

and of Alban, "the first British martyr." At the close of the sixth century occurred the great missionary movement from Rome, under Gregory and Augustine, by which Romish Christianity was firmly established in Kent. Churches and parochial schools were founded. Each of the divisions of the octarchy became nominally Christian, and at the time of the unification of the provinces under Egbert was under the rule of a Christian king or queen.

Despite all admixture of bigotry and superstition, Christianity was established, and as early as the seventh century we can see the promise of Protestantism in the sixteenth. Aelfric reaches out his hand across the centuries to Wiclif, and Wiclif reaches out in turn to Tyndale and the Reformers.

#### FIRST ENGLISH PERIOD.

We are now prepared to examine and apply the special statement in hand.

If we include in the words, biblical and homiletic, all that is religious and ethical in type, the field is almost limitless. Our oldest hymns and psalms and prayers in the vernacular would enter here. Also, such songs and elegies as, *The Song of the Three Children*, and *The Lament of Deor*. Here might be included a large amount of Christian biography, such as *Bede's Life of Cuthbert*. Most of the best and longest poems found in the Exeter and Vercelli books are of this ethical character. Such are *Cynewulf's Christ* and the two notable poems ascribed to him, *Elene* and *Andreas*, while equally notable in moral teaching is *Alfred's translation of Boethius*. Such a book as *Bede's Ecclesiastical History of England* would here have place, not to speak of epistles and commentaries, creeds and liturgies, while the laws themselves, as collected by Alfred, were based directly on the Decalogue.

Keeping, however, within the assigned limits of our theme, we note, as first in order, *Bible Versions and Translations*. They are as follows: *Caedmon's Paraphrase*, *Bede's Gospels*, *Aldhelm's Psalms*, *Alfred's Psalms*, and *Aelfric's Pentateuch*.

Scarcely had the Romish Bible been introduced before an earnest endeavor was made by native scholars and even by Anglo-Latins to secure the Word of God in the native speech. In the nature of the case these efforts were partial and faulty, and yet accomplished results of untold value in the line of religious thought and life. Whether or not such an author as Caedmon ever lived and wrote, a *Paraphrase of the Old and New Testaments* was written, and stands at the very opening of *First English Letters* to give them tone and tendency.

As Shakespeare would have expressed it, the people were becoming "gospelled," and education itself was parochial.

Passing from the Bible to the Homily, we naturally enter a wider province of literary product. As it would be impossible to mention all the homiletic treatises of the time, two or three collections of special value