animated of the old writers, and from him we can obtain a more vivid and full description of the conflict than even the most brilliant romance-writer of the present time can supply. We have also an antique memorial of the battle more to be relied on than either chronicler or poet (and which confirms Wace's narrative remarkably) in the celebrated Bayeux tapestry which represents the principal scenes of Duke William's expedition, and of the circumstances connected with it, in minute, though occasionally grotesque details, and which was undoubtedly the production of the same age in which the battle took place, whether we admit or reject the legend that Queen Matilda and the ladies of her court wrought it with their own hands in honor of the royal conqueror.

Let us therefore suffer the old Norman chronicler to transport our imaginations to the fair Sussex scenery northwest of Hastings, as it appeared on the morning of the fourteenth of October, seven hundred and eighty-five years ago. The Norman host is pouring forth from its tents, and each troop and each company is forming fast under the banner of its leader. The massess have been sung, which were finished betimes in the morning; the barons have all assembled round Duke William; and the duke has ordered that the army shall be formed in three divisions, so as to make the attack upon the Saxon position in three places. The duke stood on a hill where he could best see his men; the barons surrounded him, and he spake to them proudly. He told them how he trusted them, and how all that he gained should be theirs, and how sure he felt of conquest, for in all the world there was not so brave an army, or such good men and true as were then forming around him. Then they cheered him in turn, and cried out, "'You will not see one coward; none here will fear to die for love of you, if need be.' And he answered them, 'I thank you well. For God's sake, spare not; strike hard at the beginning; stay not to take spoil; all the booty shall be in common, and there will be plenty for every one. There will be no safety in asking quarter or in flight; the English will never love or spare a Norman. Felons they were, and felons they are; false they were, and false they will be. Show no weakness toward them, for they will have no pity on you: neither the coward for running well, nor the bold man for smiting well, will be the better liked by the English, nor will any be the more spared on either account. You may fly to the sea, but you can fly no farther; you will find neither ships nor bridge there; there will be no sailors to receive you; and the English will overtake you there, and slay you in your shame. More of you will die in flight than in battle. Then, as flight will not secure you, fight, and you will conquer. I have no doubt of the victory: we are come for glory; the victory is in our hands, and we may make sure of obtaining it if we so please." As the duke was speaking thus, and would yet have spoken more, William Fitz Osber rode up

with his horse all coated with iron: 'Sire,' said he, 'we tarry here too long; let us all arm ourselves. *Allons! Allons!*'

"Then all went to their tents, and armed themselves as they best might; and the duke was very busy, giving every one his orders; and he was courteous to all the vassals, giving away many arms and horses to them. When he prepared to arm himself, he called first for his good hauberk, and a man brought it on his arm, and placed it before him, but in putting his head in to get it on, he unawares turned it the wrong way, with the back part in front. He soon changed it; but when he saw that those who stood by were sorely alarmed, he said, 'I have seen many a man who, if such a thing had happened to him, would not have borne arms, or entered the field the same day; but I never believed in omens, and I never will. I trust in God, for he does in all things his pleasure, and ordains what is to come to pass according to his will. I have never liked fortune-tellers, nor believed in diviners; but I commend myself to Our Lady. Let not this mischance give you trouble. The hauberk which was turned wrong, and then set right by me, signifies that a change will arise out of the matter which we are now stirring. You shall see the name of duke changed into king. Yea, a king shall I be, who hitherto have been but duke.' Then he crossed himself, and straightway took his hauberk, stooped his head, and put it on aright; and laced his helmet, and girt on his sword, which a varlet brought him. Then the duke called for his good horse—a better could not be found. It had been sent him by a king of Spain, out of very great friendship. Neither arms nor the press of fighting men did it fear, if its lord spurred it on. Walter Giffard brought it. The duke stretched out his hand, took the reins, put foot in stirrup, and mounted; and the good horse pawed, pranced, reared himself up, and curveted. The Viscount of Toarz saw how the duke bore himself in arms, and said to his people that were around him, 'Never have I seen a man so fairly armed, nor one who rode so gallantly, or bore his arms, or became his hauberk so well; neither any one who bore his lance so gracefully, or sat his horse and managed him so nobly. There is no such knight under heaven! a fair count he is, and fair king he will be. Let him fight, and he shall overcome; shame be to the man who shall fail him.'

"Then the duke called for the standard which the pope had sent him, and he who bore it having unfolded it, the duke took it and called to Raol de Conches. 'Bear my standard,' said he 'for I would not but do you right; by right and by ancestry your line are standard-bearers of Normandy, and very good knights have they all been.' But Raol said that he would serve the duke that day in other guise, and would fight the English with his hand as long as life should last. Then the duke bade Galtier Giffart bear the standard. But he was old and white-headed, and bade the duke give the standard to some younger and stronger man to

carry. Then the duke said fiercely, 'By the splendor of God, my lords, I think you mean to betray and fail me in this great need.' 'Sire,' said Giffart, 'not so we have done no treason, nor do I refuse from any felony toward you; but I have to lead a great chivalry, both hired men and the men of my fief. Never had I such good means of serving you as I now have; and if God please, I will serve you; if need be, I will die for you, and will give my own heart for yours.'

"'By my faith,' quoth the duke, 'I always love thee, and now I love thee more; if I survive this day, thou shalt be the better for it all thy days.' Then he called out a knight, whom he had heard much praised, Tosteins Fitz-Rou le Blanc by name, whose abode was at Bec-en-Caux. To him he delivered the standard; and Tosteins took it right cheerfully, and bowed low to him in thanks, and bore it gallantly, and with good heart. His kindred still have quittance of all service for their inheritance on this account, and their heirs are entitled so to hold their inheritance forever.

'William sat on his war-horse, and called out Rogier, whom they call De Montgomeri. 'I rely much on you,' said he; 'lead your men thitherward, and attack them from that side. William, the son of Osber, the seneschal, a right good vassal, shall go with you and help in the attack, and you shall have the men of Boilogne and Poix, and all my soldiers. Alain Fergert and Ameri shall attack on the other side; they shall lead the Poitevins and the Bretons, and all the barons of Maine; and I, with my own great men, my friends and kindred, will fight in the middle throng, where the battle shall be the hottest.

"The barons, and knights, and men-at-arms were all now armed; the foot-soldiers were well equipped, each bearing bow and sword; on their heads were caps, and to their feet were bound buskins. Some had good hides which they had bound round their bodies; and many were clad in frocks, and had quivers and bows hung to their girdles. The knights had hauberks and swords, boots of steel, and shining helmets; shields at their necks, and in their hands lances. And all had their cognizances, so that each might know his fellow, and Norman might not strike Norman, nor Frenchman kill his countryman by mistake. Those on foot led the way, with serried ranks, bearing their bows. The knights rode next, supporting the archers from behind. Thus both horse and foot kept their course and order of march as they began, in close ranks at a gentle pace, that the one might not pass or separate from the other. All went firmly and compactly, bearing themselves gallantly.

"Harold had summoned his men, earls, barons, and vavassors, from the castles and the cities, from the ports, the villages, and boroughs. The peasants were also called together from the villages, bearing such arms as they found; clubs and great picks, iron forks and stakes. The English had inclosed the place where

Harold was with his friends and the barons of the country whom he had summoned and called together.

"Those of London had came at once, and those of Kent, of Hertfort, and of Essesse; those of Suree and Susesse, of St. Edmund and Sufoc; of Norwis and Norfoc; of Cantorbierre and Stanfort; Bedefort and Hundetone. The men of Northanton also came; and those of Eurowic and Bokinkeham, of Bed and Notinkeham, Lindesie and Nichole. There came also from the west all who heard the summons; and very many were to be seen coming from Salebriere and Dorset, from Bat and from Sumerset. Many came, too, from about Glocester, and many from Wirecester, from Wincester, Hontesire, and Brichesire; and many more from other counties that we have not named, and cannot, indeed, recount. All who could bear arms, and had learned the news of the duke's arrival, came to defend the land. But none came from beyond Humbre, for they had other business upon their hands, the Danes and Tosti having much damaged and weakened them.

"Harold knew that the Normans would come and attack him hand to hand, so he had early inclosed the field in which he placed his men. He made them arm early, and range themselves for the battle, he himself having put on arms and equipments that became such a lord. The duke, he said, ought to seek him, as he wanted to conquer England; and it became him to abide the attack who had to defend the land. He commanded the people, and counseled his barons to keep themselves all together, and defend themselves in a body; for if they once separated they would with difficulty recover themselves. 'The Normans,' said he, 'are good vassals, valiant on foot and on horseback; good knights are they on horseback, and well used to battle; all is lost if they once penetrate our ranks. They have brought long lances and swords, but you have pointed lances and keen-edged bills; and I do not expect that their arms can stand against yours. Cleave whenever you can; it will be ill done if you spare aught.'

"The English had built up a fence before them with their shields, and with ash and other wood, and had well joined and wattled in the whole work, so as not to leave even a crevice; and thus they had a barricade in their front, through which any Norman who would attack them must first pass. Being covered in this way by their shields and barricades, their aim was to defend themselves; and if they had remained steady for that purpose, they would not have been conquered that day; for every Norman who made his way in, lost his life in dishonor, either by hatchet or bill, by club or other weapon. They wore short and close hauberks, and helmets that hung over their garments. King Harold issued orders, and made proclamation round, that all should be ranged with their faces toward the enemy, and that no one should move from where he was, so that whoever came might find them ready; and that whatever any one, be he Norman or

other, should do, each should do his best to defend his own place. Then he ordered the men of Kent to go where the Normans were likely to make the attack; for they say that the men of Kent are entitled to strike first; and that whenever the king goes to battle the first blow belongs to them. The right of the men of London is to guard the king's body, to place themselves around him, and to guard his standard; and they were accordingly placed by the standard to watch and defend it.

"When Harold had made all ready, and given his orders, he came into the midst of the English, and dismounted by the side of the standard; Leofwin and Gurth, his brothers, were with him; and around him he had barons enough, as he stood by his standard, which was, in truth, a noble one, sparkling with gold and precious stones. After the victory William sent it to the pope, to prove and commemorate his great conquest and glory. The English stood in close ranks, ready and eager for the fight; and they, moreover, made a fosse, which went across the field, guarding one side of their army.

"Meanwhile the Normans appeared advancing over the ridge of a rising ground, and the first division of their troops moved onward along the hill and across a valley. And presently another division, still larger, came in sight, close following upon the first, and they were led toward another part of the field, forming together as the first body had done. And while Harold saw and examined them, and was pointing them out to Gurth, a fresh company came in sight, covering all the plain; and in the midst of them was raised the standard that came from Rome. Near it was the duke, and the best men and greatest strength of the army were there. The good knights, the good vassals and brave warriors were there; and there were gathered together the gentle barons, the good archers, and the men-at-arms, whose duty it was to guard the duke, and range themselves around him. The youths and common herd of the camp, whose business was not to join in the battle, but to take care of the harness and stores, moved off toward a rising ground. The priests and the clerks also ascended a hill, there to offer up prayers to God, and watch the event of the battle.

"The English stood firm on foot in close ranks, and carried themselves right boldly. Each man had his hauberk on, with his sword girt, and his shield at his neck. Great hatchets were also slung at their necks, with which they expected to strike heavy blows.

"The Normans brought on the three divisions of their army to attack at different places. They set out in three companies; and in three companies did they fight. The first and second had come up, and then advanced the third, which was the greatest; with that came the duke with his own men, and all moved boldly forward.

"As soon as the two armies were in full view of each other, great noise and tumult arose. You might hear the sound of many trumpets, of bugles, and of horns; and then you might see men ranging themselves in line, lifting their shields, raising their lances, bending their bows, handling their arrows, ready for assault and defense.

"The English stood steady to their post, the Normans still moved on; and when they drew near, the English were to be seen stirring to and fro; were going and coming; troops ranging themselves in order; some with their color rising, others turning pale; some making ready their arms, others raising their shields; the brave man rousing himself to fight, the coward trembling at the approach of danger.

"Then Taillefer, who sang right well, rode, mounted on a swift horse, before the duke, singing of Charlemagne and of Roland of Oliver, and the peers who died in Roncesvalles. And when they drew nigh to the English, 'A boon, sire!' cried Taillefer; 'I have longed served you, and you owe me for all such service. To-day, so please you, you shall repay it. I ask as my guerdon, and beseech you for it earnestly, that you will allow me to strike the first blow in the battle!' And the duke answered, 'I grant it.' Then Taillefer put his horse to a gallop, charging before all the rest, and struck an Englishman dead, driving his lance below the breast into his body, and stretching him upon the ground. Then he drew his sword, and struck another, crying out, 'Come on, come on! What do ye, sirs? lay on, lay on!' At the second blow he struck, the English pushed forward, and surrounded, and slew him. Forthwith arose the noise and cry of war, and on either side the people put themselves in motion.

"The Normans moved on to the assault, and the English defended themselves well. Some were striking, others urging onward; all were bold, and cast aside fear. And now, behold, that battle was gathered whereof the fame is yet mighty.

"Loud and far resounded the bray of the horns; and the shocks of the lances, the mighty strokes of maces, and the quick clashing of swords. One while the Englishmen rushed on, another while they fell back; one while the men from over sea charged onward, and again at other times retreated. The Normans shouted Dex Aie, the English people Out. Then came the cunning maneuvers, the rude shocks and strokes of the lance, and blows of the swords, among the sergeants and soldiers, both English and Norman.

"When the English fall the Normans shout. Each side taunts and defies the other, yet neither knoweth what the other saith; and the Normans say the English bark, because they understand not their speech.

"Some wax strong, others weak: the brave exult, but the cowards tremble, as men who are sore dismayed. The Normans press on the assault, and the English defend their post well: they pierce

the hauberks, and cleave the shields, receive and return mighty blows. Again, some press forward, others yield; and thus, in various ways, the struggle proceeds. In the plain was a fosse, which the Normans had now behind them, having passed it in the fight without regarding it. But the English charged and drove the Normans before them till they made them fall back upon this fosse, overthrowing into it horses and men. Many were to be seen falling therein, rolling one over the other, with their faces to the earth, and unable to rise. Many of the English, also, whom the Normans drew down along with them, died there. At no time during the day's battle did so many Normans die as perished in that fosse. So those said who saw the dead.

"The varlets who were set to guard the harness began to abandon it as they saw the loss of the Frenchmen, when thrown back upon the fosse without power to recover themselves. Being greatly alarmed at seeing the difficulty in restoring order, they began to quit the harness, and sought around, not knowing where to find shelter. Then Duke William's brother, Odo, the good priest, the Bishop of Bayeux, galloped up, and said to them, 'Stand fast! stand fast! be quiet and move not! fear nothing; for, if God please, we shall conquer yet.' So they took courage, and rested where they were; and Odo returned galloping back to where the battle was most fierce, and was of great service on that day. He had put a hauberk on over a white aube, wide in the body, with the sleeve tight, and sat on a white horse, so that all might recognize him. In his hand he held a mace, and wherever he saw most need he held up and stationed the knights, and often urged them on to assault and strike the enemy.

"From nine o'clock in the morning, when the combat began, till three o'clock came, the battle was up and down, this way and that, and no one knew who would conquer and win the land. Both sides stood so firm and fought so well, that no one could guess which would prevail. The Norman archers with their bows shot thickly upon the English; but they covered themselves with their shields, so that the arrows could not reach their bodies, nor do any mischief, how true soever was their aim, or however well they shot. Then the Normans determined to shoot their arrows upward into the air, so that they might fall on their enemies' heads, and strike their faces. The archers adopted this scheme, and shot up into the air toward the English; and the arrows, in falling, struck their heads and faces, and put out the eyes of many; and all feared to open their eyes, or leave their faces unguarded.

"The arrows now flew thicker than rain before the wind; fast sped the shafts that the English call 'wibetes.' Then it was that an arrow, that had been thus shot upward, struck Harold above his right eye, and put it out. In his agony he drew the arrow and threw it away, breaking it with his hands; and the pain to his head

was so great that he leaned upon his shield. So the English were wont to say, and still say to the French, that the arrow was well shot which was so sent up against their king, and that the archer won them great glory who thus put out Harold's eye.

"The Normans saw that the English defended themselves well, and were so strong in their position that they could do little against them. So they consulted together privily, and arranged to draw off, and pretend to flee, till the English should pursue and scatter themselves over the field; for they saw that if they could once get their enemies to break their ranks, they might be attacked and discomfitted much more easily. As they had said, so they did. The Normans by little and little fled, the English following them. As the one fell back, the other pressed after; and when the Frenchmen retreated, the English thought and cried out that the men of France fled, and would never return.

"Thus they were deceived by the pretended flight, and great mischief thereby befell them; for if they had not moved from their position, it is not likely that they would have been conquered at all; but, like fools, they broke their lines and pursued.

"The Normans were to be seen following up their stratagem, retreating slowly so as to draw the English farther on. As they still flee, the English pursue; they push out their lances and stretch forth their hatchets, following the Normans as they go, rejoicing in the success of their scheme, and scattering themselves over the plain. And the English meantime jeered and insulted their foes with words. 'Cowards,' they cried, 'you came hither in an evil hour, wanting our lands, and seeking to seize our property, fools that ye were to come! Normandy is too far off, and you will not easily reach it. It is of little use to run back; unless you can cross the sea at a leap, or can drink it dry, your sons and daughters are lost to you.'

"The Normans bore it all; but, in fact, they knew not what the English said: their language seemed like the baying of dogs which they could not understand. At length they stopped and turned round, determined to recover their ranks; and the barons might be heard crying DEX AIE! for a halt. Then the Normans resumed their former position, turning their faces toward the enemy; and their men were to be seen facing round and rushing onward to a fresh *melee*, the one party assaulting the other; this man striking, another pressing onward. One hits, another misses; one flies, another pursues; one is aiming a stroke, while another discharges his blow. Norman strives with Englishman again, and aims his blows afresh. One flies, another pursues swiftly: the combatants are many, the plain wide, the battle and the *melee* fierce. On every hand they fight hard, the blows are heavy, and the struggle becomes fierce.

"The Normans were playing their part well, when an English knight came rushing up, having in his company a hundred men,

furnished with various arms. He wielded a northern hatchet, with the blade a full foot long, and was well armed after his manner, being tall, bold, and of noble carriage. In the front of the battle, where the Normans thronged most, he came bounding on swifter than the stag, many Normans falling before him and his company. He rushed straight upon a Norman who was armed and riding on a war-house, and tried with his hatchet of steel to cleave his helmet; but the blow miscarried, and the sharp blade glanced down before the saddle-bow, driving through the horse's neck down to the ground, so that both horse and master fell together to the earth. I know not whether the Englishman struck another blow; but the Normans who saw the stroke were astonished, and about to abandon the assault, when Roger de Montgomeri came galloping up, with his lance set, and heeding not the long-handled axe which the Englishman wielded aloft, struck him down, and left him stretched on the ground. Then Roger cried out, 'Frenchmen, strike! the day is ours!' And again a fierce *melee* was to be seen, with many a blow of lance and sword; the English still defending themselves, killing the horses and cleaving the shields.

"There was a French soldier of noble mien, who sat his horse gallantly. He spied two Englishmen who were also carrying themselves boldly. They were both men of great worth, and had become companions in arms and fought together, the one protecting the other. They bore two long and broad bills, and did great mischief to the Normans, killing both horses and men. The French soldier looked at them and their bills, and was sorely alarmed, for he was afraid of losing his good horse, the best that he had, and would willingly have turned to some other quarter, if it would not have looked like cowardice. He soon, however, recovered his courage, and, spurring his horse, gave him the bridle, and galloped swiftly forward. Fearing the two bills, he raised his shield, and struck one of the Englishmen with his lance on the breast, so that the iron passed out at his back. At the moment that he fell, the lance broke, and the Frenchman seized the mace that hung at his right side, and struck the other Englishman a blow that completely fractured his skull.

"On the other side was an Englishman who much annoyed the French, continually assaulting them with a keen-edged hatchet. He had a helmet made of wood, which he had fastened down to his coat, and laced round his neck, so that no blows could reach his head. The ravage he was making was seen by a gallant Norman knight, who rode a horse that neither fire nor water could stop in its career, when its master urged it on. The knight spurred, and his horse carried him on well till he charged the Englishman, striking him over the helmet, so that it fell down over his eyes; and as he stretched out his hand to raise it and uncover his face, the Norman cut off his right hand, so that his

hatchet fell to the ground. Another Norman sprang forward and eagerly seized the prize with both his hands, but he kept it little space, and paid dearly for it, for as he stooped to pick up the hatchet, an Englishman with his lond-handled axe struck him over the back, breaking all his bones, so that his entrails and lungs gushed forth. The knight of the good horse meantime returned without injury; but on his way he met another Englishman, and bore him down under his horse, wounding him grievously, and trampling him altogether under foot.

"And now might be heard the loud clang and cry of battle, and the clashing of lances. The English stood firm in their barricades, and shivered the lances, beating them into pieces with their bills and maces. The Normans drew their swords and hewed down the barricades, and the English, in great trouble, fell back upon their standard, where were collected the maimed and wounded.

"There wany knights of Chauz who jousted and made attacks. The English knew not how to joust, or bear arms on horseback, but fought with hatchets and bills. A man, when he wanted to strike with one of their hatchets, was obliged to hold it with both his hands, and could not at the same time, as it seems to me, both cover himself and strike with any freedom.

"The English fell back toward the standard, which was upon a rising ground, and the Normans followed them across the valley, attacking them on foot and horseback. Then Hue de Mortemer, with the Sires D'Auviler, D'Onebac, and Saint Cler, rode up and charged, overthrowing many.

"Robert Fitz Erneis fixed his lance, took his shield, and, galloping toward the standard, with his keen-edged sword struck an Englishman who was in front, killed him, and then drawing back his sword, attacked many others, and pushed straight for the standard, trying to beat it down; but the English surrounded it, and killed him with their bills. He was found on the spot, when they afterward sought for him dead and lying at the standard's foot.

"Duke William pressed close upon the English with his lance striving hard to reach the standard with the great troop he led and seeking earnestly for Harold, on whose account the whole war was. The Normans follow their lord, and press around him, they ply their blows upon the English; and these defend themselves stoutly, striving hard with their enemies, returning blow for blow.

"One of them was a man of great strength, a wrestler, who did great mischief to the Normans with his hatchet; all feared him, for he struck down a great many Normans. The duke spurred on his horse, and aimed a blow at him, but he stooped, and so escaped the stroke; then jumping on one side, he lifted his hatchet aloft, and as the duke bent to avoid the blow, the Englishman boldly struck him on the head, and beat in his helmet though without doing much injury. He was very near falling however; but, bearing on his stirrups, he recovered himself immediately; and

when he thought to have revenged himself upon the churl by killing him, he had escaped, dreading the duke's blow. He ran back in among the English, but he was not safe even there ; for the Normans, seeing him, pursued and caught him, and having pierced him through and through with their lances, left him dead on the ground.

"Where the throng of the battle was greatest, the men of Kent and Essex fought wondrously well, and made the Normans again retreat, but without doing them much injury. And when the duke saw his men fall back, and the English triumphing over them, his spirit rose high, and he seized his shield and his lance, which a vassal handed to him, and took his post by his standard.

"Then those who kept close guard by him, and rode where he rode, being about a thousand armed men, came and rushed with closed ranks upon the English ; and with the weight of their good horses, and the blows the knights gave, broke the press of the enemy, and scattered the crowd before them, the good duke leading them on in front. Many pursued and many fled ; many were the Englishmen who fell around, and were trampled under the horses, crawling upon the earth, and not able to rise. Many of the richest and noblest men fell in the rout, but still the English rallied in places, smote down those whom they reached, and maintained the combat the best they could, beating down the men and killing the horses. One Englishman watched the duke, and plotted to kill him ; he would have struck him with his lance, but he could not, for the duke struck him first, and felled him to the earth.

"Loud was now the clamor, and great the slaughter ; many a soul then quitted the body it inhabited. The living marched over the heaps of dead, and each side was weary of striking. He charged on who could, and he who could no longer strike still pushed forward. The strong struggled with the strong ; some failed, others triumphed ; the cowards fell back, the brave pressed on ; and sad was his fate who fell in the midst, for he had little chance of rising again ; and many in truth fell who never rose at all, being crushed under the throng.

"And now the Normans had pressed on so far, that at last they had reached the standard. There Harold had remained, defending himself to the utmost ; but he was sorely wounded in his eye by the arrow, and suffered grievous pain from the blow. An armed man came in the throng of the battle, and struck him on the ventaille of his helmet, and beat him to the ground ; and as he sought to recover himself, a knight beat him down again, striking him on the thick of his thigh down to the bone.

"Gurth saw the English falling around, and that there was no remedy. He saw his race hastening to ruin, and despaired of any aid; he would have fled, but could not, for the throng continually increased. And the duke pushed on till he reached him, and

struck him with great force. Whether he died of that blow I know not, but it was said that he fell under it, and rose no more.

"The standard was beaten down, the golden standard was taken, and Harold and the best of his friends were slain; but there was so much eagerness, and throng of so many around, seeking to kill him that I know not who it was that slew him.

"The English were in great trouble at having lost their king, and at the duke's having conquered and beat down the standard; but they still fought on, and defended themselves long, and in fact till the day drew to a close. Then it clearly appeared to all that the standard was lost, and the news had spread throughout the army that Harold, for certain, was dead; and all saw that there was no longer any hope, so they left the field, and those fled who could.

"William fought well; many an assault did he lead, many a blow did he give, and many receive, and many fell dead under his hand. Two horses were killed under him, and he took a third when necessary, so that he fell not to the ground, and lost not a drop of blood. But whatever any one did, and whoever lived or died, this is certain, that William conquered, and that many of the English fled from the field, and many died on the spot. Then he returned thanks to God, and in his pride ordered his standard to be brought and set up on high where the English standard had stood; and that was the signal of his having conquered, and beaten down the standard. And he ordered his tent to be raised on the spot among the dead, and had his meat brought thither, and his supper prepared there.

"Then he took of his armor; and the barons and knights pages and squires came, when he had unstrung his shield; and they took the helmet from his head, and the hauberk from his back, and saw the heavy blows upon his shield, and how his helmet was dinted in, and all greatly wondered, and said 'Such a baron (ber) never bestrode war-horse, nor dealt such blows, nor did such feats of arms; neither has there been on earth such a knight since Rollant and Oliver.'

"Thus they lauded and extolled him greatly, and rejoiced in what they saw, but grieving also for their friends who were slain in the battle. And the duke stood meanwhile among them, of noble stature and mien, and rendered thanks to the king of glory, through whom he had the victory; and thanked the knights around him, mourning also frequently for the dead. And he ate and drank among the dead, and made his bed that night upon the field.

"The morrow was Sunday; and those who had slept upon the field of battle, keeping watch around and suffering great fatigue, bestirred themselves at break of day, and sought out and buried such of the bodies of their friends as they might find. The noble ladies of the land also came, some to seek their husbands, and others their fathers, sons, or brothers. They bore the bodies to their villages, and interred them at the churches; and the clerks and priests of

the country were ready, and at the request of their friends, took the bodies that were found, and prepared graves and lay them therein.

"King Harold was carried and buried at Varham; but I know not who it was that bore him thither, neither do I know who buried him. Many remained on the field, and many had fled in the night.

Such is a Norman account of the battle of Hastings,* which does full justice to the valor of the Saxons as well as to the skill and bravery of the victors. It is indeed evident that the loss of the battle by the English was owing to the wound which Harold received in the afternoon, and which must have incapacitated him from effective command. When we remember that he had himself just won the battle of Stamford Bridge over Harold Hardrada by the maneuver of a feigned flight, it is impossible to suppose that he could be deceived by the same stratagem on the part of the Normans at Hastings. But his men, when deprived of his control, would very naturally be led by their inconsiderate ardor into the pursuit that proved so fatal to them. All the narratives of the battle, however much they vary as to the precise time and manner of Harold's fall, eulogize the generalship and the personal prowess which he displayed, until the fatal arrow struck him. The skill with which he had posted his army was proved both by the slaughter which it cost the Normans to force the position, and also by the desperate rally which some of the Saxons made after the battle in the forest in the rear, in which they cut off a large number of the pursuing Normans. This circumstance is particularly mentioned by William of Poictiers, the Conqueror's own chaplain. Indeed, if Harold, or either of his brothers, had survived, the remains of the English army might have formed again in the wood, and could at least have effected an orderly retreat, and prolonged the war. But both Gurth, and Leofwine, and all the bravest Thanes of Southern England lay dead on Senlac, around their fallen king and the fallen standard of their country. The exact number that perished on the Saxon side is unknown; but we read that on the side of the victors, out of sixty thousand men who had been engaged, no less than a fourth perished. So well had the English billmen "plyed the ghastly blow," and so sternly had the Saxon battle-axe cloven Norman casque and mail.† The old historian Daniel justly as well as forcibly remarks,‡ "Thus was tried, by the great assize of God's judgment in battle, the right of power between the English and

* In the preceding pages I have woven together the 'purpureos pannos' of the old chronicler. In so doing, I have largely availed myself of Mr. Edgar Taylor's version of that part of the "Roman de Rou" which describes the conquest. By giving engravings from the Bayeux Tapestry, and by his excellent notes, Mr. Taylor has added much to the value and interest of his volume.

† The Conqueror's Chaplain calls the Saxon battle-axes "saevissimae secures."

‡ As cited in the "Pictorial History."

Norman nations, a battle the most memorable of all others: and, however miserably lost, yet most nobly fought on the part of England.

Many a pathetic legend was told in after years respecting the discovery and the burial of the corpse of our last Saxon king. The main circumstances, though they seem to vary, are perhaps reconcilable.* Two of the monks of Waltham Abbey, which Harold had founded a little time before his election to the throne, had accompanied him to the battle. On the morning after the slaughter, they begged and gained permission of the Conqueror to search for the body of their benefactor. The Norman soldiery and camp-followers had stripped and gashed the slain, and the two monks vainly strove to recognize from among the mutilated and gory heaps around them the features of their former king. They sent for Harold's mistress, Edith, surnamed "the Fair," and "the swan-necked," to aid them. The eye of love proved keener than the eye of gratitude, and the Saxon lady even in that Aceldama knew her Harold.

The king's mother now sought the victorious Norman, and begged the dead body of her son. But William at first answered in his wrath and the hardness of his heart, that a man who had been false to his word and his religion should have no other sepulcher than the sand of the shore. He added, with a sneer, "Harold mounted guard on the coast while he was alive, he may continue his guard now he is dead." The taunt was an unintentional eulogy; and a grave washed by the spray of the Sussex waves would have been the noblest burial-place for the martyr of Saxon freedom. But Harold's mother was urgent in her lamentations and her prayers; the Conqueror relented: like Achilles, he gave up the dead body of his fallen foe to a parent's supplications, and the remains of King Harold were deposited with regal honors in Waltham Abbey.

On Christmas day in the same year William the Conqueror was crowned at London King of England.

Synopsis of Events between the Battle of Hastings, A.D. 1066, and Joan of Arc's Victory at Orleans, A.D. 1429.

A.D. 1066–1087. Reign of William the Conqueror. Frequent risings of the English against him, which are quelled with merciless rigor.

1096. The first Crusade.

* See them collected in Lingard, i., 454, *et seq.* Thierry, i., 209; Sharon Turner, i., 82; and Histoire de Normandie, par Lieguet, p. 242.

1112. Commencement of the disputes about investures between the emperors and the popes.

1140. Foundation of the city of Lubec, whence originated the Hanseatic League. Commencement of the feuds in Italy between the Guelfs and the Ghibellines.

1146. The second Crusade.

1154. Henry II. becomes King of England. Under him Thomas a Becket is made Archbishop of Canterbury: the first instance of any man of the Saxon race being raised to high office in Church or State since the Conquest.

1170. Strongbow, Earl of Pembroke, lands with an English army in Ireland.

1189. Richard Cœur de Lion becomes King of England. He and King Philip Augustus of France join in the third Crusade.

1199–1204. On the death of King Richard, his brother John claims and makes himself master of England and Normandy, and the other large continental possessions of the early Plantagenet princes. Philip Augustus asserts the cause of Prince Arthur, John's nephew, against him. Arthur is murdered, but the French king continues the war against John, and conquers from him Normandy, Brittany, Anjou, Maine, Touraine, and Poictiers.

1215. The barons, the freeholders, the citizens, and the yeomen of England rise against the tyranny of John and his foreign favorites. They compel him to sign Magna Charta. This is the commencement of our nationality: for our history from this time forth is the history of a national life, then complete and still in being. All English history before this period is a mere history of elements, of their collisions, and of the processes of their fusion. For upward of a century after the Conquest, Anglo-Norman and Anglo-Saxon had kept aloof from each other: the one in haughty scorn, the other in sullen abhorrence. They were two peoples, though living in the same land. It is not until the thirteenth century, the period of the reigns of John and his son and grandson, that we can perceive the existence of any feeling of common nationality among them. But in studying the history of these reigns, we read of the old dissensions no longer. The Saxon no more appears in civil war against the Norman, the Norman no longer scorns the language of the Saxon, or refuses to bear together with him the name of Englishman. No part of the community think themselves foreigners to another part. They feel that they are all one people, and they have learned to unite their efforts for the common purpose of protecting the rights and promoting the welfare of all. The fortunate loss of the Duchy of Normandy in John's reign greatly promoted these new feelings. Thenceforth our barons' only homes were in England. One language had, in the reign of Henry III., become the language of the land, and that, also, had then assumed the form in which we still possess it. One law, in the eye of which all freemen are equal without distinction of race, was modeled, and steadily enforced, and still continues to form the ground-work of our judicial system.*

1273. Rodolph of Hapsburg chosen Emperor of Germany.

1283. Edward I. conquers Wales.

1346. Edward III. invades France, and gains the battle of Cressy.

1356. Battle of Poictiers.

1360. Treaty of Bretigny between England and France. By it Edward III. renounces his pretensions to the French crown. The treaty is ill kept, and indecisive hostilities continue between the forces of the two countries.

1414. Henry V. of England claims the crown of France, and resolves to invade and conquer that kingdom. At this time France was in the most deplorable state of weakness and suffering, from the factions that raged among her nobility, and from the cruel oppressions which the rival nobles practiced on the mass of the community. "The people were exhausted by taxes, civil wars, and military executions; and they had fallen into that worst of all states of mind, when the independence of one's country is thought no longer a paramount and sacred object. 'What can the English do to us worse than the thing we suffer at the hands of our own princes?' was a common exclamation among the poor people of France."†

1415. Henry invades France, takes Harfleur, and wins the great battle of Agincourt.

1417–1419. Henry conquers Normandy. The French Dauphin assassinates the Duke of Burgundy, the most powerful of the French nobles, at Montereau. The successor of the murdered duke becomes the active ally of the English.

1420. The treaty of Troyes is concluded between Henry V. of England and Charles VI. of France, and Philip duke of Burgundy. By this treaty it was stipulated that Henry should marry the Princess Catharine of France; that King Charles, during his lifetime, should keep the title and dignity of King of France, but that Henry should succeed him, and should at once be intrusted with the administration of the government, and that the French crown should descend to Henry's heirs; that France and England should forever be united under one king, but should still retain their several usages, customs, and privileges; that all the princes, peers, vassals, and communities of France should swear allegiance to Henry as their future king, and should pay him present obedience as regent. That Henry should unite his arms to those of King Charles and the Duke of Burgundy, in order to subdue the adherents of Charles, the pretended dauphin; and that these three princes should make no peace or truce with the dauphin but by the common consent of all three.

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* "Creasy's Text Book of the Constitution," p. 4.

† "Pictorial Hist. of England," vol. i., p. 28.