

as the High-Dutch, perhaps older. These dialects, which in their system of letter-changes agree with the ancient Gothic and the Scandinavian rather than with the High-Dutch, form the natural speech of the whole coast region stretching from Picardy to Denmark, and they have been carried by conquest far to the east, along the Slavonic, Prussian, and Finnish coasts of the Baltic. But their area has been encroached on in different parts by French, by Danish, and by High-Dutch, so that that form of the Low-Dutch which is spoken in the kingdom of the Netherlands, and which we now know specially as *Dutch*, is the only continental dialect of the whole group which is commonly acknowledged as a national and literary language. Among the tribes of this region, three stand out conspicuously in the history of that conquest, the Angles, the Saxons, and the Jutes.¹ Each had its special and marked share in the work. The Jutes, in all likelihood, formed the first permanent Teutonic settlement in Britain. The Saxons and the Angles settled later; but each of them occupied a far larger part of the island than the Jutes. And each of these last gave a name to the Teutonic settlements as a whole. As soon as the Teutonic settlers were so far united as to bear a common name, the received name on their own lips was *English*; on the lips of their Celtic neighbours and enemies the received name was *Saxon*.

The reason for this difference in nomenclature is plain. The Angles occupied a greater share of the land than the Saxons; they therefore gave the national name to the united people.² But the Saxons were the first among the invaders with whom the Celtic or Roman inhabitants of Britain had to deal; they therefore gave the Saxon name to the invaders in general. This last fact at once brings us to the actual history of the English conquest. If we cannot say that the English conquest itself began, we may at least say that the first steps towards it were taken, as soon as any Low-Dutch invaders from beyond sea first attempted a settlement by arms in Roman, or once Roman, Britain. This process, it must be marked, stands wholly apart from questions either as to the possible Teutonic origin of any of the tribes whom the Romans found in Britain, or, as to possible Teutonic settlements in the province made with the sanction of the Roman authorities. This last process undoubtedly happened in the case of soldiers of Teutonic race serving in the Roman armies. But Teutonic settlements, either before the Roman occupation or under the Roman occupation, are something wholly distinct from the Teutonic conquest either of a Roman province or of a land forsaken by Rome. Such settlements might make the Teutonic conquest more easy when it did come, but that is all that they could do. Settlers of either of those classes became Roman subjects, Roman provincials. The events which led to the Conquest began when men of Teutonic race first settled or tried to settle in the island, not as Roman soldiers or Roman subjects, but as foreign invaders of the Roman land. This work, which was not the English conquest, but which was the first step towards it, the conquest which was merely attempted and not carried out, seems to have begun in the second half of the fourth century. Claudian bears witness to the naval victories of the elder Theodosius, the father of the renowned emperor of that name, who (367 A.D.) beat

Angles, Saxons, and Jutes.

Native and foreign names of the united nation.

First attempts at settlement.

¹ The Angles and the Saxons are plain enough; there is a certain degree of mystery about the Jutes, their name, and their origin. But it is enough for our purpose that they were a third Teutonic people, distinguishable from the Angles and Saxons.

² *Engle, Angelcyn, Angli*, are the usual names of the united nation. *Angli-Saxones, Angul-Saxae*, are sometimes found, especially in the royal style of the tenth century. Those forms are equivalent to *Angli et Saxones*, the nation formed by the union of the Angles and Saxons. It is therefore the more correct description of the two; but its employment in England is always formal; it clearly never passed into general use. In foreign writers it is somewhat more common.

back a Saxon invasion by sea. That is to say, an attempt at Teutonic settlement was then made; but there was still strength in the Roman power to hinder it. Had it been otherwise, the history of English conquest in Britain would have begun in the fourth century instead of in the fifth. Incursions undoubtedly went on; the south-eastern coast of Britain, the part specially exposed to Saxon invasion, got the name of the *Saxon Shore*,³ and a Roman officer with the title of Count had that shore under his special keeping. But things took quite a new turn after the withdrawal of the Roman legions from Britain. The land now lay open to settlement in a way in which it had not done before. It is now therefore that actual conquests, as distinguished from mere incursions and attempted settlements, begin.

Our materials for the history of this great event, an event which is nothing short of the beginning of our national history, at first sight seem scanty. Our only absolutely contemporary notice is to be found in two meagre entries in the chronicle of Prosper of Aquitaine, which however assert the main fact that Britain was brought under the power of the Saxons about the middle of the fifth century.⁴ The native writer who is most nearly contemporary, the Briton Gildas, belongs to the next century, and was a witness of some stages, though not of the earliest, of the work of conquest. He is the earliest writer who gives us anything that can be called a narrative, a narrative meagre enough, but which helps us to some particular events and personal names. About the same time Procopius, without any direct notice of the conquest, speaks of Britain as a land inhabited by Angles and Frisians as well as Britons. The series of English writers begins with Bæda, and goes on with the English Chronicles, to which we may fairly add the fragments of ancient English songs which lurk in the Latin of Henry of Huntingdon. Of these Bæda himself did not write till more than two hundred years after the beginning of the Conquest, and the materials for his short narrative of the Conquest itself seems to come at least as much from British as from English sources. Our only details are those which are preserved in the Chronicles and in Henry of Huntingdon. The Chronicles in their present form do not date from an earlier time than the reign of Ælfred in the ninth century; but any one who studies them carefully will see that this part of the record contains far older materials. The narrative is remarkably free from anything which has a legendary sound. That its chronology may be largely arbitrary is possible; but that it is so is of itself an arbitrary conjecture. The English at the time of their landing were not wholly illiterate. They had their runic alphabet, and it is perfectly possible that the entries in the Chronicles may come from an absolutely contemporary record. Such a record, even if it marked the sequence of years according to some reckoning of its own, must of course have been adapted to the Christian reckoning by the compilers of the Chronicles, and in such a process some errors of detail may well have crept in. But there seems no reason to suspect invention, falsification, or even accidental error, on any great scale. The narrative will bear testing; the entries fit in with all that can be made out from an examination of the country. They fit in with the notices of the Welsh writers, and with all such

³ The *Limes Saxonicus* or *Littus Saxonicum* was first truly explained by Dr Guest. It means, not a shore occupied by Saxons, but a boundary against Saxons. It answers to the Danish, Slavonic, and Spanish marches of the later empire, except that in the one case the enemy was to be dreaded by land, and in the other case by sea.

⁴ Prosper has two entries. The former says that "Hac tempestate (the time of Constantine the Tyrant, 407-411) præ valitudine Romanorum, vires funditus attenuatae Britannia." The other says that, some time before the death of Aëtius in 454, "Britannia, usque ad hoc tempus variis cladibus eventibusque lacerata, in ditionem Saxonum rediguntur."

incidental sources of knowledge as we have. In this way a narrative in considerable detail has been recovered by the care and skill of Dr Guest. As for the notices in Henry of Huntingdon, which evidently contain fragments of lost poems, we must remember that a contemporary poem may be just as good an authority as a prose writing. Several poems are inserted in the Chronicles themselves in undoubtedly historical times, in the tenth and eleventh centuries. Other poems of those ages, sometimes, like the song of Maldon, preserved in the original, sometimes, like the song of Stamfordbridge and the song of Waltheof at York, preserved only in Latin fragments, are among our best materials for military events. They go far more into detail than the prose writers do. There seems then no good ground for doubting the general trustworthiness of the narrative which is preserved to us in the Chronicles, and which we are occasionally able to enlarge from other sources. It is, of course, only the earlier stages of the Conquest that can be made the subject of any controversy at all. From the beginning of the conversion of the English to Christianity, we begin to have contemporary materials of one kind or another, till, in the time of Ælfred, the Chronicle itself becomes contemporary. It is only for about a hundred and fifty years that we are left almost wholly to judge of our materials by their internal evidence. And surely a narrative like that of the Chronicles, no tissue of wild and impossible legends, but a steady business-like series of entries, may very well have been handed down for that length of time by means of runes, helped here and there by a contemporary song.

Settlement of the Jutes in Kent.

Our narrative then, put together from these various sources, represents the Britons, after the departure of the Roman legions, as left without defence against the attacks of their northern neighbours the Picts and Scots. They apply for help to Aëtius; but the Roman general, busy in the struggle with Attila, has no leisure to do anything for them. Their prince, who bears a name of which the most familiar form is Vortigern, invites the help of the Saxons, an unwise step enough, but one which has plenty of parallels in history. The British prince, in the most authentic record, is not a king but a duke. The Teutonic leaders whom he invites are also *ealdormen* or *heretogan*, not kings. They are the two brothers Hengest and Horsa. Their landing is fixed by the Chronicle to the year 449; and, without insisting on this exact date, it is plain that the Conquest must have begun about the middle of the fifth century. A warfare of nearly forty years, in which many battles are entered, established the first Teutonic kingdom in Britain, that of Kent, the one land which never lost its British name. Of the two brother leaders, Horsa is killed in a battle with Vortigern in 455, after which Hengest and his son Æsc assume the kingly title. In all this there is nothing like romance; it is a matter-of-fact kind of history, which might be preserved by a runic chronicle, which might almost be preserved by tradition. Once only we have a touch which seems to come from a song, as when in a battle in the year 473 the Welsh are said to have "fled from the English like fire." The geography of the story has been minutely examined, and it shows that the tale is a sound and credible military narrative. Later writers, English and British, have tricked out the story with endless mythical details, and have carried the arms of Hengest far beyond the narrow limits of Kent, to which the Chronicle confines them. Modern critics have found materials for cavil in the names of the two brothers, and in the number of the thirty-nine years of the reign of Hengest. Both points might easily be given up. The main fact is the gradual conquest of a small corner of Britain after much hard fighting with its British possessors. But there really seems no reason why Hengest and Horsa might not be

names of real men as much as Wulf, Beorn, and Leo. And the years of Hengest's reign are, after all, one short of the mystical forty.

In the British narrative, in the single Roman entry, of these events, the Teutonic invaders are called *Saxons*. In the Chronicles they appear as *Angelcyn, Angle, Engle, Angles* or *English*. They are so called, not merely in the historical summary of the ninth century editor, but in the entry (473) which has the earliest ring of all about it. But when Bæda, and after him the Chronicler, gives a short ethnological account of the invaders, they describe the Teutonic conquerors of Kent neither as Saxons nor as Angles, but as Jutes. As the Jutes then, in the very record of their conquest, are spoken of, on the one hand as Saxons, on the other hand as English, it seems to follow that, from the very beginning, the Celtic inhabitants of Britain called all Teutonic invaders Saxons, while the invaders themselves from the very beginning used *Angle* or *English* as their common name. The general use of the Saxon name by the Celts is only what we should have looked for; the wide use of the English name among the Teutons themselves is a fact to be noticed. It is at least certain that, while the English name is often applied to Saxons and Jutes, it would be hard to find any case where an Angle calls himself, or is called in his own tongue, a Saxon. We need not infer that the English name had become the common name of all the three tribes before they left Germany; it certainly became so within no long time after they settled in Britain.

We also see that, from the beginning, the Teutonic conquerors spoke of their British enemies as *Welsh* or *Welsh* or *strangers*. The name is familiar in that sense both in Britain and on the mainland, but it seems never to be applied to any strangers but those who were either of Roman or of Celtic speech. And it would seem to be applied only to those Celts who had come under the Roman dominion. Our forefathers spoke of the *Bretwealas* in Britain, of the *Galwealas* in Gaul, of the *Rumwealas* in Italy; but the name seems never to be applied to the Scots either in Ireland or in Britain. Like the word *Slave*, it sank, in the language of the conquerors, to express bondage. The masculine *wealh* sometimes, the feminine *wylne* much more commonly, mean a slave in the secondary meaning of that word. This difference of usage is again remarkable. It falls in with the belief, natural in itself, that in the process of conquest the few Britons who were spared were mainly women. Again, Bæda and the Chronicler, as we have seen, speak of the Teutonic conquerors of Britain as sprung from three tribes only, the Saxons, Angles, and Jutes. It was plainly only those three tribes, that is, chiefs of those tribes, who founded kingdoms in Britain. But in all great migrations various kindred tribes are sure to take a part, and it would be rash to rule that no Low-Dutch people but those three took a part in the enterprise. Procopius, for instance, speaks, not of Angles and Saxons, but of Angles and Frisians. We may well believe that Frisians, and other tribes too, helped in the work. Possibly no one settlement consisted wholly of men of any one tribe. It is enough that all the royal races of the several kingdoms belonged to the three stocks, Saxon, Anglian, and Jutish. It was then by Saxon, Anglian, and Jutish settlers, or at all events by settlers under Saxon, Anglian, and Jutish leaders, that the greater part of Britain was changed into England. But the work was a slow one, and the way in which it was carried out seems not to have been exactly the same in all parts. In the end seven or eight chief kingdoms were founded. The old dream of a regular *Heptarchy* has long been exploded; but it is certain that, among a crowd of smaller states, seven or eight stand out as conspicuous kingdoms among the rest, and as having something like a continuous

Growth of seven or eight chief kingdoms.

The
Jutish
settle-
ments.

The
Saxon
settle-
ments.

South-
Saxons.

East-
Saxons.

The
Anglian
settle-
ments.

history. The Jutes, the first to settle, occupied the smallest part of the country. Their dominions took in only Kent with perhaps for a while Surrey, and Wight with a small part of the neighbouring mainland of Hampshire. They were hemmed in on all sides by the Saxon settlements, all of which bore the Saxon name. *Suthseaxe, Westseaxe, Eastseaxe*, have been softened in modern speech into Sussex, Wessex, and Essex; but the names are strictly not territorial, but tribal. *Westseaxe* and the rest are all of them names, not of a land, but of a people. The whole of the Saxon settlements were made on the southern and south-eastern coasts; and it was the West-Saxons only who at any time carried their conquests to any distance inland. The South-Saxon settlement came next after the Jutish settlement in Kent. The date given to it is 477. The most remarkable event in the process of conquest was the storming of Anderida, now Pevensey, in 491. The forsaken walls of the Roman city still bear witness to the day when Ælle and Cissa slew all that were within, and when not a Bret was left behind. But the South-Saxons found a natural frontier to the north in the great wood of Anderida. Their kingdom always remained little more than a long strip of coast, cut off to a great extent from the other kingdoms of Britain, and playing but a small part in their general history. It still keeps its name and boundary as the modern county of Sussex. The kingdom of the Gewissas or West-Saxons, founded to the west of the South-Saxons, was destined to hold quite another place in English and British history. Two Saxon ealdormen, Cerdic and Cynric, founded in 495 a settlement on the coast of what is now Hampshire. That settlement grew into the kingdom of England. Twenty-four years after their first landing, the two Saxon ealdormen deemed their position strong enough, and their conquests wide enough, for them to assume the kingly title. Thus began the royal line of the West-Saxons, which became the royal line of England. The third Saxon settlement, that of the East-Saxons, has no such definite date given to its foundation; but it certainly began not later than the first half of the sixth century. Like Sussex, it never extended itself far inland; but it derived some importance from its containing two of the great cities of Roman Britain. One was Camulodunum or Colchester; the other was London. But London, with its district of the Middle-Saxons, grew, by virtue of its admirable position, to a greatness which gave it a separate being. The city of ships, on its broad river, remained as a great prize to be striven for by every conqueror, rather than as a lasting and integral possession of any one of the English kingdoms.

The settlements of the Angles, who in course of time occupied a much larger part of the land to which they gave their name than was occupied by the Saxons, have quite another history from the kingdoms of which we have just spoken. In Kent, in Sussex, in Wessex, the chief who leads the settlement is himself the founder of the kingdom. In the case of Kent and Sussex, the kingdom never permanently outgrew the bounds of the earliest conquests. The boundaries of Wessex advanced and fell back and advanced again; but they advanced by the process of bringing fresh conquests, newly won from the Briton, under the rule of the already existing kingly house of Wessex. The Anglian kingdoms grew in another way. We know, in some cases at least, the names of their first kings; but those first kings do not appear as the first leaders of settlers from beyond sea. It would rather seem as if a crowd of small settlements, of the date and circumstances of whose foundation we can say nothing, each doubtless ruled by its own ealdorman or petty king, were gradually grouped together into several considerable kingdoms. It is perfectly possible, though there is no evidence for the belief, that some of

these original settlements may have actually been of earlier date than the landing of Cerdic, of Ælle, or of Hengest. What is certain is that these Anglian states do not appear as organized kingdoms till a later time than Kent, Sussex, and Wessex. The chief Anglian powers were four. The East-Angles occupied the land to the north of the East-Saxons, a land which the vast fen region to the west of it made in those times, if not insular, at least peninsular. North of the Humber arose two kingdoms, Bernicia and Deira, whose union at a later time formed the mighty realm of Northumberland, stretching from the Humber to the Forth. Ida, who in 547 gathered together a number of scattered Anglian settlements into the kingdom of Bernicia, is the one Anglian prince during the first stage of conquest who stands out with a personal being like that of the Saxon and Jutish founders. From his fortress on the basaltic rock of Bamburgh, overhanging the German Ocean, he ruled the eastern seaboard from Tees to Forth. Of the founder of the kingdom of Deira to the south of Bernicia we have no such clear mention, nor do we know when or by what means that kingdom won the possession which gave it its chief importance. This was the former capital of Roman Britain, *Eboracum, Eborac, or York*.^o Of the process of conquest in central England we know even less. We know absolutely nothing of the circumstances under which the land was won from the Briton. A crowd of Anglian tribes, which kept more or less of separate existence till a very late time, were gradually brought under the dominion of a single Anglian power. This power, as growing up on the British frontier, took the name of *Merce*, the men of the mark or border, and the name of *Mercia* gradually spread over all central England. The date of the beginning of the Mercian kingdom is fixed as late as 584. But this of course does not mean a fresh settlement from beyond sea, but simply the gathering together of several small settlements so as to form one considerable power. The boundaries of the true Mercian kingdom may be traced by the boundaries of the old diocese of Lichfield; but it could not have reached to anything like this extent so early as 584.

Here then we have, among a crowd of smaller states, a few kingdoms, seven or eight in number, which stand out prominently, and fill a place in the history of Britain. Among these again, a smaller number stand out at different times as aspiring, with more or less of success, to the general supremacy of the country. In all cases where a number of kindred but independent states lie near together, a supremacy of one kind or another is sure to come, either by force or by consent, to some one among the number, in which the rest are, more or less quickly, more or less thoroughly, merged. Thus, in modern Europe, France grew into Gaul, and Castile grew into Spain; thus in our own day Piedmont has grown into Italy, and Prussia has gone far towards growing into Germany. So in the end Wessex grew into England; but it was not till after many struggles, many ups and downs, many changes of frontier, that the house of Cerdic became the royal house over the whole land. Three, or at most four, of the greater Teutonic kingdoms in Britain became serious competitors for the general supremacy over all the settlements of the race. Kent, small in geographical extent, had the start in order of time, and was in many ways favoured by position. But any effective supremacy on the part of Kent belongs only to an early stage of English occupation; the powers among which the supremacy was really disputed were the great Saxon kingdom of Wessex, the great Anglian kingdom of Northumberland, formed by the union of Bernicia and Deira, and the Anglian kingdom of Mercia, which formed itself in the space between them. It would seem that, sometimes at least, a supremacy of some kind on the part of one kingdom over the whole or part of the rest was

formally acknowledged; and the chief so recognized by common consent was known as a *Bretwalda* or ruler of Britain.¹ Our knowledge on this subject hardly goes beyond establishing the fact that such a supremacy was sometimes acknowledged, without telling us anything in detail as to its nature, or as to the way in which it was obtained. It was not continuous; there were times when there was no *Bretwalda*. It fluctuated from kingdom to kingdom, according to the accidents of war, policy, or personal ability. The fact that such a supremacy existed from early times is chiefly important on account of what it afterwards grew into. The tradition of a supremacy vested in some one power clearly helped the West-Saxon kings in gathering all the Teutonic kingdoms of Britain into the one realm of England. It further combined with other influences in suggesting the doctrine of an imperial supremacy over the whole isle of Britain.

Process
of con-
quest.

Plate II.
[Britain
in 597].

The establishment of these kingdoms at the expense of the Britons forms the period of heathen conquest, which we may reckon at about a hundred and sixty years. In the course of that time, the English, at first established only on the eastern and part of the southern coast, made their way step by step to the western sea. At the end of this period the whole of Britain was very far from being conquered; indeed English conquest was very far from having reached its fullest extent; but the English had become the dominant race in South Britain. The Britons still kept a large part of the land; but they held it only in detached pieces. The English were the advancing people. The Britons could not at the utmost hope to do more than defend what they still kept. The work of conquest during this period was mainly the work of Wessex at one end and of the Northumbrian kingdoms at the other. Sussex, Kent, East-Anglia, each gave the English race a *Bretwalda*; but these powers, as well as Essex, were geographically cut off from any share in the conquest after the first stage of settlement. Wessex, on the other hand, whose later growth took another direction, pressed boldly into the heart of Britain. West-Saxon progress was indeed checked for a while by British resistance under the famous Arthur. The legendary renown which has gathered round Arthur's name ought not to wipe out the fact that he met Saxon Cerdic face to face, and by the rings of Badbury dealt him a blow which for a while made the English invader halt.² But from the middle of the sixth century West-Saxon advance is swift. In 552 the second stage begins with the taking of Old Sarum. Sixteen years later comes, doubtless not the first, but the first recorded, fight of Englishman against Englishman. The fight of Wibbandun (Wimbledon) made Surrey West-Saxon, and cut off Kent from all hope of further advance. In 571 the West-Saxon border, under the *Bretwalda* Ceawlin, stretched far beyond the Thames, as far north as the present Buckingham. Still no English conqueror had reached the sea between Britain and Ireland. From Dunbarton to the south coast of Devonshire, the British occupation of the western side of the island was still unbroken. *Aquæ Solis, Corinium, Glevum, Uriconium*, and greater than all, *Deva* on her promontory, were still British strongholds. They had not yet changed into Bath, Cirencester, Gloucester, Wroxeter, and Chester. The next object of the advancing English was to break this line, to reach the sea, and, if not wholly to subdue the British inhabitants of the west coast, at least to break their continuous power into fragments which might be more easily

¹ It may be, as Mr Kemble suggests, that the truer form is *Bryten-waldia*, and the truer meaning "wide ruler." But if so, it is true only etymologically. In the two or three places where the name is used, it is used, rightly or wrongly, to mean "ruler of Britain."

² Dr Guest has shown that "*Mons Badonicus*" is not Bath, or anywhere else but Badbury in Dorset.

overcome. In 577 Ceawlin took Bath, Gloucester, and Cirencester, and carried the West-Saxon border to the estuary of the Severn, the future Bristol Channel. The British dominion was thus split asunder. Wales and Strathclyde, to use the geographical names of a time a little later, still formed a continuous whole. But they were now cut off from all connexion with the Britons in the great south-western peninsula, the peninsula of West-Wales, from the northern Axe to the Land's End. To break through the line at another point, to seize *Deva* and to carry the West-Saxon arms to the north-western sea, was the next object. In this Ceawlin failed; but his expedition of 583 established a long strip of English territory along the Severn valley. Wessex thus seemed to be growing into the great power of central, as well as of southern, Britain. But the second great blow which was to cleave the British dominion into three, as it had been already cloven into two, was not to be dealt by Saxon hands. A great power had now grown up in the north. At various periods before and after the English conquest, things looked as if the supreme power was to be fixed in the northern lands, in the city by the Ouse and not in the city by the Thames. *Eboracum* had been in Roman days the capital of Britain. The once imperial city was now the head of a great realm, formed by the union of Bernicia and Deira under their conquering king Æthelfrith. In 603 a victory over the Scottish king Ægdan at Dægsanstan secured his power to the north. Some years later he broke through the line of unconquered British territory; he smote the Britons under the walls of *Deva*, and left those walls, like the walls of Anderida, desolate without an inhabitant. The English conquest of Britain, if not yet completed, was now assured. The British power, which five and twenty years before had stretched uninterruptedly along the whole west coast, was now broken into three parts. Through western and central Britain the boundaries were still very fluctuating. While Æthelfrith smote *Deva*, lands near to his own capital, the land of Elmet and Loidis, the modern Leeds, was still unconquered British ground. The dominion of Wessex north of the Thames and Avon had rather the character of an outlying territory stretching into a hostile land, than of the compact dominion which the West-Saxon kings held over Hampshire, Wiltshire, and Berkshire. Moreover the two great powers of the north and the south were now brought into rivalry and collision. Æthelfrith had done what Ceawlin had failed to do; and between Northumberland and Wessex a third great power had arisen, which in a few years was to show itself the equal of either. The West-Saxon had reached the western sea at one point; the Northumbrian had reached it at another point. But the greater part of the western conquests of both were to go to swell the Mercian power which had just come into being. And besides all this, a revolution had begun which was to work the greatest of all changes. The victory of Æthelfrith was the last great blow dealt by the heathen English to the Christian Britons. When it was dealt, Northumberland, Wessex, Mercia, Sussex, and East-Anglia were still heathen. But Kent and Essex had already embraced the gospel. York and Winchester still knew no worship but that of Woden; but the altars of Christ had already risen once more in Canterbury and London.

The time of heathen conquest thus ends with the first years of the seventh century. The introduction of Christianity among the English was so great a change, it gave so different a character to all the events that followed, that this would seem to be the most fitting point in our story to stop and attempt a picture of the general state of things in Teutonic Britain during the first century and a half after Teutonic conquest began. The introduction of a new religion did

Effects of not stop warfare, whether between Englishman and Briton or between Englishman and Englishman. It did not stop aggressive conquest at the cost of either kinsmen or strangers. But it so far humanized its new converts that warfare ceased to be exterminating. Conquest now meant political subjugation and, for a while, social degradation. It no longer meant the more frightful alternatives of death, flight, or personal slavery. The lands won by the English up to this date must be looked on as having become purely Teutonic. The Britons were swept away as nearly as a people can be swept away. The lands conquered after this time must be looked on as lands in which the dominant Teuton has largely assimilated his Celtic subjects. The process has gone on from that day to this, and it goes on still. Kent, the south-eastern peninsula, has been purely English for fourteen hundred years. Cornwall, the south-western peninsula, has become fully English, even in speech, only within the memory of a generation which has hardly passed away. Thus, in the hundred and fifty-eight years which passed between the landing of Hengest and the victory of Æthelfrith, a large part of Britain had received another language, another religion, another system of law. Old things had passed away; all things had become new. In the whole eastern part of the island, from the Forth to the English Channel, and through a great, though still somewhat undefined, central region, reaching at two points to the western seas, the Roman and the Briton had gone, and the Teuton had taken their place. The three Low-Dutch tribes brought with them their form of the common Teutonic language. Into that language a few Roman and a few British words crept from the beginning. British slaves, British women, brought in a few humble words of domestic life. A few of the great works of Roman civilization, such as the conquerors had never seen in their own land, struck them with awe and wonder. For these they had no names in their own tongue; they therefore kept their Latin names in the English tongue. The words *street*, *port*, *chester*, thus came into our language. Many of the great natural objects, most of the rivers, a few of the hills, kept their earlier names; so did a few great cities. With these few exceptions, the vocabulary of the tongue which our fathers brought with them remained untouched. It was enriched by a few new words to express new ideas, and that was all. Nothing happened till far later times to make any change in its character, its grammatical construction, its general stock of words. We brought with us our language, and with our language we brought with us the earliest monuments of its literature. We brought with us our English Iliad in the primæval Song of Beowulf; we brought with us our Homeric catalogue in the Song of the Traveller. Whether they were written or unwritten, whether they lived only in the memory or were graven with the primæval runes, those songs were the work of Englishmen in days before a rood of British soil had become England. Nor need we doubt that the deeds of Hengest and Cerdic had already been graven on the primæval beech,¹ while yet Englishmen knew no speech but English, and worshipped no god but Woden and his fellows. Before the Roman made his second appearance in this island, the national literature of Englishmen, the local literature of England, had begun.

We thus brought with us into Britain that form of the common Aryan speech which had grown up among the tribes of northern Germany. Wherever, during the first hundred and fifty years of the English settlement, the English arms reached, there the tongue of Rome and the tongue of Britain passed away. Their place was taken by

¹ *Beech and book* are the same word, just like the two senses of the Latin *liber*. *Write* is cognate with the High-Dutch *reissen*, just like *Gere* with *corde*.

the speech which, with the changes that fourteen hundred years have wrought in it, still abides the speech of England. It has changed, as all other languages have changed. It has, like all other languages, so changed that its older forms cannot now be understood without special study; but it has never lost its unbroken personal being. The English tongue has never been displaced by any other tongue, as the tongue of the Briton was displaced by the tongue of the English. It has lived on, spoken in different local forms in different parts of the land, changing from age to age, losing old inflexions, taking in new words; but it has changed simply as the nation itself has changed, without ceasing to be one and the same English nation; it has changed, as each man in the nation himself changes in his passage from childhood to old age, without ceasing to be the same personal being in old age which he was in childhood. And, with our form of the common Aryan language, we brought with us our form of another common Aryan possession, which still abides, also unchanged in its personal identity, never displaced to make way for any other system, but which has gone through even greater and more constant changes than our spoken language. We brought with us our own political and social system; that is, the form which the political and social system common to the whole Aryan family had taken among the tribes of northern Germany. A germ of political and social life was brought into Britain in the keels of Hengest, which, changing from generation to generation but never itself exchanged for any other system, borrowing from foreign sources but assimilating what it borrowed with its own essence, changing its outward shape but abiding untouched in its true substance, has lived and grown through fourteen hundred years into the law, the constitution, the social being, of England.

The earliest law or custom of England was the law or custom of the old homes of the English settlers, with such modifications as the settlement in a land beyond the sea could not fail to bring with it. These modifications, as a moment's thought will show, must have been considerable. A conquest by land need not involve any sudden change; it does not necessarily place the conqueror in any wholly new set of circumstances. It may well be a mere territorial advance, a mere addition of field to field, in which the last won territory does not call for any different treatment from the older territory immediately behind it. But a conquest by sea implies a breach of continuity; the old land is necessarily forsaken, and a fresh start has to be made in a new one. The political society of the old home may be reproduced in the new; but it is reproduced rather than continued, and it can hardly be reproduced without some measure of change. And a settlement made bit by bit, each step being won by hard fighting, such as was the English settlement in Britain, will be affected by all such influences as are likely to be strengthened by constant fighting for the possession of a new country. And in such a case, when the nation is an army in active service, when the chiefs of the nation are the leaders of that army, the influences which are most likely to be strengthened are those which tend in the direction of national unity. Or, what is almost the same thing, they are the influences which tend to strengthen the authority of the chiefs by whom the national unity is represented.

The political and social state of the Low-Dutch tribes at the time of their settlement in Britain was still essentially the primitive Teutonic democracy, the state of things described by Tacitus, and which still exists, modified of course in the lapse of ages, but untouched by any violent change, in some of the smaller and more primitive cantons of Switzerland. The family is at the root of everything. The *hide* of land, the portion supposed to be enough for the maintenance of a single family, is the lowest territorial unit