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SAXON LONDON.

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The beginning of the fifth century witnessed the withdrawal from Britain of the Roman legions. As early as the year 405, A. D., the hordes which occupied the rich plains of the Vistula, had poured down upon Italy in a vast body, which, numbering 200,000 fighting men, were swelled up by women and children to probably ten times that amount. Scarcely had they been expelled, when Alaric, King of the Visigoths, began the invasion which culminated on the 24th of August, 410, in the fall and sack of Rome, and it was to oppose him that the legionaries were withdrawn from Britain. That country, deserted by the army which had hitherto maintained its submission to Rome, and constituted its defence against Saxon pirates and Caledonian barbarians, expelled the Roman magistrates, and established its independence. Then followed a short and troubled period, which terminated in the conquest of the country by the Saxons, and the utter overthrow of the Roman civilization. Still, however, the marks impressed by Rome during centuries of possession could not be entirely erased. The Roman ideas left their traces in the architecture, the municipalities, the literature, and even the superstitions of the new-comers; and, although, doubtless many of the Roman towns were reduced to heaps of ruins, yet some remained, though shorn of much of their grandeur and refinement. London was one of these. Its suburbs were probably entirely destroyed, its temples and

villas devastated, and all that could excite the admiration or cupidity of a savage conqueror torn from it, while from the fragments of the public buildings and palaces rose up new and humbler structures, and houses and huts of timber were collected round the walls of the old colony.

Its history during the Anglo-Saxon period is very obscure. In the sixth century, when whatever profession of Christianity had once existed in London had perished, even out of remembrance, Augustine visited the shores of England to preach the Gospel. At that period a heathen temple is supposed to have existed on Ludgate Hill. Originally built in honor of Diana, it is thought to have been converted into a Christian sanctuary during the Romish sway, and afterwards to be either reduced to ruins, or applied once more to pagan purposes. Here Ethelbert, King of Kent, erected a church in the year 610, which, humble as it was at first, was enlarged and improved by his successors, Athelstane, Edgar, Canute and Edward the Confessor. Its representative is now known as St. Paul's Cathedral.

About the same time, Sebert built another church at Westminster, on an island enclosed between two branches of a small brook or river, and called Thorney, from the underwood with which it was covered. A pagan temple had stood on the site of this structure, also, dedicated to Apollo, for early Christianity, as she gathered in the nations, seems to have chosen out the