

mune with his own heart in silence, and anxiously to enquire what was true religion. Those who employ the same methods, with earnest prayer for Divine teaching, will not fail to advance in the knowledge and enjoyment of the truth.

Edwin pursued his inquiries, and being at length convinced of the truth and importance of Christianity, he openly professed the faith of Christ, and sought at the same time the extirpation of idolatry. In the eleventh year of his reign, he was baptized with all his nobles, and very many of the people, one hundred and eighty years after the arrival of the Saxons in Britain, and in the year of our Lord 627. Paulinus continued to preach the Gospel. Edwin's children were afterwards baptized: and so great was the desire of his subjects to hear the word, and imitate their example, that Paulinus coming with the king and queen to a royal villa, spent there thirty-six days in teaching and baptizing from morning till night. At another time he baptized in the river Swale, which flows near Catterick, a number of persons who resorted thither. Many of these conversions, doubtless, were the result of mere complaisance to the court, but some, it may be hoped, sprang from sincere conviction.

Paulinus continued his zealous labours in the north till the death of Edwin, when he accompanied the queen and her children into Kent, and was made bishop of Rochester by Eadbald. Paganism resumed its sway in the north, which was brought into a deplorable condition. Aidan, a missionary from Ireland, by his zeal and piety, and the aid of other Irish ministers, soon recovered the ground that had been lost. Aidan was a shining example of godliness, and lived according to the doctrines he professed. He laboured to convert infidels, and to strengthen the faithful. He gave to the poor whatever presents he re-

ceived from the great, and employed himself, with his associates, in reading the Scriptures continually. He strictly avoided every thing luxurious, and every appearance of secular avarice and ambition; he redeemed captives with money that was given to him by the rich; he instructed them afterwards with a view of fitting them for the ministry. In many respects this northern missionary presented a pleasing contrast to Augustine and his companions. Oswald, the king of Northumberland, was not less pious than the prelate, nor inferior to him in his endeavour to promote godliness in his dominions.

All were not such. Some, who had far more ambition than piety, if indeed they had any portion of the latter, exhibited a spirit just the opposite of Christianity. Of these, one of the most conspicuous was Wilfred, Archbishop of York, towards the close of the Heptarchy. He displayed consummate vanity, and a most ungovernable spirit; he exceeded the sovereigns of the heptarchy in magnificence and display, was attended on all public occasions by a numerous retinue, and banqueted on a service of gold. In defiance of the attempt of the king of Northumberland to moderate his ambition, he continued during many years to exercise a spiritual tyranny, over both princes and their subjects. Supported by the Roman pontiff in his most violent measures, he disregarded all civil authority, and fulminated the censures of the church against all who dared to resist his will. His life was a perpetual tempest, a struggle to acquire that ecclesiastical supremacy, which as yet the temporal sovereigns were unwilling to acknowledge, but to which, in a few years, they tamely submitted. Such is the progress of evil, the restlessness of pride, and the desecration of the best things by the worst of men, who make "a gain of godliness," under the cloke of "zeal for the truth"