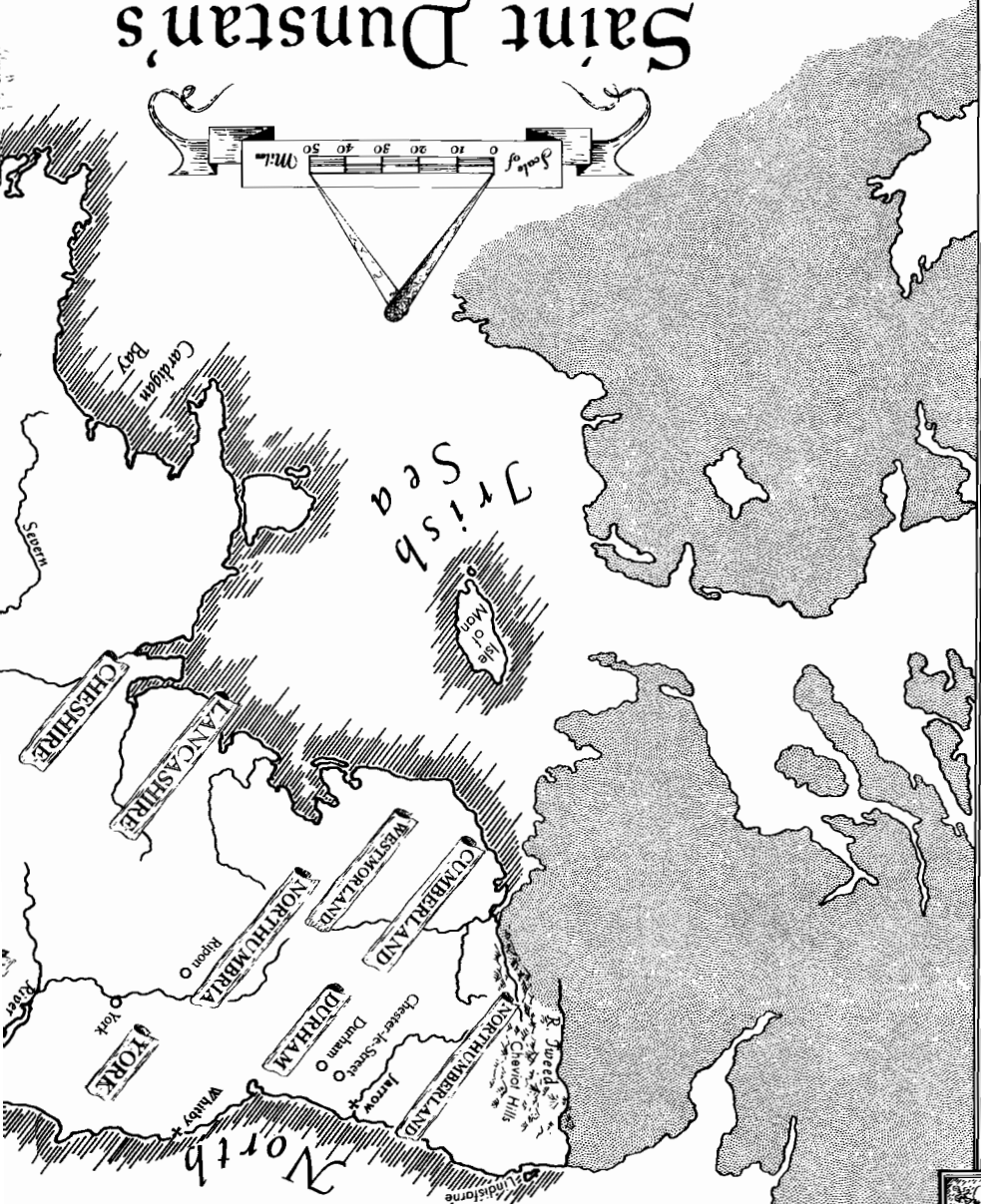
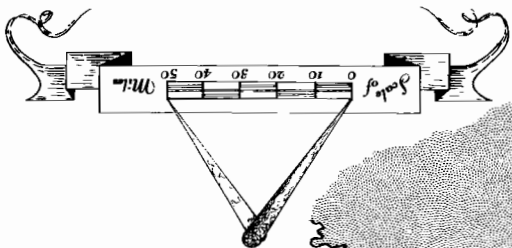
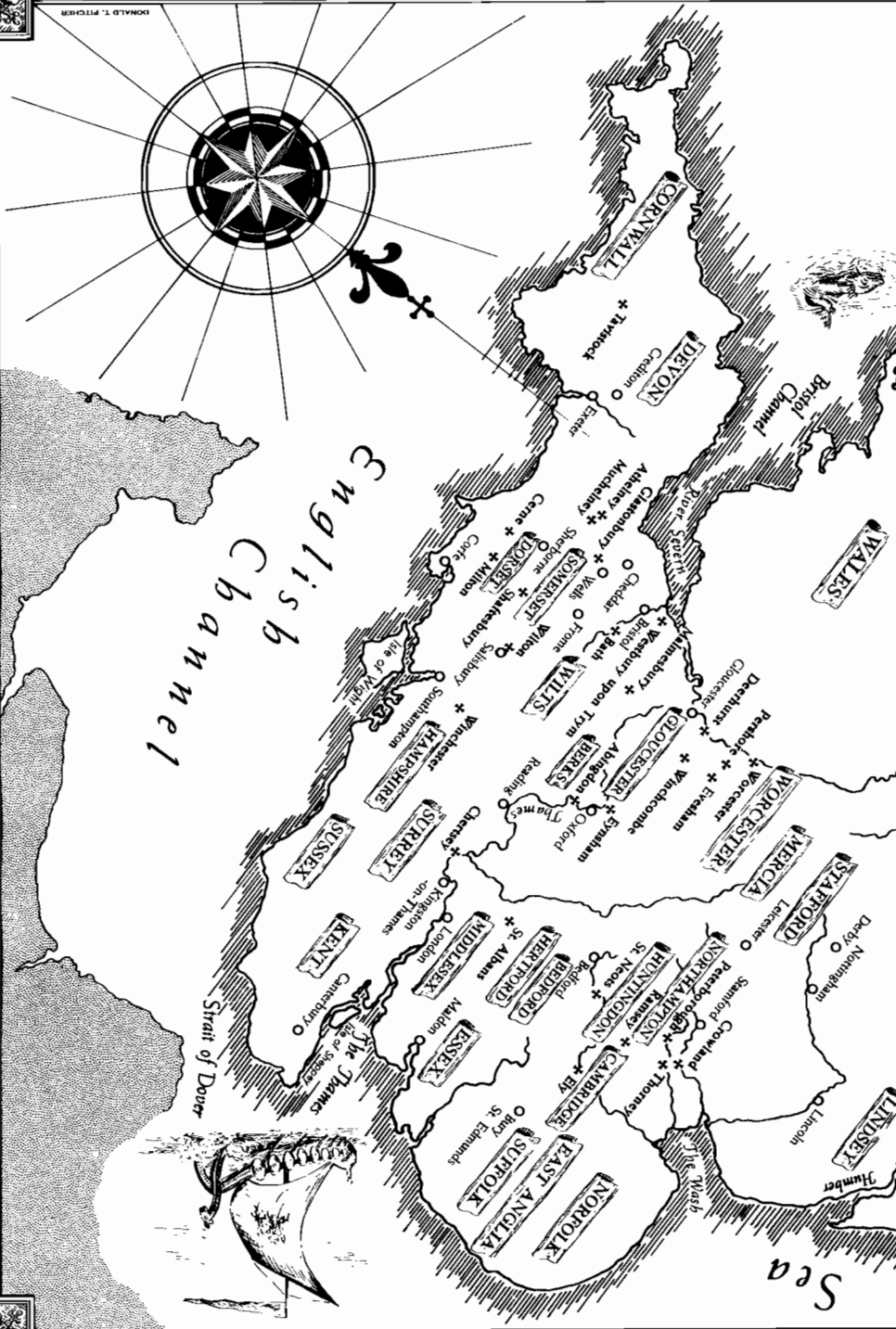


Saint Dunstan's England





English Channel

Strait of Dover

Sea





OF CANTERBURY
Saint Dunstan

THE GATEWAY TO THE MIDDLE AGES
ANGLO-SAXON SAINTS AND SCHOLARS
ALCUIN, FRIEND OF CHARLEMAGNE
SAINT DUNSTAN OF CANTERBURY

By Eleanor Shipley Duckett

NEW YORK
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ELEANOR SHIPLEY DUCKETT

by

THE TENTH CENTURY
OF MONASTIC REFORM IN
A STUDY



CANTERBURY
OF
Saint Dunstan



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FIRST EDITION

BRUCE DICKINS
TO

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THIS BOOK is offered both to college students and to general readers. It has two aims. First, it attempts to describe the life and work of Saint Dunstan, in connection with his colleagues and against the background of his world, for the many people who are interested in the churches and the societies which bear his name. Secondly, it tries to give a general picture of monastic reform in the tenth century, not only in England, where Saint Dunstan led this movement, but on the Continent, since all monastic reform of this time, however individual in origin, rose from a common motive, was linked in many places and points by intercourse and influence, and presents a most fruitful subject for comparison and contrast.

The details of this picture, concerning men and their movements, rest here upon the primary sources left to us, in Latin and in Old English. At the same time, its author must gratefully rejoice, *felix opportunitate scribendi*, in the light that in recent years has been thrown upon the various paths of this dark century: upon its monastic history, in England, by Dom David Knowles, by Dom Thomas Symons; on the Continent, by Dom Ursmer Berlière, by Dom Philibert Schmitz, by Dom Kassius Hallinger, by E. de

Foreword



Moreau, S. J., by Philip Grierson, by Emilie Amann, and Auguste Dumas: upon its character, political, social, and literary, in England, by Sir Frank Stenton, by Dorothy Whitelock, by D. J. V. Fisher, by F. E. Harmer; on the Continent, by Ph. Lauer, by Ch. Pfister, by R. Parisot, by Gustav Glotz: upon its art, by A. W. Clapham, by D. Talbot Rice, and by Francis Wormald. Among the names of earlier days, no student of Dunstan can progress without constant reading of the books of Bishop Stubbs, and of the former Dean of Wells, J. Armitage Robinson; no reader of medieval monastic history of the Continent can omit to acknowledge his debt to Sackur and to Hauck. Space is lacking in which to print the multitude of names that might well find place here. Those that come most readily to mind will be recognized in the footnotes and in the necessarily brief list given on the last pages of this book.

Once again most gladly I give thanks to those who have directly aided me in my work: to Storer B. Lunt, President of the house of W. W. Norton and Company, and to his generous and friendly Staff; to the scholars and experts of both countries of my home. In America, to Mary Ellen Chase, to Edna R. Williams, to Sidney R. Packard; to the Librarian and Library Staff of Smith College, of the Forbes Library in Northampton, of the Widener Library at Harvard, and the Sterling Library at Yale. In England, in the University of Cambridge, to Nora Kershaw Chadwick, for her aid in matters of Anglo-Saxon history and literature, to Philip Grierson, for his authority in the mediæval history of the Netherlands, to Arthur Tilloson, Secretary of the Cambridge University Library, and to Harold Pink, of its Department of Western Manuscripts; in the University of Oxford, to Dorothy Whitelock, for her direction in problems of this tenth century; in the University of Durham, to

Bertam Colgrave, for his knowledge of the mediæval *Lives* of Saints.

For my book and its statements and theories I alone am responsible; its errors are mine. I have been bold, however, to inscribe on its page of dedication the name of the Eltington and Bosworth Professor of Anglo-Saxon in my own University of Cambridge, moved thereto by a lively sense of gratitude for that lightening of darkness which he so often has given me in the company of so many other students beset by problems of books, Latin and Anglo-Saxon, ancient, mediæval, and modern.

E. S. D.

Northampton, Massachusetts

Saint Dunstan
OF CANTERBURY

¹ Leslie A. St. L. Toke, *Bosworth Falter*, ed. Gasquet and Bishop, 1908, 133ff.; Armistage Robinson, *BASP*, IV, 1918, 34ff. (Reference in these notes, unless otherwise indicated, is made to pages; abbreviations are explained on pp. 231f., below.)

For behind Dunstan and his work lay a century of invasion, ravaging, and conquest by the Vikings from northern Europe. From Norway to his own West Saxon shore raiders had first come to draw blood in the days of Beorhtric, who ruled Wessex from 786 to 802; in 793 northern England had been struck by Norwegian descent on Lindisfarne, in the following year on Jarrow, monasteries hallowed by the memory of Cuthbert, of Benedict Biscop, and of Bede. Forty years later, in 835, the Danes, grown to great strength under their King Horik, turned from worrying the coast of Frisia to land on the isle of Sheppey off the shore of Kent. From this time onward, year after year saw Danish raids, aided by

SAINT DUNSTAN was born in Wessex about the year 909.¹ If his work for monastic reform, if the work of his contemporaries in England and on the Continent is to stand out, clearly and logically understood, it is necessary to trace briefly the events, the movements, which gave to these labours their first impulse and their continued necessity.

The Ninth Century

♦ ♦ ♦ ♦ ♦ I ♦ ♦ ♦ ♦ ♦

Celtic men who willingly rose against their Saxon lords. Egbert, King of Wessex, fought the pirates in Somerset and in Cornwall; the men of Hampshire and of Dorset marched against them, but in vain. By 841 devastation and slaughter had reached Lincolnshire, East Anglia, and Kent; a year later London and Rochester met their force.

These were scattered swoopings. In the mid-ninth century, in 850, the Danes stayed to encamp, and spent the winter on the Isle of Thanet. Soon hundreds of Danish ships sailed to the Thames; from them Danish men fell upon London and Canterbury, bringing panic and rout to Beorhtwulf, King of the Mercians, and his army. Once again a King of Wessex, Æthelwulf, came out against them and for a while held them at bay; yet in the time of Æthelberht, his son and successor, Danish pirates laid Winchester in ruins. About five years later, in 865, the men of Kent were glad to promise money in exchange for peace, but their promise availed them nothing. In 865-66 a vast and permanent army began its work of conquest of England. Sons of the great Viking, Ragnar Lodbrok, brought their host to winter among the East Angles; from thence they marched north to occupy York on the first of November, 866, and to dwell there until spring, when the English rallied in multitude to the attack and broke into the city. The attack failed. It cost them immense slaughter of their men, the lives of two English kings, and ended only in a necessary peace.

South of Northumbria there was no peace. From York this Danish army passed to Mercia, and we find the Mercian King and his counsellors begging Æthelred, ruler of Wessex, and Alfred, his brother, to come speedily to their aid. From York, too, the sons of Ragnar overran East Anglia and in the winter of 869 killed treacherously its king, held in future ages as Saint Edmund the Martyr. But bravely the two princes of

Wessex resisted, now in their own land, at Reading and at Ashdown in Berkshire. In this same year of 871 King Æthelred died, and Alfred came to the West Saxon throne.

The seven years now opening saw the height of the struggle. In 871 alone nine battles were fought by Alfred's men. From their control of Northumbria, plundered far and wide, the Danes again came southward, to subdue much of Mercia and to set up there a king of their own naming. By 878 Yorkshire was occupied by Danish farmers, Danish Mercia had come into being, East Anglia was held by Danes, and the hope of England depended on Alfred, holding out desperately in Wessex against the Danish chieftain Guthrum. Already many of the West Saxons had yielded or had fled by sea from evil too great to face.

But from his strong refuge in the marshes of Athelney, near Taunton, Alfred constantly raided the invaders; from there he marched to lead the men of Somerset, Wilt, and Hampshire against the Danes in Wiltshire, to bring them by heroic endurance to treaty of peace, and their King, Guthrum, to Christian baptism at Aller, a victory honoured by high feasting there and at Wedmore on the moorlands of Somerset. At last the worst was over, and the Vikings who still longed for active war departed in quest of fresh booty across the Channel to Flemish and French shores.²

Danish settlers still remained, however, possessors of the soil in the eastern Midlands, in the Northeast, and in East Anglia, those regions of England which were known later as the Danelaw. All English people outside these regions looked to Alfred of Wessex as their head, their hope for liberty, independence, and decent living; and, as all know, Alfred's re-

² For Alfred see Asser, ed. W. H. Stevenson, 1904; Stenton (*Anglo-Saxon England*, 1947); R. H. Hodgkin; Charles Plummer, *Life and Times of Alfred the Great*, 1902.

When I thought on this, I thought also of what I once had seen, the churches throughout all England standing full of person south of the Thames when I came to the throne. . . . So few there were that I cannot call to mind even one from Latin into English; not many, I think, beyond the Hum- (Latin) service-books in English, or even translate a message this (south) side of the Humber who could understand their that when he attained the kingship "there were very few on was lamenting to his bishops of Wessex and English Mercia relax from its appointed rigour of standard. About 894 Alfred measure also to the constant tendency of human nature to discipline, due largely to these same causes, but in some ers, and other men of learning; internally, a lapse in Church- struction of buildings, in slaughter of priests, monks, teach- this: externally, the havoc worked by the Northmen, in de- ters intellectual, moral, and religious. Two reasons lay behind ruin, decay, ignorance, lack of discipline and order, in mat- take measures for their inner welfare. He faced a scene of threatening his own Wessex and Mercia, Alfred was free to When once, however, Danish conquest was no longer north and the east and in the middle region.

grievously in frequent assault of the settlers inside, on the Danish enemies, striking in raids from the Continent, more lived was his English land at rest from attack by those same kind of fleet was gradually assembled. But never while Alfred Fortresses were carefully placed at strategic points; some turned all his thought and power of action. First, for defence. To these realms of his, Wessex and English Mercia, Alfred son-in-law by marriage with his eldest daughter, Athelstred. man named Athelred, who eventually became the King's middle England which we call English Mercia, to an ealdor- entrusted by him for rule and safekeeping, in that western sponse was worthy of their hope. London in 886 was his own,

treasures and books, before all was ravaged and burned down.”³

Doubtless in his depression Alfred made his picture too dark, especially in regard to Mercia. Yet early in the eighth century the Venerable Bede had counselled Egbert, bishop of York, to provide translations of the Creed and the Pater-noster for those who knew no Latin, and among them clergy and monks, declaring that he himself had done the same for many unlearned priests.⁴

Not only ignorance, but disruption of Church life had followed close upon the sacrilege of the Northmen. Much of England was now possessed by Danes who must gradually be won to the Faith. In Christian England the see of Danish York suffered much by distance from that of English Canterbury; there was no bishop at Hexham after 821; the bishop of Lindisfarne and his younger clergy wandered in exile with the relics of their Saint Cuthbert for seven years, until in 883 they found rest at Chester-le-Street. In Danish Mercia the see of Lindsey disappeared; the bishop of Leicester fled and his successor held his seat at Dorchester in Oxfordshire; in East Anglia the line of bishops at Dunwich was lost in permanence, at Elmham for a long season. Those bishops who did hold fast their cathedrals were largely called from their proper duties to function in the field of battle, to give of their capacity in secular council and administration, to organize the defence and succour of their people.

Far more did the constant warring cast havoc into the monastic life of England of this ninth century. It is true that the later tradition of Abbo of Fleury in his *Life of Saint Edmund*, the narrative of Symeon of Durham, of Roger of

³ Preface to his A-S. trans. of Gregory, *Pastoral Care*, ed. Sweet, *EETS*, aff.; Francis P. Magoun, Jr., *Medieval Studies*, Toronto, X, 1948, 93ff.
⁴ Plummer, ed. Bede, I, 409.

Wendover, telling of wholesale destruction and massacre, should be read with caution.⁵ In regard to the monasteries of eastern England, among others: "The post-Conquest historians here fill in the scanty record of the contemporary Chronicle by painting the horrors endured at this time by these monasteries of the Fen country. They describe, for instance, how at Medeshamsted (afterwards Peterborough) the heathen came and burnt and broke everything, slaying the abbot and the monks, and all that they found in the place; and that which was formerly full rich they reduced to nothing; Bardeneý, Crowland, Ely, all had their later traditions of destruction and martyrdom. But all that can be recorded as authentic history is the great silence which now descends on this region. The Danes sweep across eastern Mercia and the district of the Fens; and for two generations Christianity in these parts seems to be withered and lifeless."⁶

Nevertheless, strict monastic observance needed in any case new vivifying and tightening from time to time. Anglo-Saxon monks had themselves been conscious of this. In the seventh century Aldhelm had hurled scorn upon monks and nuns who decked themselves in unseemly finery; Bede had warned his friend Egbert of heathen living among English people; Boniface had reproached an Archbishop of Canterbury for the vices and waywardness of English bishops and religious; Alcuin, who, it is true, remembered his friends in order to admonish them, yet doubtless not without cause wrote his fears to the English monks he loved so well.

Now, in this time of Alfred, we read of letters of Pope John the Eighth to Æthelred, Archbishop of Canterbury, exhorting him to keep the marriage-laws of the Church in

⁵ *Memorials of St. Edmund's Abbey*, I, RS, XCVI, 9f.; Sym. Dun. I, RS, LXXV, 51f.; Rog. Wend. *Flores Hist.* I, Eng. Hist. Soc. 302f. ⁶ R. H. Hodgkin, II, 531.

force; ⁷ to Burgred, King of Mercia, brother-in-law of Alfred, declaring that solemnly dedicated women were married, and within the forbidden degrees of kinship.⁸ Fulk, Archbishop of Reims, wrote to King Alfred and to Plegmund, who held the see of Canterbury from 890 to 923, concerning rumours that English bishops and their clergy were wanting with women and that perverse preachers were upholding the same; ⁹ Formosus, Pope from 891 to 896, is said to have rebuked the bishops of England for "keeping silence, like dogs unable to bark," while unmentionable heathen rites flourished around them.¹⁰

But the words of Asser, bishop of Sherborne in Dorset and biographer of Alfred, tell us to what pass the religious calling had come when Alfred set to work in England: "Now," he wrote, "for many years past the desire for monastic life has utterly been lost to all this people, and also to many other peoples. Many monasteries, it is true, still remain standing. Yet no one keeps in due order the Rule of monastic life, and I know not why. Perhaps the cause lies in these raidings by men of foreign race, who very often make assault by land and by sea, perhaps in the superabundance of wealth of every kind in England."¹¹

Another reason may also be recalled: the increase and spread of the canonical life for clergy formulated by Saint Chrodegang of Metz in the eighth century. This had encouraged many priests and deacons to live together under rule, yet unbound by Benedictine vow, free to possess property and, if they desired, to live apart from their brethren in separate houses. Community life, not of monks but of clergy, as

⁷ J. W. Nos. 2995, 3125; *PL*, CXXVI, coll. 745f.

⁸ J. W. No. 2993; *PL*, LXXX, coll. 607f.

⁹ Flodoard, *Hist. Rem. Eccl.* IV, ch. 5; *SS*, XIII, 566, 568.

¹⁰ J. W. No. 3506; Birch, No. 573.

¹¹ Ed. Stevenson, 80f.

Theodore of Tarsus knew it at Christ Church, Canterbury, and Alcuin at York, had now been generally accepted in place of that Benedictine monasticism, of Jarrold and Ripon and Malmesbury and countless other abbeys, which men like Bede and Wilfrid and Aldhelm had followed in early eighth-

century England. Much has been written of Alfred's making of laws for England, of his zeal, first for his own educating, and then for that of his people, especially the young; of his desire that all who could should learn Latin and read the Fathers in the original, but that translations also should be generally available for the unlearned; of his own making of translations and of his entrusting this same work to other hands; of his calling scholars to his aid, among them Werferth, appointed bishop of Worcester, Plegmund, raised to be Archbishop of Canterbury, both from Mercia, and Asser, who came from St. Davids in Wales. On the other hand, his sincere desire for the restoration of regular monastic life in England led in his own experience to relatively little. The fullness of time had not yet come.

In the marshes of Athelney from which he had crept forth to conquer he built a new monastery as mark of his thanksgiving. Doubtless he hoped that its utter solitude would foster meditation. It covered but two acres of land, surrounded by fen, swamp, and pools of water through which no man could pass except by boat and one single bridge. Its building was of stone or of timber—
 radiated from a rounded centre with four supporting pillars, driven deep into the earth; from them rose four rounded arches, framing screened recesses, probably used as shrines or chapels. The workmanship was unusual in England, of beautiful design, seemingly borrowed from Eastern and Carolingian sources. But Englishmen would not dwell on this island

in the marsh, and Alfred had to bring monks from France, with child oblates who might be injured to this discipline from their early years. At its head he placed as abbot one of the Old Saxon race of the Continent, named John. John's strict ruling put the last touch to the miseries of his desolate community. Two of his Gallic monks bribed assassins to murder him as he prayed in the church at dead of night, and he barely escaped with his life.¹²

For women Alfred also made a monastic home, on the cliff at Shaftesbury. Here his daughter Æthelgifu was abbess, and the nunnery was well known for many years.¹³ A third foundation, of infinitely greater importance, was for him but a thought: ¹⁴ of a New Minster at Winchester, to adorn this, his royal city, and to be the centre of his work for the Church in the west country. In Winchester there already stood its Cathedral; tradition was to hold it as built by King Cenwalh of Wessex in the middle of the seventh century and hallowed in the name of Saint Peter.¹⁵ There, in his little "clergy-house" was now living Grimbal, once monk of Saint Bertin's Abbey at Saint-Omer in Flanders, whom Fulk of Reims at the King's wish had sent to Alfred, declaring his fervent hope that "ecclesiastical rule, now sorely impaired in England, as you say, whether by heathen invasion or by lapse of time or by negligence of bishops or by ignorance of men, may soon be mended and furthered."¹⁶

In 899 Alfred died, and was buried in his old Cathedral of Winchester, where, so legend declared, his wandering ghost

¹² Will. Malm. *Gest. Pont. RS*, LII, 199; Clapham, *Eng. Rom. Arch. before the Conquest*, 147f.; Asser, chs. 92, 95ff.; T. Hugo, *PSAS*, 1897, II, 94ff.

¹³ Asser, ch. 98.

¹⁴ *Libet Vitaæ, New Minster*, ed. Birch, 215.

¹⁵ *A.-S. C. (E)*, ann. 648.

¹⁶ *Libet de Hyda, RS*, XLV, 31ff.; Birch, No. 556. For Grimbal see P. Grierson, *EHR*, 1940.

disturbed the clergy at their nightly prayers. More seriously, the encouragement of Grimbald aided Edward the Elder, Alfred's son and successor, in the first years of the tenth century to raise a New Minster near the Old one. Here Alfred's relics were finally laid, and the group of buildings at Winchester was completed when his widow, Queen Falls-with, founded the Nunnaminster, a house for religious women.¹⁷

Yet religious life in England was now secular, led by clerks who followed a round in common that lacked both monastic discipline and depth. Grimbald himself had been trained in no strict school at Saint-Bertin.¹⁸ Alfred knew little of the letter of Benedictine living; he not only presented to Grimbald as a Christmas gift the two "minsters, filled full of all good things," of Congressbury and Banwell, "with all that they contained," but readily distributed of his substance to many cloisters, which we may safely believe were distinctly relaxed in rule, throughout Wessex and Mercia.¹⁹

We cross the Channel to the Continent of this ninth century. Here monastic life had run at the last into its own eclipse. Charles the Great, it is true, had worked hard to ensure a faithful text of the Benedictine *Rule* in the monasteries throughout his realms; ²⁰ he had passed in repeated Councils enactments for its observance, ²¹ had in fact recognized no other *Rule* for monks.²² He had officially supported the

¹⁷ *Libert de Hyda*, 83.

¹⁸ Guérard, ed. *Cart. de l'abbaye de Saint-Bertin*, 1840, xxxviii, 74ff.

¹⁹ Asser, ch. 81. For a full discussion of life in English religious houses

before the reform under Dunstan see Dom David Knowles, *The Monastic*

Order in England, 1949, 31ff., 695f.

²⁰ Albers, III, 51ff.

²¹ *Cap. reg. Fr.* I, 105, 107ff.

²² *Ibid.* 162.

Frankish Church in the endeavour to drive out vice, disorder, luxury, ignorance, and lack of discipline from Frankish abbeys.²³

But many factors made here, too, for laxity. Charles himself, devout churchman as he was, had little natural sympathy with the strictly ascetic life, and was highly tolerant of the many houses of canons throughout his lands. The new monasteries which he built were viewed by him as means of converting heathen enemies to Christian and loyal subjects of his throne. Under him laymen ruled abbeys, bishops held abbeys in rule together with their sees, abbeys in number were granted to one man, were neglected for long seasons while their superiors, lay or priest, were far away, busy with secular matters, even on military service. Frequently a rich cloister, or cloisters, with herds and flocks, vineyards and fields of grain, fell in hiset as reward or as bait to some useful servant of the Court, who found his abbey's great hall and wide park convenient for the entertaining of his many guests.²⁴ Moreover, in one of five Councils held for reform in matters of the Church during 813, the Frankish bishops gathered at Tours rebuked abbots for living "rather as canons than as monks."²⁵

The quarrels of the descendants of Charles after his death in 814, during the rule of his heir, Louis the Pious, who followed him as Emperor until 840, the hideous slaughter of the field of Fontenoy, where the sons of Louis fought one another in 841, the dividing of the Empire between them by the Treaty of Verdun in 843, all cast their tragedy upon spiritual life in Frankland. "The crown of our Empire is fallen,"

²³ K. Stosiek, *Das Verhältniss Karls des Gr. zur Klosterordnung*, 1909.
²⁴ K. Voigt, *Die karol. Klosterpolitik*, 1917, 55ff.; Hauck, II, 578; H. Fichtenau, *Das karol. Imperium*, 1949, 196ff.
²⁵ MGH, *Conc.* II, 290.

wrote Florus of Lyon, "trodden under foot by all; for King now have we kinglet, our kingdom split in three." ²⁶

Each faction strove to attract and to hold men of promise, whether priest, monk, or lay. "Many, and oh! the shame of it," mourned Raban Maur to Bishop Haymo, "many men are found now, ordained to office in the Church, who forsake their duty of preaching and spiritual living for the ambition of secular business. Often they are present at worldly conferences, presiding as judges and arbiters of conflicts. Surely it is a bishop's work to teach the word of God for the cure of souls entrusted to him, rather than to discuss and define civil points, to spend his time on the disputes of greedily and covetous squabblers." ²⁷

Even the stream of scholars in the Frankish kingdoms of the ninth century: the Palace circle, the Irish, the heads of monastic Schools, the experts in theology and in the nascent scholasticism of the early Middle Ages, brilliant as they were—John the Scot, Raban, Hincmar of Reims, Paschasius Radbert, Amalarius of Metz and his opponent, Florus of Lyon, Heiric of Auxerre and his pupil, Remigius, with so many others—concentrated their inexhaustible energy on disputing of points, on annotating problematic passages, on extracting matter from the accepted bases of secular and spiritual learning, on contending in Church Councils for the extirpation of heresy, far more than on the daily practice of the Benedictine chapters in their individual monasteries. In general, the ninth century among churchmen on the Continent was an age given to theological argument rather than to inner monastic life. Its hallmark might well be those words written to Einhard from the monastery of Fulda by the young Lupus, studying under Raban: *Mihi satis apparet propter se ipsam*

²⁶ *Poet. lat. aevi Car.* II, 559ff.
²⁷ PL, CXL, coll. 13f.

appetenda sapientia: "Knowledge, to my mind, is its own end and goal." ²⁸

The scholars, it is true, in their eager search into texts had not neglected the *Rule* of Saint Benedict. In the eighth century Paul Warnfried, the Deacon, the friend of Charles the Great, had illustrated its chapters in the lectures which he wrote in a monastery near Milan; ²⁹ in the ninth, Hildemar of Civate followed in his steps, and Smaragdus, abbot of Saint-Mihiel, near Verdun, made his careful explanation of the *Rule*, badly needed, he declared in his preface, by a multitude of monks. ³⁰

The work of Smaragdus was called forth by the one great concerted effort for the re-establishing of Benedictine life amid the confusion of this ninth century, an effort destined both to fail in its immediate effect and to give of its fruit for Dunstan's aid. Under Louis the Pious, Benedict of Aniane became dominant in monastic administration, first in Aquitaine and, after 814, throughout the Frankish Empire. Two events of high importance marked his long, intense endeavour to bring the monasteries of Frankland into conformity with Benedictine use. In the valley of the river Inde, a few miles from Aachen and therefore near the Palace of his spiritual son and fervent supporter, King Louis, whose treasury was ever open to his need, this second Benedict founded the abbey of Kornelimünster, a model for all Frankish abbot and heads of regular communities. To this house Frankish Fathers in God, in anxious fear lest the *missi*, the spiritual inspectors appointed by the King, should on their rounds discover among them somewhere a lack in Benedictine spirit or prescription, sent as their envoys monks who were instructed

²⁸ Ed. Levillain, I, 6.

²⁹ Ed. at Monte Cassino, 1880.

³⁰ Schroll, *Bened. Monasticism as reflected in the Warnfried-Hildemar Commentaries*, 1941; *PL*, CII, col. 691.

to mark, learn, digest, and report to their brethren all that daily life on the Inde entailed.³¹

The second event occurred when Benedict called together two Councils at Aachen: one in 816, which drew up provisions as a preliminary measure;³² the other in July 817, the famous assembly of abbots and monks which gave to the Benedictine communities living under Louis the seventy-five chapters of that *Capitulaire Monasticum* by which they were henceforth, one and all, to be guided and governed.³³

The passion of this Benedict of Aniane was uniformity: "that, as all Benedictine monks profess one and the same monastic calling, so there may be one and the same Use for their souls' health." His contemporary and friend, the monk Ardo, tells us that in this Council of 817 "Benedict's work was perfected and prospered through grace of the Divine Mercy; one Rule was appointed in general for all monks, and all monasteries were constrained to the form of unity, as though ruled by one master and in one and the same place. One and the same measure of food and drink, one and the same practice of common prayer at the Hours of day and of night, was henceforth to be the common tradition."³⁴

Under this same prevailing principle Benedict sought to banish the evils which were corrupting Benedictine houses. Throughout Frankland monks henceforth were to keep constant silence, to remain steadfastly within their cloister, to teach in their schools none save those offered for training in Ardo, *Vita Bened. An.*: SS, XV, 1, 215f.; Ermoldus Nigellus, ed. Faral, lines 1180ff., 1209ff.; Albers, III, 104ff.; MGH, *Epp.*, V, 301ff., 305ff. (re-ports of Grimald and Tarto, monks of Reichenau, to their abbeys). On Benedict of Aniane see Narberhaus, *BGMB*, XVI, 1930; Schmitz, *DHGE*, VIII, 1935; Hilpisch, *Gesch. d. Bened. Mönchtums*, 1929, 117ff.; Koschek, *Die Klosterreform Ludwigs des Frommen*, 1908; Hauck, II, 588ff., 613; Fichtenau, 197ff.; Dom David Knowles, *EHR*, 1954, 139f.
³² Represented for us in the *Statuta Murbaicensia*, Albers, III, 79ff.
³³ *Ibid.*, III, 115ff.; *Cap. reg. Fr.*, I, 343ff.
³⁴ Ardo, ch. 36 (50).

It is of interest to note here, too, the beginning of a change in monastic tradition which was to influence in the future the practice of Dunstan and his colleagues. More and more in these Frankish monasteries of the ninth century manual work was being transferred to lay servants, leaving members of the choir free for prayer, in common or in private, for intellectual work, for painting, drawing, script. This tendency is shown in the adding by Benedict of Aniane of special devotions to the ordinary round of the Offices of the Church directed under Benedict of Nursia for his monks.³³

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At the signals for Night Office, Benedict of Aniane prescribed, the brethren were to rise from bed, bless themselves with holy water, and hasten in reverence to all the altars of their church for the first offering of the *trina oratio*, the "threefold prayer." Then, when they had taken their places in choir, before the Office began, each monk was, furthermore, to chant the fifteen gradual psalms: five for all the faithful yet living on earth, five for all the faithful departed, five for all recently departed, whose names might not be generally known. Each group of five psalms, moreover, was to be individually offered to the Lord in a prayer at its end, preferably with prostration of the suppliant on the floor of his stall. Again, before Prime, the monks were to visit all the altars, again to offer the "threefold prayer." When, after Prime and Chapter, they dispersed to the work of the house, as they laboured, alone or in couples, in the kitchen, the bakery, or the cellar, psalms were to be on their lips. Ten psalms after Compline in winter, five in summer, were prescribed; then once more a visit was made to all the altars, once more the *trina oratio* was offered, and so to bed. Even the prayers made during these three visits to the altars were carefully defined: during the first, the monks said the Lord's Prayer and the Creed, during the other two the Lord's Prayer with confession of sins. "This triple visit," writes Benedict's biographer, "he instituted for two reasons: to compel the lazy and disinclined to do what they would not do freely, and to restrain the too enthusiastic from spiritual indiscretion."³⁶

The high undertaking failed in its immediate aim. Benedict died in 821, before his energy and devotion could foster its ripening. Asceticism was here, indeed, tempered with reason and with sympathy; but the prescription of regularity was

too severe for the times, the silence, solitude, and other-worldliness were alien to the monk who desired to live comfortably with his vows. Above all, monasteries resented this new emphasis upon conformity in things lesser as well as greater, physical and material as well as spiritual, this exact precision which marked out the details of their daily life, which dictated as before, but imposed more strictly than before, the amount and the fashion of the clothing to be worn, the food to be consumed, the implements to be used, identical in all monasteries of Frankish lands. Already in the assembly of 817 opposition had raised its head, and gradually, without this leader and mainspring of reform, under an Emperor vexed and distracted by dissension which his weak hand could not control, the fervour of early response died away.

Apart from this internal conflict, moreover, Benedictine life of the second half of the ninth century on the Continent was sadly planted, amid the turmoil of politics which worked unceasingly for the disintegration of the Frankish Empire after the death of Louis the Pious in 840. The ambition of his son, Charles the Bald, King of what we call France, to grasp the German lands ruled by his kinsmen was ended only by his death in 877. Strife equally strong continued in the time that followed, until, in 884, all the realms of the Franks, east, middle, and west, were in the hands of a grandson of Louis the Pious, known as Charles the Fat. His Empire had come to him endowed with a history of seventy years of constant quarrel. Three generations of Frankish men had seen the passing of its various parts from one ruler to another, the waning of the power of its thrones, the growing menace of the strength of its vassal lords, lay and spiritual.

Into this confusion of Frankish politics there marched, year after year, that same oncoming of the Northmen which was devastating England. Already the beginning of the ninth

century had seen Charles the Great taking measures to defend his lands, building ships and fortifications at Boulogne and at Ghent against the assault of Godfred, King of the Danes, upon the French and the Frisian shores. By its middle years the assault had reached Hoodide. In 841 the Vikings were on the Seine, moving to attack Rouen; the year 843 found them working havoc on the Loire, the following year on the Garonne. As they went they burned Nantes and murdered its bishop; then they stayed to seize the abbey of Noirmoutier on its island near the mouth of the Loire and to encamp there for the winter. In 845 Paris met their ravaging force. At the same time King Horik the Dane sent his ships along the river Elbe for the destruction of Hamburg. "For his cowardly sloth," declared the annals of Xanten against this year, "Charles the Bald gave the Normen many thousands of pounds of gold and silver as bribe to depart from France, which they did. Yet monasteries of very many saints were plundered, many Christian men were taken captive." Four years later these annals take on a darker colour: "Stronger and stronger has waxed this heathen evil from the North," they now record. "It provokes one to sickness to tell the tale."³⁷

Monasteries were naturally among the first objects of raid, for their treasures were joy to the hunters. As the years rolled on in their increasing panic the roads of France, of Germany, of Holland and Belgium were crowded with monks in search of refuge, carrying in their flight the bones of their own special Saints and Patrons, destined, so they declared afterward in those many narratives of *Miracles* which we still possess, to work innumerable deeds of healing as they were

³⁷ For these ravagings see the *Annales Fuldenses*, ed. Kurze; *Ann. Bertiniani*, ed. Waitz; *Ann. Vedastini*; SS, I, 516ff.; *Ann. Xantenses*; SS, II, 217ff.; W. Vogel, *Die Normannen und das fränk. Reich*, 1906; Lot and Halphen, *Charles le Chauve*, 1909, 130ff.

borne from place to place. "Deliver us, O Lord, from the fury of the Northmen," the churches prayed, while King Charles the Bald still poured money into Viking coffers.

Nor was Charles the Fat superior to this uncle of his in the yielding to bargain with the prevailing terror. In the year 885 this terror rose in France to its crest, when a host under the Viking Sigfred, in strength far surpassing anything the Franks had seen hitherto, advanced along the Seine to the siege of Paris, and for the fourth time the city broke into flame. The story of its long defence under two heroes, Joscelin, abbot of Saint-Germain, bishop of Paris, and Odo, or Eudes, Count of Paris, has been eloquently told both in prose and in verse.³⁸ Fire, flood, and battle mark Frankish records from November 885, until October 886. King Charles the Fat did little or nothing. At last, his heart failing him utterly, he gave the Northmen that leave to pass to the plunder of Burgundy for which they had fought his men so long.

Twelve months later he was deposed, and again France and Germany came to separate rule. That gallant defender of Paris, Count Odo, was elected King of France. Brave soldier though he was, he was, however, no member of its traditional Carolingian line, and for ten years many of his nobles rose in revolt, until he died and they could rejoice in seeing as their King one already crowned as rival of Odo five years before, one of their own royal house, Charles the Simple. He was holding the throne of France when Dunstan was born in England; when Dunstan was about fourteen years old this Charles the Simple was to lose his crown to another and to begin to spend his last years in prison, the captive of determined enemies among his vassal lords.

Germany fared not much better, although here the crown

³⁸ *Ann. Vedast. ann.* 884ff.; Abbo of Saint-Germain-des-Prés, *Bella Paris. Urbis*, ed. H. Waquet, *CHF*, 1942.

of Charles the Fat passed in succession to two princes illegitimate in descent but of Carolingian blood: Arnulf, a great-grandson of Louis the Pious; and Arnulf's son, Louis the Child. And now further terror was falling upon the Germans, from a flood of invaders who outdid the Vikings in their deeds. Year after year their annals now tell of slaughter and ravage wrought by the Hungarians from the east; for more than sixty years they harried German lands.³⁹ In 911, as Dunstan's life was beginning, the Carolingian line came to an end in Germany with the death of Louis the Child, who had worked without success to withstand the coming of the barbarians in their fury, and their coming to stay.

It is not surprising, after so many years of disruption and assault, that in the latter years of the ninth century a monk of Corbie, the theologian and Biblical scholar, Paschasius Radbert, wrote in his *Commentary on the Lamentations of Jeremiah*: "Now scarcely is there any undertaking of secular life which the priests of Christ do not take in hand, any worldly business in which the ministers of the altar are not busy, any dishonest affair in which the monastic order is not implicated, any of life's pleasant seductions by which the purity of nuns is not stained."⁴⁰ About the time of Dunstan's birth a great assembly of bishops of the Frankish Church, debating at Trosly near Soissons in the reign of Charles the Simple, thus solemnly recorded their sense of present evil: "You see how manifest is the anger of the Lord, His hand stretched out to strike. Lo! every year our land we see sick and barren, daily are people dying. Our cities are devastated, our monasteries destroyed by the axe and by fire, our fields

³⁹ Hauck, III, 150ff.
⁴⁰ PL, CXX, col. 1199.

brought to desert wastes; truly has the sword entered even into our soul. Through our sins and the sins of all our people, the people we ought to guide and govern, do these things come to pass; surely our iniquities are multiplied above our heads, our transgressions rise to the heavens. Fornication and adultery, sacrilege and manslaughter have covered our land; the tide of blood rolls on without cease. In all the world we see plunder of the poor, robbery of the Church; hardly one order, one rank among churchmen, that is not come into disorder and pollution. Touching the condition, the falling away of monasteries, we scarce know what to say, what to do. For the mass of our crimes and the oncoming of judgment from the Lord, our cloisters have been burned and destroyed by the heathen, have been robbed and brought almost to nothing; and if, in some, aught still remains of their building, no customs of monastic Rule are still kept in use. Monks, canons, nuns, lack their own rightful rulers, are subject, contrary to all law of the Church, to prelates not of their body, and thus are brought to dire need, to sin and to confusion. They have forgotten their vocation for the things of this earth; some, driven by hunger, have left their cloisters and have gone back to life in the world. As gold that has lost its colour cannot be restored to its former brightness unless the jeweller polish it anew, so how shall our monks be reformed without the care of a Father of true religious calling? Now in our monasteries laymen live as lords and masters, presiding over religious life and conversation as though they were professed abbots; their monks give themselves to greed and luxury indecent even for godly layfolk. Nay more, in consecrated houses of God lay abbots are living with their wives, their sons and their daughters, with their soldiers and their dogs. It is written that abbots shall read, interpret, and study

their holy Rule with their communities. Who now shall interpret this? Who shall read, who understand? For should you offer these 'abbot's' the book of their Rule, they will answer you in the words of Isaiah, 'I know not how to read.'⁴¹

⁴¹ Mansi, XVIII, coll. 265f., 270ff.

tion from his secular nobles. In 919, however, a new and incomparably happier era opened in the election of Henry the Fowler, first of a line of Saxon kings in Germany. Henry was, indeed, descended from Louis the Pious, but his election was due entirely to his own excellence. Under him German dukes were held in control, Hungarian invaders in abeyance; and the Church received much aid for her needs.

In England, under Alfred's eldest son, King Edward the Elder, the tide was at last turning against the Danish settlers. In 910 Edward defeated them decisively near Tettenhall in Staffordshire; henceforth English towns and countryside began to pass from Danish to English hands. English Mercia, growing steadily in extent, was held for the King by his sister, Athelred, widow of its ruler, Athelred, and now "Lady of the Mercians" in her own right. As she built fortress after fortress for the protection of her midlands, Edward moved year after year against the Danes, in London, in Oxford, in Essex, in the shires of Bedford and of Huntingdon. By the end of 919 all Mercia was his, all England as far north as the Humber. At this point his rule yielded. In Northumbria, Danes were still independent of England, ruled by the Viking chieftain Ragnald, who by force of arms in 919 had made himself King of a Norse realm of York. Yet the Anglo-Saxon *Chronicle* declares that, before Edward died, Ragnald, with all who dwell in Northumbria, chieftains and people, English, Danes, Northmen, and others, with the King of Scots and the King of the Strathclyde Britons and all their peoples, chose him "as father and as lord." Their action does not, of course, imply feudal homage, but is nevertheless remarkable as witness of deep respect and desire for alliance of friendship.²

So much for political matters on the Continent and in England when Dunstan was a child in Wessex.

² A. S. C. (A), ed. Earle-Plummer, I, 104.

On the side of religion, new life, new growth, were still

more marked. In France for a long time a young man, Odo, unhappy in his life among the canons of Saint Martin's at Tours, had been trying, with his friend Adhegrin, to find some place where monastic regularity was to be seen in its Benedictine ideal. Finally, in the year 909, at Baume, a monastery hidden among the Jura Mountains, they came upon what they wanted—constant silence, regular chanting of the Hours, a life entirely ascetic in its simplicity, obedience, humility—in short, the spirit of Benedict of Aniane, embodied in an abbot named Berno. In the year following, 910, William, Duke of Aquitaine, troubled in conscience, was bidden by Abbot Berno to replace the cry of his hunting dogs in the pleasant valley and hills of his estate at Cluny on the Saône by psalms of Benedictine monks interceding for his soul.³ During the next twenty years, while Dunstan was growing toward young manhood, this monastery of Cluny, first under Berno, then under Odo, appointed its abbot shortly before Berno's death in 927, was steadily gaining that power and precision which was to make it the earliest source of tenth-century Benedictine reform throughout France.

But not yet in England. The chief event in the life of the English Church at this time, in addition to the founding of the Minsters for men and for women at Winchester, was the division by Edward the Elder of his two dioceses of Winchester and of Sherborne (the latter of which had existed since the eighth century) into five. From Winchester was carved out a new episcopal district centered at Ramsbury in Wiltshire; from Sherborne two new prelates took their sees, one as the first bishop of Crediton in Devonshire, the other as the first bishop of Wells in Somerset.

³ For Cluny see Sackur, Hilpisch, Schmitz, Berlière; Joan Evans, *Monastic Life at Cluny, 910-1157*, 1931; *Vita S. Odonis*, by John of Salerno: *AA. SS. OSB*, V, 148ff.; *Bibl. Clun.* ed. Martier, 1915; Bernard and Bruel, *Chartes de Cluny*, I, 124ff.; *DHGE*, s.v. *Cluny*, 1953.

This brings us directly to Dunstan. We still possess the substance of a letter, written, it would seem, by Dunstan himself, to King Æthelred the Second, mentioning this divison of sees.⁴ Dunstan, moreover, was born but a few miles from Wells, and this first bishop of Wells, Athelm, was his uncle.

Two villages in the heart of Somerset, Edgarley and Baltonsborough, claim the honour of his birth. Both lie near Glastonbury in a wide valley, from which here and there rise rounded hills. Turf moors and cider orchards now cover the plain; though it run long and narrow waterducts, fringed by the same withies and rushes which grow so densely at Athelney, some eleven miles distant. In this early tenth century all was one vast marsh, as solitary and unapproachable around Dunstan's home as around King Alfred's abbey of Athelney. But travellers often crossed it, as Dunstan did, keeping before his eyes the hill that seemed to rule it far and wide, Glastonbury Tor. His family was of wealthy substance and high rank, related to the reigning King, Edward the Elder. We read of his father, Heorstan, of his mother, Cynethryth, and of a brother, Wulftric. They were devoutly Christian, and frequently took the rough and perilous path through the swamp to keep fast or feast within the ancient abbey that stood below the Tor.

Tradition, from the thirteenth century, was to make Glastonbury the home of ancient tales, of Saint Joseph of Arimathea, of Arthur's grave.⁵ Of these legends of Glastonbury Dunstan knew nothing save perhaps some vague popular story. The abbey held for him its wonder as the most an-

⁴ *Crawford Charters*, ed. Napier and Stevenson, 1895, 18f., 102ff.; *Armistage Robinson, BASP*, IV, 1918, 18ff., 27f.
⁵ See *Armistage Robinson, Two Glastonbury Legends*, 1926.

cient, the most revered monastery of his people; the very land on which it stood was as full of mystery as the clouds that hung over the head of the Tor. Here the British of its earliest days had lived in their lake-villages; here when Julius Caesar invaded Britain in 54 B.C. they were practicing their Celtic arts and crafts in clay and bronze and iron; here, before the Saxons conquered Somerset, stood the "Old Church" of Our Lady, woven of wattle, a church still revered in the days of Dunstan as raised by hands of heaven rather than of mortal men.⁶ To this church in the sixth century Saint David, the Saint of Wales, had added a chapel, tury Saint David, the Saint of Wales, had added a chapel, or chancel; in the seventh century Paulinus, the missionary bishop of the Northumbrians, had built for it a roof of wood after he had fled south from the fury of Cadwallon, King of Gwynedd, and had been made bishop of Rochester.⁷

Dunstan also held, with all who worshipped here in his time, that Saint Patrick of Ireland had founded the first monastic house at Glastonbury and had been buried here; day by day he saw the pilgrims come to say their prayers at Saint Patrick's tomb.⁸ Here British monks were keeping their vows in the sixth and the seventh centuries; tradition gave the names of three of their abbots, Worgeret, Lademund, and Bregored. Here, after Glastonbury had passed from British to Saxon hands, the abbey had received its first Saxon abbot, Berthwald, later on head of the monastery of Reculver in Kent, and in 692 successor of Theodore as Archbishop of Canterbury. From the time of Berthwald, Glastonbury had followed for very many years the *Rule* of

⁶ *Memorials*, 7.

⁷ Will. Malm. *De Antiquitate Ecclesiae Glastoniensis*, ed. Gale, 296f.; PL, CLXXIX, coll. 1687, 1691; *Gest. Reg. RS, XC*, 1, 24, 28.

⁸ James F. Kenney, *Sources for the Early History of Ireland*, I, 1929, 606f.

Saint Benedict, passing from the Celtic to the Roman use and to the obedience of Canterbury. To this abbey of Glas-tonbury King Centwine in this same seventh century had given land in the Quantocks, near Taunton; ⁹ and Ine, King of Wessex from 688 to 726, had built a larger church, of Saint Peter and Saint Paul, east of that ancient church of Mary, Mother of God.¹⁰

When we come at last to the reign of Edward the Elder, we find Somerset still much in the King's mind. Cheddar, twelve miles by road from Glastonbury, often saw him and his Court in residence, and Glastonbury itself, with its famous abbey, was probably largely under his control, "a royal isle." But its community had not escaped the blight and slackening which had fallen upon English abbeys in the ninth century. Now its buildings were in need of repair, of new work; in its choir were clergy living more or less as seculars; and the practice now followed in its walls had fallen far from the "reasonable" strictness of Benedict of Nursia.

Yet here lay the means of learning, such as it was, spiritual and secular; and as a royal house this seemed the fitting place for the educating of a child of the royal kin, born within its vale. About 918, then, when Charles the Simple, King of France, was martyring Eadgifu, daughter of Edward the Elder, the boy Dunstan was living under the care of Glaston-bury's brethren in their abbey, learning from Irish pilgrims who had made this shrine of Saint Patrick their home. He read the books they had brought there, pored over the Bible and texts that explained its teachings, wrote his Latin exer-
⁹ Robinson, *Som. Hist. Essays*, 28; *De Amr. Eccl. Glast.* col. 1701; *Gest. Reg. I*, 29; Birch, No. 62.
¹⁰ *A-S. C.* (A, margin), *ann.* 688; *De Amr. Eccl. Glast.* col. 1704; *Gest. Reg. I*, 36.

cises, gained enough mathematics for the computing of the Church's year according to the sun, moon, and stars, discovered much of detail in the lives and histories of saints, Irish, English, Continental, and traced much of the history of his own land from the writings of Gildas, of Aldhelm, and of Bede. Here in course of time he received the tonsure and became one of Glastonbury's brethren; but this tonsuring does not mean that he now entered upon a life truly monastic.

In 923 Plegmund, Archbishop of Canterbury, died and was succeeded by that bishop of Wells, Athelm, Dunstan's uncle. By this time uncle and nephew were well acquainted; Wells was but six miles from Glastonbury, and Athelm himself was probably of its training. He was proud of this boy, already at thirteen or fourteen showing much promise in his lessons; and now he invited him to exchange Somerset for Kent, to stay a while at Canterbury in the Archbishop's house.¹¹ Dunstan went, we do not know exactly when. Perhaps he was already there when in the following year King Edward the Elder died and his throne passed to Athelstan, his eldest son; very possibly he was one of the great congregation at Kingston-on-Thames that fourth of September, 925, when his uncle, Athelm, anointed and crowned Athelstan as King.

Athelstan was now in his early thirties, spare in build, were told, and of average height, his hair reddish yellow, with a glint of gold. Long ago his grandfather, King Alfred, had seen in him the future King, had made him knight, child though he was, had dressed him in scarlet mantle and jewelled baldric and hung at his side a Saxon sword sheathed in gold. He had seen in him the future lord of Mercia, as

¹¹ *Memorials*, 55f., 258; Armitage Robinson, *BASP*, IV, 6.

of Wessex, and had sent him to be brought up by his aunt, Æthelþræd, and her husband, its Ealdorman and ruler.¹²

To this young King the Archbishop naturally presented his nephew. Athelstan so readily welcomed him that when in 926 Athelstan died, Dunstan, although doubtless holding his home and duty in his abbey of Glastonbury, was frequently with the Court during the next eight or nine years, from about the age of seventeen until he was twenty-six, and especially when it was in residence at Cheddar, so near that abbey.

Now he followed with a young man's interest the various doings of Athelstan, and first of all his action in the North. Northumbria was in the hands of Sihtric, cousin of Rægnald, and Rægnald's successor as Norse King of York. Edward the Elder had allowed Norse rule there, and Athelstan had continued the allowing; in January 926, he had given one of his sisters to Sihtric as wife. Sihtric died shortly afterward, leaving as his heir Olaf, his son by a former marriage; the chance of gaining rule over Northumbria tempted Guthfrith, a brother of Sihtric, in 927 to invade the land from his Irish holdings. Athelstan drove both Olaf and this uncle of his into flight, received the submission of chieftains of the Scots and of Strathclyde, and made Norwegian Northumbria and its city of York his own. When Guthfrith, weary of wandering, appealed to his clemency, the King entertained the Norseman in sumptuous style for four days at his Court; but to no effect. For Guthfrith, once dismissed, returned to his raids, "a pirate of old, as familiar with salt water as a fish."¹³

Dunstan, no doubt, heard of this Guthfrith, feasting in the North with his conqueror. Perhaps at some time he saw the

¹² *Gest. Reg. I*, 145f., 148.
¹³ *Ibid.*, 146f.

Welsh princes whom, it was said, Athelstan compelled at Hereford to promise him tribute: every year twenty pounds of gold, three hundred of silver, twenty-five thousand oxen, as many dogs and hawks for his hunting as he would.¹⁴ At many places these Welsh chieftains met King Athelstan in later years, as the Old English charters tell: at Exeter, Kingston, Winchester, Nottingham, Frome, and Dorchester. Their leader was Hywel Dda, Hywel "the Good," King of Dyfed, who admired England and its kings immensely, who followed the example of King Alfred in journeying as pilgrim to Rome, and before he died in 950 as supreme chieftain of Wales had gathered and defined in a great written code the many laws and customs of his land. Others from Wales who also came on visits but less frequently were Idwal, King of Gwynedd, and Morgan of Morgannwg, and Twdwr of Brycheiniog.¹⁵

Of equal interest to a young onlooker at Athelstan's Court must have been the visitors from across the Channel. England and the Continent had long been related by intermarriage. Two kings of Wessex, Athelwulf and Athelbald, father and brother of Alfred, had married in succession the girl Judith, daughter of Charles the Bald; Alfred's daughter, Ælfthryth, had been given as wife to Baldwin the Second, Count of Flanders. Now, in 926, the younger son of Ælfthryth and Baldwin, Adulf, Count of Boulogne, came to the English Court of Athelstan to ask for his cousin, Athelstan's sister Eadhlid, as bride for Hugh, known to history as Hugh the Great, Duke of the Franks.

In the records of early mediæval France this Hugh holds a place of high import, both for his family and for his own

¹⁴ *Ibid.*, 148.
¹⁵ J. E. Lloyd, *History of Wales*, I, 1911, 333ff., 353; Rachel Bromwich, *Studies in Early British History*, ed. Nora K. Chadwick, 1954, 99f.

influence. He was both nephew and son of kings of France. His uncle, Count Odo, we have seen elected king in 888, after his gallant defence of Paris; his father, Robert, Marquis of Neustria and brother of Odo, had been raised to the throne in 922 by the nobles of France, hot with rebellion against Charles the Simple. King Charles had fled, had gathered an army, had come back to fight his rival at Soissons the next year, had heard with triumph of Robert's death on the battlefield. His joy had been brief; his nobles had rallied to give his crown to another man. Probably it might now have come to Hugh, had he not perhaps preferred to enjoy his power behind a throne. The election, at all events, had fallen upon Raoul, Duke of Burgundy, brother-in-law of Hugh through his marriage with Hugh's sister, the intrepid Lady Emma.

Soon the de throne King, Charles the Simple, had been seized and thrown into prison by the treachery of one who pretended to be his friend, Herbert of Vermandois, also brother-in-law of Hugh. Then Eadgifu, wife of Charles, had fled for protection to England, to her father, Edward the Elder, in terror lest this same Herbert should also lay hands upon her little son, Louis, then about three years old.¹⁶ Louis "d'Ouremer" they called him henceforth, and Dunstan must often have seen him with Athelstan after King Edward's death in 924.

Now, in 926, Hugh was eager to gain King Athelstan of England as his ally, and the ally of this Raoul whom he had allowed to gain the throne of France. No doubt he feared a rising in favour of the Carolingian, Charles the Simple; hence his quest for a wife of Athelstan's line.¹⁷ Probably Dunstan saw the magnificent gifts presented by Count

¹⁶ Lauer, *Louis d'Ouremer*, 9f.; ed. Flodoard, 212 (Hugh of Flavigny).
¹⁷ Flodoard, ed. by Lauer, 36, note 5.

Adulf to the King when they met at the abbey of Abingdon in Berkshire. There were perfumes, "such as England had never known"; jewels, especially emeralds, winking brilliant with green light; race horses, gorgeous in golden trappings; an onyx vase, on which peasants, cunningly engraved, seemed actually to move in their corn fields and vineyards. Other offerings were even more precious: a sword, declared to be that of Constantine the Great, bearing in its hilt, men said, a nail from the very Cross of the Christ; thorns from His crown, set in crystal; a lance famed as that with which the soldier pierced His side, long held as the lance of Charlemagne; the standard of blessed Maurice, the Martyr of Valais. Part of this splendour Athelstan kept for himself; the most sacred relics he gave to enrich Aldhelm's abbey of Malmesbury, where he himself was to be laid to rest.¹⁸

The Lady Eadhid departed with Count Adulf to her wedding with Hugh in France, and three years later, in 929, Charles the Simple died there, still a prisoner. His son, Louis d'Outre-mer, the boy "from overseas," was still in school at the Court of Athelstan, his uncle, while his land of France went through crisis after crisis. King Raoul fought incessantly against enemies within and without: against that same Herbert of Vermandois, ever veering from one side to another; against the chieftains of Lotharinga, now turning their allegiance from France to Germany; against the North-men and the Hungarians.

In 928 another envoy appeared at the English Court in search of a bride. He came from the King of Germany, Henry the Fowler, to ask of Athelstan another of his sisters, for Henry's son Otto, afterward Otto the Great, now a youth of sixteen. Fear of a movement in support of the Caro-

¹⁸ *Gest. Reg.* I, 150f.; Laura H. Loomis, *Speculum*, 1950, 437ff.

lingian line lay also behind this mission. Two sisters were sent for German inspection; the elder one, Edith, was chosen, and became Otto's wife.¹⁹

The name of this ambassador from Germany has come down to us as Count Hooft. A happy suggestion imagines young Dunstan, at the age of twenty, entertaining him at Court in England with the story of the British girl Ursula and her many Virgin Martyrs. Then—so the reasoning argues—the Count passed the story on to his friends, the nuns at Cologne, and eventually at their request the tenth-century narrative of her *Passion* was written.²⁰ The theory itself is well supported, and is, indeed, in keeping with Dunstan's delight, from youth to age, in stories of spiritual adventure. Another glimpse of this time, equally attractive and based on excellent authority, shows him at this same Court of Athelstan, listening with the King and his nobles to an old soldier who told of that day nearly sixty years past when as his armour-bearer he had seen King Edmund, the Martyr of East Anglia, killed by invading Danes.²¹ Dunstan himself as an old man retold this tale.

Scholarship in another matter has connected Dunstan with the preparations for the marriage of this Princess Edith to Otto of Germany. In 929, the year of the marriage, Cenwald, bishop of Worcester, was travelling in the kingdom of Henry the Fowler, possibly as envoy from England on this business. If so, he did more than arrange a wedding. He visited many churches, among them that of Saint-Gall in Switzerland, where he established a Confraternity of Prayer with England. On the list of those in England for whom

¹⁹ *Gest. Reg.* I, 117, 137; R. L. Poole, *Studies in Chronology and History*, 1934, 115ff. (*EHR*, 1911).
²⁰ W. Levison, *Bom. Järb.* CXXXII, 1927, 71.
²¹ *Memorials of St. Edmund's Abbey*, ed. T. Arnold, I, RS, XCVI, 15ff.; *Memorials of Saint Dunstan*, 378f.

henceforth the brethren of Saint-Gall offered their intercession appear still the names of King Athelstan, of Wulfhelm, who in 926 had succeeded Athelm as Archbishop of Canterbury, and of one Keondrud, though perhaps, as one well known to the royal household, to have been Cynethryth, Dunstan's mother.²²

In Athelstan's Court, Dunstan not only talked, we may think, with young Louis d'Outre-mer from France, but with the young Alan who was to be known to history as Alan of the Twisted Beard, who bore in pride the name of his grandfather, Alan the Great, the renowned Lord of Brittany. His father, Mathuedoi, Count of Poher, had escaped with him to England from the raids of the Northmen upon the Breton coast; Athelstan had been godfather at his baptizing, and always afterward held him in special affection. The description given of him in Breton annals is heroic: "strong in body and bold of spirit, disdainful to kill wild game of boars and bears with wapon of iron, hunting only with branches of trees cut from the forest." It would seem that he, like Louis d'Outre-mer, had been in England as a child under Edward the Elder, that he had returned to his own land of Brittany, and had once again crossed the Channel, this time to live under English protection for years, probably, too, Dunstan met a third young prince from overseas who made Athelstan's household his home. His name was Håkon, and he was son of that Harold Fairhair who bound all the Viking chieftains of Norway together under his supreme rule as their King.

²² Piper, ed. *Libri Confrat. S. Galli* (MGH), 136 and 100; *Memorials of Saint Dunstan*, lxxv; Armitage Robinson, *BASP*, IV, 41.
²³ For differing theories see *La Chronique de Nantes*, ed. R. Merlet, 1896, 82; A. de la Borderie, *Hist. de Bretagne*, II, 1898, 361, 387.

A common need of defence against Viking raiders encouraged overtures of friendship between Harold and Athelstan; and to the English King at York came two envoys, Helgrim and Ostrid, escorting as gift a ship with golden prow and purple sail, overlaid with gilded shields. Norway under Harold was growing fast in renown; Athelstan received the gift gladly and gave its escort a magnificent welcome.²⁴ Norse tradition told that a son born to Harold in his old age of a bondswoman named Thora was brought up by King Athelstan at his Court and was called Håkon Athelsteinsfóstri. After his father Harold was dead, Håkon returned to Norway, was made King by its chieftains in place of his half-brother, Eric Bloodaxe, and ruled long and victoriously there as "Håkon the Good."²⁵

The ambassadors from the Continent, their talk, and especially the treasures they brought with them, were of deep interest to young Dunstan, who was now growing into that skill of arts and crafts always connected with his name. Tapestries, metalwork, paintings, were already his joy. He was learning to draw, to limn portraits; he was poring over poetry, Latin and Old English, the songs and verse, the legends and history of his ancestors; he was practicing his hand and his mind in music, interpreting the thoughts of others and working hard to create his own. Most of all, as appealing both to his feeling for art and his reverence for his Faith, he delighted in King Athelstan's gifts to various communities: the treasures from France offered to Abingdon, to Malmesbury; books, magnificently written and illuminated, to Saint Cuthbert's shrine at Chester-le-Street, to

²⁴ *Gest. Reg.* I, 149.

²⁵ Cf., on the problems connected with Håkon, Kendrick, *Hist. of the Vikings*, 108f., 121, 253; for sagas, Snorri Sturluson, *Heimskringla*, ed. Finnur Jónsson, 1911, 65ff.; trans. Erling Monsen and A. H. Smith, 1932, 71ff.

Christ Church, Canterbury, to Bath; relics to Glastonbury, to Exeter, to Winchester.

He doubtless talked often with the priests at Court. Two of these we know by name, the same name. One was *Ælfheah*, "priest," the other was *Ælfheah*, "priest and monk,"²⁶

generally described as "the Bald"; both were chaplains and secretaries to the King. *Ælfheah* "the Bald," as cousin in some degree of *Athelstan*, was also related to *Dunstan* and held him especially in his thoughts. Both these priests became bishops. *Ælfheah*, "the priest," was consecrated to Wells in 926, and frequently came from his Cathedral to the royal Court at Cheddar. *Ælfheah*, "priest and monk," was not appointed bishop until 934, when he received the see of Winchester.

On the surface, then, all seemed well in *Dunstan's* life. As time went on, however, trouble began to rise, simmering in quiet for many months. *Dunstan's* companions in the royal household were, like himself, connected with the ruling line of *Wessex*; but most of them looked on him as an alien to their minds. Many of them found him bookish, given to reading rather than sport, delighting in talk with older men; some of them envied him the praise and notice which his various skills brought to him. Dislike and envy begot secret slander. It was whispered that he was deep in study of magic verses, heathen spells and legends. This was a serious matter, for magic was of the devil, and surely the royal Court must be beyond reproach of such offence.²⁷

Gradually the whispers became such open talk that the King could no longer refuse to listen. He ended the trouble, as he thought, by dismissing *Dunstan* from his presence and

²⁶ Birch, No. 641.

²⁷ Against sorceries and spells see *II Athelstan*, No. 6; *I Edmund*, No. 6; *F. L. Attenborough*, 130; *A. J. Robertson, Laws*, 6.

Long and hard he thought in the quiet of Glastonbury; now and then at Winchester he talked with its bishop. Within the mind of Ælftheah, "priest and monk," a desire, a hope, had long been stirring, that once again in the monasteries of England Benedictine *Rule* might be followed with the vigour it had once held; above all, that this vigour might rise anew in Glastonbury, England's ancient and holy house. Already he himself was doing as much as was then within his reach. He was practicing faithfully a strict round of prayer and discipline with some who felt as he did, and making this round as monastic as he could. More he could not venture at the moment. So long a time of falling away, of destruction, could not, it seemed, be brought suddenly into regular monastic course by a concerted attack, by order of bishops or King; for bishops and King in England were not yet ready. But could not Dunstan, this student of marked gifts, could not he find within him energy to kindle into new vigour the monastic *Rule* which had once been followed far and wide in England? One day as they talked, Ælftheah

time. What was he to do with his life? Bishop Ælftheah's house. It was a difficult and depressing next months partly in Glastonbury, partly in Winchester at All this took place about the year 935, and he spent the away the mud.

company. Directly this was made known, the worst of Dunstan's enemies seized their chance. They fell upon him in a band, tied him hand and foot, threw him into a bog and bear and kicked him there until they were tired. Then they ran away and left him, covered with filth, to make for the house of a friend he could trust. Even the hounds in its yard rushed to worry this strange apparition until they recognized a familiar voice. How much kinder are dogs than these cousins of mine, Dunstan thought bitterly, as he scraped

It must be remembered that there was no definite movement or organization at hand for his support. In France, indeed, the spirit of monastic reform had now been twenty-five years at work, since the foundation of Cluny in 910. Its second abbot, Odo, had filled his days well. Always following the path marked by Benedict of Aniane, he had brought this reform to abbeyes of Frankland north and south, supported by Papal authority. About 930 his aid had been sought for the monastery of Fleury on the Loire, founded in the seventh century and famed as guardian of the relics of Saint Benedict of Nursia. Its brethren, once scattered in fear of the Northmen, had by this time gathered there once

his mind, even possible.

The question found no welcome in this young man of twenty-six. Dunstan at heart was a lover of thought, mature in silent peace, rather than of many words, of struggle and contention; he had not yet forgotten the unhappy ending of his bond with Athelstan's Court. He had loved his days there at the centre of England, the constant discussion of politics, of books, of art, the meeting with men of learning from France, from Germany, from Flanders, the hope of progress in his studies. The society of cultured and attractive women, too, had been pleasant—more than pleasant. Perhaps, he had even thought, the best way for him was to martyr, to work for the Church amid the ignorant and un-churched world. In contrast with this picture, that of himself as a would-be Benedictine monk upholding the cause of regular discipline among his variously minded colleagues in the marshes of Glastonbury was neither appealing nor, in

at Glastonbury in the true Benedictine sense?

Could he, for himself and for others, give the years that lay before him to the renewing, if this might be, of monastic life

more. But they were not united in spirit; quarrels were constantly arising. The story was told that Benedict himself, their Patron, appeared one day to one of them: "Go," he said, "tell those brothers that I am leaving this house since they will not let me rest in peace; and say that I shall not come back until I bring here from Aquitaine a man after my own heart." Like other cloisters, Fleury had fallen into lay hands; King Raoul had presented it to a leading noble of France, Count Elisier. Fortunately Elisier's conscience began to work, until finally he begged Odo to take this abbey into his keeping and discipline. When Odo approached its gates he saw the brethren of Fleury assembled on the roofs of its buildings, standing grimly at its doors, stones and swords in their hands. For three days arguments flew back and forth; the community threatened appeal to the law, to the King. In a last hope Odo rode to their great gate, sitting humbly upon a donkey. In peace, he said, he had come. Let him only be allowed to work for the ending of confusion and the restoring of order, and no one should suffer harm. Then Fleury yielded.²⁸

Naturally the names of Cluny and of Fleury, homes of renewed Benedictine life, were known to Englishmen of this time; but their influence, especially that of Fleury, upon spiritual life in England was to mature later. There is no evidence that their example was directly driving forward Ælfheah of Winchester as he talked with Dunstan. And Dunstan might then and there have decided for secular life had he not fallen now into critical sickness, which kept him long unable to work and in great pain. In his fear and torment his mind slowly changed. Now, little by little, he began to discern, as it seemed, the hand of the Lord which was leading him inexorably toward that

²⁸ PL, CXXXIII, coll. 80ff.; *Bibl. Chim.* 52.

decision he had long refused to make. It was perhaps in 936 that he at last came to his resolve. He would try to settle down at Glastonbury and learn the life of a Benedictine monk so far as he then could, say the Divine Office regularly night and day, and follow ascetic discipline with as many of the abbey's brethren as were awake, or could awaken, to the same call.

Directly he recovered he made known at Glastonbury his purpose and desire. Doubtless all was as hard as he had foreseen. But Ælfhæah was still at Winchester, and to Winchester Dunstan was able now and then to ride in hope of encouragement and counsel. His earliest biographer tells of a visit on a day when the bishop was dedicating a new church near the west gate of the city. Many were present; and after the ceremony Ælfhæah and Dunstan enjoyed a feast in its honour with their friends, both men and women. At last, as night was coming on, the bishop rose, gave thanks for all, blessed all the company, and left with his young novice from Glastonbury. As they were walking back to the episcopal House they came to Saint Gregory's Church. "Let us say our Compline here," said Ælfhæah, "in this place of prayer of our father Gregory." So they did, and in its course, while the bishop was saying the words of absolution after the *Compline* a huge stone fell from the high roof, crashing to the floor so near to these two heads that it even touched their hair. "If I mistake not," the writer notes, "it was the hand of the Enemy of all good work. But, thanks be to God, no harm was done."²⁹

All we hear of these earlier years of Dunstan's life points to a mind quick and intense. One of his friends, a deacon named Wulfred for whom he cared very much, died about this time. Soon afterward Dunstan dreamed that Wulfred

²⁹ *Memorials*, 14f.

came from the world beyond to tell him of his future. Like many persons practical and active yet blessed with vivid imagination, all his life he was given to dreams while he slept. As a little boy, we are told, sleeping near his father on a visit from his home to Glastonbury, his child's vision full of the Night Office he had just attended in that ancient, crumbling abbey of the marsh, he had dreamed of a venerable old man in gleaming white alb who showed him a new monastery, beautiful in its chapel and cells. In the years after his father had left him to his books in that old abbey he had worked so hard that he came down with fever and, if the tale be true, seems to have walked in his sleep to the church and to have climbed by a ladder to its roof. So, at any rate, Glastonbury declared, and added that he was found next morning fast asleep between two watchmen inside the church. The man who could see visions of new buildings, of new and regular life in the disordered abbeys of England, might well have dreamed dreams as a boy.

There were women, too, whom he held his friends at Glastonbury. One of these, the Lady Athelthæd, was related to the royal family and to Dunstan, a widow of strongly religious bent and possessed of earthly wealth. She lived with her household in cottages near the abbey, on its western side; to her the brethren frequently came to give and to find aid and solace. King Athelstan came, too, to enjoy his niece's hospitality. To Dunstan the years of her presence meant much, and at last it was joy to him that he himself could give her the Holy Eucharist at her departing from this world; for by that time Athelthæd of Winchester had ordained him priest. Another woman, one Athelwynn, also of noble birth, took great interest in his artistic work, still practiced by him in the intervals of Office, reading, and solitary prayer. At her asking he drew a design for a stole which she was to

embroider with her needle, and sometimes he carried his harp to her house near by, for her delight in his music.

The days passed quietly at Glastonbury, as he prayed and worked in his little cell, built apart for greater solitude, against the abbey walls. For the world outside they were full of unrest, and Dunstan must have listened with all eagerness to those who brought him news concerning men whom he had known at Court.

In 936, about the time when Dunstan had yielded himself to the monastic life, King Raoul of France had died. By the aid of Henry the Fowler of Germany, to whom he repeatedly gave homage, and through the enormous power of Hugh the Great, he had held his throne amid the perpetual feuds and intrigues of Frankish nobles, stranger though he had been to the Carolingian house of Frankish tradition.

Raoul left no child, and the destiny of France lay at the will of the two great rivals, Hugh the Great and Herbert, Count of Vermandois. Hugh was now Count of Paris and Marquis of Neustria, lord of the lands between the Loire and the Seine, with the exception of Brittany and of those districts of Normandy given to Rollo by Charles the Simple. His holdings within the Church extended far and wide. He was lay abbot of the "monasteries" of Saint-Martin of Tours and of Marmoutier, of Saint-Denis, of Saint-Riquier, and of Saint-Germain of Auxerre, all now largely given to canons and secularized clerics. But he was not of Carolingian descent. On the other hand, Herbert of Vermandois was directly in the line of Charlemagne, and he, also, was in control of wide regions of France.

Bitter strife at length prevented choice of either. To Hugh the only expedient seemed to be to recall Louis d'Outre-mer to the throne of his father, Charles the Simple. Hugh's policy

preailed; envoys were sent to England, and found Athelstan with this nephew, now about fifteen years old, at York. After exacting from those who sought him an oath of allegiance to Louis, the King allowed him to depart with an escort of English bishops and secular lords. They landed at Boulogne, where French nobles, gathered there, knelt on its sands in homage, then brought their new King to Laon for his crowning by Artaud, Archbishop of Reims.³⁰

Joy was high throughout France in this return of the Carolingian line to rule. The eagerness of all men is seen in a story of a vision, appearing to a monk at Baume. Saint Martin of Tours himself, it was said, suddenly stood by this brother as he knelt at prayer. In his confusion of surprise he could only stammer, "Whence comest thou?" "From Rome," replied the Saint. "Louis is being hallowed as King of France today, and I must be here."³¹

Among those who escorted Louis to France was a bishop named Oda, who was to be highly revered by Dunstan in later days. He was a Dane, very probably from the eastern Danelaw;³² his father, it was said, had come to England with the Northmen Hubba and Inguar. But Oda had left father and home at an early age for the household of an Englishman of military service, who taught him well in things Christian and secular. His religious fervour had carried him to priesthood, then on pilgrimage to Rome. Some ten years before this time of 936, Archbishop Wulfhelm had consecrated him bishop, the second in line, of the recently founded see of Ramsbury in Wiltshire.

This same year of 936 also saw Alan of the Twisted Beard

³⁰ Floardard, *Annales*, ann. 936.

³¹ *AA. SS.* I Jul. 339f.

³² On Oda see *Vita Odonis, Anglia Sacra*, II, 78ff.; Langbeek, ed. *Script. rer. Dan.* II, 401ff.; *HGX*, I, 404ff.; Dorothy Whitelock, *Saga Book of the Vikings Society*, 1941, 169ff.; Armitage Robinson, *BASP*, V, 44.

leaving his refuge in England for the cause of his native land. Aided by Athelstan, he now gathered together his fellow-exiles and led them back to chase the Northmen from his Breton shore. Year after year he fought them, especially at and around Nantes, until they fled and his name was praised throughout Brittany.³³

In 936, too, Henry the Fowler died. His crown passed to his son, Otto, and thus Edith, Athelstan's sister, became queen in Germany. Three years later, in 939, Louis d'Outre-mer, King of France, was struggling bravely against the ambition of this young Otto, seeing with bitterness his own French vassals deserting him for Germany's rising power. Athelstan had to choose between his brother-in-law in Germany and his nephew in France. He chose France, and sent a fleet to aid Louis; but it only achieved a few ineffective raids.

Meanwhile Athelstan was ruling an England now generally his own, through conquest and wise governing. One last effort of his enemies was made in 937, when Olaf, son of that Guthfrith whom as a conquered pirate Athelstan had welcomed to his Court ten years before, came sailing from Ireland in the hope of gaining back a Norse kingdom of Northumbria. In the famous battle "at Brunanburh," a place now located only in the suggestions of scholars, Athelstan utterly defeated him, with his hopeful allies, those old enemies from the Scots and Strathclyde. Now the way was made ready for England's freedom in years to come.³⁴

It was Athelstan's last victory in the field. In 939 he died at Gloucester, and was buried in Malmesbury Abbey with pomp and procession of those holy relics which he had brought from abroad. His throne passed to the half-brother

³³ Flodoard, ed. Lauer, 63.

³⁴ Alstair Campbell, ed. *The Battle of Brunanburh*, 1938.

who had fought under him at Brunanburh, Edmund, son of Edward the Elder and his third wife, Eadgifu. Edmund was to rule only a short time; but in that short time he brought both misery and joy to Dunstan.

The new King was only eighteen. He had known Dunstan, some twelve years his senior, at Athelstan's Court, had, indeed, cherished a deep and admiring affection for him. He now speedily revoked the sentence of banishment which Athelstan had given; and frequently hereafter summoned Dunstan from Gloucestre to give his counsel, at Winchester, at Cheddar, on weighty matters of state. On his side, too, Dunstan hoped for much from this young man, for he had heard already of his courage in battle.

Edmund needed wise advice. Early in the new reign the defeated Norseman, Olaf Guthfrithson, thought to see his chance. He marched upon York, and then led his men south, ravaging as he went, to plunder Tamworth in Staffordshire and to encamp at Leicester. At last the English troops under King Edmund came up to blockade the city's gates, but Olaf forced his passage through their camp.

Then that Oda, who as bishop of Ramsbury had served Athelstan well, now Archbishop of Canterbury in Wulfhelm's place, united with Wulfstan, first of that name as Archbishop of York, to bring about such peace as was possible. In 940 it was made, at heavy loss to Edmund's rule.⁸⁵ Five Danish boroughs captured by Olaf—Leicester, Lincoln, Nottingham, Stamford, and Derby—were left in his possession; Watling Street was henceforward to be a boundary between two rival kingdoms in England.

Yet the victory, after all, was brief; Olaf lived only until 941. Then, to the good fortune of the English Crown, he

⁸⁵ M. L. R. Beaven, *FHR*, 1918, iff. and note 11.

was succeeded by his cousin, Olaf Cuaran, a man of far less force. Edmund took new hope, marched upon the Norsemen in 942, "redeemed the five boroughs," and recovered for his own English people land at least as far north as the Humber. Olaf received Christian baptism and in honour of the occasion the Anglo-Saxon *Chronicle* burst out into a rare paean of verse.³⁶

In the midst of all this excitement trouble was again brewing for Dunstan, the same trouble that had driven him from Athelstan's Court. More and more of late he had been giving time to Edmund, especially at Cheddar, where the King frequently stayed. Here once again his happiness in solitude, his reserve, his hours with his books and his pen, his lack of interest in lighter things, brought charges of evil against him; once more these charges persisted, until the King, weary of tales, finally lost his temper and told Dunstan to depart and to find his friends elsewhere.

To hear these words from an English king was more than Dunstan could bear. It happened just at this moment—the year 940 or one following not long afterward—that ambassadors from the "kingdom in the east," possibly of Otto of Germany,³⁷ were in Cheddar with letters to the English Court. To them he now turned and amid the deep concern of his friends told them of his disgrace and asked whether he might travel back with them to their land. Gladly they assured him all welcome and comfort.

Edmund was already repenting his hasty action. A few days later he rode to hunt with his nobles over the moors and forest land around Cheddar. Suddenly, as he followed fast and furiously after his stag, he outstripped his escort

³⁶ Allen Mawer, *EHR*, 1923, 551ff.

³⁷ Cf. *Memorials*, xvii, lxxixf.; Birch, No. 752; Stenton, *A.-S. England*,

and found himself alone. For miles he continued the chase, too excited to notice where he was riding. Then in the distance he saw the stag take a flying leap over the precipice into Cheddar's gorge, the dogs tearing after it. His horse was entirely out of control, death seemed certain, and all he could think of in this second of time was that if only the Lord would somehow save him he would surely atone to Dunstan for his recent angry words. Just then, instinct sensing danger, the horse brought its rider to a stop on the outer edge of the cliff.

The King returned to his Manor House in Cheddar and immediately sent for Dunstan. "Make haste," he said to the wondering priest. "Get ready a horse, for you go with me today on a journey of our own." With a few attendants they rode across the marsh to Glastonbury, halted, and walked into the abbey church. There Edmund took Dunstan by the hand, and with reverence led him to the seat of honour and rule. "Thine henceforth be this seat, and thine power, and be thou its faithful Abbot," he said as he placed him in it. "Whatever shall be lacking to thee for the increase of Divine worship or the furthering of holy Rule, that will I diligently supply in royal abundance."

It is not surprising that in their forgetfulness of the past, men came to look upon Dunstan as "the first abbot of the English nation."³⁸

He himself did not forget. Patiently he read and meditated, and so far as he was able at this time, led his community in the discipline of the *Rule* of either Benedict, of Italy and of France, in the English tradition of Bede, of Cuthbert, of ³⁸A.-S. C. (A; F, insertion) *ann.* 943 (on the word "afterwards" see Armitage Robinson, *BASP*, IV, 40; Flor. Worc. gives 942; *Memorials*, 251. For theory in regard to the abbot who ruled at Glastonbury before Dunstan see Armitage Robinson, *Som. Hist. Essays*, 43.

Aldhelm and his monasteries at Malmesbury, at Bradford-on-Avon, and at Frome. We are not, however, to look upon Glastonbury as now suddenly Benedictine in the sense held by the later tenth century. Clerics of more or less "secular" standard were still mingled here with monks in the making, and much study, much experience, both at home and on the Continent, remained to come from the future.

Progress was soon visible on the material side, at least. Dunstan did much to enlarge the buildings at Glastonbury, as skilled excavation is now gradually revealing. To the church of Ine and of the days following Ine, of very simple plan, he added another chancel, or a prolongation eastward of its existing chancel, placing this addition of his above the crypt of earlier date; secondly, he built aisle chapels (*porticus*), to the north and south of his chancel, that on the north dedicated to Saint John the Baptist, that on the south, it would seem, to Saint Andrew; thirdly, he erected a tower, probably above his chancel. From this point a monk of Dunstan's time would walk westward through the older chancel down the nave and beyond to reach the ancient church of Saint Mary. West of this, Dunstan built also a new chapel of Saint John the Baptist. Outside the church buildings he placed new houses for menial labour and for work in arts and crafts. The graveyard he enclosed by a wall and "raised it into a mound," making of it "a pleasant meadow removed from the noise of passers-by, a place of peace for those who rest there for a season."³⁹

At Glastonbury he ruled for the next thirteen years, per-

³⁹ *Memorials*, 25, 48, 182, 271f.; Knowles and St. Joseph, 28f. For Dunstan's building at Glastonbury as revealed by recent excavation, see, in order of date, Armistage Robinson, *PSAS*, 1928, 40ff.; Peers, Clapham, and Horne, *ibid.*, 1929, 1ff., and *Antiquaries Journal*, 1930, 24ff.; Clapham, *Eng. Rom. Arch. before the Conquest*, 1930, 48f., 91f.; C. A. Ralegh Radford, *Antiquity*, C, 1951, 213; CV, 1953, 41.

haps longer. Edmund fulfilled his promise by gifts and endowment, as did his Queen, Athelstred.⁴⁰ To free himself and his community from much of the secular business of the abbey Dunstan made his own brother, Wulftric, comptroller of its various properties.

Meanwhile he eagerly sought after books. The boys and young men under Dunstan's rule were carefully and widely taught in subjects both sacred and secular: the Bible, and its interpretation by the Churchmen of former centuries; grammar and literature, Latin and English; history and geography; such science and mathematics as were available.

Nor again did Dunstan fail to keep as before in constant

touch with events at Court and in his world, so far as he could through his own journeys and through the many visitors, messengers, and guests, who came to his abbey. Thus he learned that Edmund had again marched north, that in 944 he had defeated Norsemen anew beyond the Humber and made York his own. The following year the intrigue of conflicting parties in France came to a climax. Louis d'Outre-mer, now for nine years King Louis the Fourth, had seen Hugh the Great, Duke of the Franks, change gradually his friendship and support into determined opposition. On the one hand, Hugh's wife, that sister of Athelstan, had died, and Hugh had made a bid for German favour in marrying Hedwig, a young sister of Otto, King of Germany; on the other, Louis was of too independent a spirit to please Duke Hugh. Now the old rivals, Hugh the Great and Herbert of Vermandois, joined in a common cause against their King, until in 945 Louis, taken captive by the men of Normandy, was delivered over to Hugh as his prisoner. Edmund sent a mission to France for the aid of his nephew, but it met with

no success.⁴¹

⁴⁰ Birch, No. 752; Whitelock, *A-S. Wills*, 34f.
⁴¹ Lauer, *Louis d'Outre-mer*, 140.

No time was left him to do more. On the twenty-sixth of

May 946, he was murdered at Pucklechurch in Gloucestershire, a martyr to his own rash courage. He was there at a feast in honour of Saint Augustine of Canterbury, when suddenly at the height of its noise and merriment he saw in the company a man named Liofa, banished from England six years before, now enjoying a place at table next to an aldorman, his own special guest. Immediately the King determined to drive this outlaw from the hall, and during the tumult which followed died by a thrust of Liofa's dagger.⁴²

In the King's company as they rode to this feast was Dunstan, side by side with Athelstan, Ealdorman of East Anglia, a loyal friend, perhaps a kinsman, of the Royal House of Wessex, owner of wide lands, so powerful that he was commonly spoken of as "the Half-King." As they rode they both admitted a strong foreboding of evil to come, so vivid that it seemed as though announced by an emissary of the Evil One himself.⁴³

The King's body was carried to Glastonbury, and he was buried, as he had wished, in its church; Dunstan, as abbot and intimate friend, chanted his requiem. The house where he had died at Pucklechurch was set apart as a chapel of intercession for his soul.

The Lady Ethelred had been Edmund's second wife; and she was still living at this time. His two sons, Eadwig and Edgar, were born of his earlier marriage with Alfgifu, who in later days was held a saint, since record declared that "miracles numberless" honoured her tomb in Shaftesbury Abbey.⁴⁴ These sons were both too young to rule, and the English crown now came to Edmund's brother, Eadred. A specially strong affection bound this Eadred to the abbot of

⁴² Will. Malm. *Gest. Reg.* I, 159f.; Flor. *Worc. ann.* 946.
⁴³ *Memorials*, 44f.
⁴⁴ Ethelweard, *Chronicle*, MHB, I, 520.

Glastonbury; and Dunstan cared for him perhaps more than any other of the young kings of his country whom he, one after another, advised, restrained, and loved. All the nine years of his reign Eadred struggled against painful and humiliating sickness; yet he carried on his kingly tradition. Dunstan followed him, if not in person, with anxious spirit as he led his army in the North of England to quell a final burst of enthusiasm for the Scandinavian cause. Northumbria's leading men, among them Wulfstan the First, Archbishop of York, protested to him their dutiful loyalty when he met them in 947. Shortly afterward they welcomed openly to the kingship at York that Eric Bloodaxe, son of Harold Fairhair, whom his brother Hákon had driven from his throne. In retaliation they saw during the next year their fields ravaged by Eadred's men, the Minister of Ripon arrested, they heard, too, before long that Eadred had it in mind, did they not submit, to lay waste all their land. This was too much; they broke with Eric and he disappeared from sight. Still the Northumbrians were not crushed. They received as King once again that son of Sihtric, Olaf Cuaran, who now came back to hold for nearly three years, from 949 until 952, his seat in York. But their adherence again proved fickle. In 952 they changed their minds, drove him out, and called Eric once more to be their ruler. Now Wulfstan was accused before Eadred of disloyalty to the English Crown, presumably as supporter of Eric. For two years Eric once more held York with his Norse warriors; in 954 he was banished afresh by the Northumbrians, who now again gave their allegiance to the English King. From this day Eadred ruled York and the North in peace.⁴⁵

It was during his reign that his nephew, King Louis the Fourth of France, Louis d'Outre-mer, found peace in death.

⁴⁵ A.-S. C. (D, E), *ann.* 947-54; Alistair Campbell, *EHR*, 1942, 91ff.

His former enemy, Otto the Great, had become his friend; the King of Germany was, indeed, brother-in-law of Louis as well as of Hugh, Duke of the Franks. Otto had compelled Hugh to release Louis from captivity and, also, to yield homage to him as rightly due. But the homage was only superficial, and death for Louis in 954 was release from trouble within his borders and trouble from the Hungarians without. Goings and comings in the Church also filled Dunstan's mind during this reign. Daniel, a monk of Glastonbury, was consecrated to the see of St. Germans, provided by Athelstan for the British in Cornwall. Dunstan himself was eagerly pressed by the King to accept a bishopric. His second biographer, Adalard, tells of an offer of Winchester, made in 951, on the death of that well-loved bishop, Ælfheah, who had received Dunstan's profession as Benedictine monk. More reliable is the record of the first *Life*: that Eadred asked him in 953 to accept the vacant see of Crediton in Devonshire. When he persistently refused, busy not only at Glastonbury but in the King's service, and not yet prepared, he said, for so grave a responsibility, Eadred begged his mother, Eadgifu, to add her prayers. But neither her efforts nor his could move the abbot from Glastonbury.

There, such was Eadred's confidence, much of the royal treasure was in his keeping. In 955 the King's chronic sickness became critical, and, feeling that the end was near, he asked Dunstan to bring to him the possessions he prized most, that he might make gift of them before he died. Dunstan was on his way from Glastonbury to Frome in Somerset, where the King was lying ill, on Saint Clement's Feast, the twenty-third of November, when through one of those premonitions which all his life gave him knowledge of his friends he knew that Eadred was already dead. At Frome, according to Adalard, all the royal courtiers and servants had fled from the

place of death: ⁴⁶ a story which, if true, might have its reason in terror of the plague. The King was laid to rest by Dunstan in the Old Minster of Winchester; in his will he left two hundred pounds to him and to succeeding abbots of Glastonbury as a trust fund for relief of the people of Somerset and Devon.⁴⁷

Edmund's elder son, young Eadwig, now was King. Wessex, Mercia, and the men of the North of England accepted him as ruler. He was about fifteen, extremely good-looking, ready to carry out such royal duties as did not entail too much trouble, yet showing little of the early sense of responsibility, the courage and tolerance of duty, which had marked his father and his uncle. Mercifully England was not vexed by troubles from without during the four brief years of his reign. He certainly gave much to the Church; in the number of his charters there are records of benefactions for the brethren of Abingdon, Bath, Glastonbury, Malmesbury, Winchester, and Worcester, for the communities of Wilton and of Shaftesbury, as well as gifts of land for the aid of the sees of Canterbury and York.

But he cared lightly for his realms, far and wide, for their political well-being, for the reviving of monastic life. Indifference was his evil, not deliberate wrong-doing; his private affairs, his own friends, absorbed his days. It was, we may imagine, interference with these private interests which turned his respectful but unenthusiastic acceptance of Dunstan, chief friend and adviser of his father, into strong personal hostility. Already in the first months of his reign he was deeply under the influence of the young woman named Ælfgifu who a year or so afterward was to become his wife, and perhaps even more deeply under the influence of her

⁴⁶ *Memorials*, 58; *A-S. C. (A)*, *ann.* 955.

⁴⁷ *Gest. Reg.* I, 162; F. E. Harmer, *Eng. Hist. Documents*, 1914, 34.

ambitious mother, the Lady Æthelgifu. Both were constantly at Court. Ælfgifu was related in blood kinship to Eadwig, we are told; we read, too, that Oda, Archbishop of Canterbury, was opposed to the marriage for this reason.⁴⁸ Dunstan may have provoked ill-feeling by following his Archbishop here. Certainly some kind of crisis occurred when, late in 955 or at Eiphanytide 956, Oda crowned Eadwig at Kingston⁴⁹ in a long and elaborate ritual, followed, according to ancient custom, by an equally long and magnificent banquet. For hours young Eadwig sat at this feast in the great Hall, with his bishops and nobles assembled to honour him. Suddenly he rose and disappeared. For some time all in respectful wonder awaited his return. When he did not come, the Archbishop, embarrassed and concerned, bade Dunstan, kinsman of Eadwig's family, and Cynesige, bishop of Lichfield, a relative of Dunstan, go to find out what had happened. They found the King, his crown cast carelessly and happily aside, enjoying relief from solemnity with the girl Ælfgifu and her mother. Perhaps Dunstan acted too forcibly; probably there was nothing but force for him to use. The King, it was said, flatly refused to move; Dunstan seized him bodily, put back his crown upon his head, and dragged him forth. Eadwig returned to his lords and bishops at the feast; but neither he nor the two women ever forgot that hour.

Some time in 956 Dunstan left England. We do not know whether or not he was expressly sent into exile. Anger of these ladies of high favour, anger of the King, already in no way warmly attracted toward this earnest counsellor; rebellion against control, steadily rising in the sons and daughters of noble families, Eadwig's familiar companions; hostility of bishops and clergy who foresaw stricter discipline in sees and

⁴⁸ *A.-S. C.* 958 (D).⁴⁹ *Flor. Worc.* ed. Thorpe, I, 136.

monasteries if Dunstan's influence were to continue; fear of those high in State who desired favour from the King and from the women he made his queen and his mother-in-law—any or all of these factors may well have added new weight to feeling so often aroused against Dunstan by his austere, aloof manner. Now once more there spread exaggerated and untrue words throughout the land.⁵⁰ Now Eadwig's grand-mother, Eadgifu, who had worked hard for the Church with Dunstan, was stripped of lands and honour.⁵¹ Now Dunstan doubtless felt that his work at Glasstonbury, at the Court, was ended, at least for the time; and he crossed the Channel to refuge under Arnulf, Count of Flanders.⁵²

⁵⁰ *Memorials*, 32ff., 100f.

⁵¹ Birch, No. 1064; Kemble, No. 499.

⁵² *Memorials*, 59f.

Experience in Exile



THE YEAR or more spent in Flanders at this stage of Dunstan's life was to influence very deeply his work for monks and for monastic reform.

Three elements of inspiration were to be active later on

in the reviving of Benedictine discipline in England, each of them spontaneous of origin in its individual country: the new and original impulse given by Ælfhæth at Winchester and furthered by Dunstan at Glastonbury; that given by Berno and by Odo at Cluny and transmitted to Fleury; that given by Gerard of Brogne and by John of Gorze to the Netherlands, in the mediæval duchy of Lotharingia. In this mid-century those Englishmen who had begun at home in their own lives their own movement toward reform turned to seek from Fleury the stimulus and training they needed. Oda, Archbishop of Canterbury from 940 to 958, one of the early workers in the cause, at some time, we do not know exactly when, received the Benedictine habit from the abbot of this monastery on the Loire.¹ From Dunstan, first and especially, was to come the influence upon England of the corresponding but independent movement for reform in the Netherlands, seen and closely studied by him during these

¹ R. R. Darlington, *EHR*, 1936, 387; Beaven, *ibid.* 1918, note 11.

months in Flanders.² To understand this movement for reform in the Netherlands we will look first at Lotharinga, at its own need of monastic renewal, and at the lives of the men concerned in this.

The mediæval state of Lotharinga at this time embraced the lands of the Meuse and the Moselle; in other words, Belgium, with parts of Germany, France, and Switzerland, with the cities of Cologne, Aachen, Liège, Namur, Cambrai, Trèves, Verdun, Toul, and Strasbourg. Its history since its birth had been one of marked unrest, of a country continually swaying between the ambitious hands of rulers of France on the one side, of Germany on the other. Born as a kingdom in the mid-ninth century, under Lothar the Second, grandson of Louis the Pious, upon Lothar's death it had been seized by Charles the Bald, who was crowned its King at Metz. It had been divided, at Meerssen, between Charles and his half-brother, Louis the German; had been disputed by Charles and his nephew, Louis the Younger, who gained it after Charles was at last dead; had been grasped by Charles the Fat when in 884 he became Lord of all Frankland; had passed from him to Arnulf, King of Germany; and had finally risen in critical revolt when Arnulf made gift of its rule to a son of his, Zwentibold, born out of wedlock.

Lotharinga was now to change from a kingdom to a feudal duchy. Among the Lotharingian nobles contending against Zwentibold, the leader was Rêgnier au Long-Col, or Rêgnier Long-Neck, who allied his power with that of France and fought until Zwentibold fell on the field of battle in 900. Thereafter, whoever the Lord of Lotharinga might be in name, Charles the Simple of France or Louis the Child of Germany, it was Rêgnier who ruled here, and after him his young son Gilbert.

² Hallinger, *Gorze-Kluny*, 79; Symons, *DR*, 1941, 264ff.

From evil sometimes rises good. Out of this hot political strife in Lotharingia was to come a new spirit in religion, begotten of utter discontent and the hunger of spiritual need. Here, as in France and in Germany, monasteries which had survived the coming of the Northmen and the Hungarians lay imprisoned, reward of feudal service, in the grasp of nobles who fleeced them of their revenues and left the remnants of their once vigorous communities in want, famine, and apathy; here, also, bishops had bestowed rich cloisters on their friends and kinsmen; here, according to the frequent record, monks were fighting, quarrelling, hunting, and feasting, living with a Rule kept but in name. Some of this record, again, is exaggeration; but it is surely not altogether the lament of a later, more devout, time.³

It was in the hearts of the fighting, plotting, intriguing nobles of Lotharingia in this tenth century that the renewal of spiritual life of the monasteries of their land took its rise. They might, and they did, contend for their own political ends and accept the rich gifts of abbeyes offered them; but now and then the disordered state of these abbeyes struck the conscience of one who held a house once dedicated to the Lord, and held it, as he well knew, against the precepts and the tradition of the Church he himself acknowledged and in theory obeyed.

Such a one was this Gilbert, Duke of Lotharingia.⁴ The historian looks upon him, and truly, as ambitious, unscrupulous, always turning his allegiance this way or that, as he judged well for his advantage, now to France, under Charles the Simple, under Robert and Raoul, now to Germany, under the Simple, *Le royaume de Lorraine sous les Carolingiens*, 1898, 722f.; *Hist. de Lorraine*, I, 173ff.⁵

⁴ For Duke Gilbert see Lauer, ed. Flodoard, *Annales, ann. 920ff.*; A. Eckel, *Charles le Simple*, 1899, 110ff.; G. Tellenbach, *Königtum und Stämme*, 1939, 90f.

Henry the Fowler. In 925 Henry entered Lotharingia to stay; by 928 its duchy was a permanent part of his realm. It looked for a while as though the allegiance which Gilbert as Duke now rendered to this King of Germany might be lasting; he even received Henry's daughter, Gerberga, in marriage.

The honour of the first arousing of Duke Gilbert's conscience in regard to his monastic holdings apparently falls to one of the two great reformers of this time in the Netherlands, Gerard of Brogne.⁵ The birthplace in Belgium of this pioneer whose work was to interest Dunstan so keenly was once called Brogne, but is now known as Saint-Gérard. It lies on the edge of the forest of Marlagne, south of Charleroi. There the Merovingian nobles rode to hunt, and there, when Gerard was a boy, stood the ruins of a little chapel of Our Lady, of Saint Peter, and of Saint John the Baptist, built, it was said, by Pippin of Herstal. Gerard's father was of high rank and considerable wealth; and to this son, now a young man, he passed on as inheritance the land on which these ruins were still standing. Already Gerard was possessed by a hungry desire for things of the spirit, since the world, he had decided, was not for him, enjoyable as he had found it in the household of one of the nobles of his district. In or about 913 he had begun what he had long had in mind, the raising of another church in this same forest glade, the restoring of its once holy ground.

The little church was almost ready for its dedication when Gerard behought him that for its sanctifying it must certainly hold within its walls some sacred relics, just as those

⁵ W. Schultze, *Gerhard von Brogne, Forsch. z. deutsch. Gesch.* XXV, 2, 1885, 22 ff.; Bertière, *Mess. des Fidèles*, 1888; RB, 1892; *Mon. belge*, I, 28 ff.; BLB, 1932, 141 ff.; Hauck, III, 345 ff.; Baix, s.v. *Brogne, DHGE*, Haltinger, *passim*; P. Grierson, ed. *Ann. de S.-Pierre de Gand; de Morcau*, II, 142 ff. *The Vita Gerardi* (SS, XV, 2, 654 ff.) is not reliable.

other cloisters which he knew by name guarded in reverence and pride some link with the earthly life of their special Saint. He had no idea where to seek such. But nothing daunted, he set out on his search, and at last to his joy gained as gift from Saint-Denis relics of Eugenius, Saint and Martyr of Toledo. Back he hastened with his treasure and asked leave of Stephen, bishop of Liège, for its translating. On the eighteenth of August, of a year varying in the opinions of scholars from 915 to 919, it was triumphantly borne, escorted by a multitude of priests, clerics, and layfolk, into the church it was to honour.⁶

Gerard, however, wanted monastic life for himself and for others even more than he wanted holy relics in his church. At some time and in some place—Saint-Denis has been both suggested and denied—he himself made his profession. The work of establishing regular discipline at Brogne progressed, no doubt, very slowly, and dates are here very uncertain; but some time between 920 and 928, we may think, while Dunstan was growing from boy to man, a community of Benedictine monks, inspired by the tradition of Benedict of Aniane, were learning the routine of their Office in this church of Brogne, dedicated to Saint Peter and Saint Eugenius. Their abbot was Gerard himself, now in priest's Orders.

As time went on, his courage, enthusiasm, and single-mindedness, the austere and devoted life of his community, drew to him the notice and the respect of the Catholic nobles of Lotharingia, among them Duke Gilbert. About 931 Gilbert was hearing again and again what he already knew well, that his abbey of Saint-Ghislain at Mons in Hainaut was in dire straits.⁷ Here, fifty years before, the Normen had

⁶ *Anal. Boll.* III, 1884, 29ff.; V, 1886 (Morin), 385ff.

⁷ *Ibid.* V, 209ff.; VI, 1887 (Poncelet), 209ff.; *Misc. S. Gisleini: AA. SS.* B. IV, 385ff.; Berlière, *Mon. belge*, I, 274; de Moreau, II, 145f.

worked their wonted devastation; its monks had fled, and a narrative, dated with good reason in this same tenth century, tells that its deserted altar was now being served by a priest, Teutrid, who had found lodging near by: "So dreadful was the desolation within its walls that no one could live there." It may be that then the Duke had filled his abbey with secular clerics, of whom we hear in other tradition, and that their loose living disturbed his peace of mind. At any rate, during an assembly in Dinant he told Gerard that he was greatly troubled by the state of things at Saint-Ghislain. Episcopal sanction, he said, had been granted for work there; he himself had talked with the bishop, Stephen, who held the see of Cambrai from 911 to 934. Would not Gerard, he asked, go speedily to this abbey and use his power and energy for its renewing? Gerard both would and did.

Duke Gilbert had other abbeys in the same state of negligence and disorder. In years past he had laid a heavy hand of requisition upon his monastery of Saint-Maximin at Trèves, itself ravaged in that *annus miserabilis* of 881. In vain its half-starving brethren had appealed against Gilbert to their King, Henry the Fowler. At last, also here, Gilbert's conscience came to life. The mediæval monastic narrative proudly asserts that in indignation the abbey's Patron Saint visited him one night and beat him black and blue for his callous cruelty. Whatever the immediate stimulus, the Duke certainly hurried to Trèves to make amends, to restore decent living and order. This time, however, he obtained help from the monastery of Gorze.⁸

The abbey of Gorze is known to history as the home of its monk John, the mainspring of monastic reform of this cen-

⁸ On Gorze see *Vita Joh. abb. Gorz.*: AA. SS. OSB, V, 363ff.; SS, IV, 335ff.; Hallinger, 51ff.; Lager, *Stud. und Mitt. aus dem Benediktinerorden*, 1887, 32ff., 181ff.; Hauck, III, 349ff.

tury in Upper Lotharingia, in the dioceses of Metz, Tèves, Toul, and Verdun. He was born in Vandières on the Moselle, went to school at Metz, studied grammar with little zeal under Berner, deacon of the Cathedral at Toul, and, as he grew up, threw himself avidly into reading and prayer, urged on by the example of a nun of Saint Peter's at Metz. But no monastery could he hear of in which he could attain his long-ing: practice of the regular life in all its fullness. There were others among his friends who felt the same need; they met with him, now in one home, now in another, to discuss and plan what they might do. Among those mentioned by name are Rotland, cantor of Saint Stephen's Church in Metz, and Warimbert of Saint Saviour's, who allowed John to try his soul as anchorite in a tiny cell near his church. But this was in the middle of the city and altogether too noisy. Then report reached him of a holy and learned hermit named Humbert, living in solitude at Verdun. To him John hastened, and from him to another recluse, who had no learning but an in-human appetite for abstinence and mortification. His name was Lambert, and he was praying hard in the depths of the forest of Argonne. For a while John was happy here in quietness. Visitors, indeed, came, but they brought unnecessary food and asked for instruction. Humbert, his friend, came to confer; a deacon, Bernacer, came from Metz; there also arrived in need of counsel Andrew, who had fled from the Northmen raiding Britain to the hospitality of Dado, bishop of Verdun.

All were seeking a life under monastic rule, but the question remained: Where? One has to eat, even in a forest cell, and practical difficulties seemed almost impossible. For long the friends debated, and now they were joined by one Eimold, who had been asking himself the same question in his cell at Toul, urged on by the sympathy of Toul's bishop, Gauzlin.

No stone was left unturned. John and Bernacer even ventured as pilgrims on the dangerous and painful journey to Italy, hopeful of aid from Rome and from the Benedictine monastery of Monte Cassino.

At long last a possible home was proposed, in the desolated abbey of Gorze, near Metz. This had been founded in the eighth century by Saint Chrodegang, but by this time most of its brethren had fled from the Hungarians, carrying as they went the relics of their Patron, Saint Gorgonius, to the shelter of Saint Saviour's Church in Metz.⁹ Their abbey had fallen into lay ownership and was now held, for whatever could be squeezed out of its land, by a secular lord, entirely opposed to its passing into Benedictine usage and tenure.

John and his friends, nevertheless, sought out Adalbero, bishop of Metz, to put forward their petition. The bishop was a good and conscientious ruler, not unsympathetic with the urgent need of restoration of monasteries and of monastic life in his diocese. Story declared that as a young man, just ordained, he had visited the ruins of Gorze and then and there had vowed that, if ever he should become a bishop, he would restore this profaned sanctuary to dignity and honour.

Now, however, when the chance was his, he found himself in a most embarrassing situation. The present possessor of the abbey of Gorze was one of his own supporters, a man of high standing and importance, whose aid he badly needed for his own episcopal work in these stormy times. How was he to tell him to yield this property?

A compromise was made. In 933 the abbey was yielded; but little of its revenue went with it. Thus, in poverty and strictest austerity, monastic reform began in Upper Lotharingia. Adalbero consented to clothe these postulants—John,⁹ *Mirac. S. Gorgonii: SS, IV, 239ff.; Cart. de l'abbaye de Gorze, ed. A. d'Herbomez, 1898, 1ff.*

Einold, Bernacer, and a few others—with the monastic habit, according to the *Rule* of Saint Benedict. They thereupon elected Einold as their abbot and gave the care of buildings, money, and providing to John. At first the lack of practical necessities made John's work extremely difficult; and the reproaches, even insults, of his hungry brethren almost brought him to despair. The bishop had too much on his mind to give thought to his new little congregation; and it took a vision of Saint Peter himself in terrible wrath, so at least the *Life* of John of Gorze declares, to bring him to serious consideration of its need.¹⁰

From this *Life*, written by John's friend of the same name, abbot of Saint-Arnoul at Metz, we learn some details of the daily and nightly round of service at Gorze. Evidently it, also, was inspired by Benedict of Aniane. We read that "in number and length psalms, prayers, and lectures were increased." Here was found again the *trina oratio*: "The three-fold prayer at night after the signal had been given for Vigils was much longer than before." Moreover, while all sat in choir, awaiting the Night Office, "thirty psalms, from the hundred and nineteenth to the end of the Psalter, were said by each monk in silence, divided into three groups: ten for the departed, ten for friends and kinsfolk, ten for men in general. On the shorter nights of summer, and on Feast Days, only the gradual psalms were said, divided in the same way into three. The lectures at Vigils in the winter were lengthened so greatly that the Books of the Prophets were ended in about two weeks; only one lecture was needed for the whole Book of Daniel."¹¹

Little by little, very largely through John's practical skill and energy, the abbey of Gorze developed its resources: its

¹⁰ SS, IV, 241, 364, 367. See, however, d'Herbomez, 169ff., 174ff., 177ff. ¹¹ SS, IV, 359f.

farm, its fields of grain, poultry yard, mill and bakery, vineyard and wine press. His courage and devotion gradually induced secular hands to give up property which rightly belonged to the monastery. As time went on, aspirants came to its doors, and the fame of the venture spread abroad.

It was this abbey of Gorze, then, that aided the old and well-known monastery of Saint-Maximin at Trèves when Duke Gilbert was moved in 934 to renew its life by the devoted work of a new abbot, Hugh.¹² In the same year Gorze and Fleury shared in the reforming of the monastery of Saint-Evre at Toul, to which Gauzlin, bishop of Toul, who had visited Fleury, gave his help and blessing;¹³ from Saint-Evre the movement spread to the abbey of Saint-Mansui, also in Toul.¹⁴ By this time Bishop Adalbero had become more enthusiastic, and at his request Gorze sent out Ansteus to restore the buildings of Saint-Armoul in Metz, to plant trees and vines in its ruined orchards while he stirred up the will of its community for Office and reading.¹⁵ The influence of Gorze spread further in Metz to the abbey of Sainte-Glodesind, where Adalbero placed his kinswoman Hilmiltrud as abbess, and, near Metz, to the cloisters of Saint-Martin, Longeville, and Saint-Félix.¹⁶ The renewing of this last monastery—like the others, entirely run to seed—was entrusted by the bishop to a monk from Ireland, or Irish Scotland, named Kaddroc.¹⁷ In Lower Lotharingia, in the diocese of Liège, under its bishop, Richer, Kaddroc and his fellow-countryman, Mac-calan, were the first rulers of the abbey of Waulsort, Dinant,

¹² *Ann. S. Max. Trev. ann. 934*: SS, II, 213; SS, IV, 6, 231f., 364.
¹³ *Mirac. S. Bercharii*: SS, IV, 487; *Gesta episc. Tull.* ch. 31: SS, VIII, 699; Hallinger, 60ff.; Hauck, III, 360, note 3.
¹⁴ *Mirac. S. Mansueti*: SS, IV, 510; Hallinger, 62f.
¹⁵ Hallinger, 67f.; *Vita Job. Gorz.*: SS, IV, 355f.; Hauck, III, 357f.
¹⁶ *Mirac. S. Glodesindis*: SS, IV, 238; Hallinger, 71, 74f.; Amann-Dumas, 334f.
¹⁷ For his *Life* see *NA. SS. OSB*, V, 482ff.; SS, XV, 2, 689ff.

founded in this tenth century. Kaddroe had been trained at Fleury, Maccalan at Gorze. In 938 Duke Gilbert, impelled by the energy of Richer, carried further his action at Trèves four years before. The twin monasteries of Stavelot and Malmedy, standing in Lower Lotharingia and under his control, had also sunk into irregular ways; for their restoring he called from Gorze its monk Odilo.¹⁸

But now this Lotharingian Duke of so curiously mixed character came to his tragic end. In 936 he had renewed his oath of allegiance to Germany and to its King, Otto the First. The oath was soon broken. With Otto's younger brother and other powerful nobles, vassals of the King, Gilbert rose in revolt, invaded Germany in 939, was defeated, and—so writes the chronicler—as he fled from death or capture leaped on horseback into the river that barred his way and was drowned.¹⁹

For long afterward his feudal duchy of Lotharingia remained unsettled. At last, in 954, some two years before Dunstan came to the Continent, Otto found for it a strong government in his own brother, Bruno, lately elected Archbishop of Cologne. In 955, the year before Dunstan arrived in Ghent, this same Otto mustered strength for a supreme effort against barbarian invaders. On the bank of the river Lech near Augsburg, he put the Hungarians completely to rout and delivered his realms, including Lotharingia, from their long night of terror and destruction.²⁰

When we turn for a moment to compare the monastic revival in Lotharingia with that which was rising in the same tenth century from Cluny in France, we find a situation both

¹⁸ Hallkin and Roland, *Chartes de Stavelot-Mahmédy*, I, 1909, iii, Nos. 54ff., 57f., 62f.; Berlière, *Mon. belge*, II, 76f.; Hallinger, 64f.
¹⁹ Flodoard, ed. Laner, 73; J. Depoin, *Le Moyen Âge*, 1907, 82ff.
²⁰ Ruotger, *Vita Brunonis*: SS, IV, 258f., 261f.; Widukind, ed. 5, 1935: SRGS, 97, 123ff.

similar and unlike. Similar, of course, was the practice of the Benedictine *Rule* as norm, in its devotion to prayer, silence, obedience, poverty, self-denial. But severe austerity and asceticism were especially characteristic of Lotharingian monks; in this respect, indeed, Gorze went markedly further than the Cluniac practice. Secondly, Gorze in Lotharingia never saw itself as head and mother of a vast multitude of daughter-houses, all held from the centre in one obedience and administration. It sent out monks constantly for the aid of monasteries in need; but these monasteries remained notably individual in their working under the common *Rule*. Thirdly, the bishops of Lotharingia in these years—Adalbero of Metz, Gauzlin of Toul, Richer of Liège, and their colleagues—when once they had put their hand to reforming the abbey under their control, did not relinquish this control, much as they encouraged individuality. Their episcopal authority remained in force, to oversee, to counsel, and to command both the agents who started and the abbots who continued the work.²¹

From Lotharingia in general we pass to consider Flanders in particular, the land of Dunstan's refuge. With it were associated in this tenth century the adjacent regions of Artois and Saint-Omer. Flanders was geographically connected with Lotharingia and shared in its work for monastic reform at this time. But Flemish men looked back upon a history of their own, and the choice of their county by Dunstan is easy to understand.²²

From an early date English travellers had crossed the Channel to its coast, conveniently near, and Flemish fugi-

²¹ Hauck, III, 354ff.

²² F. L. Ganshof, *La Flandre sous les Premiers Comtes*, 1949; H. Pirenne, *Hist. de Belgique*, I, ed. of 1948.

tives had escaped from the northern menace. Englishmen, like Alcuin and Fridugis, had visited, taught, or ruled monasteries in Flanders; in Saint-Omer had lived for long that Grimbold whom King Alfred had called to his aid.²³

Moreover, history itself had intertwined the course of the ruling houses of England and Flanders. In 862 Judith, daughter of Charles the Bald, once queen of two kings of England, had horrified her father and her Church by escaping from duress hand in hand with one Baldwin, known for his war-ring against the Northmen as Baldwin Bras-de-fer, Iron-arm. He was the first Count of Flanders. The next year her father saw them duly married. Their son, Baldwin the Bald, the second Count, we have seen married to King Alfred's daughter, Ælfthryth; we have seen, too, the younger son of this marriage of Ælfthryth arriving as envoy at the English Court of King Athelstan, his cousin.²⁴

It was to the elder son that Dunstan now fled in Flanders; he had succeeded his father as Count Arnulf the First, "Arnou le Vieux" or "le Grand." Like Gilbert of Lotharingia, he was a man of twofold character. He was driven by that passion which had possessed his father for enlarging his County of Flanders; and he fulfilled the striving of Baldwin the Second through which their title of "Count" grew into that of "Marquis." As Vermandois had stood in his father's way, so Normandy's ambition conflicted with his, and he saw to it that death removed his rival, the Scandinavian-Norman William Longsword, its second Duke. Ardentely he covered the fortress of Montreuil-sur-Mer in the Pas-de-Calais as a convenient base for his ambition. Many years he contended with its lord, Count Herluin, and Montreuil passed to and

²³ P. Grierson, *TRHS*, XXIII, 1941; J. M. TOLL, *Hist. Stud.* 145, 1921.
²⁴ *Ann. Berth. ann.* 862f.; see page 33 above.

from each by alternate seizure. In 939, when he had captured and sons and sent them across the Channel to his royal kinsman Athelstan, perhaps in a bid for Athelstan's friendship. At last Herluin was dead, and Arnulf was seeking the help of Louis d'Outre-mer against Roger, one of those sons of Herluin whom he had sent into exile in England. For long Arnulf had been the ally of this cousin, Louis, from the day when he had stood at Boulogne to welcome him to France. Three years after that welcome his feeling for England had grown cool when the fleet sent by Athelstan to help Louis turned aside to harry the Flemish shore. Perhaps some memory of this old affront made Arnulf the more ready to receive a fugitive from the English Court.²⁵

Like Duke Gilbert, Count Arnulf, in spite of all his worldly lust, revered deeply his Church. His ambition had brought him enormous wealth, and his gifts to various abbays were magnificent. Especially he enriched the sanctuaries of Reims, the city which in 945 his own soldiers aided King Louis to besiege; we read that fourteen years later he offered to its Cathedral of Notre-Dame great weight of silver for the making of shrines, and a Book of the Gospels, splended with silver and gold.²⁶

It was he who owned and ruled the twin abbays of Ghent, of Saint Bavo and of Saint Peter, to which Dunstan now came. These had both been founded in the seventh century by Amand, Saint of Flanders, and were constantly disputing between themselves which had been founded first. They were neighbours, Saint Bavo's, named after Bavo, disciple of Amand and monk of this same cloister, standing where the

²⁵ Flodoard, *ann.* 939, 943f., 947f., 951; Laner, *Louis d'Outre-mer*, 276ff., 1893, 319ff.; J. Lair, *Étude sur la vie et la mort de Guill. Longue-Épée*, 61ff., 66ff.; Grierson, 89.

²⁶ Flodoard, *ann.* 945, 959.

river Lys meets the Scheldt, Saint Peter's a little further south, on the height called Mont-Blandin.

Their history is of interest.²⁷ In the ninth century Einhard, friend of Charles the Great, held them both as lay abbot. He brought into them secular clergy in place of monks; but, unlike many lay possessors of these mediæval abbeys, he conscientiously made efficient provision here for decent living.²⁸

From time to time he himself stayed in retreat at Saint Bavo's. After his death we are for long uncertain regarding the rule of the two abbeys. In 850-51, when the Northmen plundered Saint Bavo's, its clergy fled, first to Saint-Omer and then to Laon, where they settled and stayed. But at last the Viking peril seemed to have ebbed, and those of the community who were still living decided to return home. A dreadful sight met them as, bearing the relics of their Patron, Saint Bavo, they came once more to their deserted abbey. "It looked like a wilderness, the ruined walls, half-destroyed by fire, were buried in dense growth of thistles and briars." No one could say Mass here, no one could even live; and for many days a church near by gave a bare shelter to those who had the courage to stay. The chronicler of Saint Bavo's tells a story of Heaven's pity upon their wretchedness, a story which also perhaps points toward a bond between Britain and Flanders. For in Britain a radiant being appeared at this time, men said, to an old man, so old he could scarcely walk. "The abbey of

²⁷ See list of books pp. 239f., under Fagen, Grierson, Schmitz; C. P. Serrure, *Cart. de S. Bavoyn*, 1840; A. van Lokeren, *Chartes et Documents de l'abbaye de S. Pierre*, 1868; O. Oppermann, *Die älteren Urkunden des Klosters Blandinikum*, I, 1928; Et. Sabbe, *Etudes dédiées à Henri Firme*, 1937, 299ff.; and RB, 1935; G. Des Marez, *Compte Rendu*, BCHB, V, 6, 1896, 219ff.; *Vitae S. Bavoynis: Script. rer. Merov.* IV, 527ff.; *Mirac. S. Bavoynis: AA. SS. OSB*, II, 389ff.; *AA. SS. I Oct.* 293ff.; O. Holder-Egger, *Hist. Aufsätze* (for G. Waitz), 1886, 622ff.; F. L. Ganshof, *Bull. de la Soc. d'Hist. et d'Arch. de Gand*, 1926.

²⁸ E. Lesne, *L'Origine des Menses*, 1910, 23, 87f.

Saint Bavo is in miserable state," said the messenger from on High. "Get thee up and cross the sea to build again its walls, and the strength of thy youth shall return to thee." The old man thereupon hurried to Ghent, to work there for the remainder of his days.²⁹

During the later ninth century the House of Robert the Strong, Marquis of Neustria, and the House of Flanders, in the person of Baldwin, its first Count, held in turn lay rule in one or other of these abbeys. In the tenth century that Robert, son of Robert the Strong, who died at Soissons in 923 as King of France and rival of Charles the Simple, held Saint Peter's as lay abbot; and it is after his death that we find both houses under the rule of this Arnulf the First, grandson of Baldwin, the first Count. Arnulf's father, Baldwin the Second, was never, it would seem, lay abbot in Ghent; ³⁰ but he maintained close connection with Saint Peter's, and was buried there. The story was told that his wife, the English-born Ælfthryth, stoutly refused that he be laid to rest in the chief cloister of his inheritance, that of Saint-Bertin at Saint-Omer, Pas-de-Calais, "because she wanted to lie beside him, and no woman might cross the threshold of Saint-Bertin." Record of charter has led scholars to believe that she made gift to Saint Peter's of estates in England, at Lewisham, at Greenwich, and at Woolwich; recent criticism, however, has skillfully attacked this belief and referred the donation to an act of King Edgar.³¹

For many years Arnulf did nothing for Saint Peter's and Saint Bavo's. Then at last, inspired by reports of the work which Gerard of Brogne was doing elsewhere, and realizing that these abbeyes of his were in grievous need, material and

²⁹ *Mitrae. S. Bavoensis*: SS, XV, 2, 593f.

³⁰ See Philip Grierson, *RB*, 1939, 310ff.

³¹ Folcuin, *Cart. de Saint-Bertin*, ed. Guérard, 1840, 140; SS, XIII, 627; J. Dhondt, *BCHB*, CV, 1940, 117ff.

spiritual, he took counsel with Transmar, bishop of Noyon-Tournai from 937 to 950. Both men decided to ask Gerard to give his aid. We are not sure of the time when Gerard came to Ghent, but it was in or about the year 941, according to the date given by tradition.³²

Here he worked some twelve years,³³ and gradually he replaced irregular discipline by firm maintenance of the Benedictine *Rule* in houses and choirs. Count Arnulf became deeply attached to these monasteries, especially to Saint Peter's. He steadily increased its treasure of holy relics until the monks of Saint Bavo's were seized by jealousy. The abbey of Saint Peter on the Mount held mortal remains of Saints Amalberga, Wandregisil, Ansbert, Wulfram, whereas they themselves could boast only of fragments of Saint Pharaldis and that body of Saint Bavo which they had carried to Laon and back with such care.

Gerard did not, however, spend all these years in continual stay at Ghent. Other abbey were equally in need of reform. We hear of him at work, also by petition of Arnulf, in the North of France at Saint-Amand,³⁴ and at Saint-Bertin, Arnulf's most prized heritage.

This latter monastery had been held by the Counts of Flanders as their rightful possession in fief since the day when Charles the Simple had legalized its seizure by Baldwin the Second. When Gerard arrived there the secular clergy who filled it stoutly refused to change their way of life. He then ordered them to submit or to depart, and most of them departed, with loud accusations against Gerard, Count Arnulf, and the Benedictine monks who were being brought there in their place. In their wrath they took ship for England, where

³² *Ann. Biand. ann.* 941; Des Marez, 238; Rayen, 54f.

³³ See Grierson, ed. *Ann. de S.-Pierre*, 19, *ann.* 953, and RB, 1939, 315,

note 1.

³⁴ de Moreau, II, 145; *Saint Amand*, 1927.

King Edmund, remembering the kindness of Saint-Bertin in giving burial to his brother, drowned at sea, and thinking little about Benedictine reform, gave them the abbey of Bath for their home. The year was 944. The newly established monks of Saint-Bertin were placed by Gerard, as himself their chief authority, in charge of Womar, of Saint Peter's, Ghent, and of Agilo,³⁵ who came from Toul. After some years Womar returned to Ghent. Eventually, in 953, he was appointed abbot of Saint Peter's and Gerard went back happily to his own monastery at Brogne.

Dunstan, then, knew Womar as abbot of Saint Peter's while he stayed in Ghent. He knew him, too, as a man deeply interested in the history and traditions of his abbey and working hard to add to its archives. Saint Bavo's, though nominally also under his rule, seems in practice during this time to have been ruled by Wido, a nephew of Gerard. As a young man this Wido had been installed abbot of Saint-Bertin but had failed to live up to his responsibility. He had been "too keen on the empty joys of youth," we are told, and he had been sent by the angry Arnulf to do better in Saint Bavo's. Here doubtless he did well, for on the death of Womar in 980 he was elected abbot of both Saint Bavo's and Saint Peter's.³⁶

We know nothing by direct tradition of Dunstan's life in Saint Peter's, which held at the time a small but thriving community of at least twenty monks. Naturally he concerned himself much with the story of all this reform, led by Brogne, by Gorze, under Gilbert, in Lotharingia, in Flanders. Certainly he studied the ritual, the sacramentaries, the prayers in use on the Continent, of the past and the pres-

³⁵ Folcuin, ed. Guérard, 144ff.; SS, XIII, 628ff.; de Moreau, II, 150ff.; *Ann. Bland. ann.* 945f.

³⁶ Folcuin, 145f.; Holder-Egger, 625.

ent, and talked with Womar and with Wido of things political and monastic. Relations between Saint Peter's and Saint Bavo's were uneasy at times, for the old rivalry rose now and again in a bubbling of wrath that threatened to boil over.³⁷

These months of exile must often have been hard in their lessons of patience and perseverance. Sixty miles from Ghent stood the abbey of Lobbes, near Charleroi, still full of disorder and irregularity while Dunstan was at Saint Peter's. Erluin, monk of Gorze, abbot of Gembloux, Namur, was asked by the lay owner of Lobbes—Reginar, Count of Hainaut—to come from Gembloux on a crusade of reform. He came, but failed. In 957, the year of Dunstan's return to England, the monks of Lobbes seized this would-be reformer in their dormitory at night, dragged him outside the cloister, hacked out his eyes, tore at his tongue, and sent him, blind and stammering, back by boat to Gembloux.³⁸

Then, too, Dunstan was homesick for Glastonbury, "remembering how high a degree of holy religion he had left in his own monastery." His earliest biographer tells a story which may well have come from Dunstan himself. Long and sadly, it relates, he thought of his abbey in Somerset, especially of the evening hour of Vespers when he had sung *Magnificat* with his brethren there in choir. Then one night at Ghent while he was thus thinking, he fell asleep, and in his sleep, as so often, a dream came upon him. He seemed to be listening at Vespers to his monks as they sang the antiphon from the Book of Job:

*Why have ye taken away from the words of truth,
why do ye put together words to rebuke, and strive*

³⁷ Grierson, *Ann. de S.-Pierre*, xxI; Berlière, *RB*, 1929, 239; Fayer, 89, note 1.

³⁸ de Moreau, 158f. The monks of Lobbes, however, had cause for irritation, if Folcuin writes truth; see *Gest. abb. Lobien.*: SS, IV, 68.

*to overthrow your friend? Nevertheless, finish what ye
have purposed. . . .*

But in his dream the choir at Glastonbury stopped at the word "Nevertheless"; they could get no further. As he wondered why, he heard a voice from heaven, speaking to him in Flanders: "For this reason the monks at Glastonbury cannot sing the last words, because those who have tried to drive you from that monastery shall never finish what they purpose." Then Dunstan awoke, knew that the words were true, and gave thanks to the Most High, the Comforter.³⁹

³⁹ *Memorials*, 34f.



Dunstan in the Reign of Edgar, 959-75

MEANWHILE Eadwig, King of England, continued to neglect his more remote lands for the society of his young companions at the Court in Wessex: "losing the shrewd and wise who disapproved of his folly and eagerly annexing ignorant men of his own kind."¹ Gradually this indifference alienated many of his subjects. Finally, in 957, the men of Mercia and Northumbria threw off their allegiance and elected his brother Eadgar, a boy of fourteen, as their King.

At once Eadgar recalled Dunstan from exile. The act was judged wise by the King's advisers on political grounds, for Dunstan stood in their minds as worker for that discipline in Church and State which had meant comparatively little to King Eadwig and the young nobles of his Court. In the years to come, from this recall was gradually to develop a partnership of King and minister in the governing of people, of clergy, and of monks. It was during these eighteen years that Dunstan, wholeheartedly supported and encouraged by the royal enthusiasm, confidence, and power, wrote a new chap-

¹ *Memorials*, 35f.

ter into the history of Benedictine rule and life in England. A new spirit was rising among the ealdormen who had held office under Eadwig and who were now turning to Edgar, men such as Æthelwold of East Anglia and Brihnoth of Essex. Æthelwold was the eldest son of Dunstan's friend Athelstan, "the Half-King," and of one Æthelæd. He was married to Ælftryth, daughter of Ordgar, Ealdorman of Devon, and he had three brothers: Ælfwold, Æthelrige, and Æthelwine. The father of the family, Athelstan, apparently laid aside his great power and lived his last years as a monk at Glastonbury; and his sons were to stand firmly in support of the coming monastic movement.² So, too, stood their uncle, Brihnoth, brother of their mother, Æthelæd, and hero of the battle of Maldon in 991, a fighter as bold for his Church as for his country. His wife, who was named Ælfæd, was a sister of that other Æthelæd, the wealthy Lady of Damerham, who was King Edmund's wife at the time of his death. On the other hand, Ælfhere, Ealdorman of Mercia, was to use his influence against monks in England after Edgar's death.

Among the first questions which now, in 957, came for decision before Edgar's supporters in this divided kingdom was that of the place and position which Dunstan was to hold in England. Glastonbury was still, we may suppose, under control of Eadwig, ruler in southern England.³ At a gathering of Edgar's Witan⁴ it was decided that Dunstan should be appointed bishop, "above all, in order that he might constantly be at hand to aid the King with his sage and foresighted coun-

² HCY, I, 428f.; *Chron. Rames.* RS, LXXXIII, 12; *Lib. Eliensis*, 183; *Crawford Charters*, 84. The last follows *Chron. Rames.* 11 in holding Athelstan's wife to be Ælfwen, foster-mother of King Edgar; cf. White-lock, *A.-S. Wills*, 138. For Æthelæd see E. D. Laborda, *Byrthnoth and Maldon*, 1936, 14; E. V. Gordon, *The Battle of Maldon*, 1937, 15f.

³ Birch, No. 933.

⁴ *Memorials*, xc, 36f.

sels." Archbishop Oda consecrated him; Metropolitan of England at Canterbury though Oda was, he apparently sympathized with the lords who stood for Edgar and, especially, with Dunstan's desire for reform. It was remarked that he did not name, as was usual at the time of consecration, the see to which Dunstan was appointed; and it may be that at first Dunstan was regarded as a bishop at large, free at any moment for Edgar's call. If so, the thought was short-lived, for in this same year, 957, Dunstan became bishop of the see of Worcester, vacant through the death of Cenwald.⁵

The consecration of Dunstan was one of Oda's last acts as Archbishop; the next year, 958, he died. Dunstan had known him active in business of the State, the Chief Pastor who at Kingston-on-Thames had crowned Eadred and Eadwig; energetic in organization, a worker for reform, a lover of Benedictine living, a prelate who delighted in adding to the dignity of his Cathedral Church. His *Constitutions*, put forward for the exhorting of all under his charge, bishops, priests, monks, secular clergy, and lay people, and his "ordinance," prescribed at a Council held in London during or after 942 in conjunction with King Edmund and Wulfstan the First, Archbishop of York, show his high ideals, his vigorous dealings with sin and negligence. He was buried in his Cathedral at Canterbury, where Dunstan was to honour his shrine and to speak of him as "Oda the Good," a name which lived on among the English people.⁶

Now King Eadwig transferred to this see of Canterbury Ælfsige, bishop of Winchester. As was customary, Ælfsige before long set out from England on a journey to Rome to obtain the pallium, the little vestment which was to symbolize

⁵ *Ibid.*, xci, 60.

⁶ *HCF*, I, 401ff.; *Walkins, Conc.* I, 212ff.; *Robertson, Laws*, 6f.; *Will. Malin, Gest. Pont. Darlington*, *EHR*, 1936, 386f., 415; *Stenton, A.-S. England*, 431; *Memorials*, 203.

Papal confirmation of his election. But his fellow-travellers returned without him; he had died, they reported, through cold in the Alpine snows. Then Eadwig transferred to Canterbury a bishop from Wells. To the kings of England in this tenth century Wells, so near their royal residence at Cheddar, was a see of high interest, continually filled with men whom they themselves knew and admired. Athelm and Wulfhelm had gone from Wells to Canterbury; now, early in 959, Brihtelm, bishop of Wells, became Archbishop there.⁷

This year of 959 was to be eventful in Dunstan's life. First of all, the bishop of London, another Brihtelm, left his see, probably through death. This see, as under Mercia, was in the hands of Edgar. He and his advisers promptly offered it to Dunstan with their earnest urging; and he thus became bishop of London as well as of Worcester. Then, in early October of this year, Saint Gerard died at Brogne. Finally, the same month saw the death of King Eadwig, which meant that Edgar, henceforth King of England, was now ruler over Wessex, Mercia, and Northumbria.

The respite from invasion and war which had marked Eadwig's reign continued throughout this rule of England by Edgar, "the Peaceful." His praise meets us from many sources, particularly the Anglo-Saxon *Chronicle*, which in his honour again broke into verse:

God gave it him that he dwelt in peace . . .

He lifted up God's glory wide,

He loved God's law and furthered the people's peace . . .

And God also aided him, that kings and earls

gladly to him bowed,

and were subject to his will.⁸

⁷ *Memorials*, xcvi, 37f.; Flor. Worc. ed. Thorpe, I, 138f.; Armitage Robinson, *BASF*, IV, 64.
⁸ *A.-S. C. (E)*, *ann.* 959.

In one thing only, "one misdeed," this praise is sullied by reproach. Men said that Edgar loved overmuch "heathen ways, and brought in outlandish people."⁹ This accusation refers to his really salutary recognition of the tenure of the Danes in the society of England, to whom, in his own hopeful words, he left the responsibility for their own governing:

*That among the Danes there stand fast the best laws,
as they shall decide upon them. I have always granted
this, and will, as long as life is mine, for the loyalty which
you have ever made known toward me.¹⁰*

His private life, on the other hand, has been attacked by evil narrative of murder and lust. Of this the only detail worthy of notice is that which makes him, by an irregular union of his early youth, father of Saint Edith of Wilton, who was to be a close friend of Dunstan. The name of Edith's mother has come down to us as Wulfthryth, a girl of noble family, compelled by Edgar's desire to leave the convent of her choice. Eventually, preferring the life of a nun to his offer of marriage, she retired to Wilton Abbey, near Salisbury in Wiltshire, taking her little daughter with her.¹¹

Later on, the King married the daughter of one Ordmarc, Æthelred "the White," whom men compared to a wild-duck for her grace and beauty and of whom Edgar's son Edward was born. In 964, after her death, we find him taking as his second wife a Lady Ælfthryth, said to be that same Ælfthryth, daughter of Ordgar, whom his friend Æthelwold of East Anglia had now left a widow. Two sons were born to

⁹ *Ibid.*; Will. Malm. *Gest. Reg.* I, 165; Henry of Huntingdon, *MHB*, I, 747.
¹⁰ Robertson, *Laws*, 36; Stenton, *The Danes in England*, 1927, 44f.
¹¹ Goscelin, *Vita S. Edithae*: *AA. SS. OSB*, V, 623ff.; *Gest. Pom.* 188ff.; *Memorials*, 209.