vaine persons, he deuised and practised the deed before mentioned, thereby both to reprocue such flatterers, and also that men might be admonished to consider the omnipotencie of almightie God. He had issue by his wife queene Emma, a sonne named by the English chronicles Hardiknought, but by the Danish writers Canute or Knute: also a daughter named Gonilda, that was after married to Henrie the sonne of [Sidenote: *Polydor.*] Conrad, which also was afterwards emperour, and named Henrie the third. By his concubine Alwine that was daughter to Alsme, whome [Sidenote: *Alb. Cranz.*] some name earle of Hampton, he had two bastard sonnes, Harold and Sweno. He was much giuen in his latter daies to vertue, as he that [Sidenote: *Polydor. Fabian.*] considered how perfect felicitie rested onelie in godlines and true deuotion to serue the heauenlie king and gouernour of all things.

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He repared in his time manie churches, abbeies and houses of religion, which by occasion of warres had beene sore defaced by him and his father, but speciallie he did great cost vpon the abbeie of saint Edmund, in the towne of Burie, as partlie before is mentioned. He also built two abbeies from the foundation, as saint Benets in Norffolke, [Sidenote: Which is supposed to be Barclow: for Ashdone it selfe is halfe a mile from thence.] seuen miles distant from Norwich, and an other in Norwaie. He did also build a church at Ashdone in Essex, where he obtained the victorie of king Edmund, and was present at the hallowing or consecration therof with a great multitude of the lords and nobles of the realme, both English and Danes. He also holpe with his owne hands to remooue the bodie of the holie archbishop Elphegus, when the [Sidenote: 1020. *Simon Dun.*] same was translated from London to Canturburie. The roiall and most rich iewels which he & his wife queene Emma gaue vnto the church of Winchester, might make the beholders to woonder at such their exceeding and bountifull munificence.

Thus did Cnute striue to reforme all such things as he and his ancestors had doone amisse, and to wipe awaie the spot of euill dooing, as suerlie to the outward sight of the world he did in deed; he had the archbishop of Canturburie Achelnotus in singular [Sidenote: Leofrike earle of Chester.] reputation, and vsed his counsell in matters of importance. He also highlie fauoured Leofrike earle of Chester, so that the same Leofrike bare great rule in ordering of things touching the state of [Sidenote: King Cnutes lawes.] the common wealth vnder him as one of his chiefe councillors. Diuerse lawes and statutes he made for the gouernment of the common wealth, partlie agreeable with the lawes of king Edgar, and other the kings that were his predecessors, and partlie tempered according to his owne liking, and as was thought to him most expedient: among the which there be diuerse that concerne causes as well ecclesiasticall as temporall. Whereby (as maister Fox hath noted) it maie be gathered, that the gouernment of spirituall matters did depend then not vpon the bishop of Rome, but rather apperteined vnto the lawfull authoritie of the temporall prince, no lesse than matters and causes temporall. But of these lawes & statutes enacted by king Cnute, ye may read more as ye find them set forth in the before remembred booke of maister William Lambert, which for briefenesse we heere omit.

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Variance amongst the peeres of the realme about the roiall succession, the kingdome is diuided betwixt Harold the bastard sonne and Hardicnute the lawfullie begotten son of king Cnute late deceassed, Harold hath the totall regiment, the authoritie of earle Goodwine gardian to the queenes sonnes, Harold is proclaimed king, why Elnothus did stoutlie refuse to consecrate him, why Harold was surnamed Harefoot, he is supposed

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to be a shoormakers sonne, and how it came to passe that he was counted king Cnutes bastard; Alfred challengeth the crowne from Harold, Goodwine (vnder colour of friendlie intertainment) procureth his retinues vtter vndooing, a tithing of the Normans by the poll, whether Alfred was interessed in the crowne, the trecherous letter of Harold written in the name of queene Emma to hir two sons in Normandie, wherevpon Alfred commeth ouer into England, the vnfaithfull dealing of Goodwine with Alfred and his people, teaching that in trust is treason, a reseruatioun of euerie tenth Norman, the remanent slaine, the lamentable end of Alfred, and with what torments he was put to death; Harold banisheth queene Emma out of England he degenerateth from his father, the short time of his reigne, his death and buriall.

THE XIIIJ. CHAPTER.

[Sidenote: HAROLD. *Matth. West. Wil. Malm.*] After that Cnute was departed this life, there arose much variance amongst the peeres and great lords of the realme about the succession. The Danes and Londoners (which through continuall familiaritie with the Danes, were become like vnto them) elected Harold the base [Sidenote: Controuersie for the crowne.] sonne of king Cnute, to succeed in his fathers roome, hauing earle Leofrike, and diuerse other of the noble men of the north parts on their side. But other of the Englishmen, and namelie earle Goodwine earle of Kent, with the chieftest lords of the west parts, coueted rather to haue one of king Egelreds sonnes, which were in Normandie, [Sidenote: *Simon Dun.*] or else Hardicnute the sonne of king Cnute by his wife queene Emma, which remained in Denmarke, aduanced to the place. This [Sidenote: The realme diuided betwixt Harold and Hardicnute.] controuersie held in such wise, that the realme was diuided (as some write) by lot betwixt the two brethren Harold and Hardicnute. The north part, as Mercia and Northumberland fell to Harold, and the south part vnto Hardicnute: but at length the whole remained vnto Harold, bicause his brother Hardicnute refused to come out of Denmarke to take the gouernment vpon him.

[Sidenote: The authoritie of earle Goodwine. *H. Hunt.*] But yet the authoritie of earle Goodwine, who had the queene and the treasure of the realme in his keeping, staied the matter a certeine time, (professing himselfe as it were gardian to the yoong men, the sonnes of the queene, till at length he was constrained to giue ouer his hold, and conforme himselfe to the stronger part and greater number.) And so at Oxford, where the assemblie was holden about the election, Harold was proclaimed king, and consecrated [Sidenote: The refusall of the archbishop Elnothus to consecrate king Harold.] according to the maner (as some write.) But it should appeere by other, that Elnothus the archbishop of Canturburie, a man indued with all vertue and wisdom, refused to crowne him:

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for when king Harold being elected of the nobles and peeres, required the said archbishop that he might be of him consecrated, and receiue at his hands the regall scepter with the crowne, which the archbishop had in his custodie, and to whome it onelie did apperteine to inuest him therewith, the archbishop flatlie refused, and with an oth protested, that he would not consecrate anie other for king, so long as the queenes children liued: “for (saith he) Cnute committed them to my trust and assurance, and to them will I keepe my faith and loiall obedience. The scepter and crowne I heere lay downe vpon the altar, and neither doo I denie nor deliuer them vnto you: but I forbid by the apostolike authoritie all the bishops, that none of them presume to take the same awaie, and deliuer them to you, or consecrate you for king. As for your selfe, if you dare, you maie vsurpe that which I haue committed vnto God and his table.”

But whether afterwards the king by one meane or other, caused the archbishop to crowne him king, or that he was consecrated of some other, he was admitted king of all the English people, beginning [Sidenote: 1036.] his reigne in the yeere of our Lord a thousand thirtie and six, in the fouretenth yeere of the emperor Conrad the second, in the sixt yeere of Henrie the first, king of France, and about the seuen and twentieth yeere of Malcolme the second, king of Scots. This Harold for his [Sidenote: Harold why he is surnamed Harefoot.] great swiftnesse, was surnamed Harefoot, of whome little is written touching his dooings, sauing that he is noted to haue beene an oppressor of his people, and spotted with manie notable vices. It [Sidenote: Harold euill spoken of. *Ran. Higd. ex Mariano.*] was spoken of diuerse in those daies, that this Harold was not the sonne of Cnute, but of a shoemaker, and that his supposed mother Elgina, king Cnutes concubine, to bring the king further in loue with hir, feined that she was with child: and about the time that she should be brought to bed (as she made hir account) caused the said shoemakers son to be secretlie brought into hir chamber, and then vntrulie caused it to be reported that she was deliuered, and the child so reputed to be the kings sonne.

[Sidenote: *Matth. West.*] Immediatlie vpon aduertisement had of Cnutes death, Alfred the sonne of king Egelred, with fiftie saile landed at Sandwich, meaning to challenge the crowne, and to obtaine it by lawfull claime with quietnesse, if he might; if not, then to vse force by aid of his friends, and to assaie that waie foorth to win it, if he might not otherwise obtaine it. From Sandwich he came to Canturburie: and shortlie after, earle Goodwine feining to receiue him as a friend, came to meet him, and at Gilford in the night season appointed a number of armed men to fall vpon the Normans as they were asleepe, and so tooke them together with Alfred, & slue the Normans by the poll, in such wise that nine were shine, & the tenth reserued. But yet when those that were reserued, seemed to him a greater number than he wished to escape, he fell to and againe tithed them as before. Alfred had his eies put out, and was conueied to the Ile of Elie, where shortlie after he died.

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[Sidenote: *Ran. Higd.*] ¶ How Alfred should claime the crowne to himselfe I see not: for verelie I can not be persuaded that he was the elder brother, though diuers authors haue so written, sith Gemeticensis, & the author of the booke called “Encomium Emmae,” plainlie affirme, that Edward was the elder: but it might be, that Alfred being a man of a stouter stomach [Sidenote: See maister *Fox* acts and monuments, pag. 112. *Simon Dun.*] than his brother Edward, made this attempt, either for himselfe, or in the behalfe of his brother Edward, being as then absent, and gone into Hungarie, as some write: but other say, that as well Edward as Alfred came ouer at this time with a number of Norman knights, and men of warre imbarked in a few ships, onelie to speake with their mother, who as then lay at Winchester, whether to take aduise with hir how to recouer their right heere in this land, or to aduance their brother Hardicnute, or for some other purpose, our authors doo not declare.

But the lords of the realme that bare their good wils vnto Harold, and (though contrarie to right) ment to mainteine him in the estate, seemed to be much offended with the comming of these two brethren in such order: for earle Goodwine persuaded them, that it was great danger to suffer so manie strangers to enter the realme, as they had brought with them. Wherevpon earle Goodwine with the assent of the other lords, or rather by commandement of Harold, went foorth, and at Gilford met with Alfred that was comming towards king Harold to speake with him, accordingle as he was of Harold required to doo. But now being taken, and his companie miserablie murthered (as before ye haue heard) to the number of six hundred Normans, Alfred himselfe was sent into the Ile of Elie, there to remaine in the abbeie in custodie of the moonks, hauing his eies put out as soone as he entered first into the same Ile. William Malmesburie saith, that Alfred came ouer, and was thus handeled betwixt the time of Harolds death, & the comming in of Hardicnute. Others write, that this chanced in his brother Hardicnuts daies, which seemeth not to be true: for Hardicnute was knowne to loue his brethren by his mothers side too dearelie to haue suffered anie such iniurie to be wrought against either of them in his time.

¶ Thus ye see how writers dissent in this matter, but for the better clearing of the truth touching the time, I haue thought good to shew also what the author of the said booke intituled “Encomium Emmae” writeth hereof, which is as followeth. When Harold was once established king, he sought meanes how to rid queene Emma out of the way, and that secretlie, for that openlie as yet he durst not attempt anie thing against hir. She in silence kept hir selfe quiet, looking for the end of these things. But Harold remembring himselfe, of a malicious purpose, by wicked aduise tooke counsell how he might get into his hands and make away the sons of queene Emma, & so to be out of danger of all annoiance that by them might be procured against him. Wherefore he caused a letter to be written in the name of their [Sidenote: A counterfet letter.] mother Emma, which he sent by certeine messengers suborned for the same purpose into Normandie, where Edward and Alfred as then remained. The tenour of which letter here insueth.

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The tenour of a letter forged and sent in queene Emmas name to hir two sonnes.

“Emma tantum nomine regina filijs Edwardo & Alfredo materna impertit salutamina. D[=u] domini nostri regis obitum separatim plangimus (filijs charissimi) dumq; dietim magis magisque regno haereditatis vestrae priuamini, miror quid captetis consilij, dum sciatis intermissionis vestrae dilatione inuasoris vestri imperij fieri quotidie soliditat[=e]. Is enim incessanter vicos & vrbes circuit, & sibi amicos principes muneribus, minis, & precibus facit: sed vnum e vobis super se mallent regnare quam istius (qui nunc ijs imperat) teneri ditione. Vnde rogo vnus vestrum ad me velociter & priuate veniat, vt salubre a me consilium accipiat, & sciat quo pacto hoc negotium quod volo fieri debeat, per praesentem quoque internuncium quid super his facturi estis remandate. Valete cordis mei viscera.”

The same in English.

“Emma in name onelie queene to hir sons Edward and Alfred sendeth motherlie greeting. Whilest we separatelie bewaile the death of our souereigne lord the king (most deare sonnes) and whilest you are euerie day more and more depriued from the kingdome of your inheritance, I maruell what you doo determine, sith you know by the delay of your ceassing to make some enterprise, the grounded force of the vsurper of your kingdom is dailie made the stronger. For incessantlie he goeth from towne to towne, from citie to citie, and maketh the lords his friends by rewards, threats, and praiers, but they had rather haue one of you to reigne ouer them, than to be kept vnder the rule of this man that now gouerneth them. Wherefore my request is, that one of you doo come with speed, and that priuie ouer to me, that he may vnderstand my wholesome aduise, and know in what sort this matter ought to be handled, which I would haue to go forward, and see that ye send mee word by this present messenger what you meane to doo herein. Fare ye well euen the bowels of my heart.”

These letters were deliuered vnto such as were made priuie to the purposed treason, who being fullie instructed how to deale, went ouer into Normandie, and presenting the letters vnto the yoong gentlemen, vsed the matter so, that they thought verelie that this message had beene sent from their mother, and wrote againe by them that brought the letters, that one of them would not faile but come ouer vnto hir according to that she had requested, and withall appointed the day and time. The messengers returning to king Harold, informed him how they had sped. The yoonger brother Alfred, with his brothers consent, tooke with him a certeine number of gentlemen and men of warre, and first came into Flanders, where after he had remained a while with earle Baldwine, he increased his retinue with a few Bullogners, and passed ouer into England, but approaching to the shore, he was streightwaies descried by his enimies, who hasted foorth to set vpon him; but perceiuing their drift, he bad the ships cast about, and make againe to the sea; then landing at an other place, he ment to go the next way to his mother.

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[Sidenote: Godwin was suspected to do this vnder a colour to betray him as by writers it seemeth.] But earle Goodwine hearing of his arriual, met him, receiued him into his assurance, and binding his credit with a corporall oth, became his man, and therewith leading him out of the high way that leadeth to London, he brought him to Gilford, where he lodged all the strangers, by a score, a doozen, and halfe a score together in innes, so as but a few remained about the yong gentleman Alfred to attend vpon him. There was plentie of meat and drinke prepared in euerie lodging, for the refreshing of all the companie. And Goodwine taking his leaue for that night, departed to his lodging, promising the next morning to come againe to giue his dutifull attendance on Alfred.

But behold, after they had filled themselues with meats and drinks, [Sidenote: Not onelie Goodwine but other such as king Harold appointed, took Alfred with his Normans.] and were gone to bed, in the dead of the night came such as king Harold had appointed, and entring into euerie inne, first seized vpon the armor and weapons that belonged to the strangers: which done, they tooke them, and chained them fast with fetters and manacles, so keeping them sure till the next morning. Which being come, they were brought foorth with their hands bound behind their backs, and deliuered to most cruell tormentors, who were commanded to spare none but euerie tenth man, as he came to hand by lot, and so they slue nine and left the tenth aliue. Of those that were left aliue, some they kept to serue as bondmen, other for couetousnesse of gaine they sold, and some they put in prison, of whome yet diuerse afterwards escaped. This with more hath the foresaid author written of this matter, declaring further, that Alfred being conueied into the Ile of Elie, had not onelie his eies put out in most cruell wise, but was also presentlie there murthered. But he speaketh not further of the maner how he was made away, sauing that he saith he forbeareth to make long recitall of this matter, bicause he will not renew the mothers greefe in hearing it, sith there can be no greater sorrow to the mother than to heare of hir sonnes death.

¶ I remember in Caxton we read, that his cruell tormentors should cause his bellie to be opened, & taking out one end of his bowels or guts, tied the same to a stake which they had set fast in the ground; then with needels of iron pricking his bodie, they caused him to run about the stake, till he had woond out all his intrailles, & so ended he his innocent life, to the great shame & obloquie of his cruel aduersaries. But whether he was thus tormented or not, or rather died (as I thinke) of the anguish by putting out his eies, no doubt but his death was reuenged by Gods hand in those that procured it. But whether erle Goodwine was cheefe causer thereof, in betraieng him vnder a cloked colour of pretended freendship, I cannot say: but that he tooke him and slue his companie, as some haue written, I cannot thinke it to be true, both as well for that which ye haue heard recited out of the author that wrote “Encomium Emmae,” as also for that it should seeme he might neuer be so directlie charged with it, but that he had matter to alledge in his owne excuse. But now to other affaires of Harold.

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[Sidenote: *Simon Dun.* Queene Emma banished.] After he had made away his halfe brother Alfred, he spoiled his mother in law queene Emma of the most part of hir riches, and therewith banished hir quite out of the realme: so that she sailed ouer to Flanders, where she was honourable receiued of earle Baldwine, and hauing of him honourable prouision assigned hir, she continued there for the space of three yeeres, till that after [Sidenote: *Polydor.* Harold degenerateth from his father. *Hen. Hunt.*] the death of Harold, she was sent for by hir sonne Hardiknought, that succeeded Harold in the kingdome. Moreouer, Harold made small account of his subiects, degenerating from the noble vertues of his father, following him in few things (except in exacting of tributes and payments.) He caused indeed eight markes of siluer to be leuiued of [Sidenote: *A* nauie in a readinesse. Euill men, the longer they liue, the more they grow into miserie. *Wil. Malm. Hen. Hunt.*] euerie port or hauen in England, to the reteining of 16 ships furnished with men of warre, which continued euer in readinesse to defend the coasts from pirats. To conclude with this Harold, his speedie death prouided well for his fame, bicause (as it was thought) if his life had beene of long continuance, his infamie had beene the greater. But after he had reigned foure yeeres, or (as other gathered) three yeeres and three moneths, he departed out of this world at Oxford, & was buried at Winchester (as some say.) Other say he died at [Sidenote: *Wil. Malm.*] Meneford in the moneth of Aprill, and was buried at Westminster, which should appeare to be true by that which after is reported of his brother Hardiknoughts cruell dealing, and great spite shewed toward his dead bodie, as after shall be specified.

* * * * *

Hardicnute is sent for into England to be made king; alteration in the state of Norwaie and Denmarke by the death of king Cnute, Hardicnute is crowned, he sendeth for his mother queene Emma, Normandie ruled by the French king, Hardicnute reuengeth his mothers exile upon the dead bodie of his stepbrother Harold, queene Emma and erle Goodwine haue the gouernment of things in their hands, Hardicnute leuieth a sore tribute upon his subiects; contempt of officers & deniall of a prince his tribute sharpelie punished; prince Edward commeth into England; the bishop of Worcester accused and put from his see for being accessarie to the murthering of Alfred, his restitution procured by contribution; Earle Goodwine being accused for the same trespasse excuseth himselfe, and iustifieth his cause by swearing, but speciallie by presenting the king with an inestimable gift; the cause why Goodwine purposed Alfreds death; the English peoples care about the succession to the crowne, moonke Brightwalds dreame and vision touching that matter; Hardicnute poisoned at a bridall, his conditions, speciallie his hospitalitie, of him the Englishmen learned to eate and drinke immoderatlie, the necessitie of sobrietie, the end of the Danish regiment in this land, and when they began first to inuade the English coasts.

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THE XV. CHAPTER.

[Sidenote: HARDICNUTE, or HARDIKNOUGHT.] After that Harold was dead, all the nobles of the realme, both Danes and Englishmen agreed to send for Hardiknought, the sonne of Canute by his wife queene Emma, and to make him king. Heere is to be noted, that by the death of king Canute, the state of things was much altered in those countries of beyond the seas wherein he had the rule [Sidenote: Alteration in the state of things. *Simon Dun.*, & *Matt. West.* say, that he was at Bruges in Flanders with his mother when he was thus sent for, having come thither to visit hir. 1041.] and dominion. For the Norwegians elected one Magnus, the sonne of Olauus to be their king, and the Danes chose this Hardiknought, whome their writers name Canute the third, to be their gouernor. This Hardiknought or Canute being aduertised of the death of his halfe brother Harold, and that the lords of England had chosen him to their king, with all conuenient speed prepared a nauie, and imbarcking a certeine number of men of warre, tooke the sea, and had the wind so fauorable for his purpose, that he arriued upon the coast of Kent the sixt day after he set out of Denmarke, and so comming to London, was ioifullie receiued, and proclaimed king, and crowned of Athelnotus archbishop of Canturburie, in the yere of our Lord 1041, in the first yeere of the emperour Henrie the third, in the 9 yeere of Henrie the first of that name king of France, and in the first yeere of Magfinloch, alias Machabeda king of Scotland. Incontinentlie after [Sidenote: Queene Emma sent for.] his establishment in the rule of this realme, he sent into Flanders for his mother queene Emma, who during the time of hir banishment, had remained there. For Normandie in that season was gouerned by the French king, by reason of the minoritie of duke William, surnamed the bastard.

Moreouer, in reuenge of the wrong offered to queene Emma by hir sonne [Sidenote: The bodie of king Harold taken vp, and throwen into Thames.] in law Harold, king Hardicnute did cause Alfrike archbishop of Yorke and earle Goodwine, with other noble men to go to Westminster, and there to take vp the bodie of the same Harold, and withall appointed, that the head thereof should be striken off, and the trunk of it cast into the riuer of Thames. Which afterwards being found by fishers, was taken vp and buried in the churchyard of S. Clement [Sidenote: S. Clement Danes.] Danes without Temple barre at London. He committed the order and gouernement of things to the hands of his mother Emma, and of Goodwine [Sidenote: A tribute raised. *Hen. Hunt.*] that was erle of Kent. He leuied a sore tribute of his subiects here in England to pay the souldiers and mariners of his nauie, as first 21 thousand pounds, & 99 pounds, and afterward vnto 32 ships [Sidenote: *Simon Dun.* *Wil. Malm. Matth. West. Sim. Dun.*] there was a paiment made of a 11 thousand and 48 pounds. To euerie mariner

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of his nauie he caused a paiment of 8 marks to be made, and to euerie master 12 marks. About the paiment of this monie great grudge grew amongst the people, insomuch that two of his seruants, which were appointed collectors in the citie of Worcester, the one named Feader, and the other Turstane, were there slaine. In reuenge of which contempt a great part of the countrie with the citie was burnt, and the goods of the citizens put to the spoile by such power of lords and men of warre as the king had sent against them.

Shortlie after, Edward king Hardicnutes brother came foorth of Normandie to visit him and his mother queene Emma, of whome he was most ioifullie and honorable welcomed and interteined, and [Sidenote: *Matt. West. Ran. Higd. Marianus.*] shortlie after made returne backe againe. It should appeare by some writers, that after his comming ouer out of Normandie he remained still in the realme, so that he was not in Normandie when his halfe brother Hardicnute died, but here in England: although other make [Sidenote: *Polydor.*] other report, as after shall bee shewed. Also (as before ye haue heard) some writers seeme to meane, that the elder brother Alfred came ouer at the same time. But suerlie they are therein deceiued: for it was knowne well inough how tenderlie king Hardicnute loued his brethren by the mothers side, so that there was not anie of the lords [Sidenote: The bishop of Worcester accused for making away of Alfred.] in his daies, that durst attempt anie such iniurie against them. True it is, that as well earle Goodwine, as the bishop of Worcester (that was also put in blame and suspected for the apprehending and making away of Alfred, as before ye haue heard) were charged by Hardicnute as culpable in that matter, insomuch that the said bishop was expelled out of his see by Hardicnute: and after twelue moneths space was restored, by meanes of such summes of monie as he gaue by waie of amends.

[Sidenote: Earle Goodwin excuseth himselfe.] Earle Goodwine was also put to his purgation, by taking an oth that he was not guiltie. Which oth was the better allowed, by reason of such a present as he gaue to the king for the redeeming of his [Sidenote: The gift which earle Goodwin gaue to the king.] fauour and good will, that is to say, a ship with a sterne of gold, containing therein 80 souldiers, wearing on each of their armes two bracelets of gold of 16 ounces weight, a triple habergion guilt on their bodies, with guilt burgenets on their heads, a swoord with guilt hilts girded to their wastes, a battell-axe after the maner of the Danes on their left shoulder, a target with bosses and mails guilt in their left hand, a dart in their right hand: and thus to conclude, they were furnished at all points with armor and weapon accordinglie. [Sidenote: *Polydor.*] It hath beene said, that earle Goodwine minded to marie his daughter to one of these brethren, and perceiuing that the elder brother Alfred would disdaine to haue hir, thought good to dispatch him, that the other taking hir to wife, hee might be next heire to the crowne, and so at length inioy it, as afterwards came to passe.

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Also about that time, when the linage of the kings of England was in maner extinct, the English people were much carefull (as hath beene said) about the succession of those that should inioie the crowne. Wherevpon as one Brightwold a moonke of Glastenburie, that was afterward bishop of Wincester, or (as some haue written) of Worcester, studied oftentimes thereon: it chanced that he dreamed one night as he slept in his bed, that he saw saint Peter consecrate & annoint Edward the sonne of Egelred (as then remaining in exile in Normandie) king of England. And as he thought, he did demand of saint Peter, who should succeed the said Edward? Wherevnto answer was made by the apostle; Haue thou no care for such matters, for the kingdome of England is Gods kingdome. Which suerlie in good earnest may appeare by manie great arguments to be full true vnto such as shall well consider the state of this realme from time to time, how there hath beene euer gouernours raised vp to mainteine the maiestie of the kingdome, and to reduce the same to the former dignitie, when by anie infortunate mishap it hath beene brought in danger.

[Sidenote: The death of K. Hardicnute. *Sim. Dunel. Matth. West.* 1042.] But to returne now to king Hardicnute, after he had reigned two yeares lacking 10 daies, as he sat at the table in a great feast holden at Lambeth, he fell downe suddenlie with the pot in his hand, and so died not without some suspicion of poison. This chanced on the 8 of Iune at Lambeth aforesaid, where, on the same day a mariage was solemnized betweene the ladie Githa, the daughter of a noble man called Osgot Clappa, and a Danish lord also called Canute Prudan. His bodie was buried at Winchester besides his father. He was of nature [Sidenote: K. Hardicnute his conditions and liberalitie in housekeeping. *Hen. Hunt.*] verie curteous, gentle and liberall, speciallie in keeping good cheere in his house, so that he would haue his table couered foure times a day, & furnished with great plentie of meates and drinks, wishing that his seruants and all strangers that came to his palace, [Sidenote: Of whom the Englishmen learned excessiue feeding.] might rather leaue than want. It hath beene commonlie told, that Englishmen learned of him their excessiue gourmandizing & vnmeasurable filling of their panches with meates and drinkes, whereby they forgat the vertuous vse of sobrietie, so much necessarie to all estates and degrees, so profitable for all common-wealthes, and so commendable both in the sight of God, and all good men.

[Sidenote: The end of the Danish rulers.] In this Hardicnute ceased the rule of the Danes within this land, with the persecution which they had executed against the English nation, for the space of 250 yeres & more, that is to say, euer since the tenth yeere of Brithrike the king of Westsaxons, at what time they first began to inuade the English coasts. Howbeit (after others) they should seeme to haue ruled here but 207, reckoning from their bringing in by the Welshmen in despite of the Saxons, at which time they first began to inhabit here, which was 835 of Christ, 387 after the comming of the Saxons, and 35 neere complet of the reigne of Egbert.

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¶ But to let this peece of curiositie passe, this land felt that they had a time of arriual, a time of inuading, a time of ouerrunning, and a time of ouerruling the inhabitants of this maine continent. Wherof manifest proofes are at this day remaining in sundrie places, sundrie ruines I meane and wastes committed by them; vpon the which whensoever a man of a relenting spirit casteth his eie, he can not but enter into a dolefull consideration of former miseries, and lamenting the defacements of this Ile by the crueltie of the bloudthirstie enimie, cannot but wish (if he haue but “*Minimam misericordiae guttam quae maior est spatioso oceano,*” as one saith) and earnestlie desire in his heart that the like may neuer light vpon this land, but may be auerted and turned away from all christian kingdomes, through his mercie, whose wrath by sinne being set on fire, is like a consuming flame; and the sword of whose vengeance being sharpened with the whetstone of mens wickednesse, shall hew them in peeces as wood for the fornace.

Thus farre the tumultuous and tyrannicall regiment of the Danes, inferring fulnesse of afflictions to the English people, wherewith likewise the seuenth booke is shut vp.