



THE COMING OF THE NORMANS.

making himself the true ruler of the realm. Though Dunstan gave Edgar all the appearance of power, and treated him with every possible consideration, yet he was obliged to resent some of the depraved acts of the young monarch, and to put him under penance for them. He had by no means a quiet rule, for the deprived clergy had many friends, and there was always a strong party against him. When Edgar died he succeeded in getting Edward, the king's son by a former marriage, made king, to the exclusion of Ethelred, his son by a second marriage; but when Edward (known as "the Martyr," but for no other reason than that he was murdered by his step-mother) was killed, Ethelred (the Unready) succeeded to the crown.

After nine years of struggling with Ethelred, who never liked the archbishop, and tried hard to be independent of him, the great Dunstan, greater as a statesman than an ecclesiastic, went the way of all flesh, and was buried near the altar in Canterbury Cathedral, A. D. 988. Five hundred years afterwards, in the reign of Henry VII., his tomb was opened and the skull and bones of the dead man were found. This was done to refute a report then current that his body had been removed to Glastonbury Abbey. The authorities of Glastonbury, however, were not convinced by this, inasmuch as they declared that the "principal bones" of the great man rested with them. This superstition regarding dead men's bones and their actual resting-place has, happily, to a great extent, passed away.

He was succeeded by Ethelgar, Bishop of Selsey (now Chichester), who, however, died in the following year, 989. Siric, Bishop of Wiltshire, then became archbishop. Siric was a learned man, but he was fond of pomp and religious ceremonial. He was also a poor

adviser to the king (Ethelred). It is said to have been by his advice that "the Unready" established the Danegelt, or annual tax for buying off the Danes—an unfortunate policy, which finally led to the overthrow of the Anglo-Saxon kings. Siric died in 994, and in 995 Elfric, formerly a foreign monk (from Abingdon), but afterwards Bishop of Wiltshire, succeeded him, and is known as a man of some learning, and as the author of some original writings. He allowed the Pope to have great influence over him, and thus helped this foreign ecclesiastic to gain all the more power in England. The will of Archbishop Elfric, which has come down to us, shows that he was a man of great wealth and power, and the disposition of his lands and effects was that of "a good subject, a good landlord, and a charitable Christian." He brought the Anglican Church into a new century, and died in 1006.

Troublesome days then came for the Anglo-Saxons. Their old enemies, the Danes, swooped down upon them once more. Fire and desolation left large portions of England in misery and despair. It was then that Elphege, Bishop of Winchester, a man of noble birth, was called upon to preside over the English Church. He was a man severe alike to others and himself, an ascetic, pale and thin through fasting. Of his emaciated hand it might be said:

"It was so wan and transparent of hue
You might have seen the moon shine through."

All Canterbury rejoiced to welcome him, but soon all Canterbury was in dire distress from an attack by the terrible Danes. Elphege helped in the defence of the city by his prayers and by his courage, but some one betrayed it, and the barbarous soldiers poured into it, killing and destroying wherever they went. They