

done for many years before, they now came to conquer and to rule. The Anglian kingdoms of Northumberland and Mercia were quickly overrun, the rulers and the clergy killed or driven out, the churches and monasteries destroyed, and the people reduced to submission. In 870 East Anglia was occupied, and its king, Edmund, cruelly put to death. (This is that St. Edmund the Martyr, whose supposed remains were only a few weeks ago brought back from France to England for final interment). In the following year, 871, Ethelred died from the effect of a wound received in battle, and Alfred was unanimously elected king. For seven years he continued the struggle against the invaders. At length he was obliged to dismiss his followers, conceal his identity, and seek safety in the hut of an obscure peasant near the borders of Wales.

Of the king in disguise, during this time of seclusion, many pretty stories are told, which throw light upon his character as a man. The chief fact is that though driven into hiding he was not vanquished, but was able to mature those plans for recovering his kingdom which he afterwards so successfully carried out. "It is a wonderful story," writes Sir Walter Besant, of this success; "next to the miracle wrought by Joan of Arc there is no more wonderful event in history. Out of the dust and ashes of the devastated land; out of the country from which bishops, priests and monks had fled; which even the saints had abandoned; where the old pagan gods were restored—out of a people enslaved and spiritless, Alfred raised an army, filled it with new confidence, and led it on to victory." The Danes, thinking English resistance ended, were surprised and defeated in the great battle of Ethandune; their leader, Guthrum, was besieged in his fortified camp and forced to surrender; his life was spared on condition of his accepting Christianity, and he and his followers were settled in the wasted country of East Anglia as friends and allies of the English.

Great as a soldier, Alfred proved to be equally great as a ruler. In the years of comparative peace that followed his victory, he established law and justice in his kingdom; and, though he never claimed the title of King of England, he may be looked upon as the true founder of the English monarchy. He cleared the land of robbers that infested it. He greatly encouraged commerce, and made London the centre of trade. He built ships to meet the Danes at sea, and thus gave rise to the English navy. He compiled a code of law which has ever since been looked upon as the foundation of English justice.

Not the least of his achievements was that he brought back the English learning which Alcuin and others had

carried to the court of Charlemagne. Restoring the Christian faith, he brought over from France priests and scholars, re-built the monasteries, which were the great centres of education in those days. For the diffusion of knowledge, he himself made free translations of Latin authors, which are among the most interesting monuments of his reign; and he cherished the purpose, not yet fully realized, that every free-born Englishman should learn to read English.

The millennial anniversary of Alfred's death will be celebrated both in Great Britain and in America. At Winchester, England, where he was buried, a magnificent monument will be unveiled next month, with appropriate ceremonies in honor of the king who stands as a type of all that is best and noblest in the Anglo-Saxon race, and to whom we may be said to owe our language and our literature, our laws and institutions, our form of government and our very existence as a nation—for English laws and English learning, no less than English enterprise and English statecraft, have made our mighty empire what it is. J. V.

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Notes on Some Subjects of the Provincial Examination in Nova Scotia.

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SANITARY SCIENCE—This is one of the compulsory subjects for Grade A. Before beginning the study of sanitary science it is necessary for the student to have a good general knowledge of physics, chemistry and biology. If he has been properly trained in these subjects in the preceding grades he will have formed the habit of observing and drawing conclusions from related facts. In the study of mineralogy and botany he must observe, examine and carefully describe the objects; in chemistry he must perform many experiments. In the early study of these subjects the pupil's own observation and experiments are much more important than the information obtained from books. In physics and physiography the importance of the book becomes greatly increased.

Sanitary science may be looked upon as the most practical outcome in a certain direction of the other sciences named. Under existing conditions in our academies it must be studied almost wholly from books. As a matter of fact, the examinations show that the candidates depend almost wholly upon a careful reading or memorization of the text-book. Some educational reformers denounce all such study of science as useless or even injurious. In this case they would seem to be in the wrong. To have arrived at almost the simplest conclusions of sanitary science required years of patient