

## BOOK III.

### FROM THE INSURRECTION OF THE ENGLISH PEOPLE AGAINST THE NORMAN FAVOURITES OF KING EDWARD, TO THE BATTLE OF HASTINGS.

1048—1066.

Eustache of Boulogne, lands at Dover; his quarrel with the inhabitants—Patriotic resistance of Godwin—Grand armament of king Edward—Proscription of Godwin and his sons—Triumph of the Norman favourites—William, duke of Normandy—His origin and character—His visit to England—His ambitious projects—Landing of Godwin and his sons—Their entry into London—Terror and flight of the Norman favourites—Reconciliation of Godwin with king Edward—Death of Godwin—Death of Siward, chief of Northumberland—Talents and popularity of Harold, son of Godwin—Insurrection of the Northumbrians against Tosti—Banishment of Tosti—Hostility of the Romish church to the English people—Friendship between the Romish church and the duke of Normandy—Harold visits Normandy—He is imprisoned by the count de Ponthieu—His release—He is received at Rouen by duke William—Request made him by William—Harold's oath upon relics—His return to England—Death of king Edward—Election of Harold—Indignation of the duke of Normandy—Tosti persuades Harold of Norway to make a descent upon England—Message from William to Harold—William's negotiation with the Romish church—Temporal sovereignty of the church at this period—The dispute between William and Harold referred to the pope—Alexander II. decides in favour of William—Convocation of the states of Normandy—William baffles this opposition—Grand military preparations—Enrolment of men from all countries—William seeks to form allies—National animosity between the Normans and Britons—Conau, earl of Brittany, refuses his assistance—He is poisoned—Departure of the Norman fleet—Harold of Norway lands in England—Harold of England attacks the Norwegians—Rout of the Norwegians—Landing of the Norman army at Pevensey—Harold marches against the Normans—He forms an entrenchment seven miles from their camp—Message from William to Harold—Reply of the latter—State of the Anglo-Saxon army—Preparations of the two armies—Attack upon the Anglo-Saxon camp—Victory of the Normans—The body of Harold recognised by his mistress.

AMONG those who came from Normandy or France, to visit king Edward, was a certain Eustache, who on the other side of the channel bore the title of count de Boulogne. He held the hereditary government, under the suzerainty of the kings

of France, of the town of Boulogne and a small territory along the coast, and in token of his dignity of lord of a maritime country, when he was armed for war, wore in his helmet two long plumes of whalebone.<sup>1</sup> Eustache had just married Edward's sister, the widow of another Frenchman named Gualtier de Mantes.<sup>2</sup> The Saxon king's new brother-in-law sojourned with him for some time, with a numerous retinue. He found the palace filled with men born, like himself, in Gaul, and speaking its idiom, so that England appeared to him a conquered country, in which the Normans and French had the right to do anything they pleased. After having rested, on his return home, in the city of Canterbury, the count proceeded towards Dover; at about a mile from the town, he made his escort halt, quitted his travelling palfrey, and mounted the charger which one of his men led in his right hand;<sup>3</sup> he put on his coat of mail, and all his companions did the same. In this menacing attire they entered Dover.<sup>4</sup>

They insolently paraded the town, marking the best houses to pass the night in, and authoritatively established themselves in them. The inhabitants murmured; one of them had the courage to stop on the threshold one of the Frenchmen who was about to take up his quarters in his house. The foreigner drew his sword and wounded the Englishman, who hastily arming with his household, attacked and killed the aggressor. On hearing this, Eustache de Boulogne and his troop left their lodgings, remounted their horses, and besieging the house of the Englishman, murdered him, says the Saxon chronicle, before his own hearth.<sup>5</sup> They then went through the town, sword in hand, striking men and women, and crushing children under the feet of the horses.<sup>6</sup> They had not proceeded far before they met a body of armed citizens; and in the combat which took place, nineteen of the Boulognese were killed. The count fled with the remainder,

<sup>1</sup> See Willelm. Britonis Philippeid, *apud* Script. rer. Gallic. et Francic., xvii. 262.

<sup>2</sup> Walterus Medautinus. (Willelm. Malmesb., lib. ii. *ut sup.* 81.

<sup>3</sup> *Dextrarius, destrier.*

<sup>4</sup> Chron. Saxon., p. 163. Willelm. Malmesb., *ut sup.*

<sup>5</sup> Chron. Saxon., p. 162.

<sup>6</sup> Roger de Hoveden, *ut sup.* p. 441.

and not venturing to seek the harbour to embark, he turned back and hastened to Gloucester, where king Edward then resided with his Norman favourites.<sup>1</sup>

The king, say the chronicles, gave his peace to Eustache and his companions.<sup>2</sup> He believed, on the bare word of his brother-in-law, that all the blame lay with the citizens of Dover, and, violently enraged against them, he sent for Godwin, in whose government the town was included. "Go without delay," said Edward, "and chastise, by a military execution,<sup>3</sup> those who attack my relations with arms in their hands, and disturb the peace of the country." Less prompt to decide in favour of a foreigner against his countrymen, Godwin suggested that instead of exercising a blind vengeance upon the whole town, the magistrates should be cited, in legal form, to appear before the king and royal judges, to account for their conduct. "It is not right," said he to the king, "to condemn, without hearing them, men whom it is your duty to protect."<sup>4</sup>

Edward's fury, aggravated by the clamours of his courtiers and favourites, now turned wholly against the English chief, who himself, charged with disobedience and rebellion, was cited to appear before a great council convoked at Gloucester. Godwin at first was little moved by this accusation, thinking the king would soon be calmer, and that the other chiefs would do him justice.<sup>5</sup> But he soon learned that by means of the royal influence and the intrigues of the foreigners, the assembly had been corrupted, and that a sentence of banishment would be pronounced against himself and his sons. Both father and sons hereupon resolved to oppose their popularity to these machinations, and to make an appeal to the English against the foreign courtiers, although it was far from their intention, says the ancient chronicle, to offer any violence to their national king.<sup>6</sup>

Godwin raised a troop of volunteers in the country south of the Thames, the whole extent of which he governed. Harold, his eldest son, assembled a great number of men on

<sup>1</sup> Chron. Saxon. Fragm., *sub anno* MLII. *apud* Lye, *Glossar.* ii. *ad finem.*

<sup>2</sup> *Ib.*

<sup>3</sup> Mid unfritha. (Chron. Saxon., 163.)

<sup>4</sup> Willelm. Malmesb., *ut sup.*

<sup>5</sup> *Ib.*

<sup>6</sup> Chron. Saxon., 164.

the eastern coast, between the Thames and Boston Wash; his second son, Swen or Sweyn, engaged the inhabitants of the Severn and the Welsh frontier in this patriotic confederation. The three armies united near Gloucester, and demanded of the king, by messengers, that count Eustache and his companions, with some other Normans and Boulognese at the court, should be given up to the judgment of the nation. Edward made no answer to these requests, and sent an order to the two great chiefs of the northern and central provinces, Siward and Leofrik, both Danes by birth, to march southwest, with all the forces they could assemble. The inhabitants of Northumbria and Mercia, though they armed at the call of the two chiefs for the defence of the royal authority, did so with little ardour. Siward and Leofrik heard their soldiers murmur that it was an entire miscalculation to suppose that they would shed the blood of their countrymen for any foreign interest, or for Edward's favourites.<sup>1</sup>

Both chieftains saw the force of this; the national distinction between the Anglo-Saxons and the Anglo-Danes had become too slight for the old hatred of the two races to be again worked for the profit of the enemies of the country. The chiefs and warriors of the northern provinces refused positively to cross arms with the insurgents of the south; they proposed an armistice between the king and Godwin, and that their dispute should be investigated before an assembly held at London. Edward was compelled to yield; Godwin, who did not desire war for the sake of war, willingly consented; and on one side and the other, says the Saxon chronicle, they swore the peace of God and perfect friendship.<sup>2</sup> This was the formula of the time, but, on one side at least, these promises were insincere. The king availed himself of the interval before the meeting of the assembly, fixed for the autumnal equinox, to augment the number of his troops, while Godwin retired to the south-western provinces, and his band of volunteers, having neither pay nor quarters, returned to their families. Breaking his word, although indirectly, Edward proclaimed his ban for the levy of an army, south as well as north of the Thames.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Chron. Saxon. Fragm., *ut sup.* Roger de Hoveden, *ut sup.* p. 441.

<sup>2</sup> Chron. Saxon., p. 164.

<sup>3</sup> *Id. ib.* *Id.* Frag., *ut sup.*

This army, say the chroniclers, was the greatest that had been seen under the new reign.<sup>1</sup> The king gave the command of it to his foreign favourites, amongst whom in the first rank, figured a youthful son of his sister Goda and the Frenchman Gualtier de Mantes. Edward quartered his forces in and near London, so that the national council opened in the centre of a camp exposed to the influence of terror and of royal seduction. Godwin and his two sons were cited by this council, deliberating under compulsion, to absolve from their oaths and their attendance the few men who remained with them,<sup>2</sup> and to appear without escort and unarmed. They replied that they were ready to obey the first of these two orders, but that before appearing in the assembly alone and unprotected, they demanded the king's peace and hostages to guarantee their personal safety both coming and going.<sup>3</sup> Twice they repeated this demand, which the military array displayed in London fully justified on their part,<sup>4</sup> and twice they were met by a refusal, and the summons to appear without delay, with twelve compurgators to affirm their innocence on oath. They did not appear, and the great council declaring them contumacious, banished them, granting them only five days of peace to quit England with all their family.<sup>5</sup> Godwin, his wife Ghitha or Edith, and three of his sons, Sweyn, Tosti, and Gurth, proceeded to the eastern coast, whence they embarked for Flanders. Harold and his brother Leofwin went westward, to Brig-stow, now Bristol, and crossed the Irish sea. Before the expiration of the five days, and in contempt of the decree of the assembly, the king sent a troop of horse in pursuit of them, but the commander of the party, who was a Saxon, either could not or would not overtake them.<sup>6</sup>

The property of Godwin and his children was seized and confiscated. His daughter, the king's wife, was deprived of all her possessions in land, goods or money. It was not right, the foreign courtiers ironically said, that while the family of this woman was undergoing the evils of exile, she

<sup>1</sup> Chron. Sax., p. 164. Id. Frag., *ut sup.*

<sup>2</sup> Willelm. Malmesb., *ut sup.* lib. ii. 81.

<sup>3</sup> Chron. Saxon., p. 164.

<sup>4</sup> Willelm. Malmesb., *ut sup.*

<sup>5</sup> Chron. Saxon., p. 164.

<sup>6</sup> Id. Frag., *ut sup.* Roger de Hoveden, *ut sup.* p. 441.

herself should sleep upon down.<sup>1</sup> The weak-minded Edward went so far as to allow her to be confined in a cloister; the favourites maintained that she was his wife in name only, although she shared his bed, and he himself did not contradict this proposition, upon which his reputation for sanctity was partly founded.<sup>2</sup> The days which followed were days of rejoicing and high fortune for the foreigners, and Normandy furnished more governors than ever to England. The Normans gradually obtained there the same supremacy which the Danes had formerly achieved by the sword. A monk of Jumièges, named Robert, became archbishop of Canterbury; another Norman monk was made bishop of London; Saxon prelates and abbots were deposed, to make room for Frenchmen and pretended relations of king Edward on the mother's side;<sup>3</sup> the governments of Godwin and his sons became the property of men bearing foreign titles. One Eudes was made chief of the four counties of Devon, Somerset, Dorset, and Cornwall, and the son of Gualtier de Mantes, named Raulfe, had charge of Herefordshire and of the fortresses erected against the Welsh.<sup>4</sup>

A new guest from Normandy, the most considerable of all, now came with a numerous train to visit king Edward and the towns and castles of England;<sup>5</sup> this was William, duke of Normandy, bastard son of the last duke Robert, whose violent character had gained for him the surname of Robert the Devil. He was born to Robert by a young girl of Falaise, whom the duke saw one day on his return from hunting, by the side of a brook, washing linen with her companions. Her beauty made a great impression on Robert, who, wishing to have her for a mistress, sent, says the poetical chronicle,<sup>6</sup> one of his most discreet knights to make propositions to the family. The father at first treated the offer with disdain; but on reflection he went to consult one of his brothers, a hermit in the neighbouring forest, a man of great religious reputation,

<sup>1</sup> Willelm. Malmesb., *ut sup.* p. 82.

<sup>2</sup> Nuptam sibi rex hac arte tractabat, ut nec thoro amoverit, nec virili more cognoscerit. (*ib.* p. 80.)

<sup>3</sup> Chron. Saxon., p. 165.

<sup>4</sup> Roger de Hoveden, *ut sup.* p. 443. Willelm. Malmesb., *ut sup.* p. 81. Thom. Rudborne, *Hist. major. Winton.* Anglia Sacra, i. 240.

<sup>5</sup> Ingulf., *ut sup.* i. 65

<sup>6</sup> Benoit de St. Maure, *Chronique des ducs de Normandie*, ii. 555.

who replied that in all things it was fitting to do the will of the prince; the request was accordingly granted, says the poet, and the night and hour fixed. The name of the young Norman was Arlete, a corruption of the ancient Danish name Herleve; the duke Robert loved her tenderly, and the child he had by her was brought up with as much care as though he had been the son of a lawful wife.<sup>1</sup>

William was only seven years of age when his father was seized with a desire to make a pilgrimage on foot to Jerusalem, to obtain forgiveness for his sins. The Norman barons wished to prevent this, by representing to him that it would be unwell for them to remain without a chief. "By my faith," answered Robert, "I will not leave you without a lord. I have a little bastard, who will grow and be a gallant man, if it please God; and I am certain that he is my son. Receive him, then, as your lord; for I make him my heir, and give him from this time forth the whole duchy of Normandy."<sup>2</sup> The Norman barons did as the duke desired, "because," says the old chronicle,<sup>3</sup> "it suited them to do so." They swore fidelity to the child, placing their hands between his.<sup>4</sup> Duke Robert dying on his pilgrimage, several chiefs, and especially the relations of the ancient dukes, protested against this election, saying that a bastard could not command the sons of Normans.<sup>5</sup> The seigneurs of Bessin and the Cotentin, more turbulent than the rest, and still more proud of the purity of their descent, placed themselves at the head of the malcontents, and raised a numerous army; but they were defeated in a pitched battle at the Val des Dunes, near Caen, with the assistance of the king of France, who maintained the cause of the young duke from personal interest, and in order to exercise some influence over the affairs of the country. William, as he advanced in years, became more and more dear to his partisans; the day on which he for the first time assumed armour, and mounted his first war-horse without using the stirrup, was a day of rejoicing throughout Normandy. From his youth he occupied himself with military matters, and made

<sup>1</sup> Willelm. Malmesb., lib. iii. *ut sup.* p. 95.

<sup>2</sup> Benoit de St. Maure, *ut sup.* ii. 571. Chronique de St. Denis; Recueil des Historiens de la France et des Gaules, xi. 400.

<sup>3</sup> *Ib.*

<sup>4</sup> Dudo de Sancto Quintino, *ut sup.* p. 137.

<sup>5</sup> Willelm. Gemet., *ut sup.* p. 268.

war on his neighbours of Anjou and Brittany. He was passionately fond of fine horses, and had them brought, say his contemporaries, from Gascony, Auvergne, and Spain, selecting always those which had proper names by which their genealogy was distinguished.<sup>1</sup> The young son of Robert and Arlete was ambitious and vindictive to excess; he impoverished his father's family as much as he could, to enrich and elevate his relations on the mother's side. He often punished in the most cruel manner the jests in which the stain of his birth involved him, whether on the part of foreigners or of his countrymen. One day, while he was attacking the town of Alençon, the besieged cried from the walls: "*Hides! hides!*" and beat skins of leather, in allusion to the trade of William's tanner grandsire. The bastard immediately cut off the hands and feet of all the prisoners who were in his power, and made his slingers throw the amputated members into the town.<sup>2</sup>

While traversing England, the duke of Normandy might well have thought that he had not quitted his own duchy; Normans officered the fleet he found stationed at Dover; at Canterbury, Norman soldiers formed the garrison of a fortress built on the side of a hill;<sup>3</sup> other Normans came in every place to salute him, attired as captains or prelates. The favourites of Edward respectfully gathered round the chief of their native land, around their natural seigneur, to adopt the language of the period. William appeared in England more a king than Edward himself, and his ambitious mind was not slow in conceiving the hope of becoming such in reality at the death of this prince, so entirely the slave of Norman influence. Such thoughts could not fail to arise in the mind of the son of Robert; and yet, if the testimony of a contemporary is to be believed, he allowed nothing of it to appear, and never mentioned the subject to king Edward, believing that circumstances would adapt themselves to his ambitious purposes.<sup>4</sup> On his side, Edward, whether or not he guessed these projects, and contemplated the one day having his friend for successor, said nothing to him about it, but simply received him with

<sup>1</sup> Guill. Pictav. *apud* Script. rer. Norman., p. 181.

<sup>2</sup> Benoit de St. Maure, *ut sup.* iii. 93. Willelm. Gemet., *ut sup.* p. 270.

<sup>3</sup> Castellum in Dornbernæ Clivo. Roger de Hoved. *ut sup.* p. 441.

<sup>4</sup> Ingulf., *ut sup.* p. 65.



the greatest tenderness; gave him arms, horses, dogs, and falcons,<sup>1</sup> in a word, all sorts of presents and assurances of affection. Entirely absorbed in the remembrance of the country in which he had passed his youth, the king of England thus yielded to an oblivion of his own nation; but this nation did not forget itself, and those who still loved it soon found occasion to draw the king's attention towards them.

In the summer of the year 1052, Godwin set out from Bruges with several vessels, and landed on the coast of Kent.<sup>2</sup> He sent secret messengers to the Saxon garrison of the port of Hastings, in Suth-sex, or, by euphony, Sussex; other emissaries spread themselves north and south. On their solicitation, numbers of men fit to bear arms bound themselves by oath to the cause of the exiled chief, all vowing, says an old historian, to live and die with him.<sup>3</sup> The news of this movement reached the royal fleet, which was cruizing in the eastern sea, under the command of the Normans, Eudes and Raulfe; they went in pursuit of Godwin, who, finding his forces inferior, retreated before them, and took shelter in Pevensey Roads, while a tempest arrested the progress of the hostile ships. He then coasted along the south as far as the Isle of Wight, where his two sons, Harold and Leofwin, joined him from Ireland with a small army.<sup>4</sup>

The father and sons then together began to open communications with the inhabitants of the southern counties. Wherever they touched, the people supplied them with provisions, and bound themselves to their cause by oath, giving hostages for their fidelity;<sup>5</sup> all the royal soldiers, all the royal ships they found in the ports, deserted to them.<sup>6</sup> They sailed towards Sandwich, where they landed without any obstacle, notwithstanding Edward's proclamation, which ordered every inhabitant to stay the progress of the rebel chief. The king was then at London; he commanded all the warriors of the

<sup>1</sup> Roman de Rou, ii. 100.

<sup>2</sup> Chron. Saxon., p. 165. <sup>3</sup> Roger de Hoveden, *ut sup.* p. 442.

<sup>4</sup> Chron. Sax., *ut sup.* Roger de Hov., *ut sup.*

<sup>5</sup> Chron. Sax., p. 167.

<sup>6</sup> *Buthsecarlos omnes quos invenerant, secum legentes* (Roger de Hov., *ut sup.*). *Buthse-earl*, seaman, one of the crew of a vessel, from *bucca*, *buccia*, *bucea*, *buscita* (from the Saxon verb *bugan*, to bend) signifying a vessel of large dimensions; and *carl*, *ceorl*, strong man. (See Somner, *Glossarium*, *apud* Script. Anglic. Hist., ii. *ad finem.*)

west and north to that city. Few obeyed the order, and those who did, came too late.<sup>1</sup> Godwin's ships freely ascended the Thames, to the suburb of London, then called Southward (Southwark).<sup>2</sup> When the tide went down, they cast anchor, and secret emissaries dispersed among the inhabitants of London, who, following the example of the outports, swore to will whatever the enemies of foreign influence should will.<sup>3</sup> The vessels passed under London bridge without impediment, and landed a body of troops, who drew up on the banks of the river.

Before bending a single bow, the exiles<sup>4</sup> sent a respectful message to king Edward, entreating a revision of the sentence which had been pronounced against them. Edward at first refused; other messengers followed, and meantime Godwin could scarcely restrain the irritation of his friends. On his side, the king found the men who remained under his standard little inclined to draw the sword against their own countrymen.<sup>5</sup> His foreign favourites, who foresaw that peace among the Saxons would be their ruin, urged him to give the signal for battle; but necessity making him wiser than usual, he did not heed the Normans, and consented to abide by the decision of the English chiefs of the two parties. These met under the presidency of Stigand, bishop of East Anglia, and unanimously decided that the king should accept from Godwin and his sons the oath of peace, and hostages, giving them, on his part, equivalent guarantees.

On the first intimation of this reconciliation, the Norman and French courtiers hastily mounted their horses, and fled in every direction—some to a western fortress guarded by the Norman Osbert, surnamed Pentecoste; others to a northern castle, also commanded by a Norman. The Normans, Robert, archbishop of Canterbury, and William, bishop of London, left the city by the eastern gate, followed by some armed men of their nation, who, even while thus retreating, massacred several English children. They reached the coast, and embarked in fishing-boats. In his agitation and haste, the archbishop left in England his most precious effects, and

<sup>1</sup> Roger. de Hoved., *ut sup.* p. 442.

<sup>2</sup> The Saxons wrote it *Suth-weorde*.

<sup>3</sup> Roger de Hoved., *ut sup.*

<sup>4</sup> Elagati. (Sax. Chron. p. 167.)

<sup>5</sup> Roger de Hoveden, *ut sup.*

among other things the *pallium* which he had received from the Roman church, as the ensign of his dignity.<sup>1</sup>

A great council of the wise men was held out of London, and this time they assembled freely. All the chiefs and best men of the country, says the Saxon chronicle, were there. Godwin spoke in his own defence, and justified himself from every accusation before the king and the people;<sup>2</sup> his sons exculpated themselves in the same way. Their sentence of banishment was revoked, and another sentence, unanimously decreed, banished all the Normans from England, as enemies of the public peace, promoters of discord, and calumniators of the English to their king.<sup>3</sup> The youngest son of Godwin, called Ulfnoth, like his ancestor the cowherd of the west, was placed, with a son of Sweyn, in the hands of Edward, as hostages for the peace. Still, even at this moment, influenced by his fatal friendship for the foreigners, the king sent them both to the care of William duke of Normandy. Godwin's daughter left her convent, and returned to inhabit the palace; all the members of this popular family were reinstated in their honours, with one exception, Sweyn, who renounced them of his own will. He had formerly carried off a nun, and had committed a murder in a fit of passion; to satisfy justice, and appease his own remorse, he condemned himself to make a pilgrimage to Jerusalem barefooted. He rigorously accomplished this painful task; but a speedy death was the result.<sup>4</sup>

Bishop Stigand, who had presided over the assembly held for the great reconciliation, replaced the Norman Robert in the archbishopric of Canterbury; and, pending the negotiation for the *pallium* for himself from the Roman church, he officiated in that which Robert had left on his departure. The Normans, Hugh and Osbert Pentecoste, gave up the keys of the castles they held, and obtained safe conducts to leave England,<sup>5</sup> but on the request of the weak Edward, some exceptions were made to the decree of banishment pronounced against the whole body of foreigners. Raulfe, the son of

<sup>1</sup> Chron. Sax., *ut sup.*

<sup>2</sup> Sax. Chron., p. 168.

<sup>3</sup> Willelm. Malmesb. lib. ii. *ut sup.* p. 82.

<sup>4</sup> *Id. ib.* Roger de Hoveden, *ut sup.* p. 442. Eadmeri, *Hist. nova.* (Selden) p. 4.

<sup>5</sup> Roger de Hoveden, *ut sup.*

Gualtier de Mantes, and of the king's sister; Robert, surnamed the Dragon, and his son-in-law, Richard Fitz-Scrob; Onfroy, the equerry of the palace; Onfroy, surnamed Pied-de-Guai, and several others for whom the king entertained a personal friendship, or who had taken little part in the late troubles, obtained the privilege of inhabiting England, and of retaining their offices.<sup>1</sup> William, bishop of London, was also recalled some time after, and re-established in his see. A Fleming, named Herman, remained bishop of Wilton. Godwin opposed with all his might this tolerance, so contrary to the public feelings,<sup>2</sup> but his voice did not prevail, because too many people wished to conciliate the king, and thus succeed to the credit of the foreign courtiers. The result showed which of these were the best politicians, the court people or the austere Godwin.<sup>3</sup>

It is difficult exactly to estimate the degree of the sincerity of king Edward in his return to the national interest, and his reconciliation with the family of Godwin. Surrounded by his countrymen, he perhaps thought himself enslaved, and regarded his obedience to the wishes of the nation that had made him king as a constraint. His ulterior relations with the duke of Normandy, his private conferences with the Normans who remained about his person, are the secrets of this history. All that the chronicles of the time say is, that an apparent friendship existed between the king and his father-in-law, and that, at the same time, Godwin was utterly detested in Normandy. The foreigners whom his return had deprived of their places and honours, those to whom the facile and brilliant career of courtier to the king of England was now closed, never named Godwin without calling him traitor, enemy of his king, murderer of the young Alfred.

This last accusation was the most accredited, and it followed the Saxon chief to the hour of his death. One day, at the table of Edward, he suddenly fell fainting, and upon this incident was founded a story altogether romantic and doubtful, though repeated by several historians. They relate that one of his servants, while pouring him out a cup of wine, stumbled

<sup>1</sup> Roger de Hoveden, *ut sup.*

<sup>2</sup> Ranulf Higden, *Polychron, apud Rerum Anglic. Script.*, iii. 281.

<sup>3</sup> Roger de Hov., *ut sup.* Gervasii, *Acta Pontif. Cantuar. apud Script.*, *ut sup.* ii. col. 1051. Ranulf Higden, *ut sup.*

with one foot, but stayed his fall with the other. "Well," said Godwin to the king, smiling, "the brother has come to assist the brother." "Ay," answered Edward, casting a significant look on the Saxon chief, "brother needs brother, and would to God mine still lived!" "O king," exclaimed Godwin, "why is it that, on the slightest recollection of your brother, you always look so angrily on me? If I contributed even indirectly to his death, may the God of heaven grant that this piece of bread may choke me!"<sup>1</sup> Godwin put the bread in his mouth, say the authors who relate this anecdote, and was immediately strangled. The truth is, that his death was not so sudden; that falling from his seat, and carried out by his two sons, Tosti and Gurth, he expired five days after.<sup>2</sup> In general, the account of these events varies, according as the writer is of Norman or English race. "I ever see before me two roads, two opposite versions," says an historian of less than a century later; "I warn my readers of the peril in which I find myself."<sup>3</sup>

Shortly after the death of Godwin, died Sig-ward or Siward, the chief of Northumberland, who had at first followed the royal party against Godwin, but subsequently voted for peace, and the expulsion of the foreign favourites. He was a Dane by birth, and the population of the same origin, whom he ruled, gave him the title of Siward-Digr, Siward the Strong;<sup>4</sup> a rock of granite was long shown, which he had, it was said, split with one blow of an axe.<sup>5</sup> Attacked by dysentery, and feeling his end approach: "Raise me," said he to those who surrounded him; "let me die like a soldier, and not huddled together like a cow; put me on my coat of mail, place my helmet on my head, my shield on my left arm and my gilt axe in my right hand, that I may expire in arms."<sup>6</sup> Siward left one son, named Waltheof, too young as yet to succeed to his government, which was given to Tosti, Godwin's third son. Harold, who was the eldest, succeeded his

<sup>1</sup> Henrici Huntind., lib. vi. *ut sup.* p. 306. Willelm. Malmesb., lib. ii. *ut sup.* p. 81.

<sup>2</sup> Roger de Hoveden, *ut sup.* p. 443.

<sup>3</sup> Willelm. Malmesb., *ut sup.*

<sup>4</sup> Origo et Gesta Sivarði regis, *apud* Script. rer. Danic., iii. 288.

<sup>5</sup> *Id. ib.* 292.

<sup>6</sup> Henric. Huntind., *ut sup.* Ranulf Higden, lib. vi. *ut sup.* p. 281. Bromton, *ut sup.* p. 946.

father in the government of all the country south of the Thames, and transferred to Alfgar, son of Leofrik, governor of Mercia, the administration of the eastern provinces, which he had previously governed.<sup>1</sup>

Harold was now, in power and military talents, the first man of his time; he drove back within their ancient limits the Welsh, who at this time made several incursions into England, encouraged by the incapacity of the Frenchman Raulfe, Edward's nephew, who commanded the foreign garrison at Hereford. Raulfe showed little vigilance in guarding a country which was not his own; or if, in virtue of his power as chief, he called the Saxons to arms, it was to exercise them, against their will, in the warfare of the continent, and make them fight on horseback, contrary to the custom of their nation.<sup>2</sup> The English, embarrassed by their horses, and abandoned by their general, who fled with his Normans at the first peril, could not resist the Welsh; the vicinity of Hereford was occupied, and the town itself pillaged. It was then that Harold came from the south of England; he drove the Cambrians beyond their frontiers, and compelled them to swear that they would never again pass them, and to receive a law that every man of their nation found in arms east of the entrenchment of Offa, should have the right hand cut off. It would appear that the Saxons, on their part, constructed a similar entrenchment, and that the space between the two became a kind of neutral ground for the traders of both nations. The antiquarians imagine that they can still distinguish the traces of this double line of defence, and upon the heights several remains of ancient fortified posts, established by the Britons on the west, and by the English on the east.<sup>3</sup>

Whilst Harold was thus increasing his fame and his popularity with the southern Anglo-Saxons, his brother Tosti was far from acquiring the love of the Anglo-Danes of the north. Tosti, although a Dane by the mother's side, from a false national pride treated those whom he ruled more as subjects than as citizens voluntarily combined together, and made them feel the yoke of a conqueror rather than the authority of a

<sup>1</sup> Roger de Hoveden, *ut sup.* Ingulf, *ut sup.* p. 66.

<sup>2</sup> Roger de Hoveden, *ut sup.* p. 443.

<sup>3</sup> Wats-Dyke. See Pennant's *Tour in Wales*.

chief. He violated their hereditary customs at will, levied immense taxes, and put to death those who had offended him, without any trial. After several years of oppression, the patience of the Northumbrians became exhausted, and a troop of insurgents, led by two men of distinction in the country, suddenly appeared at the gates of York, the residence of Tosti. The chief fled, but his officers and ministers, Saxons and Danes, were put to death in great numbers.<sup>1</sup>

The insurgents seized the arsenal and the treasure of the province; then, assembling a great council, they declared the son of Godwin deprived of his charge, and outlawed. Morkar, one of the sons of the Alfgar who, on the death of Leofrik his father, had become chief of all Mercia, was elected to succeed Tosti. The son of Alfgar proceeded to York, took the command of the Northumbrian army, and drove Tosti towards the south. The army advanced on the territory of Mercia, as far as the town of Northampton, and many of the inhabitants of the district joined it. Edwin, the brother of Morkar, who held a command on the Welsh frontier, levied, in aid of his brother, some troops in his province, and even a body of Cambrians, induced by the promise of pay, and partly perhaps by the desire to satisfy their national hatred in fighting against Saxons, even though under a Saxon banner.<sup>2</sup>

On the news of this great movement, king Edward sent Harold, with the warriors of the south and east, to meet the insurgents. Family pride wounded in the person of a brother, joined to the natural aversion of the powerful against any energetic act of popular independence, seemed calculated to render Harold a pitiless enemy of the population which had expelled Tosti, and the chief whom it had elected. But the son of Godwin showed himself superior to such vulgar influences, and before drawing the sword on his countrymen, he proposed to the Northumbrians a conference of peace. The latter set forth their grievances, and the grounds of their insurrection. Harold endeavoured to exculpate his brother, and promised in the name of Tosti better conduct for the future, if the people of Northumberland would pardon and again receive him; but the Northumbrians unanimously protested against any reconcilia-

<sup>1</sup> Roger de Hoveden, *ut sup.* p. 446.

<sup>2</sup> Chron. Sax., p. 171. Roger de Hoved., *ut sup.*

tion with him who had so tyrannized over them.<sup>1</sup> "We were born free," said they, "and brought up free; a haughty chief is insupportable to us, for we have learned from our ancestors to live free or to die." They charged Harold himself to bear their answer to the king; Harold, preferring justice and the peace of the country, to the interest of his own brother,<sup>2</sup> went to Edward; and it was he also who, on his return, swore to the Northumbrians, and subscribed with his hand, the peace which the king granted them in sanctioning the expulsion of Tosti and the election of the son of Alfgar.<sup>3</sup> Tosti, enraged with the king and with his countrymen who thus abandoned him, and more especially with his brother, whom he deemed bound to defend him, right or wrong, quitted England, hatred deep in his heart, and took up his residence with the count of Flanders, whose daughter he had married.

Since the kingdom had been freed from the dominion of the Danes, the law instituted by king Knut for the annual tribute called Peter's pence had undergone the same fate with the other laws decreed by a foreign power. The public authority obliged no one to observe it, and Rome only received the voluntary offerings and gifts of individual devotion. Accordingly, the ancient friendship of the Roman church for the English nation rapidly declined. Injurious reflections, couched in mystic language, were made upon this nation and its king in the halls of St. Giovanni Latran;<sup>4</sup> the Saxon bishops were accused of simony,<sup>5</sup> that is, of buying their sees for money, a reproach of which great use was made against others by the court of Rome, and which the court of Rome itself frequently incurred, accustomed as it was, in the language of a contemporary proverb, to sell everything.<sup>6</sup> The archbishop of York, Eldred, underwent the first attack. He went to the eternal city to solicit the pallium, the usual token of the high catholic prelacy, as the purple mantles transmitted by the Cæsars were the signs of royalty with the vassal kings of ancient Rome. The Roman priests refused the archiepisco-

<sup>1</sup> Roger de Hoveden, *ut sup.*      <sup>2</sup> Willelm. Malmesb., *ut sup.* p. 83.

<sup>3</sup> Chron. Saxon., p. 171.

<sup>4</sup> Membra mali capitis (Alexandri papæ, *epist. apud Labbæi, concilia, ix.* 1121.)

<sup>5</sup> Willelm. Malmesb., *ut sup.* p. 204.

<sup>6</sup> Ranulf. Higden, *ut sup.* p. 280.



pal mantle to Eldred; but a Saxon chief who accompanied him threatened, in reprisal, to prevent any money being sent to the apostolic see,<sup>1</sup> and the Romans yielded, retaining in their hearts deep anger at having been constrained to yield, and an eager desire for revenge.

The Norman Robert de Jumièges, expelled by the English patriots from the see of Canterbury, now proceeded to Rome, to complain that the sacred character had been violated in his person; he denounced as an usurper and an intruder, the Saxon Stigand, whom the popular voice had elevated to his place. The pontiff and the Roman cardinals listened favourably to his complaints; they declared it a crime in the Saxon prelate to have assumed the pallium which the Norman had abandoned in his flight; and the complainant returned to Normandy with papal letters which declared him legitimate archbishop of Canterbury.<sup>2</sup> Stigand, the elected of the English, seeing the danger of not being acknowledged at Rome, meanwhile opened negotiations, and addressed to the reigning pope a demand for the pallium; but a circumstance, impossible to foresee, occasioned other embarrassing difficulties to arise out of this demand. At the time it reached the pontifical court, the papacy was in the hands of a man chosen by the principal Roman families, against the will of the king of Germany, who, in virtue of the title of Cæsar, transmitted to him by the Frank emperors, asserted that no sovereign pontiff could be created without his consent.

This pope was Benedict, the tenth of that name: disposed to be indulgent, because his power was insecure and he needed friends, he granted the pallium to archbishop Stigand. But an army advancing from beyond the mountains, soon enforced the election of a new pope, who, having expelled Benedict, assumed, without any scruple, the pontifical ornaments abandoned by the defeated pontiff, degraded him, excommunicated him, and annulled all his acts. Stigand thus found himself once more without a pallium, and charged, in the eye of the papal power, with the crime of usurpation, and with another, and still greater crime, that of having sought the good graces of

<sup>1</sup> Willelm. Malmesb., *ut sup.* p. 271.

<sup>2</sup> Ranulf Higden, *ut sup.* Willelm. Malmesb., *ut sup.*

an excommunicated anti-pope.<sup>1</sup> The journey from Canterbury to Rome was at this time one of great difficulty; Stigand was in no haste to justify himself before the successful rival of Benedict X., and the old ferment of hatred against the English became more violent than ever.<sup>2</sup>

Another incident furnished the Romans with the means of associating in their hatred the desire of vengeance, which the so-called treason of Godwin had excited in many of the Normans, and the ambitious projects of duke William. There was at the court of Normandy a monk named Lanfranc, a Lombard by origin, famous in the Christian world for his knowledge of jurisprudence, and for works devoted to the defence of catholic orthodoxy; this man, whom duke William cherished as one of his most useful councillors, fell into disgrace for having blamed the Norman duke's marriage with Matilda, daughter of Baldwin, count of Flanders, his relation in one of the degrees prohibited by the church. Nicholas II., successor to the anti-pope Benedict, obstinately refused to acknowledge and sanction this union; and it was with him that the Lombard monk, banished from his lord's court, took refuge. But far from complaining of the duke of Normandy, Lanfranc respectfully pleaded before the sovereign pontiff in favour of the marriage, of which he himself had before not approved.<sup>3</sup> By dint of intreaties and great address, he obtained a dispensation in form, and for this signal service was received by the duke with greater friendship than before. He became the soul of his councils and his plenipotentiary at the court of Rome. The respective pretensions of the Romish clergy and of the duke of Normandy over England, the possibility of giving effect to them, now became, it would appear, the object of serious negotiations. An armed invasion was not perhaps yet thought of, but the relationship of William to Edward seemed a great means of success, and, at the same time, an incontestable claim in the eyes of the Romans, who favoured throughout Europe the maxims of hereditary royalty against the practice of election.<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *Anglia Sacra*, i. 791.

<sup>2</sup> *Ingulf.*, *ut sup.* p. 66.

<sup>3</sup> *Vita Lanfranci*, *apud* Script. rer. Gallic. et Francicarum, xiv. 31.

<sup>4</sup> *Mabillon, Annales Benedictini*, iv. 528.

For two years internal peace had reigned in England without interruption. The animosity of king Edward to the sons of Godwin disappeared from want of aliment, and from the habit of constantly being with them. Harold, the new chief of this popular family, fully rendered to the king that respect and deferential submission of which he was so tenacious. Some ancient histories tell us that Edward loved and treated him as his own son,<sup>1</sup> but, at all events, he did not feel towards him that aversion mingled with fear with which Godwin had ever inspired him; and he had now no longer any pretext for retaining, as guarantees against the son, the two hostages whom he had received from the father. It will be remembered that these hostages had been confided by the suspicious Edward to the care of the duke of Normandy. They had, for more than ten years, been far from their country, in a sort of captivity. Towards the end of the year 1065, Harold, their brother and their uncle, deeming the moment favourable for obtaining their deliverance, asked permission of the king to go and demand them in his name, and bring them out of exile. Without showing any repugnance to release the hostages, Edward appeared greatly alarmed at the project which Harold had formed of going in person to Normandy. "I will not compel you to stay," said he; "but if you go, it will be without my consent; for your journey will certainly bring some evil upon yourself and upon your country. I know duke William and his crafty mind; he hates you, and will grant you nothing unless he gain greatly by it; the only way safely to obtain the hostages from him were to send some one else."<sup>2</sup>

The brave and confiding Saxon did not adopt this advice; he departed on his journey, as on a party of pleasure, surrounded by gay companions, with his falcon on his wrist and his hounds running before him.<sup>3</sup> He sailed from one of the ports of Sussex. Contrary winds drove his two vessels from their track towards the mouth of the Somme, upon the territory of Guy, count de Ponthieu. It was the custom of this maritime district, as of many others in the middle ages,

<sup>1</sup> Saga of Harold Hardrada, cap. lxxvii. Snorre's Heimskringla, iii. 143.

<sup>2</sup> Chronique de Normandie; Rec. des Hist. de France, xiii. 223.—Roman de Rou, ii. 108.—Eadmer, *ut sup.* i. p. 4.

<sup>3</sup> See the Bayeux Tapestry.

that every stranger thrown on the coast by tempest, instead of being humanely succoured, was imprisoned and put to ransom. Harold and his companions were subjected to this rigorous law; after being despoiled of all their more valuable property, they were thrown by the lord of the territory into his fortress of Belrain, now Beaurain, near Montreuil.<sup>1</sup>

To escape from the wearisomeness of a protracted captivity, the Saxon declared himself the bearer of a message from the king of England to the duke of Normandy, and sent to require William to obtain his release, that he might come to him. William did not hesitate, and demanded from his neighbour, the count de Ponthieu, the liberty of the captive, at first menacingly, and with no mention of ransom. The count de Ponthieu was deaf to the threats, and only yielded to the offer of a large sum of money and a fine estate upon the river Eaume.<sup>2</sup> Harold proceeded to Rouen, and the bastard of Normandy had the satisfaction of having in his power the son of the greatest enemy of the Normans, one of the chiefs of the national league which had banished from England the friends and relations of William, the upholders of his pretensions to the English crown.<sup>3</sup> Duke William received the Saxon chief with great honours and an appearance of frank cordiality: he told him that the two hostages were free on his request alone, that he could immediately return with them; but that as a courteous guest he ought not to depart so abruptly, but at least remain some days to see the towns and festivals of the country. Harold went from town to town, from castle to castle, and with his young companions took part in all the military sports. The duke created them knights, that is to say, members of the high Norman militia, a kind of warlike brotherhood, into which every rich man who devoted himself to arms, was introduced under the auspices of an associate, who, with great ceremony, gave him a sword, a baldric plated with silver, and a bannered lance. The Saxon warriors received from their godfather in chivalry presents of fine weapons and valuable horses.<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Roman de Rou, ii. 110. Eadmer, *ut sup.* p. 5.

<sup>2</sup> Chron. de Nor., *ut sup.*

<sup>3</sup> Matth. Paris. i. 1. Henric. Huntind., lib. vi. *ut sup.* p. 366.

<sup>4</sup> Roman de Rou, ii. 113. Guill. Pictav., *ut sup.* p. 191. Bayeux Tapestry.

William then proposed to him, by way of trying their new spurs, to follow him in an expedition he had undertaken against his neighbours of Brittany. Since the treaty of St. Clair-sur-Epte, each new duke of Normandy had attempted to give effect to the claim of suzerainty which Charles the Simple had ceded to Roll; the result had been continual wars and a national enmity between these two states, separated only by the little river Coësnon.

Harold and his friends, foolishly tenacious of acquiring a reputation for courage among the Normans, did for their host, at the expense of the Bretons, deeds of valour which were one day to cost themselves and their country dear. The son of Godwin, robust and active, saved at the passage of Coësnon several soldiers who were perishing in the quicksands. He and William, so long as the war lasted, had but one tent and one table.<sup>1</sup> On their return, they rode side by side, enlivening the way with friendly conversation,<sup>2</sup> which one day the duke turned upon his youthful friendship with king Edward: "Edward and I," said he to the Saxon, "lived under the same roof, like two brothers; he promised me if ever he became king of England, to make me heir to his kingdom; Harold, if thou wouldst aid me in realising this promise, be sure that, if I obtain the kingdom, whatever thou askest thou shalt have."<sup>3</sup> Harold, taken by surprise at the excess of this unexpected confidence, could not help answering it by some vague words of compliance, whereupon William continued: "Since thou consentest to serve me, thou must engage to fortify Dover castle, to dig a well there of fresh water, and deliver it up, when the time comes, to my people; thou must also give thy sister in marriage to one of my barons, and thyself marry my daughter Adeliza; moreover, on thy departure, thou must leave me, as guarantee for thy promise, one of the two hostages thou reclaimest, and I will restore him to thee in England when I come there as king." Harold felt at these words all the peril in which he himself stood, and in which he had unconsciously involved his two young relations. To escape from the more pressing embar-

<sup>1</sup> Guill. Pictav., *ut sup.*

<sup>2</sup> Peter Langtoft's *Chronicle*, improved by Robert de Bruce, p. 68.

<sup>3</sup> Eadmer, *ut sup.* p. 5. Chron. de Normandie, *ut sup.* Guill. Pictav., *ut sup.*

rassment, he acquiesced in word to all the demands of the Norman;<sup>1</sup> and he who had twice taken up arms to drive foreigners from his country, promised to deliver to a foreigner the principal fortress of that country, with no intention, indeed, of fulfilling this unworthy engagement, thinking to purchase, by a falsehood, his safety and his repose. William did not pursue the conversation further; but he did not long leave the Saxon at rest on the point.

On arriving at the castle of Bayeux, duke William held his court, and thither convoked the great council of the high barons of Normandy. According to the old histories, on the eve of the day fixed for the assembly, William collected from the churches of the town and neighbourhood all the relics they possessed. Bones taken from their shrines, and the entire bodies of saints were laid, by his order, in a large tub or trough, which was placed, covered with rich cloth of gold, in the council-hall.<sup>2</sup> When the duke was seated on his throne of ceremony, crowned with a worked circlet, holding in his hand a drawn sword, and surrounded by a crowd of Norman lords, amongst whom was the Saxon, two small reliquaries were brought and placed upon the golden cloth which covered and concealed the larger box of relics. William then said: "Harold, I require thee, before this noble assembly, to confirm, by oath, the promises thou hast made to me; namely, to aid me to obtain the kingdom of England after the death of king Edward, to marry my daughter Adeliza, and to send thy sister, that I may wed her to one of my people."<sup>3</sup> The Englishman thus a second time taken by surprise, and not venturing to deny his own words, approached the two reliquaries, extended his hand over them, and swore to execute, as far as lay in his power, his agreement with the duke, if he lived and God aided him. All the assembly repeated, *God aid him!*<sup>4</sup> Then William made a sign; the cloth of gold was raised, and the bones and sacred bodies revealed which filled the box to the brim, and upon which the son of Godwin had sworn, without suspecting their

<sup>1</sup> Eadmer, *ut sup.*

<sup>2</sup> Chron. de Normandie, *ut sup.* Roman de Rou, ii. 114.

<sup>3</sup> Roman de Rou, ii. 114. Eadmer, *ut sup.* p. 5. Guill. Pictav., *ut sup.* 191.

<sup>4</sup> *Id. ib.*—Bayeux Tapestry.

presence. It is said, that at this sight he shuddered and changed countenance, terrified at having made so formidable an oath.<sup>1</sup> Shortly afterwards Harold departed, taking his nephew with him, but, much against his inclination, leaving his younger brother Ulfnoth in the hands of the duke of Normandy. William accompanied him to the seaside, and made him fresh presents, delighted at having surprised the man the most capable of impeding his projects, into a solemn promise, backed by a terrible oath, to serve and aid him.<sup>2</sup>

When Harold, on his return home, presented himself to king Edward, and recounted all that had passed between himself and duke William, the king became pensive, and said: "Did I not warn thee that I knew this William, and that thy journey would bring great evils upon thyself and upon thy nation? Heaven grant that these evils happen not in my time!"<sup>3</sup> These words and this mournful expression would seem to prove that Edward had really, in the days of his youth and heedlessness, made the rash promise to a foreigner, of a royalty that did not belong to him. It is not known whether, subsequent to his accession, he had by any expressions nourished William's ambitious hopes; but, in default of specific words, his constant friendship for the Norman had, with the latter, supplied the place of positive assurances, and given grounds for believing him still favourable to his views.

Whatever might before have been the secret negotiations of the duke of Normandy with the Roman church, henceforward there was afforded them a fixed basis, a distinct direction. An oath sworn upon relics, however absurd the oath might have been, called, if it were violated, for the vengeance of the church; and in such a case, in the opinion of the period, the church struck legitimately. Whether from a secret presentiment of the perils with which England was threatened by the spirit of ecclesiastical revenge, combined with the ambition of the Normans, or from a vague impression of superstitious terror, a fearful depression came over the English nation. Gloomy reports were spread from mouth to

<sup>1</sup> *Id. ib.* Chron. de Normandie, *ut sup.*

<sup>2</sup> Guill. Pictav., *ut sup.* 192. Eadmer, *ut sup.*

<sup>3</sup> Eadmer, *ut sup.* Roger de Hoveden, *ut sup.* 449.

mouth; fears and alarms spread abroad, without any positive cause for alarm; predictions were dug up from the graves of the saints of the old time. One of these prophesied calamities such as the Saxons had never experienced since their departure from the banks of the Elbe;<sup>1</sup> another announced the invasion of a people from France, who would subject the English people, and abase their glory in the dust for ever.<sup>2</sup> All these rumours, hitherto unheeded or unknown, perhaps indeed purposely forged at the time, were now thoroughly credited, and kept every mind in the expectation of some vast and inevitable evil.

The health of king Edward, a man of naturally weak constitution, and who had become more alive, as it would appear, to the destiny of his country, declined rapidly after these events. He could not conceal from himself that his love for foreigners was the sole cause of the peril which terrified England; his mind was thus still more overwhelmed than was even that of the people. In order to drown these thoughts, and perhaps, also, the remorse which beset him, he occupied himself wholly with religious exercises. He made great donations to the churches and monasteries; and his last hours came upon him amidst this mournful and inactive life. Upon his death-bed he was entirely absorbed in his melancholy forebodings; he had frightful visions, and, in his melancholy ecstasies, the menacing passages of the Bible recurred involuntarily, and in a confused manner, to his mind. "The Lord has bent his bow," he would exclaim, "the Lord has prepared his sword; he brandishes it like unto a warrior; his anger is manifested in steel and flame."<sup>3</sup> These words froze with horror those who surrounded the king's bed;<sup>4</sup> but the archbishop of Canterbury, Stigand, could not refrain from a smile of contempt at men who trembled at the dreams of a sick old man.<sup>5</sup>

However weak the mind of the aged Edward, he had the

<sup>1</sup> Joh. de Fordun, *Scoti-chronicon*, lib. iv. cap. xxxvi. p. 349. (Hearne.)

<sup>2</sup> Joh. Bromton. *Chron. ut sup.* col. 909. Osbernus, *Vita S. Dunstani*; *Anglia Sacra*, ii. 118.

<sup>3</sup> Ailred. Rieval. *de vita Edwardi Confess. apud Hist. Angl. Script.*, i. col. 400.

<sup>4</sup> Robert of Gloucester's *Chronicle*, p. 350, 2.

<sup>5</sup> Ailred, *ut sup.* Willelm. Malmesb., lib. ii. *ut sup.* 93.



courage, before he expired, to declare to the chiefs who consulted him as to the choice of his successor, that in his opinion the man worthy to reign was Harold, son of Godwin.<sup>1</sup> In pronouncing the name of Harold, under the circumstances, the king showed himself superior to his habitual prejudices, and even to the ambition of advancing his own family; for there was then in England a grandson of Edmund Ironsides, born in Hungary, where his father had taken refuge at the time of the Danish proscriptions. This young man, whose name was Edgar, had neither talent nor acquired glory, and having passed his childhood in a foreign country, could hardly speak the Saxon tongue.<sup>2</sup> Such a candidate could not compete in popularity with the brave and rich Harold, the destroyer of foreign power.<sup>3</sup> Harold was the man most capable of encountering the dangers which seemed to menace the country; and even had the dying king not designated him to the choice of the other chiefs, his name would have been pronounced by every mouth.<sup>4</sup> He was elected the day after the funeral of Edward, and consecrated by archbishop Stigand, whom the Roman church, as we have seen, persisted in not acknowledging.<sup>5</sup> The grandson of the cowherd, Ulfnoth, showed himself, from the day of his accession, just, wise, affable, active for the good of his country, not sparing himself, says an old historian, any fatigue by land or by sea.<sup>6</sup>

Much anxious care was needed on his part to overcome the public discouragement which displayed itself in different ways. The appearance of a comet, visible in England for nearly a month, produced upon every mind an extraordinary impression of wonder and fear. The people collected in the streets and public places of the towns and villages, to contemplate this phenomenon, which they regarded as a confirmation of the national forebodings. A monk of Malmesbury, who studied astronomy, composed upon this comet a sort of

<sup>1</sup> Chron. Sax., p. 172. Eadmer, *ut sup.* Roger de Hoveden, *ut sup.* p. 440.

<sup>2</sup> Pontanus, *Rerum Danicarum hist.*, lib. v. 183. (Amsterdam, 1651.)

<sup>3</sup> Orderic. Vitalis, *Hist. Ecclesiast. apud Script. rer. Normann.*, p. 402.

<sup>4</sup> Comes Haroldus unanimi omnium consensu in regem eligitur, quia non erat eo prudentior in terra, armis magis strenuus, legum terræ sagacior, in omni genere probitatis cultior. (Vita Haroldi; Chron. Anglo-Normann. ii. 243.)

<sup>5</sup> Bayeux Tapestry. Guill. Pictav., *ut sup.* p. 196. Orderic. Vital., *ut sup.*

<sup>6</sup> Roger de Hoveden, *ut sup.* Willelm. Malmesb., *ut sup.*

poetical declamation, in which were these words: "Thou hast, then, returned at length, thou who wilt cause so many mothers to weep! Many years have I seen thee shine; but thou seemest to me more terrible now, that thou announcest the ruin of my country."<sup>1</sup>

The commencement of the new reign was marked by a complete return to the national customs abandoned under the preceding reign. In the charters of king Harold the ancient Saxon signature replaced the seals lately appended in the Norman fashion.<sup>2</sup> He did not, however, carry reform so far as to deprive of their offices or expel from the country the Normans, whom, despite the law, a compliance with the affections of king Edward had spared. These foreigners continued to enjoy all civil rights, but, little grateful for this generosity, they began to intrigue, at home and abroad, for the duke of Normandy. It was a messenger from them who announced to William the death of Edward, and the election of the son of Godwin.

When the duke received this great news, he was in his park, near Rouen, trying some new arrows.<sup>3</sup> All at once he appeared pensive, gave his bow to one of his people, and crossing the Seine, repaired to his palace at Rouen; he stopped in the great hall, and walked to and fro, now seating himself, now rising and changing his seat and position, unable to remain in any one place. None of his people dared to approach him; all remained apart, looking at each other in silence.<sup>4</sup> An officer, admitted to more than ordinary familiarity with William, happening to enter, the others pressed around him to learn from him the cause of the great agitation they remarked in the duke. "I know nothing certain," answered the officer, "but we shall soon learn." Then advancing alone to William: "My lord," he said, "why not communicate your intelligence to us? It is reported in the town that the king of England is dead, and that Harold has seized upon the kingdom, thus breaking his faith to you."—"They report truly," answered the duke; "my anger is touching the death of Edward, and the injury Harold has done me." "Sir," returned the courtier, "chafe not at a thing that

<sup>1</sup> Ranulf. Higden, *Polychronicon*, lib. vi. *ut sup.* 281.

<sup>2</sup> Ducarel, *Norman Antiquities*.

<sup>3</sup> *Chronique de Normandie*, *ut sup.* p. 224.

<sup>4</sup> *Ib.*

may be amended: for Edward's death there is no remedy, but there is one for the wrong that Harold has done; yours is the right: you have good knights; strike boldly; well begun is half done."<sup>1</sup>

A man of Saxon race, and Harold's own brother, that Tosti whom the Northumbrians had expelled, and whom Harold, become king, had refused again to impose upon them, hastened from Flanders to urge William not to allow the perjurer to reign in peace.<sup>2</sup> Tosti boasted to the foreigners that he had more credit and power in England than the king his brother, and promised the possession of the country to whomsoever should unite with him to make its conquest.<sup>3</sup> Too prudent to engage in a great undertaking upon the mere word of an adventurer, William, to test his power, gave him some vessels, with which, instead of landing in England, Tosti sailed to the Baltic, to seek other aid, and to excite the ambition of the northern kings against his country. He had an interview with Swen, king of Denmark, his relation by his mother's side, and called upon him to aid him against his brother and his nation. But the Dane gave a harsh refusal. Tosti withdrew in utter discontent, and went to seek elsewhere a king less tenacious about justice.<sup>4</sup> He found in Norway Harald or Harold, the son of Sigurd, the most valiant of the Scandinavians, the last among them who led the adventurous life whose charm had vanished with the religion of Odin. In his southern expeditions, Harold had carried on his pursuits alternately by land and by sea; he had by turns been pirate and soldier of fortune, *viking* and *varing*, as the language of the north expressed it.<sup>5</sup> He had served in the east under the chiefs of his nation, who for nearly two centuries had possessed a portion of the Slavonian provinces. Then, impelled by curiosity, he had been to Constantinople, where other Scandinavian emigrants, mercenary troops under this

<sup>1</sup> Chron. de Normandie, *ut sup.* p. 225.

<sup>2</sup> Order. Vital., *ut sup.* p. 492.

<sup>3</sup> Saga af Haralda Hardrada, cap. lxxxi.; Snorre's Heimskringla, iii. 146.

<sup>4</sup> Torfæ, *ut sup.* pars. iii. lib. v. cap. xvii. p. 347-9.

<sup>5</sup> More correctly *vargling*, from *varg*, fugitive, expatriated. This word exists in all the ancient Germanic dialects. See Ducange, in the words *wargus*, *wargengus*, *wargangi*, *warganeus*, *gargangi*, &c.

same name of *varings*, in which the conquerors of the Russ towns prided themselves, acted as the imperial guard.<sup>1</sup>

Harold was brother to a king, but he deemed it no derogation to enrol himself in this troop. He kept guard, axe on shoulder, at the gates of the imperial palace, and was employed with the corps to which he belonged in Asia and Africa. Enriched by the booty acquired in these expeditions, he wished to depart, and offered his resignation; finding that it was intended to detain him by force, he escaped by sea, taking with him a young woman of high birth. After this, he cruized as a pirate along the coasts of Sicily, and thus augmented the treasure he carried with him in his ship.<sup>2</sup> He was a poet, like most of the northern corsairs, who in their long voyages, and when their progress was slackened by calms, amused themselves with celebrating, in verse, their successes and their hopes. On his return from the long voyaging in which, as he expressed it in his songs, he had led his vessel afar, the terror of the labourers, his dark vessel, filled with grim warriors, Harold raised an army, and made war upon the king of Norway, in order to dispossess him. He asserted an hereditary claim to the crown of that kingdom; but soon perceiving the difficulty of conquering it, he made peace with his competitor, on the condition of a division; to complete the arrangement, it was agreed that the treasure of the son of Sigurd should be shared between them, as well as the territory of Norway. In order to gain over to his views this man, so famous throughout the north for his wealth and courage, Tosti approached him with honied words. "The world knows well," said he, "that there exists not a warrior worthy to be compared with thee; thou hast only to will it, and England will be thine." The Norwegian allowed himself to be persuaded, and promised to put his fleet to sea, as soon as the annual melting of the ice should set the ocean free.<sup>3</sup>

Pending the departure of his Norwegian ally, Tosti essayed his fortune on the northern coasts of England, with a band of adventurers collected in Friesland, Holland, and Flanders.

<sup>1</sup> The Byzantine historians designate this corps of foreign mercenaries *Φαργανοί* and *Βαργγγοί*.

<sup>2</sup> Saga of Harald, cap. iii. : Snorre, *ut sup.* p. 56.

<sup>3</sup> Id. cap. lxxxii. ; Snorre, *ut sup.* p. 149.

He pillaged and devastated several villages; but the two great chiefs of the provinces laying along the Humber, Morkar and Edwin, united their forces, and pursuing his vessels, compelled him to seek a retreat on the coast of Scotland.<sup>1</sup> Meantime Harold, son of Godwin, tranquil in the south of England, witnessed the arrival of a messenger from Normandy, who addressed him in these terms: "William, duke of Normandy, reminds thee of the oath which thou didst swear to him, by mouth and by hand, upon good and holy relics."<sup>2</sup> "It is true," answered the Saxon king, "that I swore such an oath to duke William; but I swore it under compulsion. I promised that which did not belong to me, and which I could not perform; for my royalty is not mine, and I cannot divest myself of it, without the consent of the country; nor, without the consent of the country, can I marry a foreign wife. As to my sister, whom the duke claims, to marry her to one of his chiefs, she died this year; would he have me send him her body?"<sup>3</sup> The Norman ambassador took back this answer; and William replied by a second message, couched in terms of gentle remonstrance,<sup>4</sup> intreating the king, if he would not consent to fulfil all the sworn conditions, to execute at least one of them, and to take as a wife the young girl he had promised to marry. Harold again replied that he would not, and to settle the point, married a Saxon wife, the sister of Edwin and Morkar. Then the last words of rupture were pronounced; William swore that within the year he would come and demand the whole of his debt, and pursue the perjurer to the very places where he thought he had the surest and firmest footing.<sup>5</sup>

As far as publicity could go in the eleventh century, the duke of Normandy published what he called the Saxon's gross dishonesty.<sup>6</sup> The general influence of superstitious ideas prevented indifferent spectators of this dispute from understanding the patriotic conduct of the son of Godwin, and

<sup>1</sup> *Id. ib.* Roger de Hoveden, *ut sup.* p. 448.

<sup>2</sup> Chron. de Normandie, *ut sup.* p. 229. Robert of Gloucester, p. 358. Chron. Pictav., *ut sup.* p. 192.

<sup>3</sup> Eadmer, *ut sup.* p. 6. Roger de Hoveden, *ut sup.* p. 449. Ranulf Higden, *ut sup.* p. 285.

<sup>4</sup> *Iterum ei amica familiaritate mandavit.* (Eadmer, *ut sup.* 5.)

<sup>5</sup> Willelm., Malmesb. *ut sup.* p. 99. Ingulf., *ut sup.* p. 68. Matt. Paris, i. 2.

<sup>6</sup> Eadmer, *ut sup.*

his scrupulous deference to the will of the people who had made him king. The opinion of the majority upon the continent was with William against Harold, with the man who had employed holy things as a snare, and accused of treason the man who refused to commit it. The negotiation commenced with the Romish church by Robert de Jumièges and the monk Lanfranc was actively pursued, from the moment that a deacon of Lisieux had borne beyond the mountains the news of the alleged crime of Harold and the English nation. The duke of Normandy laid an accusation of sacrilege against his enemy before the pontifical court; he demanded that England should be placed under the ban of the church and declared the property of the first occupant, sanctioned by the pope.<sup>1</sup> He founded his demand upon three principal causes of complaint: the murder of young Alfred and his Norman companions, the expulsion of the archbishop Robert from the see of Canterbury, and the perjury of king Harold.<sup>2</sup> He also pretended to have incontestable claims to the royalty, in virtue of his relationship to king Edward, and the intentions which this king had, he said, manifested on his death-bed. He affected the character of a plaintiff awaiting justice, and desiring that his adversary shall be heard. But Harold was summoned in vain to defend himself before the court of Rome. He refused to acknowledge the jurisdiction of that court in the matter, and deputed no ambassador there, too proud to submit the independence of his crown to foreigners, and too sensible to believe in the impartiality of the judges invoked by his enemy.<sup>3</sup>

The consistory of Saint John Latran was at this time governed by a man whose celebrity surpasses that of any other man of the middle ages; Hildebrand, monk of Cluny, created archdeacon of the Romish church by pope Nicholas II. After having reigned several years under the name of this pope, he found himself sufficiently powerful to elect one of his own choice, who took the name of Alexander II.; and to maintain him on his throne, despite the ill will of the imperial court. All the views of this personage, who was gifted with indefatigable activity, tended to transform the religious supremacy

<sup>1</sup> Willelm. Malmesb., *ut sup.* p. 100.

<sup>2</sup> Ranulf. Higden, *ut sup.* p. 285.

<sup>3</sup> Ingulf., *ut sup.* p. 69.

of the holy see into an universal sovereignty over the Christian states. This revolution, commenced in the ninth century by the reduction of several towns of central Italy to the obedience or suzerainty of the pope, was continued during the two following centuries. All the cities of Campania, of which the pontiff of Rome was the immediate metropolitan, had passed, voluntarily or by force, under his temporal power; and, strange circumstance, in the first half of the eleventh century, Norman knights, emigrants from their country, had been seen leading the Roman troops to this conquest, under the banner of Saint Peter.<sup>1</sup> At the same epoch, other Normans, pilgrims or adventurers, had taken service under the petty lords of southern Italy; then, like the Saxons with the Britons, they had broken their engagement, seized the fortresses, and established their dominion over the country. This new power, having put an end, if not to the pretensions, at all events to the power of the Greek empire over the towns of Apulia and Calabria, suited the religious intolerance of the court of Rome, and flattered its ambition, in the hope of an authority readily obtained over simple-minded warriors, filled with veneration for the holy see. In fact, several of these new dukes or counts successively declared themselves vassals of the prince of the apostles, and consented to receive a banner of the Roman church, as a feudal investiture of the lands which they themselves had conquered. Thus the church profited by the power of the Norman arms gradually to extend her sovereignty in Italy, and accustomed herself to look upon the Normans as destined to combat in her service, and to do her homage for their conquests.

Such were the singular relations which the chance of events had created, when the complaints and demand of the duke of Normandy reached the court of Rome. His mind full of his favourite idea, the archdeacon Hildebrand thought the moment favourable for attempting on the kingdom of England that which had succeeded in Italy; he applied all his efforts to substitute for the ecclesiastical discussion on the indifference of the English, the simony of their bishops, and the perjury of their king, a formal negotiation for the conquest of the country, at the common cost and for the common profit. Not-

<sup>1</sup> Orderic. Vital., *ut sup.* p. 472. Fleury, *Hist. Eccles.*, xii. 40.

withstanding the reality of these purely political projects, the cause of William against Harold was examined in the assembly of cardinals, without any other question being discussed than that of the hereditary right, the sanctity of the oath, and the veneration due to the relics. These did not appear to several of those present sufficient grounds to warrant, on the part of the church, an armed aggression against a Christian people; and when the archdeacon persisted, a murmur arose, and the dissentients told him that it was infamous to authorize and encourage homicide;<sup>1</sup> but he was unmoved at this, and his views prevailed.

In the terms of the sentence which was pronounced by the pope himself, William duke of Normandy was permitted to enter England, to bring that kingdom back to the obedience of the holy see, and to re-establish there for ever the tax of Saint Peter's pence.<sup>2</sup> A bull of excommunication, directed against Harold and all his adherents, was given to William's messenger, and to it was added a banner of the Roman church and a ring containing one of the hairs of Saint Peter, set under a diamond of great price.<sup>3</sup> This was the double emblem of military and ecclesiastical investiture; the consecrated banner which was to consecrate the invasion of England by the duke of Normandy, was the same which, a few years before, the Normans Raoul and William de Montreuil had planted, in the name of the church, on the castles of Campania.<sup>4</sup>

Before the bull, the banner, and the ring had arrived, duke William assembled, in a cabinet council, his most intimate friends, to demand their advice and assistance. His two brothers by the mother's side, Eudes and Robert, one of them bishop of Bayeux, the other count of Mortain; William Fitz-Osbern, seneschal of Normandy, or ducal lieutenant for civil administration, and some high barons, attended the conference. All were of the opinion that it was proper to make a descent upon England, and promised to serve him with body and goods, even to selling or pledging their inheritances. "But this is not all," said they; "you must seek aid and

<sup>1</sup> Epist. Greg., vii. *apud* Script. rer. Gallic. et Francic., xiv. 648.

<sup>2</sup> Chronique de Normandie, *ut sup.* p. 227.

<sup>3</sup> Guill. Pictav., *ut sup.* p. 197. Matt. Paris, i. 2.

<sup>4</sup> Order. Vital., *ut sup.* p. 473. Fleury, *ut sup.* p. 400.



counsel from the body of the inhabitants of this country; for it is right that those who pay the cost should be asked their consent."<sup>1</sup> William, say the chroniclers, then convoked a great assembly of men of every class in Normandy—warriors, churchmen, and merchants, all the richest and most considerable personages of the land. The duke explained his projects to them, and solicited their assistance; the assembly then withdrew, in order to deliberate more free from influence.<sup>2</sup>

In the debate which followed, opinions seemed greatly divided; some wished to aid the duke with vessels, munitions, and money; others protested against any kind of aid, saying that they had already more debts than they could pay. This discussion was not carried on without tumult, and the members of the assembly, risen from their seats and divided into groups, spoke and gesticulated with great noise. In the midst of this confusion, the seneschal of Normandy, William Fitz-Osbern, raised his voice, and said: "Why dispute ye thus? he is your lord, he has need of you; it were better your duty to make your offers, and not to await his request. If you fail him now, and he gain his end, by God he will remember it; prove, then, that you love him, and act accordingly." "Doubtless," cried the opponents, "he is our lord; but is it not enough for us to pay him his dues? We owe him no aid beyond the seas; he has already enough oppressed us with his wars; let him fail in his new enterprise, and our country is undone."<sup>3</sup> After a long discussion, resulting in various opinions, it was determined that Fitz-Osbern, who knew the position of each man present, should be the messenger to excuse the limited offers of the assembly.<sup>4</sup>

The Normans returned to the duke, and Fitz-Osbern spoke thus: "I do not believe that there are in the whole world people more zealous than these; you know the aids they have given you, the onerous services they have rendered you; well, sire, they will do more, they offer to serve you beyond the sea as they have done here. Forward, then, and spare them in nothing; he who hitherto has only supplied you with two good mounted soldiers, will now supply four." "No!

<sup>1</sup> Chronique de Normandie, *ut sup.* p. 225.

<sup>2</sup> *Ib.*

<sup>3</sup> *Ib.*

*Ib.*

no!" exclaimed the Normans; "we did not charge you with such an answer; we did not say that, and it shall not be so. In things within his own country we will serve him as is due; but we are not bound to assist him to conquer another man's country. Besides, if once we rendered him double service, and followed him across the sea, he would make it a right and a custom for the future; he would burden our children with it; it shall not be, it shall not be!" Groups of ten, twenty, thirty, formed; the tumult was general, and the assembly separated.<sup>1</sup>

Duke William, surprised and enraged beyond measure, dissimulated his anger, and had recourse to an artifice, which has scarcely ever failed of its effect when powerful personages have desired to overcome popular resistance. He sent separately for the same men whom he had first convoked in a body; commencing with the richest and most influential, he intreated them to aid him out of pure favour and as a voluntary gift, affirming that he had no intention of making it an ill precedent for the future, or of abusing their own liberality against them; offering even to confirm his verbal assurance by letters sealed with his own great seal.<sup>2</sup> None had the courage to pronounce a refusal to the face of the chief of the country, in an interview with him alone. That which each agreed to do was immediately registered; and the example of the first summoned, decided those who came afterwards. One subscribed for ships, another for armed soldiers, others promised to march in person; priests gave money, merchants merchandize, peasants their goods.

Presently after this, the consecrated banner and the bull authorizing the invasion of England arrived from Rome, which greatly increased the popular ardour; every one brought what he could; mothers sent their sons to enrol their names for the salvation of their souls.<sup>3</sup> William published his ban in the neighbouring countries; he offered good pay and the pillage of England to every able man who would serve him with lance, sword, or cross-bow. A multitude accepted the invitation, coming by every road, far and near, from north and south.

<sup>1</sup> Chron. de Normandie, p. 226. Roberti de Monte, *Appendix, ad Sigbertum, apud* Script. rer. Gallic., xi. 168.

<sup>2</sup> *Id. ib.*

<sup>3</sup> *Id. ib.* 227.

They came from Maine and Anjou, from Poitou and Brittany, from France and Flanders, Aquitaine and Burgundy, from the Alps and the banks of the Rhine.<sup>1</sup> All the professional adventurers, all the military vagabonds of Western Europe hastened to Normandy, by long marches; some were knights and chiefs of war, the others simple foot-soldiers and sergeants of arms, as they were then called; some demanded money-pay, others only their passage and all the booty they might make. Some asked for land in England, a domain, a castle, a town; others simply required some rich Saxon in marriage.<sup>2</sup> Every thought, every desire of human avarice presented itself. William rejected no one, says the Norman chronicle, and satisfied every one as well as he could. He gave, beforehand, a bishopric in England to a monk of Fescamp, in return for a vessel and twenty armed men.<sup>3</sup> During the spring and summer, in all the ports of Normandy, workmen of every kind were employed in constructing and fitting up ships; smiths and armourers forged lances, swords, and coats of mail, and porters went to and fro continually, transporting the completed arms from the workshops to the vessels.<sup>4</sup> While these preparations were actively going on, William went to Philip, king of the French, at Saint Germain, and saluting him with the form of deference which his ancestors had often omitted towards the kings of the Frank country: "You are my seigneur," said he; "if it please you aid me, and I, by God's grace, obtain my right over England, I promise to do you homage for it, as though I held it from you." Philip assembled his council of barons, without which he could not decide any important affair, and the barons were of opinion that they ought not in any way to aid William in his conquest. "You know," said they to the king, "how ill the Normans obey you now; it will be still worse when they possess England. Besides, it would cost us a great deal to assist the duke, and if he fail in his enterprise, the English will be our

<sup>1</sup> Willelm. Malmesb., *ut sup.* p. 99. Willelm. Gemet., *ut sup.* p. 51. Hist. Franc. Frag., *apud* Script. rer. Francicarum et Gallic., p. 162. Order. Vital., *ut sup.* p. 494.

<sup>2</sup> Chron. de Normandie, *ut sup.* p. 227.

<sup>3</sup> Sharon Turner, ii. 416. Eadmer, *ut sup.* i. 7. Willelm. Malmesb., *ib.* *ut sup.* p. 290.

<sup>4</sup> Bayeux Tapestry.

enemies for ever." Thus defeated in his object, duke William withdrew, greatly discontented with king Philip, and addressed the same request to the count of Flanders, his brother-in-law, who also declined to aid him.<sup>1</sup>

Despite the national enmity of the Normans and Bretons, there existed between the dukes of Normandy and the counts of Brittany alliances of relationship, which complicated the relations of the two states without rendering them less hostile. At the time when duke Robert, the father of William, departed on his pilgrimage, he had no nearer relation than the Breton count Allan or Alain, a descendant of Roll by the female side, and it was to him that, on his departure, he confided the charge of his duchy and the guardianship of his son. Count Alain had not long delayed to declare the birth of his pupil doubtful, and to favour the party which wished to deprive him of the succession; but after the defeat of this party at the Val des Dunes, he died, poisoned, according to all appearances, by the friends of the young bastard. His son Conan succeeded him, and still reigned in Brittany at the time of William's great armament for the conquest of England. He was a daring man, dreaded by his neighbours, and whose principal ambition was to injure the duke of Normandy, whom he regarded as an usurper and as the murderer of his father. Finding the latter engaged in a difficult enterprise, Conan thought the moment favourable for declaring war against him, and sent him, by one of his chamberlains, the following message:

"I hear that thou art about to cross the sea, to conquer the kingdom of England. Now duke Robert, whose son thou pretendest to be, on departing for Jerusalem, remitted all his heritage to count Allan, my father, who was his cousin. But thou and thy accomplices poisoned my father: thou hast appropriated to thyself his seignury, and hast detained it to this day, contrary to all justice, seeing that thou art a bastard. Restore me, then, the duchy of Normandy, which belongs to me, or I will make war upon thee to the last extremity, with all the forces at my disposal."<sup>2</sup>

The Norman historians admit that William was somewhat alarmed at this message, for the slightest diversion might

<sup>1</sup> Chron. de Normandie, *ut sup.*      <sup>2</sup> Willelm. Gemet., *ut sup.* p. 286.

defeat his projects of conquest; but he found means to get rid, without much difficulty, of the enemy who declared himself with such rash boldness. The chamberlain of the count of Brittany, gained over doubtless by bribes, rubbed with poison the mouthpiece of the horn which his master used in the chase, and, to make assurance doubly sure, poisoned also his gloves and the reins of his horse.<sup>1</sup> Conan died a few days after the return of his messenger. Count Eudes, his successor, was careful not to imitate him, or alarm William the Bastard as to the validity of his rights: on the contrary, uniting with him in a friendship, quite new between the Bretons and the Normans, he sent his two sons to aid him against the English. These two young men, Brian and Allan, came to the rendezvous of the Norman troops,<sup>2</sup> accompanied by a body of horse, who gave them the title of Mactierns,<sup>3</sup> whilst the Normans called them counts. Other rich Bretons, not of purely Celtic race, and who bore names of French form, such as Robert de Vitry, Bertrand de Dinand, and Raoul de Gaël, also came to the duke of Normandy to offer him their services.<sup>4</sup> The rendezvous of the vessels and troops was at the mouth of the Dive, a river which empties itself into the ocean, between the Seine and the Orne. For a month, the winds were contrary, and detained the Norman fleet in port. Then a southern breeze carried them as far as the roadstead of Saint Valery, at the mouth of the Somme;<sup>5</sup> there the bad weather recommenced, and it was necessary to wait some days. The fleet anchored, and the troops encamped

<sup>1</sup> Willelm. Gemet., *ut sup.* p. 286.

<sup>2</sup> Lobineau, *Hist. de Bretagne*, i. book iii. p. 98. See Appendix, No. VI.

<sup>3</sup> Son of the chief. *Tiern*, chief; in Gaelic, *Teyrn*.

<sup>4</sup> Lobineau, *ut sup.* *Chronique de Normandie, ut sup.*

<sup>5</sup> Some respectable savans have considered that the place to which William's fleet was thus driven, was Valery-en-Caux, and not Valery-sur-Somme, situated beyond the limits of Normandy; but the manuscript recently discovered at Brussels sets all doubt on the point at rest:

“Tuque, velis noliss, tandem tua litora linquens,  
Navigium vertis litus ad alterius.

Portus ab antiquis Vimaci fertur haberi,

Quæ vallat portum, Somana nomen aquæ...

Desuper est castrum quoddam Sancti Valarici,

Hic tibi longa, fuit difficilisque mora.”

(Widon, *Carmen de Hastinyæ Prælio*; *Chroniques Anglo-Normandes*, iii. 3.)

upon the shore, greatly incommoded by the rain, which did not cease to fall in torrents.<sup>1</sup>

During this delay, some of the vessels, shattered by a violent tempest, sank with their crews; this accident created a great sensation among the troops, fatigued by protracted encamping. In the long leisure of their days, the soldiers passed hours conversing under their tents, exchanging their reflections upon the perils of the voyage and the difficulties of the enterprise.<sup>2</sup> No combat had yet taken place, and, said they, already many men were dead; they reckoned and exaggerated the number of bodies that the sea had thrown on the sand. These conversations abated the ardour of the adventurers, at first so full of zeal; some even broke their engagement and withdrew.<sup>3</sup> To check this tendency so fatal to his projects, duke William had the dead secretly interred, and increased the rations of provisions and strong liquors;<sup>4</sup> but the want of active employment continually brought back the same thoughts of sadness and discouragement. "The man is mad," said the murmuring soldiers, "who seeks to seize the land of another; God is offended with such designs, and proves it by refusing us a favourable wind."<sup>5</sup>

Despite his strength of soul and habitual presence of mind, William was a prey to uneasiness which he could hardly conceal. He was frequently seen to go to the church of Saint Valery, the patron of the place, to remain there a long time in prayer, and each time that he quitted it, to look at the cock which surmounted the bell-tower, and showed the direction of the wind. If it seemed turning towards the south, the duke appeared joyful; but if the wind blew from the north or west, his face and manner became still more depressed. Whether it was an act of sincere faith, or merely to furnish some occupation to his sad and discouraged troops, he took from the church the coffer which contained the relics of the saint, and had it carried in procession with great ceremony through the camp. The whole army joined in prayer. The chiefs made rich offerings; every soldier, to the very lowest, gave his piece of money; and the following night, as if

<sup>1</sup> Wido, *ut sup.* p. 4.

<sup>2</sup> Willelm. Malmesb., *ut sup.* p. 100.

<sup>3</sup> Guill. Pictav., *ut sup.* p. 198.

<sup>4</sup> *Id. ib.*

<sup>5</sup> Willelm. Malmesb., *ut sup.*

<sup>6</sup> Wido, *ut sup.*

heaven had granted a miracle, the wind changed, and the weather became calm and serene. At daybreak of the 27th September, the sun, hitherto each day enveloped in clouds, appeared in all its splendour.<sup>1</sup> The camp was immediately raised, all the preparations for embarkation executed with great ardour and no less promptitude, and some hours before sunset the entire fleet was ready. Four hundred ships with large sails, and more than a thousand transport vessels, made for the open sea, amid the sound of trumpets and a shout of joy, sent forth from sixty thousand mouths as from one.<sup>2</sup>

The vessel in which William sailed was in the van, bearing at its mast-head the banner sent by the pope, and a cross on its own flag. Its sails were of different colours, and on them in various places were painted the three lions, the arms of Normandy; at the prow was the carved figure of a child, bearing a bow bent, with the arrow ready to quit the string.<sup>3</sup> Lastly, large lanterns suspended from poles, a necessary precaution for a night-passage, were to serve as a beacon to the whole fleet, and to indicate the rallying point. This vessel, a better sailer than the rest, outstripped them during the day, and at night left them far behind. In the morning, the duke sent a sailor to the mast-head to see if the other vessels were coming. "I see only sky and sea," answered the sailor; whereupon they dropped anchor. The duke affected a gay countenance, and, lest fear and anxiety should spread among the crew, he had a copious repast and wines highly spiced given to them. The sailor again ascended, and now said that he saw four vessels; a third time, he exclaimed: "I see a forest of masts and sails."<sup>4</sup>

Whilst this great armament was preparing in Normandy, Harold, king of Norway, faithful to his engagements with the Saxon Tosti, had assembled several hundred ships of war and transports. The fleet remained some time at anchor, and the Norwegian army, pending the signal for departure, encamped upon the coast as the Normans had done at the

<sup>1</sup> Wido., *ut sup.*

<sup>2</sup> *Id. ib.*; where, however, the author greatly exaggerates the number of the troops, to whom his description applies.

<sup>3</sup> Strutt's *Norman Antiquities*, pl. xxxii. Roman de Rou, ii. 146. Rudborne, *ut sup.* lib. v. cap. i.; *Anglia Sacra*, i. 245. Bayeux Tapestry.

<sup>4</sup> Guill. Pictav., *ut sup.* 198, 199.

mouth of the Somme. Vague impressions of discouragement and anxiety were produced by the same causes, but under a still more gloomy aspect, conformable with the pensive imagination of the inhabitants of the north. Several soldiers believed they had had prophetic revelations during their sleep. One of them dreamed that he saw his companions landed on the coast of England, and in presence of the English army; that in front of this army, riding upon a wolf, was a woman of gigantic stature; the wolf held in his jaws a human body, dripping with gore, and when he had devoured it, the woman gave him another.<sup>1</sup> A second soldier dreamed that the fleet sailed, and that a flock of crows, vultures, and other birds of prey were perched upon the masts and sails of the vessels; on an adjacent rock a woman was seated, holding a drawn sword in her hand, and looking at and counting the vessels: "Go," said she to the birds, "go without fear, you shall have enough to eat, and you shall have plenty to choose from, for I go with them."<sup>2</sup> It was remarked, not without terror, that at the moment when Harold placed his foot on the royal boat, the weight of his body pressed it down more than usual.<sup>3</sup>

Despite these threatening presages, the expedition sailed towards the southwest under the command of the king and his son Olaf. Before landing in England, they touched at the Orcades, islands inhabited by men of Scandinavian race, and two chiefs and a bishop joined them. They then coasted along the eastern shore of Scotland, where they met Tosti and his vessels. They sailed thence together, and, on their way, attacked the maritime town of Scarborough. Finding the inhabitants prepared to make an obstinate defence, they took possession of a high rock which commanded the town, and raised there an enormous pile of trunks of trees, branches and stubble, which, firing, they rolled down upon the houses, and then, favoured by the conflagration, forced the gates of the town and pillaged it.<sup>4</sup> Relieved by this first success from their superstitious terrors, they gaily doubled Holderness at the

<sup>1</sup> Saga af Haraldra Hardrada, cap. lxxxiv.; Snorre's *Heimskringla*, iii. 151.

<sup>2</sup> Idem. *ib.* cap. lxxxiii.; Snorre, *ib.*

<sup>3</sup> Id. cap. lxxxv. Snorre, *ib.* p. 152. Torfæus, *ut sup.* p. 351. Turner's *Anglo-Saxons*, ii. 390.

<sup>4</sup> Torfæus, *ut sup.* Turner, *ut sup.*



mouth of the Humber; and ascended that river. From the Humber they passed into the Ouse, which runs near York. Tosti, who had the direction of the campaign, wished first of all to regain this capital of his ancient government, in order again to instal himself there. Morkar, his successor, Edwin, Morkar's brother, and young Waltheof, son of Siward, governor of Huntingdonshire, assembled the inhabitants of the surrounding country, and gave battle to the foreigners south of York, upon the banks of the Humber; conquerors at first, but then obliged to retreat, they shut themselves up in the city, where the Norwegians besieged them. Tosti assumed the title of chief of Northumberland, and issued a proclamation dated from the foreigner's camp: a few weak-minded men acknowledged him, and a small number of adventurers answered his appeal.<sup>1</sup>

While these things were passing in the north, the king of the Anglo-Saxons remained with all his forces on the southern coast, to watch the movements of William, whose invasion, which had been long expected, gave rise to much alarm.<sup>2</sup> Harold had passed the whole summer and autumn upon his guard, between the landing-places nearest to Normandy;<sup>3</sup> but the delay of the expedition occasioned it to be believed that it would now not be made before the winter. Moreover, the danger was greater from the enemy in the north, already masters of a portion of the English territory, than from an enemy who had not yet set foot in England; and the son of Godwin, prompt and daring in his projects, hoped in a few days to expel the Norwegians, and return to his post to receive the Normans. He made rapid marches at the head of his best troops, and arrived by night under the walls of York, just as the inhabitants had agreed to surrender to the allies of Tosti. The Norwegians had not yet made their entry: but, on the word of the inhabitants and the conviction of the impossibility of their retracting that word, they had broken up the lines, and were reposing. On their part, the inhabitants of York had no other idea than that of receiving on the next day Tosti and the king of Norway, who were to hold a great council in the city, to regulate the government of all the province, and dis-

*Ib.*—Saga of Harald, cap. lxxxvii.; Snorre, p. 156.

<sup>2</sup> Guill. Pictav., *ut sup.* p. 197.

<sup>3</sup> Roger de Hoveden, *ut sup.* p. 448.

tribute, among the foreigners and deserters, the lands of the rebel English.<sup>1</sup>

The unexpected arrival of the Saxon king, who had marched so as to avoid the enemy's outposts, changed the whole face of things. The citizens of York resumed their arms, and the gates of the city were closed and guarded, so that no one could quit it for the camp of the Norwegians. The following day was one of those autumnal days in which the sun is still in all its vigour; the portion of the Norwegian army which left the camp on the Humber to accompany their king to York, not expecting to have enemies to combat, were without their coats of mail, on account of the heat; and of their defensive arms had only retained their helmets and bucklers. At some distance from the town the Norwegians suddenly perceived a great cloud of dust, and in the midst of this cloud something glittering like steel in the sunshine. "Who are these men advancing towards us?" said the king to Tosti. "It can only be," said the Saxon, "Englishmen coming to demand pardon and implore our friendship."<sup>2</sup> The advancing mass growing gradually more distinct, soon appeared a numerous army, ranged in battle order. "The enemy! the enemy!" exclaimed the Norwegians, and they detached three horsemen to bring up in all haste the soldiers who remained behind in the camp and on board the ships. The king unfurled his standard, which he called the *ravager of the world*!<sup>3</sup> the soldiers drew up around it, in a long narrow line, curved at the extremities. They stood pressed against each other, their lances planted in the ground with the points turned towards the enemy. Harold, son of Sigurd, rode through the ranks on his black charger, singing extempore verses, a fragment of which has been transmitted to us by the northern historians: "Let us fight," said he, "let us advance, though without our cuirasses, to the edges of blue steel; our helmets glitter in the sun; that is enough for brave men."<sup>4</sup>

Before the two armies met, twenty Saxon cavaliers, men

<sup>1</sup> Saga af Harald, cap. lxxxix. Snorre, p. 156. Roger de Hoveden, p. 448. Henric Knighton, *ut sup.* ii. col. 2339.

<sup>2</sup> Saga af Harald, cap. xc. Snorre, p. 158, 159.

<sup>3</sup> In Icelandic, *Land-eydo*; in Danish, *Land-ode*. Saga af Harald, xci. Snorre, *ut sup.*

<sup>4</sup> Saga af Harald, cap. xciv.; Snorre, p. 160. Gesta Danorum, ii. 165.

and horses clothed in steel, approached the Norwegian lines; one of them, in a loud voice, cried: "Where is Tosti, son of Godwin?"—"Here," answered the son of Godwin himself. "If thou art Tosti," returned the messenger, "thy brother greets thee by me, and offers thee peace, his friendship, and thy ancient honours." "These are fine words, and very different to the insults and hostilities they made me submit to a year ago. But if I accept these offers, what shall be given to the noble king Harold, son of Sigurd, my faithful ally?" "He," answered the messenger, "shall have seven feet of English land, or a little more, for his height passes that of other men." "Say, then, to my brother," answered Tosti, "that he prepare to fight: for none but liars shall ever say that the son of Godwin deserted the son of Sigurd."<sup>1</sup>

The battle immediately began, and at the first shock of the two armies the Norwegian king was killed by an arrow which pierced his throat. Tosti took the command; and then his brother Harold sent a second time to offer him peace and life, for himself and the Norwegians.<sup>2</sup> But all exclaimed that they would rather die than owe aught to the Saxons. At this moment, the men from the ships arrived, armed with cuirasses, but fatigued with their march under a burning sun. Although numerous, they did not sustain the attack of the English, who had already broken the first line of the battle and taken the royal banner. Tosti was killed, with most of the Norwegian chiefs, and, for the third time, Harold offered peace to the conquered. They accepted it; Olaf, the son of the dead king, the bishop and surviving chief of the Orcades, retired, with twenty-three vessels, having sworn friendship to England.<sup>3</sup> The country of the English was thus delivered from a new conquest by the men of the north. But while these enemies withdrew, to return no more, other foes approached, and the same breeze in which the banners of the victorious Saxons waved, also swelled the Norman sails, and urged them on towards the coast of Sussex.

By an unfortunate chance, the vessels which had long been cruising upon this coast had just returned to port from want of provisions.<sup>4</sup> The troops of William thus landed, without

<sup>1</sup> *Id. ib.* Turner, ii. 395.

<sup>2</sup> *Id. ib.* cap. xcvi. Snorre, p. 164. Turner, ii. 396.

<sup>3</sup> *Id. ib.* xcvi. <sup>4</sup> Roman de Rou, ii. 151, 153. Bayeux Tapestry.

resistance, at Pevensey near Hastings, the 28th of September 1066, three days after the victory of Harold over the Norwegians. The archers landed first; they wore short coats, and their hair was shaved off; then came the cavalry, wearing coats of mail and helmets of polished steel, of a nearly conical form, armed with long and strong lances, and straight double-edged swords. These were followed by the workmen of the army, pioneers, carpenters, and smiths, who brought on shore, piece by piece, three wooden castles, ready prepared beforehand. The duke was the last to land; at the moment his foot touched the sand, he slipped and fell on his face. A murmur arose, and voices exclaimed: "God preserve us! this is a bad sign." But William, rising, said immediately: "Lords, what is't you say? What, are you amazed? I have taken seizin of this land with my hands, and, by the splendour of God, all that it contains is ours." The repartee prevented the effect of the evil presage. The army took the road towards Hastings, and near that place marked out a camp, and raised two of the wooden castles as receptacles for provisions. Bodies of troops overran the neighbouring country, pillaging and burning houses. The English fled from their dwellings, hiding their goods and cattle, and hastened in crowds to the churches and churchyards, which they deemed the surest asylum against enemies, who were Christians like themselves. But, in their thirst for booty, the Normans paid little heed to the sanctity of places, and respected no asylum.

Harold was at York, wounded, and resting from his fatigues, when a messenger arrived in great haste, to inform him that William of Normandy had landed, and planted his banner on the Anglo-Saxon territory.<sup>1</sup> He immediately marched towards the south with his victorious army, publishing, on his way, an order to all the provincial governors to arm their fighting-men, and bring them to London. The militia of the west came without delay; those of the north were later, on account of the distance; but there was still reason to believe that the king of the English would soon find himself surrounded by the forces of the whole country. One of those Normans who had been made exceptions to the law of exile pro-

<sup>1</sup> William of Gloucester's *Chronicle*, p. 359. *Suppletio historiæ regni Angliæ.* (MSS. Mus. Britannici.)

nounced against foreigners, and who now played the part of spies and secret agents of the invader, sent word to the duke to be upon his guard, for that in four days the son of Godwin would have an hundred thousand men with him.<sup>1</sup> Harold, too impatient, did not await the expiration of the four days; he could not overcome his desire to close with the foreigners, especially when he learned the ravages of every kind which they were committing round their camp. The hope of sparing his countrymen further evil, and perhaps the desire of attempting against the Normans a sudden and unforeseen attack, like that which had succeeded against the Norwegians, determined him to march to Hastings, with an army four times less numerous than that of the duke of Normandy.<sup>2</sup>

But William's camp was carefully guarded against a surprise, and his outposts extended to a great distance. Some detachments of cavalry falling back, gave notice of the approach of the Saxon king, who, they said, was advancing furiously.<sup>3</sup> Failing in his design of attacking the enemy by surprise, the Saxon was obliged to moderate his impetuosity; he halted at a distance of seven miles from the Norman camp, and suddenly changing his tactics, intrenched himself, to await them behind ditches and palisades. Some spies, who spoke French, were sent to the foreign army to observe its disposition and force. On their return, they related that there were more priests in William's camp than there were fighting men on the English side. They had mistaken for priests all the soldiers of the Norman army who wore shaved beards and short hair. Harold smiled at this report: "They whom you saw in such great numbers," said he, "are not priests, but brave warriors, who will soon show us what they are worth."<sup>4</sup> Some of the Saxon chiefs advised the king to avoid a battle, and to retreat towards London, ravaging the country on his way, to starve out the foreigners. "I!" exclaimed Harold,<sup>5</sup> "I ravage the country which has been confided to my care! By my faith, that were indeed treason,

<sup>1</sup> Chron. de Normandie, p. 228. Guill. Pict., *ut sup.* 199.

<sup>2</sup> *Id. ib.* 201.

MSS. Abbatiae Waltham., in Museo Britannico. Florent. Wigron. Chron., p. 634. Roger de Hoveden, *ut sup.* p. 448. Ingulf., *ut sup.* p. 69.

<sup>4</sup> Guill. Pictav., *ut sup.* p. 201.

<sup>5</sup> Roman de Rou, ii. 174. Matth. Paris, i. 3.

and I prefer taking the chances of battle with the few men I have, my courage, and my good cause."

The Norman duke, whose totally opposite character led him, in every circumstance, to neglect no means that occurred, and to place interest above all personal pride, profited by the unfavourable position in which he saw his adversary, to renew his demands. A monk, called Dom Hugues Maigrot, came, in William's name, to require the Saxon king to do one of three things; either to surrender the crown to the duke of Normandy, or to submit the matter to the arbitration of the pope, or to refer its decision to the chance of a single combat. Harold shortly answered: "I will not resign the crown, I will not refer the matter to the pope, I will not fight a single combat." Not discouraged by these positive refusals, William again sent the Norman monk, to whom he dictated his instructions in the following terms: "Go and say to Harold, that, if he will fulfil his compact with me, I will leave him all the land which is beyond the Humber, and will give his brother Gurth all the land that Godwin held; if he persist in not accepting my offer, thou shalt say to him, before all his people, that he is a perjurer and a liar, that he and all those who support him are excommunicated by the pope, and that I have the papal bull for this."

Dom Hugues Maigrot delivered this message in a solemn tone, and the Norman chronicle says that at the word excommunication the English chiefs looked at each other, as though they stood in the presence of a great danger. One of them spoke: "We ought," said he, "to fight, whatever the danger may be; for it is not here the question of receiving a new lord, as if our king were dead; the matter in hand is very different. The duke of Normandy has given our lands to his barons, his knights, and all his people, most of whom have already rendered him homage for them; they will all have their donations carried into effect if the duke becomes our king, and he will be bound to give them our goods, our wives, and our daughters, for all is promised them beforehand. They come, not only to ruin us, but to ruin our descendants also, to take from us the country of our ancestors; and what shall we do, or where shall we go, when we have no longer any country?" And hereupon the English unanimously took an oath to make neither peace, truce, nor treaty, with the

invader, and to drive out the Normans or die in the attempt."<sup>1</sup>

A whole day was employed in these futile messages; it was the eighteenth since the battle fought with the Norwegians near York. Harold's precipitate march had not as yet permitted any additional troops to join him. Edwin and Morkar, the two great northern chieftains, were at London, or on the road to London; none but volunteers came, one by one, or in small bands, citizens armed in haste, monks who quitted their cloisters to obey the call of their country. Among the latter was Leofrik, abbot of the great monastery of Peterborough, near Ely, and the abbot of Hide, near Winchester, who brought with him twelve of his monks, and twenty warriors raised at his expense.<sup>2</sup> The hour of battle appeared at hand; Harold's two young brothers, Gurth and Leofwin, had taken their positions near him; the former endeavoured to persuade him not to be present in the action, but to go to London to seek fresh reinforcements, whilst his friends sustained the attack of the Normans. "Harold," said the young man, "thou canst not deny that, whether on compulsion or willingly, thou hast sworn to duke William an oath upon the relics of saints; why risk a combat with a perjury against thee? For us, who have taken no oath, the war is just, for we defend our country. Leave us, then, to fight the battle; thou shalt aid us if we retreat, and if we die thou wilt revenge us."<sup>3</sup> To these words, so touching in the mouth of a brother, Harold replied that his duty forbad him to remain apart while others risked their lives; too confident in his courage and his good cause, he drew up his troops for the combat.<sup>4</sup>

On the ground, which has ever since borne the name of Battle,<sup>5</sup> the lines of the Anglo-Saxons occupied a long chain of hills, fortified by a rampart of stakes and willow hurdles. In the night of the 13th October, William announced to the Normans that the next day would be the day of battle.

<sup>1</sup> Chron. de Normandie, p. 231.

<sup>2</sup> Dugdale, *Monast. Anglic.*, i. 210.

<sup>3</sup> Willelm. Malmesb., *ut sup.* p. 100.

<sup>4</sup> MS. Abbatiae Waltham.

<sup>5</sup> In Latin, *locus Belli*. Willelm. Gemet., *ut sup.* p. 288. Dugdale, *ut sup.* 311.

Priests and monks who had followed the invading army in great numbers, attracted, like the soldiers, by the hope of booty,<sup>1</sup> met to pray and chaunt litanies, while the warriors prepared their arms. The time which remained to them, after this first care, was employed by them in confessing their sins and receiving the sacrament. In the other army, the night was passed in a very different manner; the Saxons diverted themselves with noisily singing old national songs, and emptying, around their fires, horns filled with beer and wine.<sup>2</sup>

When morning came, in the Norman camp, the bishop of Bayeux, brother, on the mother's side, of duke William, celebrated mass and blessed the troops, armed with a hauberk under his rochet; he then mounted a large white courser, took a baton of command, and drew up the cavalry. The army was divided into three columns of attack; in the first were the men-at-arms from the counties of Boulogne and Ponthieu, with most of the adventurers engaged individually for pay; in the second were the Breton, Manceaux, and Poitevin auxiliaries; William in person commanded the third, composed of the Norman chivalry. In front and on the flanks of each of these bodies were infantry, lightly armed, wearing quilted coats, and armed with long bows or with steel crossbows. The duke was mounted on a Spanish charger, which a rich Norman had brought him on his return from a pilgrimage to St. Iago in Galicia. He wore around his neck the most revered of the relics upon which Harold had sworn, and the standard, blessed by the pope, was carried at his side by a young man, named Toustain le Blanc.<sup>3</sup> At the moment, ere the troops began their march, the duke, raising his voice, thus addressed them:—

“Fight your best, and put every one to death; for if we conquer, we shall all be rich. What I gain, you gain; if I conquer, you conquer; if I take the land, you will share it. Know, however, that I am not come here merely to take that which is my due, but to revenge our whole nation for the felon acts, perjuries, and treason of these English. They put to death the Danes, men, and women, in the night of Saint Brice.

<sup>1</sup> Dugdale, *ut sup.*

<sup>2</sup> Roman de Rou, ii. 184—186. See Appendix, No. VII.

<sup>3</sup> *Id. ib.* Guill. Pictav., p. 201. Chron. de Normandie. p. 232, 233.



They decimated the companions of my relation, Alfred, and put himself to death. On, then, in God's name, and chastise them for all their misdeeds."<sup>1</sup>

The army soon came in sight of the Saxon camp, north-west of Hastings. The priests and monks who accompanied it, retired to a neighbouring hill, to pray and watch the combat.<sup>2</sup> A Norman, named Taillefer, spurred his horse in front of the array, and began the song, famous throughout Gaul, of Charlemagne and Roland. As he sang, he played with his sword, throwing it far into the air, and catching it, as it fell, in his right hand; the Normans repeated the burthen, or shouted, *Dieu aide! Dieu aide!*<sup>3</sup>

Coming within shot, the archers began to discharge their arrows, and the cross-bowmen their bolts; but most of the shots were rendered useless by the high parapets of the Saxon redoubts. The infantry armed with lances, and the cavalry, advanced to the gates of the redoubts, and endeavoured to force them. The Anglo-Saxons, all on foot around their standard, planted in the ground, and forming behind their palisades a compact and solid mass, received the assailants with heavy blows of their axes, *ævissimæ secures*, as the historian calls them,<sup>4</sup> one blow of which broke the lances and cut through the coats of mail.<sup>5</sup> The Normans, not being able to penetrate the redoubts, or to tear up the stakes, fell back, fatigued with their useless attack, upon the division commanded by William. The duke then made all his archers advance, and ordered them not to shoot straightforward, but into the air, so that the arrows might fall into the enemy's camp. Many of the English were wounded, most of them in the face, by this manœuvre; Harold himself had his eye pierced with an arrow; but nevertheless, continued to issue his orders and to fight. The attack of the infantry and cavalry again commenced, amid cries of *Notre Dame! Dieu aide! Dieu aide!* But the Normans were driven back from one of the gates of the camp, to a deep ravine, covered with brushwood and grass, the growth of time, into which they and their horses fell one

<sup>1</sup> *Id. ib.*<sup>2</sup> *Id. ib.*<sup>3</sup> *Id. ib.* Henric. Huntind., lib. viii., *ut sup.* p. 368.<sup>4</sup> Guill. Pictav., p. 201.<sup>5</sup> Chron. de Normandie, p. 234. Matt. Paris, i. 2

upon the other, and thus perished in great numbers.<sup>1</sup> There was a moment of terror in the foreign army. The report spread that the duke had been killed, and at this news a retreat commenced. William threw himself before the fugitives and barred their passage, threatening them, and striking them with his lance; then uncovering: "I am here," he exclaimed; "look at me, I still live, and, with the help of God, I will conquer."<sup>2</sup>

The cavalry returned to the redoubts, but they could not force the gates or make a breach; the duke then thought of a stratagem to induce the English to quit their position; he ordered a thousand horse to advance and immediately retreat. The sight of this feigned flight made the Saxons lose their coolness; they all rushed in pursuit, their axes hanging from their necks.<sup>3</sup> At a certain distance, a body previously disposed, joined the fugitives, who turned; and the English, surprised in their disorder, were assailed on every side by blows of lances and swords, from which they could not defend themselves, having both their hands occupied in wielding their great battle-axes. When they had lost their ranks, the redoubts were forced; horse and foot made their way into them, but the combat was still fierce, hand to hand. William had his horse killed under him; Harold and his two brothers fell dead at the foot of their standard, which was torn up and replaced by the banner sent from Rome. The wreck of the English army, without chief and without standard, prolonged the struggle till the end of the day, so late that the combatants of the two parties only recognised each other by their language.<sup>4</sup>

Then, and not till then, did this desperate resistance end. Harold's followers dispersed, many dying upon the roads of their wounds and the fatigue of the combat. The Norman horse pursued them, granting quarter to none.<sup>5</sup> The victors passed the night on the field of battle, and the next day at sunrise, duke William drew up his troops and called over the names of all those who had crossed the sea with him, from the

<sup>1</sup> Dugdale, *ut sup.* Willelm. Gemet., p. 287.

<sup>2</sup> Guill. Pictav., p. 202.

<sup>3</sup> Chron. de Normandie, p. 235.

<sup>4</sup> Id. p. 236. Dugdale, i. 312. Matt. West., p. 223. Eadmer, lib. i. p. 6.

<sup>5</sup> Guill. Pictav., p. 203.

list which had been drawn up before their departure, at St. Valery. Numbers of these lay, dead or dying, beside the conquered.<sup>1</sup> The fortunate survivors had, for the first fruits of their victory, the spoils of the dead enemy. In turning over the bodies, thirteen were found with a monk's habit under their armour; they were the abbot of Hide and his twelve companions: the name of their monastery was the first written in the black book of the conquerors.<sup>2</sup>

The mothers and wives of those who had come from the neighbourhood to fight and die with their king, united to seek together and bury the bodies of their relations. That of king Harold lay for a long time on the field of battle, without any one daring to claim it. At length, Godwin's widow, Ghitha, subduing for the moment her grief, sent a message to duke William, asking his permission to render the last honours to her son. She offered, say the Norman historians, to give the weight of his body in gold. But the duke sternly refused, saying that a man who had been false to his word and to his religion, should have no other sepulchre than the sand of the shore. He relented, however, if we are to believe an old tradition, in favour of the monks of Waltham abbey, which Harold had founded and enriched. Two Saxon monks, Osgod and Ailrik, deputed by the abbot of Waltham, demanded and obtained permission to transport the remains of their benefactor to their church. They sought among the mass of bodies, despoiled of arms and clothes, examining them carefully one after the other, but could not recognise the body of him they sought, so much had his wounds disfigured him. Despairing ever to succeed in their research unaided, they addressed themselves to a woman whom Harold, before he became king, had kept as a mistress, and intreated her to assist them. She was called Edith, and surnamed the Beauty with the swan's neck.<sup>3</sup> She consented to accompany the two monks, and was more successful than they in discovering the corpse of him whom she had loved.

All these events are related by the chroniclers of Anglo-Saxon race, in a tone of despondency which it is difficult to convey. They call the day of the battle a bitter day,

<sup>1</sup> Chron. de Normandie, *ut sup.*

<sup>2</sup> Dugdale, i. 210.

<sup>3</sup> Chron. Anglo-Normandes, ii. De inventione sanctæ crucis Walthamensis, p. 249.

a day of death, a day stained with the blood of the brave.<sup>1</sup> "England, what shall I say of thee," exclaims the historian of the church of Ely; "what shall I relate to our descendants? Woe to thee! thou hast lost thy national king, and thou hast fallen into the hands of the foreigner; thy sons have perished miserably, thy councillors and thy chiefs are conquered, dead, or disinherited."<sup>2</sup> Long after the day of this fatal fight, patriotic superstition still saw traces of fresh blood upon the ground where it had taken place; they were visible, it was said, on the heights north-west of Hastings, when a slight rain had moistened the soil.<sup>3</sup> Immediately after his victory, William made a vow to build an abbey on the spot, dedicated to the Holy Trinity and Saint Martin, the patron of the warriors of Gaul.<sup>4</sup> The vow was soon accomplished, and the high altar of the new monastery was raised on the very spot where the standard of king Harold had been planted and torn down. The outer walls were traced around the hill which the bravest of the English had covered with their bodies, and the whole extent of the adjacent land, upon which the famous scenes of the battle had taken place, became the property of this abbey, which was called, in the Norman language, *L'Abbaye de la Bataille*.<sup>5</sup> Monks from the great convent of Marmoutiers, near Tours, came to settle here and pray for the souls of all who had died on the field.<sup>6</sup>

It is said, that, when the first stones of the edifice were laid, the architects discovered that there would be a deficiency of water; they went, quite disconcerted, to acquaint William with this untoward circumstance: "Work, work away," replied the conqueror, in a jovial tone, "for if God give me life, there shall be more wine among the monks of Battle Abbey than there is water in the best convent of Christendom!"<sup>7</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Matth. West., p. 224.

<sup>2</sup> Hist. Eccles. Eliensis, lib. ii. p. 44, *apud* *Rev. Anglic. Script.* (Gale) iii. 516.

<sup>3</sup> Guill. Neubrig. *Hist.* (Hearne) p. 10.

<sup>4</sup> *Chartæ Willelm. Conquæstoris*, *apud* Dugdale, *Monast. Anglican.*, i. 317, 318.

<sup>5</sup> *Cum leuga circumquaque adjacente... sicut illa quæ mihi coronam tribuit.* (*Chartæ Willelm. Conquæstoris in notis ad Eadmeri Hist.* p. 165.—In Latin, *Abbatia de Bello*.)

<sup>6</sup> Dugdale, i. 312.

<sup>7</sup> *Id. ib.* [As to the Bayeux Tapestry, see Appendix VIII.]