

crowned queen, and this was contrary to the customs of the West Saxons, therefore Ethelbald was supported by the people of that country; on his father's return to England, however, father and son met, and a division of the kingdom was agreed upon.

"Ethelbald received Wessex, the principal part of the kingdom, and Ethelwulf took Kent, which he had already ruled over in the time of his father Egbert. Ethelwulf died a few months afterwards, leaving Kent to Ethelbert, his second surviving son. The following year, to the horror and indignation of the people of the country, Ethelbald married his stepmother Judith, but two years afterwards died, and Ethelbert, King of Kent, again united Wessex to his own dominions, which consisted of Kent, Surrey, and Sussex. Ethelbert reigned but a short time, and at his death Ethelred, his next brother, ascended the throne. Last year Alfred, the youngest brother, married Elswitha, the daughter of Ethelred Mucil, Earl of the Gaini, in Lincolnshire, whose mother was one of the royal family of Mercia.

"It was but a short time after the marriage that the Danes poured into Mercia from the north. Messengers were sent to ask the assistance of the West Saxons. These at once obeyed the summons and, joining the Mercians, marched against the Danes, who shut themselves up in the strong city of Nottingham, and were