



ST. AUGUSTINE PREACHING BEFORE KING ETHELBERT.

sionaries who had worked with St. Augustine, succeeded him. He had been the singer of the band of missionaries, and could date his musical education from Gregory himself, who, in the spirit of true progress, did all he could to improve this important department of Church work. The Gregorian chants date from this period, and were sung, no doubt, by Honorius and his choir within the walls of his humble cathedral at Canterbury. Honorius was the last of the original mission sent out by Gregory to convert the Saxons. Yet they found Christianity already existing in Britain. The Britons had been driven into Wales by the Saxons, but they had, as we have seen, their bishops, who naturally were not well inclined to submit to the jurisdiction of foreigners like Augustine and his successors. The Celtic or British bishops claimed that they were equal in every way to the bishops of the Italian mission. In addition to this trouble Honorius was annoyed by finding another Italian mission sent from Italy under a man named Birinus, who, by the kindly aid of Oswald, the Christian king of Northumbria, was enabled to convert the kingdom of Wessex, and lay the foundation of Winchester Cathedral. This is a work which ought to have been done by the archbishop of Canterbury and his missionaries; but, as they lost their opportunity, they were obliged to witness Celtic missionaries, whose ways were very different from those of Canterbury, working under the direction of Birinus for the

further conversion of the Saxons. These Celtic missionaries carried their labors into Mercia, or Middle Anglia, and established the diocese of Repton or Lichfield. In the same way Sussex was converted by Wilfrid, a northern missionary, not connected with Canterbury. Indeed, Canterbury seems to have lost her golden opportunities, and Celtic names, such as Aiden or Cedd, are handed down as connected with missionary work which her missionaries ought to have done.

But this enriches the history of the early Church of England. It shows that it was not entirely dependent upon Roman missions. The blood of the ancient Britons was infused into the early foundations of the English national Church. The archbishops of Canterbury, Augustine, Laurentius, Mellitus, Justus, and Honorius, all members of of the original mission sent from Rome, were perhaps better ecclesiastics than missionaries. They built at Canterbury a solid stone cathedral on the model of a Roman basilica, and set up within its walls an ornate musical service, such as the Celtic bishops could not have dreamed of. The plainest buildings, made of logs and roofed with reeds, served as their churches, and wild native music answered for their chanting. Honorius was the last of the Italian mission. He died on the 30th of September, 653, and was buried at the monastery of St. Augustine.

When Honorius died, Canterbury was kept vacant for nearly two years. York was also