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Translations of John Trevisa and of an Unknown Writer of the Fifteenth Century: Volume 6

Edited by Joseph Rawson Lumby

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### Polychronicon Ranulphi Higden, Monachi Cestrensis

Ranulf Higden (*d.* 1364) was a monk at the Abbey of St Werburgh in Chester. His most important literary work is this universal chronicle, which survives in over a hundred Latin manuscripts, testifying to its popularity. The earliest version of it dates from 1327, but Higden continued writing until his death, expanding and updating the text. It was also continued in other monastic houses, most importantly by John Malvern of Worcester. The English translation made by John Trevisa in the 1380s was also widely circulated and is included in this work, published in nine volumes for the Rolls Series between 1865 and 1886. The chronicle shows how fourteenth-century scholars understood world history and geography. Volume 6 concludes Book 5, mostly on Anglo-Saxon England, and contains the beginning of Book 6, from King Alfred to the mid-tenth century.

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VOLUME 6

EDITED BY JOSEPH RAWSON LUMBY



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RERUM BRITANNICARUM MEDII ÆVI  
SCRIPTORES,  
OR  
CHRONICLES AND MEMORIALS OF GREAT BRITAIN  
AND IRELAND  
DURING  
THE MIDDLE AGES.

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**THE CHRONICLES AND MEMORIALS**  
 OF  
**GREAT BRITAIN AND IRELAND**  
 DURING THE MIDDLE AGES.

PUBLISHED BY THE AUTHORITY OF HER MAJESTY'S TREASURY, UNDER  
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ON the 26th of January 1857, the Master of the Rolls submitted to the Treasury a proposal for the publication of materials for the History of this Country from the Invasion of the Romans to the reign of Henry VIII.

The Master of the Rolls suggested that these materials should be selected for publication under competent editors without reference to periodical or chronological arrangement, without mutilation or abridgment, preference being given, in the first instance, to such materials as were most scarce and valuable.

He proposed that each chronicle or historical document to be edited should be treated in the same way as if the editor were engaged on an *Editio Princeps*; and for this purpose the most correct text should be formed from an accurate collation of the best MSS.

To render the work more generally useful, the Master of the Rolls suggested that the editor should give an account of the MSS. employed by him, of their age and their peculiarities; that he should add to the work a brief account of the life and times of the author, and any remarks necessary to explain the chronology; but no other note or comment was to be allowed, except what might be necessary to establish the correctness of the text.

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The works to be published in octavo, separately, as they were finished ; the whole responsibility of the task resting upon the editors, who were to be chosen by the Master of the Rolls with the sanction of the Treasury.

The Lords of Her Majesty's Treasury, after a careful consideration of the subject, expressed their opinion in a Treasury Minute, dated February 9, 1857, that the plan recommended by the Master of the Rolls "was well calculated for the accomplishment of this important national object, in an effectual and satisfactory manner, within a reasonable time, and provided proper attention be paid to economy, in making the detailed arrangements, without unnecessary expense."

They expressed their approbation of the proposal that each Chronicle and historical document should be edited in such a manner as to represent with all possible correctness the text of each writer, derived from a collation of the best MSS., and that no notes should be added, except such as were illustrative of the various readings. They suggested, however, that the preface to each work should contain, in addition to the particulars proposed by the Master of the Rolls, a biographical account of the author, so far as authentic materials existed for that purpose, and an estimate of his historical credibility and value.

*Rolls House,  
December 1857.*

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MONACHI CESTRENSIS;

TOGETHER WITH THE

ENGLISH TRANSLATIONS OF JOHN TREVISA  
AND OF AN UNKNOWN WRITER OF  
THE FIFTEENTH CENTURY.

EDITED

BY

REV. JOSEPH RAWSON LUMBY, B.D.,  
VICAR OF ST. EDWARD'S, CAMBRIDGE :  
FELLOW OF ST. CATHARINE'S COLLEGE, AND  
LATE FELLOW OF MAGDALEN COLLEGE, CAMBRIDGE.

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# INTRODUCTION.

IN the present volume Higden, coming down more nearly to his own times, devotes, as we should expect, a much larger space to the affairs of his own country. The history commences with the close of the first quarter of the seventh century, and terminates in the reign of King Edgar, when Dunstan was archbishop of Canterbury, thus embracing a space of about three hundred and thirty years. It seems most convenient to notice the contents of each chapter in the order in which they come.

Contents  
of the  
present  
volume.

The first, which is the xiii<sup>th</sup> chapter of Higden's fifth book, opens with a notice of the mission of St. Birinus to preach to the Angles. His conversion of Cynegils<sup>1</sup> king of Wessex, and the erection of Dorchester, near Oxford, into an episcopal see, of which Birinus was made bishop, are recorded; as is also a miracle of walking on the sea performed by the saint on his landing. He had left some small matters on shipboard,<sup>2</sup> and not wishing to lose them, marched over the water to fetch them. Birinus was buried at Dorchester, but his body was afterwards removed to Winchester, though the canons of Dorchester denied this. The chronicle gives an anticipatory mention of the episcopal see of Dorchester

Lib. v.  
Cap. XIII.

Of St.  
Birinus,  
first bishop  
of Dor-  
chester.

<sup>1</sup> The name is generally written in the MSS. Kyngilsus.

<sup>2</sup> The *rescellæ* of the MSS. have been too much for the translators. Trevisa puts *rescellis* or *restelles*, and the Harleian version shirks the difficulty, and has "certeyne" "things of his." The word has

various forms, *recula*, *recella*, *reicula*, *rescula*, *resella*, and *rescella*, and is merely a diminutive of *res*. See Du Cange, s. v. *recula*, who explains it as *res parva seu parvi momenti*, and it is employed to translate the Greek *παραμύριον*.

being transferred to Lincoln at the time of the Norman Conquest. Bede and William of Malmesbury are the chief authorities for all that is recorded concerning both ecclesiastical and civil history in England.

East Anglia becomes Christian. In the notice of the East Anglian kingdom, which immediately follows, mention is made of the Christianization of that kingdom in the reign of Sigebert by a Burgundian bishop, Felix. This prelate had been a friend of Sigebert in his exile, and according to Bede applied to the archbishop Honorius for permission to become a preacher to the Angles. He was, like Birinus, created a bishop in Britain, and his see placed at Donmice.<sup>1</sup> Sigebert introduced into his kingdom some of the educational advantages which he had observed during his exile in Gaul, and after some time became a monk, but was induced to leave his monastic seclusion to aid in repelling the invasion of Penda, in which attempt he fell. The next king of East Anglia, Anna son of Æne, also fell in battle against Penda, against whose incursions the East Anglians were powerless to protect<sup>2</sup> themselves.

Visions of St. Furseus. The story of St. Furseus is briefly told, as having occurred in the reign of King Sigebert. The whole account of his visions is to be found in Bede, Eccl. Hist. iii. 19, and their character made this saint for a long time a great authority with the advocates of the doctrine of purgatory. The name of the place at which he founded a monastery, given in the text as Cunbrisburgh with variations of orthography as recorded in the notes, and

<sup>1</sup> This place, according to Bede's orthography, *Donmice*, is Dunwich, on the coast of Suffolk. The episcopal see of Dunwich, of which Felix was bishop for seventeen years, was afterwards translated to Thetford, and then to Norwich. The date of the foundation of the see is A.D. 630. See Godwin de Præsul. 423.

<sup>2</sup> The vast rampart defended by a ditch which bore the name of Reckendyke, though afterwards variously known as St. Edmund's dyke, the Devil's, and lastly, as Cnut's dyke, was made for the purpose of protecting the East Anglians from these and such like incursions of their neighbours. See Lappenberg, i. 242.

INTRODUCTION.

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written in Bede as Cnobheresburg, is identified with Burghcastle in Suffolk.<sup>1</sup> This visionary monk is said at length to have departed from England on account of the inroads of the heathen population into the Christian portion of the country, and to have died at Peronne in Gaul.

The history of the Papacy in this volume commences with the mention of the pontificate of Severinus, A.D. 639, and after him of John IV., in the same year, but no event is mentioned except the conversion<sup>2</sup> of the Jews in the time of the latter pope.

The account of the Roman Emperors begins with Heraclius (610–641), but the notice of that prince is very brief, his victories<sup>3</sup> are just mentioned, and his heresy, which is called the heresy of the Jacobites.

The next chapter is occupied with an account of Mahomet and the Saracens, who at this time were making great inroads on the Christian world. Higden tells us that he is greatly assisted in his compilation of the history by the works of Stephen of Canterbury and Giraldus Cambrensis. He relates how it was through the intestine discords of Europe that the Saracens were enabled to make good their footing in Spain. It was when Boniface V.<sup>4</sup> was pope (617–626), and Heraclius was emperor, that Mahomet's influence began to wax strong. The story is told how Mahomet was aided in

Papal history, pope Severinus.

The Roman Empire.

Cap. xiv. Of Mahomet and the Saracens.

Traditions about Mahomet.

<sup>1</sup> See Smith's edition of Bede's E. H., p. 122.

<sup>2</sup> Platina has no mention of this conversion, though he gives many incidents of this brief pontificate. See fol. 43 b. and 44 a.

<sup>3</sup> The wars of Heraclius were against Cosroes II. king of Persia, by whom he was defeated at first, and asked to deny the Christian faith, but being afterwards victorious over the Persian monarch and his successor, he was able to recover the reputed cross of Christ.

The erroneous doctrinal opinions of this emperor were those of the Monothelites. The Jacobites mentioned in the text were Monophysites, with whom it is said that Cyrus, when made patriarch of Alexandria, formed a union, and in this way the two sets of opinions became confounded. See Moreri, s. v. *Monothelites*.

<sup>4</sup> An account of Mahomet makes almost the whole of Platina's notice of the pontificate of Boniface V. See fol. 42 b.

More  
 authentic  
 notices of  
 Mahomet.

his imposture by a Christian monk,<sup>1</sup> and certain absurd traditional tales are repeated of the way in which public attention was drawn to the rising prophet. Even Higden notes the untrustworthy nature of such materials, calling them in a rubric *quæ vulgariter traduntur*, and distinguishing them from *quod magis communiter approbatur*.<sup>2</sup> The monk Sergius is said to have been the victim of a disappointed ambition, and on that account to have have leagued himself with Mahomet.

We are told how the prophet, fatherless and motherless, lived while a boy under his uncle's protection ; of his travels and communications with both Jews and Christians, of his marriage with Chadijah,<sup>3</sup> and of the greater influence which he acquired through this union. He allowed circumcision,<sup>4</sup> and forbade the use of swine's flesh to his followers, in imitation of Judaism. And he imitated Christian baptism in the frequent ablutions which he enjoined on his followers. His regulations with regard to wives and concubines are noticed, and the strict injunctions he laid down in reference to sobriety. The tribute of recognition given by Mahomet to the pro-

<sup>1</sup> This monk, who is called *Sergius* by Christian writers, and *Boheira* by the Mohammedans, is said to have been met with by Mahomet in a visit to Syria. The story in the biographies of Mahomet differs somewhat from that in the text, and perhaps may be summarized from a note of Mr. Muir's *Life of Mahomet* (vol. i. p. 35). Mahomet with the rest of his caravan alighted close to the hermitage or monastery occupied by Boheira. The monk perceived by a cloud which hovered over the company, by the boughs bending to shelter one of them, and by other marvellous tokens, that the party contained the prophet shortly about to arise. He

entertained them, but on their assembling he perceived that the object of his search was not among them. At his request they summoned Mahomet, and Boheira questioned him, examined his body to discover the seal of prophecy, and found it plainly impressed upon his back. He then referred to his sacred books, found all the marks to correspond, and declared the boy to be the expected apostle. See also Rodwell's *Koran*, preface, p. xvi.

<sup>2</sup> See text, p. 20.

<sup>3</sup> Called in the text *Cadigan*.

<sup>4</sup> It ought to be noted that circumcision is not mentioned in the *Koran*. See Rodwell, p. 558.

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phetic character of Moses, John the Baptist, and Christ is mentioned.<sup>1</sup> Higden knows that the Koran represents Christ as taken up to heaven, and not put to death, but adds to the story really given there the legend that Judas Iscariot was changed into the form of Jesus and crucified in his stead. He tells of Abraham's visit to Mecca<sup>2</sup> to build the House of Prayer, in much the same manner as it is spoken of in the Koran. The Mahomedan paradise is described, and the books mentioned which Mahomet admitted to have been divinely inspired. Then follows an absurd account of how Mahomet is said to have brought the Koran into notice as a book sent down from heaven, and the great Mahomedan fast is said to be observed on account of this occurrence. The mode of observance of this fast is given very much as in the text of the Koran.<sup>3</sup> A reason is given why Mahomet pretended to have communications with the archangel Michael, and mention is made of the spread of the faith of Mahomet after his death. This is followed by two stories, one given on the authority of archbishop Turpin, of a marvellous statue of Mahomet on the shores of Spain, and another, without authority, of the treatment accorded by Saladin to two Cistercian monks, and how he essayed to prove that the rule of Mahomet was better than the rule of St. Benedict, which provokes an outburst from Higden against Saladin.

Precepts,  
&c. of the  
Koran.

In Chapter xv. Higden notices first the succession of Heraclonas<sup>4</sup> after his father Heraclius. His reign is in

Cap. xv.  
Heraclonas  
em-  
peror.

<sup>1</sup> The passages alluded to are all in the Koran, Sura xix; on Moses (Rodwell), p. 114; on John the Baptist, p. 111; and on Jesus, p. 112.

<sup>2</sup> *Mecca* is written *Matha* in all the MSS. See text, p. 28, and for the Mohamedan account of the building of the Caaba by Abraham, see Rodwell, pp. 433 note, and 503.

<sup>3</sup> See Rodwell, p. 389, especially the passage about discerning a white thread from a black one.

<sup>4</sup> The more usual form of the name is Heraclonas, but this is found in no MS. of Higden which I have consulted. The double form is noticed by Henninius, *Hist. Imp. Rom.*, p. 129, note.

Pope  
Theodore I.

British  
history :  
Ercombert  
king of  
Kent.

Constau-  
tine III.,  
emperor  
of Rome.

the text stated to have been two years. Other authorities say that it lasted but for six months. Mention is made of the banishment of him and of his mother, together with the mutilation of the latter. Higden omits to mention the mutilation of the son which also took place.<sup>1</sup> Theodorus the next pope is said to have held the papal throne for six<sup>2</sup> years. The only particular mentioned under his time is a list of the works of Isidore<sup>3</sup> bishop of Seville, who lived during his papacy.

Returning to the affairs of Britain, mention is made of the death of Edbald king of Kent, who was succeeded by his son Ercombert. His ecclesiastical regulations are spoken of with praise, and so is his total destruction of idols. In the account of his daughter Erkengoda, and her maternal aunt Ethelburga, instances are given of the fondness of English princes at this period for attaching themselves to continental monasteries, and in some cases inaugurating new foundations. Brie, Chelles, and Andeli<sup>4</sup> are mentioned as favourite places for such retirement.

Resuming (from Paulus Diaconus, who is his great authority for this subject) the history of the Roman emperors, Higden tells of the reign of Constantine the third, but only that he was misled by the patriarch Paulus, as his grandfather had been by Sergius, and drove pope Martin<sup>5</sup> into exile to Pontus. But in the

<sup>1</sup> Paulus Diaconus, H. M., lib. xviii., in rebus Heraclii, ait, lingua Martinæ, et naso Heracleonæ abscisso, ad principatum Constantem, filium Constantini, nepotem Heraclii provehunt.

<sup>2</sup> Platina gives the time of his pontificate as more than eleven years. See fol. 44 *b*.

<sup>3</sup> Isidore died in 636.

<sup>4</sup> The orthography of these names as given in Higden's text varies somewhat from that of the best

editions of Bede. On the identification of them with Brie-sur-Yeres, Chelles, not far from Paris, and Andeli-sur-Seine. See the notes to Smith's Bede, p. 111.

<sup>5</sup> In the notice of Pope Martin, Platina, fol. 44 *b*, says : " Theodorus (this was the name of Constantine's emissary) cum salutandi causa adire pontificem simularet, homini catenas injecit, eumque Constantinopolim mittit."

next clause (p. 54), he mixes up the history and fate of Constans II. (who succeeded Constantine III., but whom our author never notices) with the life of his father Constantine III.<sup>1</sup> It was Constans who came and spoiled Rome, and who was murdered in his bath at Syracuse, A.D. 668.

The emperor Constans II. not named by Higden.

The historian now returns to the affairs of Britain, and tells of the death of Cynegils, king of the West Saxons, and the succession of Kenwalcus his son, who though at first professing Christianity as his father had done, not only refused to be baptised, but strove to bring about in Wessex a relapse into paganism similar to that which had taken place in other states, yet his expulsion, and conversion which followed soon after through converse with Anna the pious king of the East Angles, and his steady adherence to the Christian faith after his restoration, prove that his conviction was sincerely shared by his people. An elder son of Cynegils (or according to William of Malmesbury, a brother), named Quichelinus, had died before his father. Certain appointments of bishops made by Kenwalcus are mentioned, as also his wars<sup>2</sup> against the British, and his successful campaign against Wulferus, the son of Penda, who had become king of Mercia on the death of his father.

Of Kenwalcus king of Wessex.

According to the Saxon Chronicle, in the year 642, according to other authorities in 639, Oswald king of Northumberland was defeated and slain at Maserfeld<sup>2</sup> by Penda. The cruel treatment to which that king sub-

Death of St. Oswald, king of Northumbria.

<sup>1</sup> See also pp. 108, 110, 112, where the circumstance of the death of the emperor by murder while in his bath is again related as having befallen Constantine, and on p. 114 Constantine IV. is named as the next emperor.

<sup>2</sup> The names of the two battle fields are given in Willelmus, one

as "locus qui dicitur Witgeornes-brug," and the other "juxta montem qui dicitur Pene."

<sup>3</sup> There is a place thus named near Winwick in Lancashire, but a more probable scene of this battle is a Maserfeld in Shropshire, which is now called Oswestry. See notes to Smith's edition of Bede, p. 112.

Cruel treatment of his body. jected the dead body of Oswald proves the fierceness of his nature and the dread in which Oswald had been held. The head and arms of the dead king were set on poles. These limbs were removed and buried in the following year by Oswy, the brother and successor of Oswald. His body was buried at Bardeney in Lindsey, through the care of his niece Ostrida. Some years afterwards it is said to have been moved to Gloucester by Elfleda queen of Mercia. A story is narrated that an arm of St. Oswald was at Peterborough, but of this Higden declares himself incredulous.

Story of Cesara, wife of the king of Persia. A story follows of Cesara, the wife of a king of Persia who, on becoming a Christian, came to Constantinople, was baptized, and refused to return to her husband unless he would accept the same faith which she had embraced. Learning this the king came to Constantinople, and after being baptized, returned home with his wife.

Of the Northumbrian kingdom. After Oswald's death Northumbria was once more divided into two kingdoms. Oswy, brother of Oswald, reigned in Bernicia, and Oswyne, son of Osric, in Deira; but after seven years Oswyne was slain through the treachery of Count Humbald by the agents of Oswy. The place of the murder is called by Bede, Ingetlingum.<sup>1</sup> Odilwald succeeded Oswyne in Deira.

Of the papacy : pope Martin I. In the notice of the next pope, Martin I., the points dwelt on are, that an assassin who intended to murder the pontiff was struck blind during his attempt, and that Pope Martin was banished by Constantine, as we have already noticed.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Identified with Gilling near Richmond in Yorkshire. The date was A.D. 651, and the agent in the murder was an officer named Ethelwine. See Bede, H. E., iii. 14.

<sup>2</sup> There is great confusion in the Latin text at this point, which must have existed also in the time when the versions were made. The exarchs of Ravenna at this time were the agents of the imperial authority in Italy. The exarch in the early part of Pope Martin's pontificate was Theodore Calliopas. After him came Olympius, and according to Platina (fol. 44 b.) it

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Frontmatter

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## INTRODUCTION.

XV

The death of Paulinus bishop of Rochester is noticed, and also of Felix already named as first bishop of the East Angles. The date of the death of Bishop Paulinus was A.D. 644. He was succeeded by Bishop Ithamar, who was the first Saxon raised to that dignity, and Felix by Bishop Thomas. The reconversion of the people of Essex is the next subject dwelt on. Since the expulsion of Mellitus, the Christian faith had been suppressed in this province; but now King Sigebert, at the instance of King Oswy of Northumbria, abjured idolatry, and was baptized by Finan bishop of Lindisfarne; and Cedde, an Englishman, consecrated by Finan<sup>1</sup> was made bishop among the East Saxons. Here follows a *narratio* or story concerning Bishop Cedde, drawn from some independent source. This is immediately succeeded by a renewed notice of the death of Oswyne, which leads to a narrative illustrating the liberality of Bishop Aidan, and the way in which King Oswyne, when rebuked by him, accepted the correction. Aidan is said to have foretold the death of this king, and himself to have not long survived him.<sup>2</sup> St. Cuth-

English Church history.

East Saxons return to Christianity.

Cedde, bishop of the East Saxons.

was enjoined on the latter to bring the pope alive to Constantinople, or, if that were not possible, to put him to death in Italy. It is of the officer of Olympius that the story of the sudden blinding is told. So that "Spartarius Olympi" in the text probably means a javelin-bearer belonging to Olympius: *Spartarius* being, as the version of Trevisa takes it, = *Spartharius*, a bearer of the *sparth* or battle-axe (see Du Cange, s. v.). Unless some word such as *lictor*, or something equivalent thereto, have dropped out between *Spartarius* and *Olympi*, the former could hardly be a proper name. As the whole story is mythical, it should be mentioned

that according to the best authorities it was Theodore Calliopas who sent Pope Martin to Constantinople. See Moreri, s. v. Martin, whose authorities are Anastasius *in vit. Pontif.* and Baronius, *Annales*.

<sup>1</sup> The *Ithancastre*, *Penta*, and *Tilleburgh* mentioned in this place in connexion with the subsequent preaching of Finan among the East Angles, are identified respectively with the Roman *Othona*, now St. Peters on the wall; the river Freshwell, and Tilbury. See Smith's Bede, H. E., notes, p. 127.

<sup>2</sup> The bishop only lived twelve days after the king's death. Oswy, to atone for the murder of Oswyne, founded a monastery at Ongetlin-

b 2

bert saw the soul of St. Aidan borne by angels into heaven. The death of St. Birinus is next recorded. His episcopate had continued for fourteen years.

Pope Eugenius I. Pope Eugenius I. held the pontificate for three years, but Higden says nothing of his actions, only noticing that this was the time when the abbey of Lestingay was founded, the land having been granted to Cedde by Odilwald king of Deira.

Cap. xvi. Vitalian was pope after Eugenius for fourteen years, and he it was who sent into England that great ecclesiastical reformer, Archbishop Theodore. The two archbishops who preceded him, and who are just mentioned by Higden, were Honorius and Deusdedit, the latter of whom died, according to the Saxon Chronicle, in 664.

Mercia becomes Christian A.D. 655. When Penda king of Mercia had been overthrown and slain at the battle of Wingfield<sup>1</sup> by Oswy king of Northumberland, the kingdom of Mercia, under Weda<sup>2</sup> the son of Penda, embraced the Christian faith. Weda had already married Elfleda the daughter of Oswy, and a son of Oswy had married Weda's sister. We next come to a notice of Benedict Biscop, who was a minister of King Oswy, and first had charge of the education of the historian Bede. He was the first abbot of the monastery of Wearmouth, and made many journeys to Rome, and returned from thence very largely supplied with books, and also with relics, for which he found a place in the monasteries of Peter and Paul, which he founded on the Wear. He also introduced foreign artizans into England, and the art of glazing windows is especially men-

Benedict Biscop, his library, monasteries, and encouragement of artizans.

gum, *i. e.*, Gilling, near Richmond. See Lappenberg, i. p. 164.  
<sup>1</sup> On this important turning point in the history of our island, see Freeman's Norman Conquest, vol. i. p. 37. The place is said to be on the river Winwed in the text, p. 82, which is believed to be the Aire.  
<sup>2</sup> This king's name is given in Bede as *Peada*. The confusion arises from the great similarity between the two letters P and W in the oldest English alphabet. All the MSS. of Higden write the name with W.

tioned as brought in by him. Higden quotes Bede's panegyric upon his master. By a retrospective glance he then goes back to the slaughter of Anna by Penda king of Mercia, and this leads the way to some particulars of the death of Penda himself, which has not hitherto been fully noticed in the text. It is also told how Abbot Bothulph founded the monastery of Icanno, *i.e.*, Boston in Lincolnshire. We are also informed of Oswy's vow before the battle between him and Penda, which no doubt, to Higden's mind, had great effect on the result. The Northumbrian monarch promised to devote his daughter Elfreda to the religious life, as it was then called, and also to build and endow twelve abbeys. Both these parts of his vow Oswy scrupulously fulfilled after his victory. His daughter was entrusted to St. Hilda, who was then presiding over the convent at Hertsey,<sup>1</sup> but who was afterwards the famous abbess of Whitby. Of the abbeys, six were founded in Deira and six in Bernicia. King Oswy seems to have ruled in Mercia as well as in Northumberland, for he is said to have ceded to his son-in-law Weda (or Peada) the kingdom of South Mercia, and when this latter monarch was murdered through the treachery of his wife, Oswy ruled over Mercia, till the Mercians rebelling set up Wulferus, another son of Penda, as their king.

For the first time in this volume Higden makes mention of the kings of the Franks. He takes up their history with Clodoneus II.,<sup>2</sup> son of Dagobert, but only records that he caused one of the arms of the corpse of St. Denys to be cut off. Moreri, who relates that the king's intent was that the relic should be conveyed to his own oratory, calls the act "more pious than criminal."

<sup>1</sup> This name is given in Bede as *Heruteu*, and is identified with Hartlepool, in the county of Durham. Bede, H. E., iii. 24.

<sup>2</sup> This is Clovis II., who reigned from A.D. 644-660. See Moreri, s. Clovis II.

Higden, on the contrary, says it was done “instigante  
“ diabolus.”

Lombard history. From Paulus we have next an anecdote of Grimaldus king of the Lombards, which shows that even in those rude times an act of fidelity was not unappreciated.

Next is related the marriage of St. Etheldreda to Egfrid, son of king Oswy, but more will be said of her in connexion with the abbey at Ely, in a later passage.

Hunarus, prince of the Saracens, is said to have built a Mahometan temple in Jerusalem at this period.

Kingdom of Kent : Egbert reigns nine years. The history turns back now to the affairs of the kingdom of Kent. Ercombert dies, and is succeeded by his son Egbert. Archbishop Deusdedit having died, the kings of Kent and Northumberland sent Wyghard to pope Vitalian to be appointed archbishop ; but he died of the plague, which then raged in England, and so the pope appointed the monk of Tarsus, Theodore. The mention of the plague gives Higden occasion to tell the story of a monk Egbert, who was sick, but was restored to health by virtue of his earnest prayers.

Cap. xvii. English church history. This chapter, which deals mainly with the church history of England, commences with the record of the deaths of bishops Finan and Aidan, and the appointment of Colman as bishop of Northumbria. Mention is made also of the ordination of Wylfrid, by Agilbert bishop of Wessex. Then comes a long notice of a conference about the Paschal question. The decision given

Of the keeping of Easter. by king Oswy was, that it would be best to keep Easter according to the tradition of St. Peter’s observance, lest that powerful door-keeper should close heaven against them. Bishop Colman did not approve of the decision, and retired from England to Scotland. Higden then gives a rule for the correct finding of Easter day. On the retirement of Colman, Wylfrid was made archbishop of York ; and Bishop Agilbert, indignant at a subdivision of his diocese, went over into Gaul, whither Wylfrid went to be consecrated by him. Here is introduced

from Paulus a story of the wish of Constans II. (here also wrongly called Constantinus) to recover Italy from the Lombards, and of his defeat.<sup>1</sup> The reason for the success of the Lombards is said to have been their devotion to the worship of St. John the Baptist, who in consequence was their great protector.

During the absence of Wylfrid, it appears that Oswy, Arch-bishop Wylfrid. influenced by the Scottish party, appointed Cedda arch-bishop of York. When Wylfrid learned this, he retired submissively to his cloisters in the abbey of Ripon; but afterwards archbishop Theodore, in his visitation of the Northumbrian kingdoms, restored Wylfrid to the see to which he had been first appointed, and after a time Cedda was made by him bishop of Lichfield.<sup>2</sup> Here is inserted a notice of the building of the monastery of Abendon, and the death in Gaul of St. Leger, in the tyrannical times of Ebroynus, the *major domus* of king Theodoric.<sup>3</sup> Also the succession of pope Adeodatus (669–Pope Adeodatus. 676), after Vitalian in whose time the body of St. Benedict, with that of his sister, St. Scholastica, are said to have been removed from Mount Cassinus, and conveyed to a monastery near Orleans.<sup>4</sup>

Omitting Constans II., Higden mentions as the next Cap. xviii. emperor Constantine IV., known as Pogonatus; Roman Empire : <sup>5</sup> he was the son of Constans II. No particulars of his reign are Constantine IV.

<sup>1</sup> He was defeated by Grimbold king of the Lombards, but yet went to Rome, and spoiled that city. See Henninius, *Hist. Imp. Rom.*, under Constans II.

<sup>2</sup> See Lappenberg, i. 176, where a very full account of the earlier life of Wylfrid is given.

<sup>3</sup> Constantinus here (p. 112) mentioned should, as above, be Constans II.

<sup>4</sup> Of this, Platina, fol. 45 a, 46 b, makes no mention. That which is especially noticed by him is the in-

stitution of Litanies by this pope for the mitigation of the alarming portents of his time, such as a comet which appeared for three months, great rains, and thunderstorms such as had never been known.

<sup>5</sup> Henninius remarks that this Constantine is by some called Constantine V., which of course he would be if his father were Constantine as Higden here and everywhere else names him. See *Hist. Imp. Rom.*, p. 134, note.

Constan- tine IV. emperor.	given, except its duration, which was seventeen years. The death of Grimwald king of the Lombards, from the bursting of a vein after bloodletting, is noticed. <sup>1</sup> The history then dwells on the arrival of archbishop Theodore, and on his reforms. His birth, education, and age are recorded. Pope Vitalian associated with him, when he sent him to Britain, the abbot Adrian. On his arrival he went over the entire island, and introduced many new regulations. He had schools established where singing and mathematics were taught, and the study of both Greek and Latin was encouraged. He regulated and increased the episcopate. His treatment of Cedda has already been noticed. The character of the clerical order stood high in his time. <sup>2</sup> The succession of Egfrid to the throne of Northumbria after Oswy's death is mentioned, but it is mainly done that a fuller notice may be given to St. Etheldreda who was his wife. Egfrid was her second husband, her first having been Tondebert, prince of the South Girwies. Her manner of life when she became abbess of Ely is described, and we are told that she survived in that dignity for seven years. The narrative then goes back to the synod which was assembled by archbishop Theodore. <sup>3</sup> Higden mentions five out of the ten provisions which were agreed to by this assembly.
Arch- bishop Theodore.	
His re- forms.	
St. Ethel- dreda.	
A.D. 673.	
Provisions of the synod of Hertford.	

<sup>1</sup> The reference given in the text, which is <i>Petrus</i> , should be Paulus Diaconus, lib. v.	attainments with the rest of the Christian clerical world.
<sup>2</sup> On Archbishop Theodore, and the universal acceptance of his reforms, see Lappenberg, i. 173. He made general the use of the Gregorian chant, and brought the clergy of this island to a level in	<sup>3</sup> All the MSS. and versions give the name of the meeting place of the synod as <i>Tedford</i> or <i>Tetford</i> , but Bede writes it Herutford, and it was at Hertford, which was a frequent residence of the kings of Essex.

INTRODUCTION.

xxi

Agilbertus is mentioned here, after which the history turns to the kingdoms of Kent and Wessex.

Egbert king of Kent, was succeeded by his brother <sup>Kingdoms of Kent and</sup> Lothair, and Kenwalcus king of Wessex left his king- <sup>Wessex.</sup> dom, as some say, under the dominion of his wife Sex- <sup>Wessex.</sup> burga, at his death, though Bede says that for ten years it was subdivided among several petty princes.

Chad bishop of Lichfield died, and was succeeded by <sup>Death of</sup> Wynfrid, but he was soon deposed, and Sexwolfus put <sup>St. Chad.</sup> into his place. Sexwolfus had been abbot of Medehamstede, *i.e.*, Peterborough. In the papacy Bonus<sup>1</sup> (676–678) succeeded Adeodatus, but only held the papal power for a year and a half, and Higden mentions no more than this. He next proceeds to notice the monastic foundations of St. Erkenwold, who was third Bishop of London. These were two monasteries, one at Chertsey in Surrey, and the other at Barking in Essex. Ethelburga, sister of the founder, was abbess of the latter.

The chronicle now turns to the kingdom of Wessex. <sup>Kingdoms of Wessex</sup> Oskwyne<sup>2</sup> became king when Sexburga had either died or been expelled, and reigned three years. He made himself famous by a great victory which he gained over Wulferus king of Mercia at a place called Wydenhale in the text, which Lappenberg (i. 256) identifies with Bedwin in <sup>and of</sup> Wiltshire. After Wulferus, Etheldred became king of <sup>Mercia.</sup> Mercia. The widow of Wulferus, Ermenilda, with her daughter, afterwards the famous St. Werburg, became nuns at Ely. After a short notice of the wintering of the Danes in England, which proceeding marks a stage when their inroads had gone beyond the mere desire of plunder, the chronicler returns to his notice of the family

<sup>1</sup> The name is thus given in all the MSS. and texts, but should be Donus or Dominus, see Platina, fol. 46 a.

<sup>2</sup> This name is elsewhere given as Æscwine, or Escuin, and two of

the MSS. have Elkwine. For more particulars concerning the West Saxon kingdom in the time between the death of Kenwalcus and the reign of Oskwyne, see Lappenberg, i. 254–5.

Of the family of Wulferus of Mercia. influence of Kyneswyda, a sister of Wulferus, who was wife of King Offa, that that monarch took his pilgrimage to Rome. The chapter concludes with the mention of the papacy of Agatho (A.D. 678), in whose time was held the sixth council of Constantinople, against the errors of the Monothelites.<sup>1</sup>

Pope Agatho and the sixth council of Constantinople. Cap. xix. Thierry I. king of the Franks. English affairs. This chapter opens with the mention of Theodorus as king of the Franks. He succeeded Clothaire his father,<sup>2</sup> according to Higden's statement, and reigned eighteen years. Afterwards turning to the affairs of England, mention is made of the invasion of Kent by the king of Mercia, Etheldred; of the fourth journey of Benedict Biscop to Rome, at which time he is said to have brought back with him John the precentor; of a great battle near the Trent fought between Etheldred and Egfrid king of Northumbria. After this the history proceeds with the expulsion of Wylfrid from his see by king Egfrid. This was done with the sanction of Theodore the archbishop, and is said to have been at the instigation of the wife<sup>3</sup> whom Egfrid married after Etheldreda's retirement into the cloister. The injured prelate appeals to Rome, and he is heard, and furnished by pope Agatho with a letter in which his deprivation was pronounced uncanonical. Of this, however, the authorities in England took no heed, but imprisoned the aggrieved bishop,

Deprivation of Wylfrid.

<sup>1</sup> It was at this council that the title of *Œcumenical* or *Universal* bishop, which Pope Gregory had not only denounced in others but rejected for himself, was ascribed to Agatho by his representatives, and the bishops of Rome henceforth usually assumed it. See Robertson's *Church History*, iii. 2, and notes.

<sup>2</sup> This statement of Higden evidently refers to Thierry I., but he was the son of Clovis II., and not of Clothaire. See Moreri, s. v.

<sup>3</sup> As two bishoprics were actually founded in the place of the one which Wylfrid had held, it has been suggested that the wish to do this was pleaded as an excuse for the apparently harsh proceedings against Bishop Wylfrid. Soames, *Ang. Sax. Ch.*, p. 70.