

own self-devotion and pure and chaste living." They succeeded partially in their mission, and in less than a century, through the labours of themselves and their successors, and of missionaries from Iona, the whole Anglo-Saxon race, had professed the faith of Christ.

As the centuries advance, the history of the conversion of the many European tribes lying outside the Christian pale becomes more and more mixed with monkish legends, leaving, however, a substratum of truth indicative of the great self-denial with which, one after another, men of God were raised up in the then deeply corrupted Church for the enterprise of converting the heathen. One of these legends, the locality of which was in Friesland, describes the deliverance of two boys dedicated as human sacrifices, by which a strong impression was made upon the people. "A stake was erected on the sea-shore to which the boys were fastened, and they were left to the mercy of the rising tide, in a spot where two seas met. As the tide crept nearer, the elder of the two children tried, by supporting the other on his shoulders, to save him for a time from his too certain doom. Amidst the vast crowd that had flocked to the shore to witness the cruel spectacle, one heart alone was touched. The bishop went boldly into the presence of Radbod, and begged the life of the children, declaring it iniquitous that beings made in the image of God should be exposed to the sport of demons. 'If your god Christ,' Radbod replied, 'will deliver them from their present peril, you may have them for your own.' Thereupon the bishop prayed mightily to God, and, as the story runs, the waves seemed suddenly to gather into a heap and leave the spot where the children stood, so that it became as dry land. Then the bishop flung himself into the waves, and seizing one of the children in his right hand and the other in his left, conveyed them safe to land and restored them to their mothers. They were afterwards baptised, together with a considerable number of the Frisians." In this story there is probably an admixture of truth with fiction, pointing to the bishop's willingness to encounter peril, and steadfastness in exposing the superstitions of the people. The incidents may have been coloured at a later date in the quiet recesses of the monastery.

One of the most celebrated missionaries of the eighth century was St. Boniface, an Englishman of noble family, who set himself to the task of evangelising many of the still heathen portions of Germany. Thuringia was the chief scene of his labours. After ten years' work with unflagging energy, "numbers were baptised, heathen temples dissappeared, humble churches rose amid the waste forest lands overspread with oaks; monastic cells sprung up wherever salubrity of soil, and especially the presence of running water, suggested a healthy site; the land was cleared and brought under the plough; the sound of prayer and praise awoke unwonted echoes in the forest glades, and the simple lives of Boniface's little band of missionaries won the hearts of the rude but hardy tribes." Boniface invited assistance from England, and was cheered by the flocking to him of numerous labourers from his native land. His disciples spread abroad over many parts of Germany and Holland, and one of them established, about 755, a missionary college at Utrecht, where youths assembled to be trained to evangelistic work, from England, France, and different countries of central Europe.

Missions to the north of Europe, to the Scandinavian races, occupied much attention in the ninth and tenth centuries. "While every estuary and river were darkening under the dark sails of the Northmen's barks, men were found bold enough to penetrate into the dreary regions whence they issued forth, to seek them out amidst their pine forests and ice-bound lakes, and implant the first germs of Christian civilization in the last retreats of the old Teutonic faith." The methods, however, by which in many cases Christianity was introduced into these gloomy northern regions were characteristic of the spirit of times, and showed how little the stalwart kings and chieftans understood of the religion they had embraced, and which they forced upon their subjects. In 963 the sons of Eric assumed the supreme authority in Norway, and having been bap-