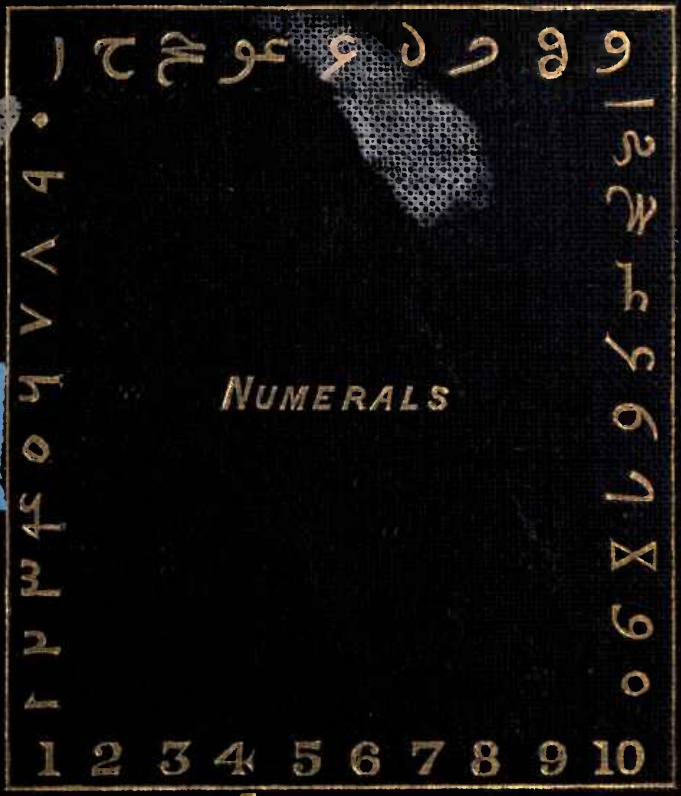

THE MYSTERIES OF CHRONOLOGY

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WITH

Proposal for a New English Era

TO BE CALLED

THE VICTORIAN

BY

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PREFACE.

The contents of this very slipshod work are as follows :

In addition to the above there ought to have been a chapter about the dates of the formulation of history in various countries. As a general rule, history begins with the fabulous, is followed by the legendary and the traditional, all at first handed down orally. A collection of these put into writing lays the foundation of the building,

and regular history then follows, which may be divided into the possible, the probable, the positive, according to various circumstances.

Now, to write a really good scientific work on all the subjects and contents mentioned above would take about fifty years. Moreover, the author must be a scholar with a good knowledge of Greek, Latin, Arabic, and many other languages, besides being well up in archæology, astronomy, chronology, geography, history, numismatics, and paleography. Possessing none of these qualifications, it may be considered most presumptuous on my part even to attempt to unravel some of the mysteries of the past, mysteries which have been often carefully concealed, distorted, falsified, and misrepresented, so that it is now impossible to get at the real truth about them. One can only suggest the phrase so frequently used by Arab authors, 'God alone knows.'

Still, the search after truth has ever been my guiding star, and what a difficult pursuit! In the present day, with all our appliances of civilization, there appear to be more persons occupied in leading people away from the truth than persons engaged in attempting to lead them to it. Moreover, the question of 'What is truth?' is somewhat difficult to answer. Even learned judges, acute lawyers, and intelligent jurymen sometimes fail in their mission.

The collection of facts seemed to be the best basis to work upon, and with this in view the contents of this work were first got together for my own information and guidance. Imperfect as it is in many ways, it struck me that some of the subjects touched upon might interest a few persons, and so for their benefit it has been published.

It is impossible to name all the persons who have kindly assisted me, but mention must be made of Mr. Edwin Johnson, who made researches on my account in the British Museum, and who from his own knowledge supplied me with much information about the three writers of the Tudor period mentioned in chap. v. and elsewhere.

To the officials of the British Museum and of the State Record Office in Chancery Lane I am also much indebted for assistance, information, and invariable courtesy. And the same thanks are due to the officials of the many museums and collections which I visited at various times in different parts of Europe.

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INTRODUCTION.

Before plunging into the subjects mentioned in the Preface, some explanation must be given as to the systems on which chronology and datings are generally established.

Time, at present represented by seconds, minutes, hours, days, months, and years, is the most fleeting of all perceptions, and unless occurring events are recorded daily with full details, it is impossible to rely upon their accuracy. And even then, though the date of the occurrence may be correct, the cause and effect of events are always open to controversy, according to the many and diverse opinions on any particular subject.

The dating of the events which occurred before the introduction of daily records and registers must be received with caution. Chroniclers, historians, and chronologers have done their best to compare and arrange the numerous eras and epochs of the earth's history. Many of these eras and epochs commence with the year of the creation of the world, each of them differing in actual figures,

and about them it must be confessed we are totally ignorant.

Astronomy perhaps will be found the safest guide to chronology. From the earliest ages the positions and movements of the planets and the stars have been observed and studied at all times by nearly all the nations. It was this study in Europe which enabled the Greek astronomers to determine the cycle of nineteen years and the lunar cycle.

These two cycles have the same origin, the same nature, the same revolutions, and the same effect. The only difference between the cycle of the moon and the cycle of nineteen years is that the former commences three years after the latter. The two are sometimes both mentioned in the same charters or documents, but the third of the one is the sixth of the other. The cycle of the moon is commonly called the Golden Number, from its being marked in letters of gold in ancient calendars.

THE LUNAR CYCLE

extends over a period of nineteen years. At the end of that time it recommences again, and goes through exactly the same phases, so that all calculation of the recurrence of the lunar phases is unnecessary. The lunar calendar of every interval of nineteen years is a reproduction of the lunar calendar of the preceding period. This cycle is

said to have been adopted 432 or 433 B.C., but it was practically known in Greece before that time.

THE SOLAR CYCLE,

or cycle of the sun, is a revolution of twenty-eight years. After every successive period of twenty-eight years the days of the month return again to the same days of the week ; the sun's place to the same signs and degrees of the ecliptic on the same month and days, and this goes on in regular rotation so as not to differ one day in a hundred years. The same order of leap-years and of dominical letters returns, and therefore it is also called the cycle of the Sunday letter.

THE INDICTIONS

are said to represent a term of fifteen years, beginning with 1, going on to 15, and then recommencing with 1. It is a period of fifteen years, having no reference to any religious observance or astronomical phenomena. It is apparently a conventional division of time, established, it is said, during the reign of Constantine, the Roman Emperor, continued by his successors, and by the Popes.

The real origin of the indiction period is doubtful. Gibbon, in his 'Decline and Fall,' gives one explanation, but it is not conclusive. Anyhow, it would appear that the indiction was finally

settled by Pope Gregory VII. (1073-1085) to be the first day of the year 313, and that year is also given in 'L'Art de vérifier les Dates.' The year of the indiction as a recorded date is to be found in many early documents, especially ecclesiastical ones, as also in charters. As there are four descriptions of indictions, each beginning with different datings—viz., 1st September, 24th September, 25th December or 1st January, and October —these must add considerably to the mysteries of chronology, though now no longer in use.

JOSEPH JUSTUS SCALIGER

was the first person who seems to have attempted to introduce some conformity into the tangled skein of datings, and laid the foundation of the science of ancient chronology. His works, 'De Emendatione Temporum' (1583) and 'Thesaurus Temporum' (1606) are still extant. It was on a multiplication of the three above-mentioned periods of 19, 28, and 15 years that Joseph Scaliger (1540-1609) is said to have established his Julian period. The result comes to 7,980, consisting exactly of 420 metonic or lunar cycles, 285 solar cycles, and 532 indictions; also, it may be noted, of 15 paschal cycles of 532 years each. Scaliger then sought the first year of a lunar cycle, the first of a solar cycle, and the first of an indiction falling on the same date, and this he

obtained by counting backwards. He took, for example, the first year of the lunar cycle, and, counting back from 19 to 19, made a table of the first years of this cycle expressed with reference to the first year of the Christian era. He then did the same by the solar cycle of 28 years, and the same by the indictions of 15 years. In these tables he sought and found the year before Christ which was the first year of a lunar cycle, the first year of a solar cycle, and the first year of the indiction. This was 4713 B.C., which he fixed as the commencement of the Julian period. According to this, the year of the birth of Christ was the 4713th year of his period, and adding 1,900 to this gives the current year as the 6613th of the Julian period.

It is difficult to understand why Scaliger included the indictions with the lunar and solar cycles, as the former had really nothing to do with the two latter in any way. As, however, the year of the indiction was much used in early datings, it was on that account perhaps he thought that they should be calculated. It was, anyhow, necessary to obtain a fixed date to start from, and so work out his chronological data, which seems to resemble somewhat the working into a large mosaic table the extraordinary number of small items of which it is composed.

To understand the various datings existing at

the time that Scaliger endeavoured to put some order into his chronological system, the following summary, showing the correspondence of the principal epochs, eras, and periods with that of the Christian era, is now given :

Epochs, Eras, and Periods.	*Dates of their Commencement.*
The Grecian era of the world.	September 1, B.C. 5598.
The ecclesiastical era of Constantinople.	March 21 or April 1, B.C. 5508.
The civil era of Constantinople.	September 1, B.C. 5508.
The Alexandrian era.	August 29, B.C. 5502.
The ecclesiastical era of Antioch.	September 1, B.C. 5492.
The Julian period.	January 1, B.C. 4713.
The Mundane era.	October, B.C. 4008.
The Jewish Mundane era.	Vernal equinox, B.C. 3761.
The era of Abraham.	October 1, B.C. 2015.
The destruction of Troy.	June 12 or 24, B.C. 1184.
The epoch of the building of Solomon's Temple.	May, B.C. 1015.
The era of the Olympiads.	New moon of summer solstice, July 1, B.C. 776.
The Roman era, *i.e.*, from the building of the city of Rome.	April 24, B.C. 758.
The era of Nabonassar.	February 26, B.C. 747.
The epoch of Daniel's seventy weeks.	Vernal equinox, B.C. 458.
The Metonic cycle.	July 15, B.C. 432.
The Calippic period.	New moon of summer solstice, B.C. 330.
The Philippian era.	June, B.C. 323.
The Syro-Macedonian era.	September 1, B.C. 312.
The Tyrian era.	October 12, B.C. 195.
The Sidonian era.	October, B.C. 110.
The Cæsarian era of Antioch.	September 1, B.C. 48.
The Julian year.	January 1, B.C. 45.
The Spanish era.	January 1, B.C. 38.
The Actian era.	January 1, B.C. 30.

Epochs, Eras, and Periods.	*Dates of their Commencement.*
The Actian era in Egypt.	September 1, B.C. 30.
The Augustan era.	February 14, B.C. 27.
The Pontifical indiction.	December 25 or January 1, B.C. 3.
The indiction of Constantinople.	September 1, B.C. 3.
The vulgar Christian era.	January 1, A.D. 1.
The destruction of Jerusalem.	September 1, A.D. 69.
The era of the Maccabees.	November 24, A.D. 166.
The era of Dioclesian.	September 17, A.D. 284.
The era of Ascension.	November 12, A.D. 295.
The era of Martyrs.	February 23, A.D. 303.
The era of the Armenians.	July 7, A.D. 552.
The era of the Hegira.	July 16, A.D. 622.
The era of Yazdegird, or Persian era.	June 16, A.D. 632.
The Galilæan era.	March 14, A.D. 1079.

It must be supposed that nearly all the dates fixed to the above epochs, eras, and periods are founded on astronomical, chronological, and historical researches and calculations, aided by solar and lunar eclipses, coins, inscriptions, manuscripts, and monuments. In the total absence of records and registers these must now be accepted as the basis from which springs all modern chronology, which cannot now be altered in any way.

THE PASCHAL CYCLE.

As has already been explained, the cycle of the sun consists of 28 and the cycle of the moon of 19 years. These multiplied by each other form a third cycle of 532 years, which is called the paschal cycle. At the end of a revolution of 532 years, the two cycles of the moon, the regulars,

the keys of the movable feasts, the cycle of the sun, the concurrents, the dominical letters, the paschal term, Easter, the epacts with the new moons, recommence as they were 532 years before, and continue the same number of years.

The paschal cycle of 532 years is most important, for it probably has more to do with the dating of the Christian era than the supposed date of the birth of Christ. The Benedictine story about Dionysius Exiguus and his reputed invention of the date of the Christian era will be described in the first chapter of this work.*

It will be noticed that nearly all the terms mentioned above are closely connected with the calendar of the Roman Catholic Church, dependent chiefly on phases connected with the lunar and solar cycles and other astronomical matters, more especially with reference to the annual recurring festival of Easter, the most important festival of the Christian Church, and the fixing of which caused considerable trouble and anxiety to the early ecclesiastical authorities.

* As previously stated, the number of 7,980 years before Christ gives exactly 420 lunar cycles, 285 solar cycles, 532 indictions, and 15 paschal cycles. If, then, A.D. 1 started with a new paschal cycle of 532 years, the year 1900 would be the 304th year of the fourth paschal cycle from the date of the introduction of the Christian era. Also 1900 would be the 1st year of the lunar cycle of 19 years, the 5th year of the solar cycle of 28 years, and indiction 13.

Frequent mention is made about the true calculation of Easter in Bede's 'Ecclesiastical History.' It is laid down at considerable length in a letter, without date, from Abbot Ceolfrid to Naitan, King of the Picts. 'There are,' the Abbot writes, 'three rules in the Sacred Writings on account of which it is not lawful for any human authority to change the time of keeping Easter which has been prescribed to us; two of which are Divinely established in the Law of Moses, the third is added in the Gospel by means of the Passion and Resurrection of our Lord. For the law enjoined that the Passover should be kept in the first month of the year, and the third week of that month—that is, from the fifteenth day to the twenty-first. It is added by Apostolic institution in the Gospel that we are to wait for our Lord's Day in that third week, and to keep the beginning of the paschal time on the same. Which threefold rule whosoever shall rightly observe will never err in fixing the paschal feast.'

* * * * *

This is followed by a long explanation of the month and days on which the Jewish Passover was fixed, etc., adding: 'By which our definition is proved to be true, wherein we said that the paschal time is to be celebrated in the first month of the year and the third week of the same. For

it is really the third week, because it begins on the evening of the fourteenth day, and ends on the evening of the twenty-first.'

According to the Book of Common Prayer, 'Easter Day is always the first Sunday after the full moon which happens upon or next after the 21st day of March ; and if the full moon happens upon a Sunday, Easter Day is the Sunday after.'

In other words, 'Find the day on or next of the 21st March upon which the ecclesiastical moon (*i.e.*, paschal moon) attains the fourteenth day of its age. The Sunday which next follows that day will be Easter Day.'

It may be stated that fourteen days of the new moon called the paschal moon is the date of the paschal term or full moon. The date of the new moon is always on one of the days from the 8th of March to the 5th of April, both inclusive. It follows, therefore, that the first day on which the paschal term or full moon can happen must be the 21st of March, and the last day on the 18th of April.

In other words, Easter Day (the paschal Sabbath) may fall upon any of the thirty-five days which are included after the 21st of March until the 25th of April, but cannot be earlier than the 22nd of March or later than the 25th of April.

Now, speaking chronologically, if Christ was born on a certain day, viz., 25th December, He

also ought to have died on a certain day. But the date of His death and resurrection is movable and dependent on the moon between the 22nd March and 25th April, which is curious. Moreover, all the movable feasts of the Church appear to be fixed more on lunar than on chronological calculations.

THE JULIAN AND GREGORIAN CALENDARS.

Julius Cæsar ordained that the year of Rome 708 (*i.e.*, A.U.C. 708) should contain 365 days, and every fourth year 366 days to balance the year, which at that time was computed at 365 days, 6 hours. But the mean solar or civil year consists of 365 days, 5 hours, 48 minutes, 49·54 seconds only. Deducting this from 365 days, 6 hours, there remains a balance of 11 minutes, 10·46 seconds, or about the 129th part of a day. In the course of time, then, the seasons would be out one day, in double that time two days, and so on. This was rectified during the Pontificate of Gregory XIII. (1572-1585), and established under the name of the New Style, ten days being deducted from the year 1582.

The 5th of October, 1582, was decreed to be the 15th. The day of the vernal equinox thus recovered its date of the 21st March, and was kept in its place in the following manner. By the established rules of the Julian Calendar there

would have been one day in excess every 129 years. To prevent this, it was decreed that the year 1700, by the Julian Calendar a leap-year, should be considered as a common year. Thus the equinox would be restored to its date of 21st March, and future equinoxes would be kept right by making the years 1800, 1900, 2100, 2200, 2300, 2500, 2600, 2700, 2900 and so on into common years of 365 days, instead of leap-years, as under the Julian Calendar, leaving 2000, 2400, 2800 and every fourth hundred year as a bissextile or leap-year of 366 days.

The Papal decree fixed the exact date of the commencement of the reform (named the New Style) on the 5th October, 1582, which was converted into the 15th October. It further ordered the year to be thenceforward reckoned from the 1st of January each year. This reform was introduced at different times into the various countries except Russia* and Greece, where the Old Style still prevails. It was not adopted in England till

* In Russia it is said that the Government are anxious to introduce the New Style in the place of the Old Style now used in that country. One difficulty of the change is caused by the many saints in the Greek Church, to each of whom a day is allotted. Their month would now have to be pushed forward twelve or thirteen days. One proposal was to omit leap-year every four years, so that in forty-eight or fifty-two years the Old would be assimilated with the New Style. It would be better perhaps to take the leap at one single bound, as was done in England in 1752.

1752, by which time an extra day had to be added, so the 3rd September became the 14th September, 1752.

In England, it is said, in the seventh, and so late as the thirteenth, century the commencement of the new year was reckoned from Christmas Day. But in the twelfth century the Anglican Church began the year on the 25th of March, and this practice was also adopted by laymen in the fourteenth century. This continued until the reformation of the calendar under Statute 24 George II., 1751, which decreed, along with other matters, that the new year should begin on the 1st January, 1752, and continue doing so every year henceforward. The date of the 3rd September, 1752, was ordered also to be converted into the 14th of the same month at the same time.

To persons acquainted with the subject all the above details will be looked upon as very ancient history. Still, it is necessary to give them here in a summarized form, so as to show the difficulties with which historians and chronologers have had to deal. The Julian and Gregorian Calendars, and the Julian Period, have been generally adopted, and reckoned not only forwards but backwards, so as to reduce all historical events to the position in respect to the order of time which they would have held if the Julian system had already existed.

It must, therefore, be understood that the dates of all events occurring before the Julian and Gregorian Calendars, and Julian Period, have been worked out by historians, chronologers, and others in accordance with the Julian chronology. The dating of events which took place at a time when no records or registers were ever kept must always remain open to some kind of doubt. Still, it is evident that without this simplification and assimilation, historical events would have been so confused that they could not have been so easily understood as they appear to be at the present time.

It is said that Napoleon called history 'a fable or fiction agreed upon.' Chronology may be included under the same heading, most certainly the chronology of the time before the introduction of some kind of record.

For ready reference a Roman calendar for the month of January is here transcribed :

1. Calends of January.
2. IV. Nones, *i.e.*, 4th day before the Nones of January.
3. III. Nones.
4. Pridie Non. Jan., or the day before the Nones of January.
5. Nones of January.
6. VIII. Ides, or the 8th day before the Ides of January.

7. VII. Ides.
8. VI. „
9. V. „
10. IV. „
11. III. „
12. Pridie Idus, or the day before the Ides of January.
13. Ides of January.
14. XIX. Calends of February, or the 19th day before them.
15. XVIII. Calends.
16. XVII. „
17. XVI. „
18. XV. „
19. XIV. „
20. XIII. „
21. XII. „
22. XI. „
23. X. „
24. IX. „
25. VIII. „
26. VII. „
27. VI. „
28. V. „
29. IV. „
30. III. „
31. Pridie Calends of February, or the day before them.

FEBRUARY.

1. Calends of February.

It must be noted that the Nones are the 5th day, and the Ides the 13th day, of each month, except in March, May, July, and October, when the Nones fall on the 7th, and the Ides on the 15th day, of these months, two more days of Nones, and two less days of Calends, being used during that period.

A good deal of the above has been taken from 'The Chronology of History,' by Sir Harris Nicolas. His work will be found most useful as a book of reference, entering into fuller details of the subject.

It would be interesting to find out when the term 'century' as applied to time first came into use. Probably it is of a later date than is generally supposed. In early times it does not appear to have been used, as the datings of that period would not require it. But when chronology began to be worked out by Joseph Scaliger and his successors, the term 'century' was found to be absolutely necessary.

In Murray's 'New English Dictionary' the word 'century' as relating to time is defined as a period of 100 years, originally expressed in full, 'a century of years.' 'Each of the successive periods of 100 years reckoning from a received

chronological epoch, especially from the assumed date of the birth of Christ. Thus, the hundred years from that date to the year A.D. 100 inclusive was the first century of the Christian era; those from 1801 to 1900 inclusive form the nineteenth century.' When, where, and how the term was first introduced it is difficult to say. It is quoted in the first half of the 17th century, A.D.

CHAPTER I.

ABOUT THE DATE OF THE INTRODUCTION OF THE CHRISTIAN ERA INTO EUROPE.

THE legend handed down to us by the Benedictines and other ecclesiastical authorities, and which has been apparently copied into every encyclopædia and other work of reference, is briefly this: 'Dionysius Exiguus, a Scythian monk and abbot of Rome, invented the Christian era about the year 532 A.D.'

There is no evidence to show when this legend was first put into circulation. It is quoted by Scaliger (1583) without any attempt at criticism. Since his time this story has been repeated over and over again, so that apparently it is now accepted as an historical truth.

In the French 'Grande Encyclopædia,' now in course of publication, a distinguished savant, in a short notice on chronology, repeats the statement that the Christian era was invented by Denis le Petit (as the French call him) in the sixth

century A.D., but that it did not come into use until the eleventh.

The various compilers of historical and chronological works do not tell the public that the legend has been doubted or denied, probably because they were themselves ignorant of the fact. It is, however, true that some 200 years ago the Jesuit Father Hardouin (1646-1729), in his Latin work on the chronology of the Old Testament, contemptuously rejected the statement about Dionysius Exiguus. Now, Hardouin was a man who knew what he was writing about, and his worth and genius have been valued by a few scholars. But that acute critic of the early Benedictine literature and of other monkish authors was, like many others, certainly not appreciated in his time, as shown by an epitaph, recorded as follows :

'In expectation of the judgment,
here lies
the most paradoxical of men,
by nation a Frenchman, by religion a Roman,
the portent of the literary world,
the worshipper and the destroyer of venerable antiquity.
Favoured in learning,
he woke to publish dreams and thoughts unheard of.
He was pious in his scepticism,
a child in credulity, a youth in rashness,
an old man in madness.'

And thus was genius, doubt, and criticism in that age handed down to posterity.

The Benedictines are solely responsible for the legend of Dionysius Exiguus; but the legend has been questioned by some of the Benedictines themselves. About fifty years after Hardouin's discoveries the Benedictines of St. Maur (1750) began their great work on chronology, 'L'Art de vérifier les Dates,'* which was carried on by a number of collaborators. They quote the legend of Denis le Petit without comment or criticism.

But a few years later a comprehensive Latin history of the literature of the Order of St. Benedict was undertaken by two Fathers of German monasteries. Here we find, in reference to Dionysius Exiguus, a remarkable admission.

The Benedictine Father says that there are grave doubts about this alleged inventor of the Christian era. Was Dionysius a Benedictine at all? The point is doubtful. He certainly was not 'Abbot of Rome.' The Father was probably aware that there was no such official in that early age. However, he continues: 'As several distinguished scholars of the Order have recognised Dionysius Exiguus,

* In 1770 Dom. François Clement prepared an entirely new edition of this work with many additions, and another still better one between 1783 and 1793, the date of his death. During the present century so much new matter has been discovered that the work is now hardly up to date. It still, however, holds its own as a book of reference, and a good deal of both astronomical and chronological information can be obtained from it.

we must not pass him over.' And so the legend is repeated.

It is certainly curious that after the Benedictine Father O'Lezipont had expressed such grave misgivings concerning Denis le Petit in 1754, further inquiries were not made on the subject. For in the ably-written tracts on 'Time' in D. Lardner's 'Common Things Explained' (first series, 1855, another edition 1874) we find 'Dionysius made historical researches, the result of which assigned the birth of Christ to the 25th day of December in the 753rd year from the foundation of Rome.'

The actual date of the birth and death of Christ is not known. It may be said to be founded on chronological calculations connected with the two Herods and the Roman Emperors, and probably made long after the event. The date is now supposed to be some three, four, or more years out in the calculation, but still it is a fact accepted, and need not be disturbed in any way.

The greater probability is that the date of the Christian era was fixed on astronomical calculations connected with the lunar, solar, and paschal cycles. The two former, of 19 and 28 years, multiplied together give 532, a date coinciding with the alleged discovery or invention of Dionysius Exiguus.

It is well known that the fixing of the date of

Easter, the great festival of the Christian Church, especially in connection with the Resurrection, was a cause of great trouble and anxiety to the early ecclesiastical authorities. And the paschal cycle is an ever-recurring revolution of 532 years closely connected with the Church Calendar.

At this distance of time it is difficult to verify the details of the supposed biography of Dionysius Exiguus, said to have been Abbot of Rome in the sixth century. Still, such a person may have existed, and on chronological or astronomical studies may have discovered, introduced, or invented the Christian era, in some places called the Dionysian era. On the other hand, it has been stated that this Dionysius was chiefly occupied with the fixing of the dates of the Easter term. By multiplying the lunar and solar cycles together he found and formed the paschal cycle, and on this calculated the dates of Easter for some years to come.

As is well known, the Benedictines and other monks were in the habit of putting forth legends, lives of saints, and other works under various names. Up to the date of the introduction of printing in the middle of the fifteenth century the whole of the learning of Europe was in the hands of the priesthood, a very close corporation, which looked keenly after their own interests, and manipulated everything in any way they chose.

There was no publication, no criticism, no contradiction of any sort.

The Jesuit Father Hardouin (already alluded to) has pointed this out in his Prolegomena to a Censure of Old Writers. Though most of this work is full of controversial matter, there are some facts about books and early libraries which, if true, are most interesting.

Books there were none or very few outside the libraries of the monasteries down to the twelfth century, says Mabillon (1632-1707) in his work on 'Monastic Studies.' It might be said with greater truth that in those very monastic libraries there were not many before the twelfth century.

Down to the rise of printing, says Hardouin, 'there was great facility for forgery and a great lust for it. After the rise of printing it may have been more difficult. And so the great period of forgery was the fourteenth, fifteenth, and sixteenth centuries, the period of printing was the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, and the period of examination and detection of it the end of the seventeenth and succeeding centuries.'

Now, this business of forging old literature has existed at all times and at all places. Mr. Thomas Chenery, in a most valuable and interesting lecture on the Arabic language, given at Oxford in 1869, says (and his remarks apply equally to the Benedictines): 'The notion of ancient Arabic

literature, of which some fragments are said to have come down to us, is, or ought to be, quite exploded. The Arabs, for instance, have preserved what they say is the lament of Amr, son of Al Harith, son of Modad the Jorhomi, who was expelled from Mecca and from the care of the Ka'beh, and forced to take refuge in Yemen at some remote time. Albert Schultens believed this Amr to have been contemporary with Solomon, and published the verses among his "Monumenta Vetustiora Arabiæ" as "Carmen Salamonis ætatem contingens." But he probably did not know that the Moslem men of letters were among the most unscrupulous and shameless of forgers, and were in the constant habit of placing snatches of poetry in the mouths of the heroes whose deeds they chronicled. The piece in question is in regular metre, determined by the quantity of syllables after the manner of Latin or Greek, and there is reason to believe that this more elaborate form of poetry was introduced at no early period. The conclusion to which we are forced to come is that these verses were probably composed by some versifier under the Khalifs when the old legends of the people were digested into a regular historical chronicle.'

Again, we find in the last chapters of A. Giry's 'Manuel de Diplomatique' (Paris, 1894) some valuable remarks on the subject of forgeries. The author is professor at L'École des Chartes, and

apparently labours under what may be called the usual infirmities of the official class. He does not see the force of objections to the system, or is unwilling to entertain them.

He refers in passing to the attacks of the Jesuit scholars (Hardouin and others) upon the Benedictine documents, but does not enter into the merits of the controversy. He gives no searching criticism of Mabillon and the other Benedictines who have been hitherto our authorities, and records as a matter of course the legend of Dionysius and the introduction of the Christian era.

And yet such is the force of evidence that this official scholar devotes his last chapters to the subject of forgeries, which in a manner breaks up the whole of the orthodox theory advocated by him.

Here is a scholar who, after labouring in the interests of credulity, tells us in the strongest language how innumerable falsities have been perpetrated in charters and genealogies in the interest of persons, families, corporations, etc., and adds that it would require a thick volume to tell us all he knows about this.

Especially in reference to Bulls of Popes he says there has been temptation to forgery and consequent results, but that the matter is one of infinite detail. From the compilations of Jaffé and his successors we may form some idea of documents of this nature marked 'false.'

Again, in 'Books and their Makers during the Middle Ages,' G. H. Putnam says, vol. i., p. 83 : 'It was about 1440 when Laurentius Valla, at that time acting as secretary for King Alphonso of Naples, wrote his report upon the famous *Donation* of Constantine, the document upon which the Roman Church had for nearly a thousand years based its claim to be the direct representative in Western Europe of the old Imperial authority. Valla brought down upon his head much ecclesiastical denunciation. The evidences produced by him of the fact that the document had been fabricated a century or more after the death of Constantine could not be got rid of, and although for a number of years the Church continued to maintain the sacred character of the *Donation,* and has in fact never formally admitted that it was fraudulent, it was impossible after the beginning of the sixteenth century even for the ecclesiastics themselves to base any further claims for the authority of the Church upon this discredited parchment.

'Of almost equal importance was the discovery of the fabrication of the pseudo-Isidorian Decretals. The Decretals had been concocted early in the ninth century by certain priests in the West Frankish Church, and had been eagerly accepted by Pope Nicholas I. (858-867), who retained in the archives of the Vatican the so-called originals.

The conclusion that the Decretals had been fraudulently imposed upon the Church was not finally accepted until the beginning of the fourteenth century. It was with the humanistic movement of the Renaissance that historical criticism had its birth, and a very important portion of the work of such criticism consisted in the analysis of the lack of foundation of a large number of fabulous legends upon which many of the claims of the Church had been based.'

Erasmus, the great scholar of the beginning of the sixteenth century, in the first edition of his New Testament, omitted altogether the testimony of the 'three witnesses' in the first Epistle of John v. 7, and 'insisted that the writings of the Fathers, and even the Roman versions of the Scriptures themselves, must be subjected to critical analysis and to textual corrections, and that not a few of the dicta which had been made the basis of doctrines called authoritative were either fraudulent interpolations in the original texts, or were the result of the glosses and blunders of incompetent copyists' (see Putnam, vol. ii., pp. 25, 206).

Though Putnam has admitted that there were interpolations, omissions, additions, and even fraud in many of the early documents and manuscripts, he seems to have accepted without any doubt or misgiving all the Benedictines' accounts of their monasteries, manuscripts, and libraries.

Now, the whole of the period from the fifth to the fifteenth century was one of great darkness as regards regular historical records, and it is difficult to fix accurate dates with absolute certainty.

It must also be remembered that the two great authorities about the literary work of the Benedictines, viz., Mabillon and Zeigelbauer, only lived during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, many centuries after Cassiodorus and Benedict. During that long interval, and before our present chronology was established, it is highly probable that more was based upon legend and tradition than upon reliable historical evidence.

Now, with regard to books and libraries in 1271, when study began to be taken up in earnest in Paris, the Archdeacon of Canterbury then bequeathed to the Chancellor of Paris all his books of theology, to be accommodated for the use of poor scholars and students of theology in Paris. They consisted of fourteen volumes of a very meagre description, with none of the Fathers or of the scholastic theologians who are said to have written before the fourteenth century.

In the year 1304 Simon, Bishop of Paris, has no other books to bequeath to his Church except 'Books of the chapel for the use of the Paris Church,' as we read in the martyrology of that Church.

In France there was no Royal Library before the

reign of Charles V., called the Wise (1364-1380). He, partly out of books which his father, King John the Good (1350-1364), left him at his death, and partly out of those which he himself acquired, founded a library of 900 volumes, and that was a vast amount of books for those times. Afterwards it was greatly augmented by Francis I. (1515-1547) and by Catherine de Medicis, books having been brought from Florence from the library of Lorenzo de Medicis.

If, then, the above is a description of books and libraries in the thirteenth, fourteenth, and fifteenth centuries, before the discovery of printing, it must be inferred that during the previous centuries they were even less numerous, and that there must have been a total absence of record of any value. The histories of those times subsequently written must have been chiefly founded on legendary and traditional information, made up later into a chronological sequence.

To return again to the date of the introduction of the Christian era generally into Europe. The style of the dating of the Christian era which first came into use was 'anno incarnationis Dominicæ,' or 'anno ab incarnatione,' or 'anno a Nativitate,' or 'anno a Passione,' etc., which prevailed for several centuries. These were followed by 'anno Domini,' 'anno gratiæ,' 'anno salutis humanæ,' and finally 'A.D.'

In a work entitled 'Die Urkunden Karls III. ; or, the Records of Charles III., Emperor of the West,' by Dr. E. Muhlbacker, Vienna, 1879, it is stated that the records of Lothair, Charles the Bald, and Louis the German are only dated according to the years of their reign and indictions. In a footnote it is added that the Incarnation year is only once mentioned in the records of the reign of Charlemagne (768-814), and once found in those of Charles the Bald (840-877). In West Francian records and those of Upper Burgundy the Incarnation dating is first mentioned in 888, while in Italy it is in use during the reign of Charles III., Emperor of the West, who is said to have reigned from 876 to 888 in various places.

From the archives of the Vatican some information was collected, and it appears that though there are scattered documents, neither indexed nor arranged in any way, there is no *series* of documents in the Vatican prior to 1198, beginning with Innocent III. (1198-1216). A little work entitled 'Ad Vaticani Archivi Romanorum Pontificum Regesta Manuductio,' Rome, 1884, gives the numerical list of these volumes from 1198 to 1592.

The early Papal records and registers (if ever they existed) appear to have disappeared altogether. Professor Lanciani, a great authority on Roman antiquities, states positively in his 'Ancient Rome' that there were early Papal records from

the time of Pope Damasus (366-384) down to the twelfth or thirteenth centuries, and adds (p. 204): 'Not one of the volumes of the documents of the Regesta belonging to the incomparable collection formerly in the buildings of Damasus, then in the Lateran, and lastly in the Turris Cartularia, has escaped destruction; not one has come down to us.' Again, at p. 189, 'The library of Damasus has long since disappeared.'

It is thus clear that no series of the records of the early years remains. How, when, and where they were destroyed it is impossible to say, and whether done intentionally or through want of knowledge of their value is also a mystery. Considering the rudeness, ignorance, and barbarism of those times, personally I doubt if any complete series ever existed at that time.

It is a curious coincidence that in England our records (meagre as they are) begin about the same time as the series of documents in the Vatican—the latter part of the twelfth century.

From various works on and about the early Papal records I have, however, been able to obtain some information about the time when the Incarnation dating first began to be used in the Vatican.

The Popes in their very early documents appear to have used no dates of any kind. The year of the indiction is the date that first appears transcribed thus: 'Scriptum per manus . . . notarii

. . . in mense Octobris Indictione XIII.' (supposed to be October, 640).

The Kalends, Nones, and Ides of the various months, and generally the year of the indiction, are used where the documents are dated at all, but many are still undated. After this comes sometimes the year of the reign of the Pope on the document. The first of this kind gives the second year of the reign of the Pope Zachary (741-752). The next is the fifth year of the reign of Hadrian I. (772-795). And this goes on, the documents being sometimes undated, sometimes dated with Kalends, Nones, and Ides, to which are sometimes added the year of the indiction ; sometimes the year of the reign of the Popes, sometimes the name and year of the reigning Emperor is added or the year of the Consulate. All the numerals used are naturally Roman ones.

Before the use of the term 'anno incarnationis dominicæ' I have come across the use of the simple word 'anno,' thus : 'Scriptum per manus Joannis scrinarii Anno VII. domini nostri Zachariæ Datum II. Nonas Novembris Imperante Constantino, Indictione V. Anno DCCXLVIIII.'—the first indiction with a dated year that I have seen.

This rather bears out the theory that the dating by the Incarnation is considerably posterior to the dating by the Christian era, at first simply expressed by the word 'anno.' Our Anglo-Saxon

Chronicle is dated throughout with 'anno' only, while Bede's 'Ecclesiastical History' carries throughout Incarnation dates. It may be that the Chronicle is anterior to Bede, for to my idea the Chronicle was the first attempt to formulate English history.

The first use of Incarnation dating among the Vatican records that I have come across (but there may be earlier) is 938, as follows: 'Mense Junio, Anno ab Incarnatione Domini DCCCCXXXVIII., Indictione XI., Epact. XVI., Concur. VII., Anno III., Ottonis regis.'

After that Incarnation datings follow, not at all continuously, but at intervals, viz., 964, 968, 996, 1046, 1048, 1061, 1069, 1121, and so on, all of course in Roman numerals.

The Abbé Duchesne, head of the École de France in Rome, and author of many valuable learned works, told me that the Popes did not begin Incarnation dates till the last half of the tenth century. The first letter is dated DCCCCLXIII. In other countries he said it was used earlier, and quoted Bede and his Incarnation dates, but could not tell me where Bede got them from. Further, that Denis le Petit (*i.e.*, Dionysius Exiguus) was occupied not with the Incarnation, but with the paschal dates. Instead of calculating from the year of the building of Rome (A.U.C.), 753 or 754, he commenced from the supposed year of the birth of Christ, and calculated the Easter date for

ninety-five years, from 531 to 626, and Bede did the same up to 1063.

From the above it may be inferred that the dating from the Incarnation in France, Germany, and Italy was not introduced till the ninth and tenth centuries. It was not till the Pontificate of John XIII. (965-972) that the Apostolic letters commenced to carry the year of the Christian era, then expressed 'Ab anno Incarnationis Dominicæ,' or 'Anno ab Incarnatione Domini.'

In the Municipal Library at Tours there are some 1,700 manuscripts, many collected from the old Abbayes of St. Martin and Marmoutier, and the Church of St. Gatien (now the cathedral) and other places. In none of these manuscripts, I am told, are there any Incarnation dates previous to the eleventh century A.D., which shows that this dating was hardly in general use prior to that period.

Datings from various epochs which occurred during the reigns of Kings and Emperors in those early days were also much in vogue at that time. From these epochs current events were computed and dated, and these with the years of the reigns of the Sovereigns appear to have formed the basis of chronology in France, Germany, and Italy for a long early period. In England for our early histories we are entirely dependent on the Benedictines, who state that Christianity and the date

of the Christian era were introduced into this country by St. Augustine, who came from Rome to England with forty monks in 596, was made the first Archbishop of Canterbury, and died about 607.

But in the early monkish chronicles there is to be found another story of the introduction of Christianity into England, to the effect that it was imported by Joseph of Arimathea, Lazarus, and Mary Magdalen, who came to Glastonbury, where Joseph was buried, and on his tomb was inscribed the following, a translation from the original Latin, 'Having buried Jesus, I came here to convert the Britons,' while the thorn-tree that he planted is blossoming still.

This story, however, has now disappeared, and the great work 'Historia Ecclesiastica Gentis Anglorum,' attributed to the Venerable Bede, but probably formulated by the Benedictines under his name from his literary remains, and published at a later date, forms the basis of the early history of England, both as regards the Church and the State.

In Spain the era known as the Spanish era was introduced B.C. 38, and was used till A.D. 1180, when it was abolished by a decree of the Council of Tarragona and the Christian era substituted. Still, the former era was continued in use in certain provinces until 1398. Portugal was the last nation that computed by this Spanish era, and retained it

till 1415 or 1422, while the Greeks did not adopt the dating by the Christian era till the fifteenth century.

With the above details before us it is difficult to believe the very early Incarnation datings given in the Anglo-Saxon charters, wills, guilds, manumissions, and acquittances from the reign of King Ethelburht (DCV.) to William the Conqueror. The work has been translated by Benjamin Thorpe, London, 1865. It is curious that England, always a backward country as compared with Italy, France, or Germany, should be far ahead of them as regards Incarnation datings.

CHARTERS.

Now, in the work just mentioned there appear to be as many documents without dates as with them. Of 239 and odd charters many are undated, others bear the date of 'Ab Incarnatione Domini,' or 'Anno Dominiæ Incarnationis,' or 'Anno adventus Domini;' some with the year of the reign of the King and some without; some with the Nones, Ides, and Calends of the Roman Calendar and some without; some mention the names of saints' days or feast days, and some the number of the indiction of the year.

It is further curious to note that in this Anglo-Saxon work the earlier charters of the seventh, eighth, and ninth centuries are more or less dated,

while those of the tenth and eleventh centuries are hardly dated at all. But all Anglo-Saxon and Anglo-Norman charters, and especially the ones dated before the ninth century, ought to be most carefully examined and regarded with some suspicion, as it is now generally admitted that many of them are spurious. Sir Nicolas Harris says: 'It is a well-known fact that an exemption from episcopal jurisdiction was greatly coveted by the principal monasteries, and that the monks during the Anglo-Norman period (and no doubt previously) committed extensive forgeries to obtain that object.' Again, when the Domesday Book was under preparation many charters were forged as titles to lands claimed by various parties, especially those belonging to many of the religious houses.

WILLS.

Among the sixty-seven wills, copies of which are given in the work above mentioned, only three are dated, and one most elaborately: 'Anno Domini DCCCCVIII.,' with the indiction, epact, concurrent, lunar cycle, paschal term, and Calends of May. The Anno Domini is curious, for the term was not in use at that early period.

Of the five guilds, eight manumissions, and ten acceptances given none are dated.

Now, this work of Thorpe's had been preceded

by another one of the same nature—'Codex Diplomaticus Ævi Saxonici,' by John Mitchell Kemble (1839-1848), in six volumes, from which Thorpe had borrowed much. This was followed in 1885, 1887, and 1893 by the 'Cartularium Saxonicum,' a collection of charters relating to Anglo-Saxon history by Walter de Grey Birch, of the British Museum. This is a very lucid and interesting work in three volumes, with more to come, giving many copies of early charters, with their dates.

The first document given in the first volume is curious. It purports to be a charter of St. Patrick granting indulgences to the benefactors of Glastonbury, and is dated, 'In nomine nostri Jhesu Christi Ego Patricius humilis servunculus Dei anno incarnationis ejusdem CCCCXXX.' Now, according to the Benedictine legend, the Christian era was not introduced till the year 532, so this precedes it by 102 years, and makes the genuineness of the date of this charter rather doubtful.

The second document purports to be a letter from St. Patrick, but without any date.

The third is properly dated according to the style of dating of that period, without the Incarnation year, viz., 'Mense Aprilis sub die IIII. Kl. Maias, Indictione VII.,' being a grant by Ethelburht, King of Kent. Mr. Birch says this date corresponds with 28th April, 604.

The next two documents carry the Incarnation

date of the year DCV., being grants by the same King.

The sixth document is properly dated for the period, while the seventh, eighth, and ninth are not dated at all. And so the work proceeds in three volumes, many of the documents with the dates of the Incarnation year, many without them or any dates at all, and others with the proper dates of the period.

It is worthy of remark that none of the Pope's letters from Rome carry the Incarnation date of the year, while all charters and grants to religious houses and monasteries are carefully filled in with this date. Until fuller and further inquiry has been made throughout Europe generally, nothing can be positively asserted. Still, from what has already transpired, it may be inferred that all documents bearing Incarnation dates prior to the ninth century should be most carefully examined. It may be that when prepared they were antedated, or dates added to the originals at a later period, or that original documents have been copied and then dated. Diligent research may eventually lead to some final conclusion as to the actual year when the datings by the year of the Incarnation first commenced.

Mr. A. Giry, in his valuable 'Manuel de Diplomatique,' says at p. 89, that 'the use of the Incarnation date in the West of Europe did not become

general till after the year 1000,' and adds in a note, 'The dates of the Christian era have been very frequently added to the documents, in some cases to the original ones, in others to old copies of them. Nearly all the original charters of the Abbaye of Saint Maur-des-Fossés received this addition in the eleventh century, and in many cases such have been published without the warning that these dates were written in other handwriting than the original. By relying on such interpolated and other false dates, it has been alleged that the datings by the Christian era are frequently found in the French records from 632.'

In conclusion, then, it may be stated that all charters or documents bearing the Incarnation date prior to the ninth century should be regarded with suspicion. Further, that from the ninth to the eleventh century the use of the Incarnation date was applied here and there, and from the twelfth century it came into more general use, and continued till its supercession, more or less, by the term 'Anno Domini,' and finally by our present system of dating A.D., which will be dealt with in the next chapter.

CHAPTER II.

ABOUT THE DATE OF THE INTRODUCTION OF 'ANNO DOMINI,' AND EVENTUALLY OF 'A.D.,' OUR PRESENT SYSTEM.

To endeavour to fix the exact date of the introduction of our present system of dating is difficult; it can only be determined after a careful examination of old documents such as Manuscripts, Records, Close, Patent, Pipe, and Charter Rolls, Letters, Wills, Registers, Official Correspondence, and such like.

To understand what labour this would entail, a reference can be made to a very interesting work entitled 'Records and Record Searching,' by Walter Rye, 2nd edition, London, 1897. The book is very complete, with an excellent index, but persons not acquainted with chronological details might imagine that from the earliest period dates were always written in Arabic numerals. No mention is made of the various kinds of dates used in the voluminous records

referred to, while a verification of the correctness of those different datings would add considerably to the historical value of the documents.

However, the practice of reducing every date to one common system has been general. Historians, chronologers, antiquaries, and archæologists, with infinite trouble and research, have worked all dates into years and centuries, all recorded in Arabic numerals. But there is an exception to which particular attention should be drawn—I allude to the many documents with the original datings to be found in Thomas Rymer's 'Fœdera, Conventiones, Litteræ,' etc.

Dean Stanley, in his 'Memorials of Westminster Abbey,' p. 397, has an interesting allusion to this Thomas Rymer, who was 'a constant pilgrim to the Chapter House for the compilation of his valuable work on the Treaties of England. So carefully closed was the Record Office itself that he had to sit outside in the vestibule, and there, day after day, out of the papers and parchments that were doled out to him, formed the enormous folios of Rymer's "Fœdera."'

Rymer himself began the copying of the documents from Anno Incarnationis 1100, the year of the accession of Henry I. A later edition in 1816 has supplied a few from 1066, when William the Conqueror commenced his reign, up to 1100. The original work extends from 1101 to 1654, and fills

twenty volumes in folio. The first fourteen volumes were published in Rymer's lifetime (1641-1713); the fifteenth and sixteenth, prepared by him, were published after his death by his assistant, Robert Sanderson, afterwards Master of the Rolls, who completed the seventeenth to the twentieth volumes between 1717 and 1735.

The last edition of this valuable work was published between 1816 and 1830 ; it begins with 1066, but only goes as far as 1383, 6 Richard II. When this was being edited, it was found that in both the original work and the editions which followed it the chronological arrangements were very faulty, and many of the dates wrongly calculated. In the last edition of 1816 the dates seem to have been all recalculated—

1. By the mode now generally adopted by European States.

2. By the ancient Roman method in Calends, Nones, and Ides.

3. By the mode adopted in many instances by the movable and immovable feasts or fasts of the Church, saints' days, their eves, octaves, etc.

Dates expressed by A.D. are carried through the chronological indexes and margins of the editions of 1704-1735, 1737-1745, and 1816-1830, though the term A.D. is not used at all in any of the original documents themselves. The A.D. dates

are therefore the productions of the various editors.

In the edition of 1816, which only goes as far as 6 Richard II., or 1383, no Arabic numerals are used. In Rymer's original edition of 1704 the first date of the year in Arabic numerals appears during the first quarter of the sixteenth century, and continues at very rare intervals up to 1601, when it becomes a little more frequent to 1654, the year of the close of the work.

In another chapter will be found allusions to the very numerous Incarnation datings inserted in Bede's 'Ecclesiastical History,' said to have been finished the first part of the eighth century A.D. Here the following summary of the datings of original documents of the eleventh and twelfth centuries will show how sparsely these Incarnation datings are to be found.

1066—WILLIAM I., THE CONQUEROR—1087.

None of the fifteen documents quoted in the edition of 1816 carry Incarnation dates, but two of them are dated by the year of the reign of the King.

1087—WILLIAM II.—1100.

Of the four documents of this reign one only is dated 'Anno ab Incarnatione MC.,' the others are undated.

Here it may be noted that the first edition of 1704 seems to have been very carelessly prepared as regards the use of Roman and Arabic numerals. Some of the latter are to be found in this work at a very early date, while on referring to the edition of 1816 the same are always expressed in the former.

The edition of 1816 was, I believe, prepared from the original documents and compared with them. Up to 1383, when this edition ends, all the figures are in Roman numerals only. This would show that Arabic figures were not much in use at that period, which will be further confirmed by the dates given in the works mentioned later on in this chapter.

1100—HENRY I.—1135.

The two documents of this reign are undated by the year in the 1704 edition, but in the 1816 edition there are several more added papers, and two of them carry dates. One, 'Anno ab Incarnatione Domini M°C°XI°. vi. id. Aug.,' and the other, 'Vicesimo secundo die Novembris anno regni nostri tricesimo tertio.'

1135—STEPHEN—1154.

With one exception, all the documents of this reign are undated by the year. One carries the

place only, 'Apud Westmonasterium'; another carries the month and day after the place, while the exceptional one is remarkable. It is an instrument placing Christchurch by the walls of London under the protection of Pope Eugenius. After date of place that of time is given thus: 'Kl. Nov. Indictione XI. Incarnationis Dominicæ Anno MCXLVII. Pontificatus vero Domini Eugenii Papæ III., Anno III.'

1154—HENRY II.—1189.

Under this reign 33 instruments are noted, the dating of which are as follows: Undated, 13; with place only, 2; place with date of month, 8; place, date of month, year of Pontificate, 3; month dated only, 1; place, date of month, year of reign, 1; exceptional, 2; year of Incarnation only, 1; year of Incarnation, month, indiction, year of reign, 1; by place, feast of Church, year from Incarnation, 1; or 33 in all.

In Rymer's edition of 1704 there is an instrument purporting to come from King Alfonso of Castile with the date below it, 'Ære 1214, Kal. Septembris.' As it seemed rather an early date for the use of Arabic numerals, I referred to the original document in 'Bibl. Cotton Julius A xi.,' and there found that the date was really given in Roman numerals thus, 'MCCXIV. viii. Kal. Septembris.' This is evidently the Spanish era, which

began 1st January, B.C. 38, and 1214 would correspond to our A.D. 1176.

1189—RICHARD I.—1199.

One of the first documents is a letter from Philip, King of France, to Richard, bearing date 'Ab Incarnatione Domini 1189, Mense Octob.' In this case neither the original document nor a copy of it is to be found, and therefore it is impossible to say whether it is actually dated with Arabic or with Roman numerals. But the probability is, supposing the document to be genuine, that it carries Roman numerals, the time being rather early for the use of Arabic figures.

Other modes of dating are by the month, the date of month, and year of reign, or month and date of month and place.

It is curious that in two instruments placed together and dated from Messana, the first has simply the day of month, while the second has, 'In the year of the Incarnate Word the thousandth one hundred and ninetieth, in the month of March.'

In a letter we find, 'We have written in the middle of September in the year from Alexander Pope, the fifth.'

A letter of Emperor Henry has place and vigil of St. Thomas, Apostle.

A letter of the Pope was dated 'St. Peter's, 8 Ides of June, in the fourth year of our Pontificate.'

Though there are fewer entirely undated documents than before, some important instruments have no date whatever.

There is no uniformity of dating even in Papal letters. The year of the Pontificate is sometimes omitted, and the year of the era seldom used.

Queen Eleanor writes long, undated letters, but apparently acquires the habit of dating in the next reign.

It should be remarked that during the reigns of Henry I., Stephen, Henry II., and Richard I. there are not less than sixty-seven years for which no kind of instrument is found in Rymer's 'Fœdera' (see General Introduction of 1816 edition).

1199—JOHN—1216.

The modes of dating are the years of the reign of the King, the place and day of month, and these are the most common both with Richard and John. Still, there are undated treaties and conventions; occasionally only the year of the reign is given in John's documents, and some of them are unaccountably undated altogether.

The Popes, as usual, have month, day, and year of Pontificate, but no year of era.

The Incarnation dates are few, viz., 'Year of the Incarnate Word,' 'Year of the Lord's Incarnation,' 'Year from the Incarnation,' all in Latin words, not figures.

The fullest date is that to the 'Resignation' of John to Pope Innocent III., as follows: 'At St. Paul's, London, on the third day of October, in the year from the Incarnation MCCXIII.,' of our reign the fifteenth year, in Latin.

There is a letter from ex-Queen Berengaria, dated, 'Cenom. Anno Dominicæ Incarnationis 1215, 7 September,' but Roman figures are used in the original without a doubt. Rymer gives the above, while the edition of 1816 gives 'MCCXV., vii. Kalends Octobris.'

1216—HENRY III.—1272.

The prevalent way of dating is by place, month, and day, the year of the reign being sometimes added.

A 'Form of Peace' is dated, 'At Lameth (*sic*) in the year from the Incarnation of the Lord the thousandth two hundred and seventeenth on the eleventh day of September, in the first year of the Lord Henry the King of England the third.'

The following is the first one of 'Anno Domini' to be noted. Reginald, King of Man, becomes vassal of the Pope; the date is, 'Actum London in Domo Militiæ Templi xi. Kal. Octob. Anno Domini millesimo ducentesimo decimo nono.'

There are a number of the King's letters witnessed by Hubert de Burg the Justiciary, who dates by month and day and place, but sometimes

gives the day in figures, sometimes in words. Thus on the same day we have 'xxiv. die Julii,' and 'vicesimo quarto die Julii.'

The term 'Anno Domini' now appears occasionally. One date in this reign is 'London anno Domini MCCXXIV., the morrow of St. Bartholomew the Apostle.' Another, 'Die Mercurii ante Ramos Palmarum anno Domini MCCLI.'

There is a treaty between Henry and Alfonso of Castile, dated, 'pridie Kalend Aprilis Æræ milesimo ducentesimo nonagesimo secundo,' and the next document has, 'Data apud Toledum Kal. Aprilis Rege Exprimante Æræ MCCXCII.' (both these dates belong to the Spanish era, and are equivalent to our A.D. 1254). There is a further letter from Toledo, dated 'Anno Domini MCCLIV.' Also a State Paper relating to the kingdom of Sicily, dated, 'Neapoli III. Non. Novemb., Indict. XIII., Incarnat. Domini anno MCCLIV., Pontificat vero Domini Innocenti Papæ IV., anno duodecimo.'

A few later instances of dating by the indiction occur in this reign. The important fact is the extremely few cases in this large mass of documents where the year is given. In the King's letters the constant habit is to give place and date of month and no more. In the Pope's letters the year of the Pontificate is added generally and nothing more.

The prevalent mode of dating continues to be by place, month, and day, but now more frequently with year of reign added, or Anno Domini. The days are given now in the old Roman fashion, now in the later Latin mode.

These are the earliest dates of this reign :

(1) 'Apud Westm. xxiii. Die Novembris Anno Regni nostri primo.'

(2) 'Datas per manum Waltori Merton Cancellarii nostri apud Novum Templum London xxix. Die Novembris Anno Regno nostri primo.'

(3) 'Dat. per manum W. de Merton Cancellarii nostri apud Westm. vii. Die Decembris.'

(4) 'Dat. per manum W. de Merton Canc. nostri apud Westm. vii. Die Decembris.'

(5) Letter of Gaston, Viscount of Perm : 'Dat. apud Orcesium xix. Kal. Februarii, Anno Domini MCCLXXIII.'

This year, 1273, is sometimes denoted not in Roman numerals, but in the Latin ordinal adjectives. The day of the week, *e.g.*, 'die Jovis,' is sometimes given.

There appears fresh evidence of a delight in exact dating on the part of monks and clerks, *e.g.* : 'Anno Domini MCCLXXIV., Indictione secunda, tempore Domini Gregorii Papæ decimo, Mense Maii, die Veneris in Crestorium Ascensionis Domini.'

Bulls continue to be dated by place, day of month, and year of Pontificate. It seems curious that in contrast to the practice of other ecclesiastics, the Pope should neglect the feasts of the Church and the year of the Lord in the dating of his letters. Absolutely undated letters are now very rare.

A French document relating to the succession is thus dated: 'Done à Aumbresbyrie le Lundy procheyn devaunt la Feste Seynt Alphege, le an du Regne le Rey Edward avaunt dit dis e ultyme' (supposed to be 1290).

Another instrument in French has only for date, 'Donee à Odymere le xii. jour de Aust' (supposed to be 1297). Another of the same year, 'Don. à Grolinques Abbaie, pres de Cartiay en Flandres, le vynt et troisieme jour du mois de Novembre, l'an de grace mil, deux cens quatre vin saysze.'

What is still perplexing is the strange irregularity in the forms of the royal dating. Here are two communications to the Pope of the same day. One is dated, 'Dat. Apud Arundel ix. Die Septembris;' the other, 'Dat. apud Arundel, nono die Septembris, anno Domini MCCCII., Regni vero nostri xxx.'

The form 'Anno Gratiæ' now makes a slight appearance.

Assuming the documents to be genuine, the evidence goes to show that the Pontiff's scribes

knew the day of month and year of Pontificate in which they were writing, and that they thought no other date of importance. So with the King's scribes; they knew the day of month, the year of reign, and heeded not, as a rule, feasts of Church or year of the Lord.

1307—EDWARD II.—1327.

The prevalent mode continues: place, day of month, sometimes with year of reign added. The same is noticed in the Pontiff's letters.

Occasionally 'anno Domini' is introduced.

(1) 'Dat. London vi. die Novembris Anno Domini MCCCVII. Regni vero nostri primo.'

(2) 'Dat. London viii. die Novembris Anno Domini MCCCVII. Regni vero nostri primo.'

(3) 'Dat. apud Westm. xii. die Novembris Anno Domini MCCCVII. Regni vero nostri primo.'

(4) 'Dat. apud Langele xxi. die Novembris Anno Domini MCCCVII. Regni vero nostri primo.'

But the 'annus Domini' is given rarely, and generally omitted, while in the vast majority of papers even the year of the reign is not inserted.

The mass of documents is considerably greater than that of any preceding reign, but throughout there is a falling off in the manner of exact dating, which perhaps may be ascribed either to the ignorance or carelessness of the scribes.

The prevalent mode of dating (*i.e.*, by place and date of month solely) is so fixed that the exceptions are hardly worth naming. In some French documents we find :

(1) 'Don. a Estaunford le xii. jour de Juyl, an de Grace Mil. Trois cente, Trente & Sept., & de notre Regne Unzisme.'

(2) 'Don. a Estaunford le xii. jour de Juyl, l'an du Grace Mill. CCC., Trente & Sept., & de notre Regne Unzisme.'

In a few instances of the latter part of the reign the year of the Lord is given in ordinals without ciphers, *e.g.:* 'Don, souz notre Grant Seal à nostre Palais de Westm. le xxiv. Jour de Marcz, l'an del Nativite nostre Seigneur Mill. Trois Centz, Sessant Un, & de nostre Regne Trent quint.'

In two documents (of viii. Jan.) 'year of grace' and 'year of nativity' are severally used, the year being expressed in each case in French words, not figures, and the name of such years occasionally recurs.

From whatever cause, it is clear that the scribes who wrote in French were more in the habit of giving the year of reign, and that of grace or nativity, than those who wrote in Latin.

1377—RICHARD II.—1399.

The prevalent mode continues, *i.e.*, place and date of month, sometimes with the addition of the year of reign.

From an account of payments it would appear that Roman numerals were used, and not Arabic ones.

Among the instruments ascribed to this reign there is nothing new to be specially noted. But in turning over these folios, the fact impresses itself more and more strongly upon the reader that while there are now hardly any undated documents, the time-dating is confined in the overwhelming majority of instances to the day of the month.

1399—HENRY IV.—1413.

The same mode prevails, and there is nothing fresh to report. Again, French documents have day of month and year of grace in ordinal words.

An English indenture bears this date: 'Wryten atte London the fourtene day of Marche, the year of our Lord a Thousand Foure Hundreth and Seven, and of the Regne of the forsaid Kyng the Aght'; equivalent to our A.D. 1407.

Perhaps the strong preference for the Roman numerals, which frequently occur, should again be noted: *e.g.*, 'Datum et actum Ruthen, die xxviii. Mensis Januarii, Anno Domini Mill. CCCCXI.'

1413—HENRY V.—1422.

The same features in reference to the dating of Latin and French documents continue. The 'year of grace' is greatly characteristic of the latter; the 'year of the Lord' is seldom given with the former.

1422—HENRY VI.—1461.

The same remarks apply as to the preceding reign.

1461—EDWARD IV.—1483.

The following is the date on an English document: 'Writen att London the xiii. day of Feuar, the Yeir of the Birth of our Lord MCCCCLXII., and the first year of the Regne of the High and Mighty Prince Kynge Edward the Fourth above rehersed.'

A Pope's letter bears date, unusually, of the year of Incarnation as well as of the Pontificate. Curiously, French documents again have the year of Incarnation, or the year of our Lord. Dating by place and day of month remains the prevailing mode in the Latin.

An English document has the date: 'The Tenth Day of Juyn the Zer of God one thousand four hundred eighty-two Zer.' Again, 'the xi. Day of Juyn, the Zer of oure Lorde a M.IVC.LXXXII. Zer.'

1483—RICHARD III.—1485—HENRY VII.—1509.

The same modes as before. Latin documents: place and day of month. French ones have the year ('l'an') without addition 'of grace,' or 'of the Lord.' Scottish have the year of the Lord. Papal documents give the year of the Incarnation.

1509—HENRY VIII.—1547.

The King remains singular, it would seem, in contrast to other potentates, in his use of the same method of dating by place and day of month only. This in the vast majority of cases. Occasionally the year of reign is added.

But about 1516 numerous examples occur of dating by the year of the Lord; yet it cannot be said that the old custom has been displaced, as later evidence still gives *place* and *month* date only.

Foreign court scribes continue to give the year ('one thousandth,' etc., generally in words), or year of the Lord, or year of grace, perhaps without exception, while the Papal letters continue to be dated by the year of the Incarnation.

In the collection of State Papers of Henry VIII., published by the Record Commission, the first dated letter by the year is that of Brian Tuke to Wolsey, 1528, in the Arabic numerals, but there is no evidence of a new fashion setting in at that time.

As yet no case of the use of the abbreviation 'A.D.' or 'A.C.' in the documents has been noted.

The will of Henry in English concludes: 'In witness whereof we have signed it with our Hand in our Palace of Westminster the thirty day of December in the Yere of our Lord God a thousand fyve hundred fourty and six after the Computation of the Church of England, and of our Reign the eight and thirty Yere.'

But Henry's last instrument has simply, 'Teste Rege apud Westmonasterium. Die Januarii, Anno Regni sui tricesimo octavo.'

1547—EDWARD VI.—1553.

The first document, 'Proclamation of Peace,' concludes: 'Witness ourself at Westminster the one and thirtieth day of January.'

The royal letters continue to be dated by place and day of month only.

1553—MARY—1554—PHILIP AND MARY—1558.

There is no change. The caprice of sometimes giving the date verbally, and sometimes in ciphers, is noticeable: *e.g.*, 'Rege et Regina apud Grenewiche vicemo quinto die Septembris,' 'the xiii. Day of Novembre,' 'xxvii. Die Novembris.' The year of reign is occasionally added.

1558—ELIZABETH—1603.

The same style continues: no recognition of any 'year of the Lord.'

In a letter addressed to the Queen by the 'Consules et Senatores Republ. Stadensis,' there is the following statement: 'Datæ sub Sigillo nostræ Civitatis tertio Februarii Anno 601, Stylo Germanico.' This would be 1601.

The first use of the form 'Annus Salutis humanæ' is here noted, 'Bremae 19 Novembris, Anno Salutis humanæ 1602,' a Baron's letter to the Queen. Polydore Vergil, who regarded himself as a very superior person, and the first historian of England worthy of attention, uses this form with the abbreviation 'A. S. H.' throughout his 'Historia Anglica,' dedicated to Henry VIII. in MDXXXIII. In his book 'On Inventions' he uses 'Anno Salutis.'

There is a document of the King of Sweden, 'Datæ Stockholmæ viii. Kalend Decembris Anno 1602.'

1603—JAMES I.—1625.

The form 'Anno Salutis Christianiæ' occurs in this reign in a document of Frederick, Elector Palatine, 1613.

But generally the same style of dating continues with some exceptions, where 'Anno Domini' and the year of reign are given.

1625—CHARLES I.—1649.

The documents attested by the King are dated as before: 'Witness our Self at W——, the —— day of ——,' with an occasional year of reign.

The Record of Parliamentary Proceedings runs (1625) : 'Die Martis, decimo septimo Die Maii, Anno Regni serenissimi Domini nostri Caroli, Dei Gratia, Angliæ, Scotiæ, Franciæ, et Hiberniæ Regis, Fidei Defensoris, etc., primo.'

Later minutes give 'anno Domini,' or 'anno,' or 1625.

It was during this reign, so far as can be made out from Rymer, that the modern way of placing time-dates at the head of memoranda, etc., came in : 'October 24, 1642,' 'November 4, 1642.' About this time also the recognition of the new style is noticed, *e.g.* : 'Hagh, August 30, or September 9, 1649 ;' '$\frac{10}{20}$ de Sept., 1649 ;' 'Hagh, Sept. $\frac{30}{20}$, 1649.'

There is a strange dearth of documents in Rymer for 1646-1649, merely some ten pages, and 1649 is dated by him as the first year of Charles II., *i.e.*, 'anno 1 Car. 2.'

Rymer's tom. xx. ends at 1654. The last date is in the heading of a newsletter : 'Intelligence from Paris, $\frac{\text{22nd March}}{\text{1st April}}$, 1654.' The abbreviated form of A.D. does not yet seem to have come into use.

Though the above details will be found both dull and wearisome, still, it was necessary to show

what very irregular dating existed from William I. to the seventeenth century. Any sort of method appears to have been entirely wanting, and the various styles can only be attributed to the knowledge or ignorance, fancy or caprice, of the scribes or persons who dated the documents in question.

A few points may, however, be noted in connection with the details. During William I.'s reign no Incarnation date is given, one only in that of William II., one in Henry I.'s, one in Stephen's, three in Henry II.'s, and so on, very moderately used throughout; some expressed in Roman numerals and others in words only.

The first Arabic numerals appear during Richard I.'s reign, on a letter from the King of France, and dated, 'Act. ab Incarnatione Domini 1189.' But as the original document or copy of it cannot now be traced, it is impossible to say whether Roman numerals were used, or in what form the Arabic figures were expressed. It was rather early for Arabic numerals to be used.

The first use of 'Anno Domini' is noted during the reign of Henry III. (1216-1272) in four places, and then in other reigns continues at long intervals; the abbreviated term 'A.D.' does not seem to be introduced in any document even up to the end of Rymer's work in 1654.

It is curious that in all the documents inscribed by Rymer those dated by the year are compara-

tively few. It is difficult to give a reason for this, but probably the system of chronology as it is now known to us had not yet been definitely established. It was a product of the sixteenth century, and improved upon during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. As it has been made, so it must be accepted now for what it is worth, and cannot be changed in any way.

The only improvement that can be suggested is to inaugurate a new English era to be called the Victorian, dating from 1st January, 1837, the year of the accession of our reigning Sovereign. Future generations would then have some definite and reliable starting-point. As positive English history can be carried backwards to A.D. 1500, we should then have a period of 336 years B.V., the history of which, as far as England is concerned, would be much more reliable than the same number of years B.C.

Some particulars respecting the State Papers published in 1830 (in connection with Henry VIII.), under the authority of His Majesty's Commission, are interesting, as now we are beginning to stand upon more solid ground so far as dates are concerned.

In Part I., Correspondence between the King and Cardinal Wolsey and others, there are 202 letters. Of these only three are dated by the place, month, and year, viz. : Hunsdon, 21 June, 1528; Hunsdon, 23 June, 1528 ; and Woodstock,

29 August, 1529, all from Brian Tuke. The remaining 199 have no date of year, but carry sometimes place only, sometimes day of month, and sometimes place and day of month. Evidently dating by the year was not the fashion, or perhaps it was unknown to many.

In Part II., Correspondence between the King and his Ministers, 1530-1547, there are 266 letters. The same mode of dating by place and day of month prevails, with the year of reign in about a dozen cases, and a few cases of the years of the era. Brian Tuke in one letter, and Archbishop Lee in two letters, date by day of month and year simply, without Anno Domini or A.D. Minutes of Council are dated by year of reign, *e.g.*, 'Anno 28,' and dates are sometimes endorsed on otherwise undated documents.

In Part III., Correspondence between the Governments of England and Ireland, 1515-1538, there are 218 letters. As before, these are usually dated by place and day of month—'Dublin, 23 July.' The year of reign is very seldom added. Only two instances of the use of 'Anno Domini' are noted, and no 'A.D.'

In Vol. XI., Part V., there are 176 letters of Foreign Correspondents, 1546-1547. The foreigners appear invariably to date their letters by place, day of month, and year, without any ecclesiastical phrase. Not a single instance of the King's dating

by the year of the era has been noticed, but the use of this seems to be creeping in on the part of some statesmen at the end of the reign.

There is a vast collection of published Domestic and Foreign State Papers, edited by Mr. R. Lemon, Mrs. Everett Green, Messrs. Bruce and Hamilton, Mr. J. S. Brewer, and others, all noted at pp. 176-179 of Walter Rye's 'Records and Record Searching,' second edition, 1897. It is unnecessary to go through these here in detail, but only to state that some are undated, and the others dated by day of month, or day of month and place. The dating by the year is always very exceptional all through the sixteenth century.

In a work edited by the Rev. Walter W. Shirley (1862 and 1866), containing royal and other historical letters illustrative of the reign of Henry III. (1216-1272), many datings of that period will be found, thus covering a great part of the thirteenth century.

Of the 691 letters and documents contained in the above two volumes, it will be found that there are: (1) Without any date, 345; (2) place with date of day and month, 222; (3) year of the reign of the King or Pope, with date of day, month, and place, 104; (4) Anno Domini, with year in Latin words, not figures, 23; (5) Anno Domini, with year in Roman numerals, viz., M°CC°XXV°, 1; (6) year of the Incarnation, with year in French words, not

figures, 1. There are a few cases in which fast, feast, or saints' days, or the days before or after them, are used instead of the date of day and month.

It must be noted that throughout this collection, extending from 1216 to 1272, there is not a single Arabic numeral used anywhere. From this it must be inferred that these had not yet been introduced, certainly not in any general way, into Europe during the thirteenth century. The dates are expressed by Calends, Nones, and Ides, or by the date of day and month in Roman numerals. The year when given is in Latin words, not figures, with two exceptions, viz., one in Roman figures and one in French words.

Again, in a volume containing royal and historical letters during the reign of Henry IV. (1399-1413), edited by the Rev. F. C. Hingeston in 1860, but going only as far as 1404, no trace of Arabic numerals are to be found, nor any use of the abbreviated term A.D.

Of the 155 specimens of letters and documents in this work there are: Without any date, 20; place with date of day and month, 95; the same without place, 3; year of the reign of the King or Pope, with date of day, month, and place, 10; fast, feast, or saint's day, or days before or after them, 6; Anno Domini, with year in Latin words only, 5; the same, with Latin words

and Roman numerals combined, 12; the same, with Roman numerals only, 3; l'an de grace mil quatre cent et quatre, 1. It will be noted that there are fewer letters without dates of some kind than in former reigns, that the year is still sparsely used, and that A.D. does not yet appear.

One of the most important works connected with dates in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries is 'The Paston Letters,' edited by James Gairdner, of the Public Record Office, 1895. Here you have a mass of public and private correspondence amounting to nearly 1,100 documents, including letters, indentures, wills, writs, settlements, etc., all probably genuine. The style and manner of the dating of these is both important and interesting, as they extend from 1422 to 1509, during the reigns of Henry VI., Edward IV., Richard III., and Henry VII.

The following summary will show how diverse was the manner of dating in those times: Place with date of day and month, 237; without any date, 222; named fast, feast, saint's day, or days before or after them, with place, 196; the same, but without place, 84; year of the reign of the King with date of day, and month, and place, 84; the same, without place, 65; date of day and month, without place, 37; place, without date, 28; year of the reign of the King, with named fast, feast, saint's day, or days before or after them,

with place, 27 ; the same, without place, 21 ; day of the week only, 17 ; year of the reign of the King only, 13 ; year of the Lord, or of Christ, in Roman numerals, 10 ; Anno Domini with full date written wholly in Latin or English words, or half words, half Roman figures, 8 ; years only in Roman numerals, 3 ; years in Arabic numerals, 2.

It will be noted that throughout these three volumes none of the dates on the original documents carry the abbreviated term A.D., and it must therefore be supposed that this form had not yet come into use at that period. Neither is it to be found, as already stated in Rymer's 'Fœdera,' up to 1654.

In 'The Paston Letters' there are only two original letters dated by the year in Arabic numerals, one simply 1459 (vol. i., p. 505), and the other (vol. iii., p. 363) in full, 'the xxvii. day of January, 1489,' from the Bishop of Durham to Sir John Paston. This Bishop, John Sherwood by name, is described in a footnote as 'a man of high character and learning, and one of the earliest Greek scholars in England.'

Of the papers dated by the year in Roman numerals, with or without Anno Domini, the most are wills, some legal documents, and three are letters.

It will thus be seen that datings by the year, either in Roman or Arabic numerals, from 1422

to 1509 were rare, and that the most common systems in use were: (1) Place, with date of day and month; (2) No date; (3) The fast, feast, or saint's day, or days before or after them, with place; (4) The same, without place; (5) The year of the reign of the King, with date of day, and month, and place; (6) The same, without place, and so on.

A perusal of these Paston letters will show clearly what trouble and labour our historians, chronologists and antiquaries must have experienced to turn not only these Paston letters, many without date, but all our chronologies into the present system of dating by the day, month and year, as expressed by A.D.

In the letters and papers illustrative of the reigns of Richard III. and Henry VII., edited by James Gairdner, Roll Series, 1861, there will be found in the two volumes some 250 letters and documents showing the datings used at that period.

About one hundred of these will be found to have been dated by the year expressed in various ways, *i.e.*, in Roman numerals, 23; in Arabic numerals, 8; in Latin, French, Spanish or Italian words, not figures, 42; in words and Roman numerals combined, 17; Anno Domini, with Roman numerals, 2; Anno Domini with words, not figures, 11; Anno Domini with Arabic

numerals, 1; year of our Lord God, with Roman numerals, 2; the same, with words and figures, 1.

The other datings consist only of the date of the day and month, with or without place, often the year of the reign of the King, and many without any date at all.

It will be noted that the term A.D. does not yet appear during these reigns, that the term Anno Domini is seldom used, and that Roman numerals are used throughout where figures are expressed, except in the nine cases where the year is notified by Arabic numerals, and all of these appear to be used in foreign letters or documents.

It is evident, then, that from 1483 to 1509 the datings were not arranged under any one chronological system, which was worked up and established at a later period.

Here it may be mentioned that in various printed Papal documents the first mention of the use of the term Anno Domini that I came across was of the year MLVIIII., the two next of the same year, and another Mill.LX. — all these during the Pontificate of Nicolas II. (1058-1061). At the same time, Incarnation datings are also used during these years, instead of Anno Domini.

After 1060 Incarnation dates continue, but are far more frequently used than before, sometimes expressed in Latin words, sometimes in Roman numerals. The term Anno Domini does not

appear again till MLXXV., MXCVIIII., MCIX., MCXXXIIII., and the first Anno Christi, MCXLVI.

In Rymer's work it will have been noticed that the term Anno Domini appears for the first time in 1219, during the reign of Henry III. (1216-1272). It is curious that Incarnation datings are said to have been used in England during the seventh century, while they were not used by the Popes till the tenth century, and the term Anno Domini was used by the Popes in the eleventh, but not in England till the thirteenth century.

In conclusion, a short analysis of the years recorded in 1137 early printed books of the last part of the fifteenth century (*i.e.*, from 1469 to 1500, both years inclusive) will show how year dates were expressed at that period. In these books the years are given in 670 works in Roman numerals; 200 in Arabic numerals; 209 without date; 49 in Latin words only; 7 half in words and half in Roman numerals; and 2 half Roman and half Arabic numerals.

In the above catalogues there are also some Aldine editions ranging from 1501 to 1542, thirty-five in all. Of these, 25 carry the year in Roman, and 8 in Arabic numerals, while 2 are undated.

Many of the above-mentioned years are prefixed by the names of the year in the following style: There are 189 of Anno Domini; 141 of Anno

Salutis; 60 of Anno Incarnationis; 28 of Anno Nativitate; 15 of Anno natalis Christi, or Domini; 10 of Anno Christi; 5 of Anno humanæ Restaurationis or Redemptionis; 4 of Anno Gratiæ, and 4 of A.D.

These last consist of three of the year MCCCCLXXXI., and one of the year MCCCCLXXI., the first three printed at Florence, the last at Venice. It is early for A.D. dates, as I have not come across any in England till a later period, but still they may exist somewhere.

In all the above the dates of the days of the month are generally expressed by Calends, Nones, and Ides, most frequently in Roman, but sometimes in Arabic numerals.

I can give no guarantee for the genuineness of any of these works, or for the correctness of the dates given in them. It might be that some of them have been printed later and antedated, a practice not unknown to the book trade in the past. Indeed, antedating appears to have been a common practice both as regards books and buildings, for one can hardly believe that many of the basilicas, cathedrals, churches, or monasteries are really as old as they are said to be.

CHAPTER III.

ABOUT THE DATE OF THE INTRODUCTION OF ARABIC NUMERALS INTO EUROPE.

THE genealogy of numerals is a very large subject, requiring deep research, and certainly not coming within the scope of the present chapter.

It may, however, be briefly stated that numbers must have been first brought into existence by counting on the fingers. In later times of antiquity this was developed into a system of expressing numbers below 10,000 by various parts of the fingers, and the Chinese, it is said, to this day have a mode of counting up to 99,999 on the fingers of one hand alone.

Sir E. Clive Bailey, in his valuable articles on the genealogy of modern numerals, *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society*, 1882, 1883, says: 'The semi-savage, who counted upon his fingers, and recorded the results of his calculations in rows of mere scratches upon the sand, gave the first hint of the abacus. So the rude numeral signs com-

posed of groups of single lines themselves were gradually superseded by other more compact and convenient symbols. These, applied to the abacus, with its primitive decimal system, led to the discovery of the value of position. Out of this, again, arose the Arcus Pythagoreus or "written abacus," with its accumulation of various series of numbers; and from this in quick succession came the new methods of decimal arithmetic; and lastly the invention of a sign to fill the "place vide" or zero; and the zero finally released the new notation and arithmetic from the trammels of the abacus, and rendered them perfectly applicable to all the purposes of social life.'

Of the tables of the early numerals of various countries the Egyptian hieroglyphic appears to be the most ancient and the most simple. One to nine perpendicular strokes represent the figures one to nine. Ten to ninety are shown by an inverted U running from one to nine ∩'s. One hundred to nine hundred are represented by the figure  repeated for every hundred up to nine. One thousand to nine thousand carry another symbol,  , repeated in the same way nine times; while ten thousand has another symbol, and so on.

Nothing could be more simple or primitive than such a numerical table, and it is reasonable to suppose that it must be the first, or one of the first,

invented. It will be observed that the zero does not appear ; that was a later discovery.

From the Hieroglyphic came the Hieratic and the Phœnician numerals, with the various figures representing them, and these show a step in advance. It is still an open question whether these last spread over the world, the symbols changing in different countries according to various circumstances, the final result as far as we are concerned being our present system of notation. It is, however, unnecessary here to enter further into the genealogical question, as only the so-called Arabic numerals have to be dealt with. (For Oriental numerals consult 'Exposé des Signes de Numération,' etc., par A. P. Pihan, Paris, 1860.)

The country or place from which the Arabs derived their numerals is generally supposed to be India. The Sanscritists say that they came from India to Arabia some time between the eighth and eleventh centuries of our era, but did not get into general use till the twelfth or thirteenth centuries. Others say that they may have been brought from India by Mahmud of Ghazni, who between 1001 and 1024 A.D. made no less than twelve expeditions into India.

It is generally admitted that the Hindus were the inventors of the decimal system of numeration, and that the Arabs borrowed it from them. Hence it is concluded that when the Arabs borrowed the

decimal system from the Hindus they received along with it their numerical figures, which by the Arabs themselves are called Indian.

When they were first used by the Arabs is an open question still. Certainly not during the time of ignorance—*i.e.*, before the advent of Muhammad, or during the life of the prophet himself, or of his immediate successors Abu Bekr, Omar, Othman, or Ali, or of the Omayyides, or the greater part of the Abbaside dynasty.

At St. Petersburg, in the Oriental coin department there, Dr. Markoff, its chief, informed me that the 75th year of the Hijra, = A.D. 694-95, was the date of the earliest Arabic coin in words, not figures, struck by Abd-ul-Malik, the 5th Omayyide Khalif (A.D. 684-705), and that figures or numerals or ciphers did not appear on these coins till the seventh century of the Hijra (A.D. 1204-1301).

At St. Petersburg also I ascertained from Professor Smirnov, a good Turkish scholar, that the first dated coin of the Turks in Arabic numerals was the 792nd year of the Hijra, but in the British Museum there is one of A.H. 790, corresponding to A.D. January 11th to December 30th, 1388. Moreover, Turkish coins never appear to have carried any dates in words, but began their dating with Arabic numerals.

In the British Museum the earliest dated gold coin of the regular series of the Khalifs belongs to

the 77th year of the Hijra, = A.D. 696-97, in words, not figures or numerals; while their silver dated coin began two years later, also in words, not figures.

Dating in figures or ciphers on Arabic coins does not seem to have begun till the 614th year of the Hijra, = A.D. 1217-18, and of these there are specimens to be found in the Catalogue of Oriental Coins of the British Museum, by Stanley Lane Poole.

At Paris, in the coin department of the Bibliothèque Nationale, the earliest dated Arabic coin there is the 77th year of the Hijra, in words, not figures or ciphers. The first Arabic coin dated in figures, not words, was of the 650th year of the Hijra, = A.D. 1252-53. But there are earlier ones than this in Europe.

At Galatz the Consul-General there, Colonel Trotter, showed me his valuable and interesting collection of Arabic coins. His earliest dated one is the 79th year of the Hijra, = A.D. 698-99, in words, not figures, and without the name of the Mint on it.

But on his coin of the 80th year of the Hijra the Mint Damascus was impressed. His earliest dated coins with figures or numerals, not words, upon them were the 614th, 615th, and 617th years of the Hijra, corresponding with A.D. 1217-1221, and the names of the Mints also engraved. These

appear to be some of the earliest Arabic coins dated with figures or numerals extant in Europe.

The ordinary numerals now in use in Europe are called Arabic, and are said to have come from the East, but at what date is uncertain. To ascertain this to the proximity of correctness many coins and inscriptions, manuscripts and correspondence would have to be examined ; and to do this completely a society would have to be formed with branch committees in all the States of Europe.

My own researches regarding the earliest dates in Arabic numerals on European coins are limited, and the following is the result, the capitals of Europe visited being given in alphabetical order :

BERLIN.

In the coin department of the old Museum the following old pieces are to be seen, and they appear to be the oldest dated ones there :

(1) A silver groschen with year MCCCLXXV. engraved upon it in Roman numerals.

(2) A Rhenish gold gulden coined at Riel, dated MCCCCXXXVII., and said to have been struck by Dietrich I., Bishop of Cologne.

(3) An old medallion of Johann I. of Cleve, dated MCCCCXLIX. in Roman numerals ; the Duke on horseback.

(4) A German coin of Frederick III. of Austria, dated 1468, Arabic numerals.

(5) An old Austrian coin of 1468, Arabic numerals.

(6) A German kreuzer of 1471, Arabic numerals.

(7) A gold coin of 1491, Arabic numerals, said to have been struck at Coblenz by John II., Archbishop of Treves.

At Nuremberg there are two very old cemeteries, dating, it is said, from 1217 and 1230. But no dates in Arabic numerals are to be found on the tombstones prior to 1512, and this is in the churchyard of St. John. It may have been engraved later, as this tombstone records the names of three or four members of the same family up to 1574.

COPENHAGEN.

Here I visited the royal collection of coins and medals in the Princes' Palace. The director, Dr. Herbst, told me the oldest dated coin in the collection was a little silver coin, dated Anno Domini MCCXX . . . I., of the reign of King Waldemar II. (1202-1241), the only specimen ever found, and this with two or three figures missing, either worn out or erased.

Between this and 1496 there are no dated coins in the collection, the next being three large gold coins of King John of Denmark, all dated anno

1496, in Arabic numerals, and called Ross, or Rose, nobles, very fine specimens. The four on them is represented by  , supposed to represent half an eight, and found in manuscripts and on coins and inscriptions up to the sixteenth century.

The next dated coin was a small, thin silver one with 1513 in Arabic numerals. I was also shown a large gold medal of Christian I. with the year of his death upon it, 1481, in Arabic numerals, but when this medal was struck I could not find out.

At the Royal Library at Copenhagen I could not obtain any information about their MSS. bearing Incarnation dates, but the librarian kindly showed me the oldest printed book they possessed, viz., the 'Rationale Divinorum Officiorum,' by the Dominican Monk Durandus, with the date 1459 printed at the end in Latin words, neither Roman nor Arabic numerals being used.

LONDON.

In the British Museum the first dated English silver coin is of the year MDXLIX., in Roman numerals on a shilling, but there is said to be a piece bearing the date MDXLVII. somewhere, but not in the Museum. The first English coin dated with Arabic numerals in this collection is 1551, on crowns and half-crowns. There is, however, also there a Scotch bonnet gold piece of James V., with 1539 upon it in Arabic numerals, and also a still

older Swiss silver piece called a plappart—*i.e.*, a groat or half-groat—dated I X 2 X (=1424), the oldest date in Arabic numerals on European coins that I have ever come across. It will be seen that the figures are not yet completely transformed into the ones now in use. At Zurich and two other places there are also coins of this date.

The first dated gold coin was struck during the reign of Mary in 1553. After that the dating of gold coins ceased until 1642, during the reign of Charles I., when it recommenced. The general dating of all English coins was from 1662.

Westminster Abbey and the Tower of London both being places of some antiquity, a search was made there for early dates. In the Abbey, as a matter of fact, everything may be regarded as legendary, traditional, or possible up to the reign of Henry III. (1216-1272). From that time the probable history of the Abbey may be said to begin and to continue to the reign of Henry VII. (1485-1509). Its positive history dates from the Tudors, while the Chapter Books begin from 1542, and these continue up to the present time, with two lacunæ from 1554-1558 and 1642-1662. The earliest burial register of the Abbey begins in 1606 and lasts to 1706, while the later burial register continues from 1706 to the present time.

The positive history of the Abbey may therefore be said to begin in 1542, and continues

systematically up to our own time. It is true that the archives are said to reach back to the Charters of the Saxon Kings, but all these early Charters must be regarded with considerable suspicion, as already explained.

It is curious that neither in Dean Stanley's nor in George Gilbert Scott's works about the Abbey is there any reference to the earliest dates actually inscribed on the tombs themselves. From a personal investigation and inquiry it may be stated that there are apparently no existing *original* dates on them until the time of the Tudors.

The earliest original date that I could find was on the tomb of the Lady Margaret, Countess of Richmond, mother of Henry VII., and in his chapel. It is in Roman numerals, 'An. Domini MDIX. III. KAL. IVLII.,' corresponding to our 29th June, 1509. It is interesting and important, as it shows that the old Roman Calendar was still used in 1509.

The earliest date in Arabic numerals, and which appears to be also original, was 1524, on the tomb of Ruthall, Bishop of Durham, in the Chapel of St. John the Baptist. The 4 is in the shape of the upper part of an 8, and expressed thus  , this form of 4 having been apparently in use up to the sixteenth century.

It is said that the bishop really died in 1523, and Anthony Wood says : 'Some years after was

a fair tomb built over his grave, with his statue mitred and crested, and a small inscription on it, but false as to the year of his death.' Anyhow, the date as it stands at present appears to be the oldest original date with Arabic numerals now to be found in the Abbey.

An inscription on the tombs of Sir Giles Daubigny and his lady in St. Paul's Chapel may be referred to. This bears the date in Arabic numerals of 1500 and 1507, but it is doubtful if they can be accepted as original. There has been a recent restoration of this tomb in 1886, and the guide-book says, 'there was a Latin inscription, which Camden gives and translates, but of which all trace has now disappeared.'

Some earlier dates than the above have been added here and there in later times, especially by the Abbot Feckenham (1556-1560), and Dean Stanley writes in a note at p. 137 of his work : ' Four inscriptions still remain in whole or in part, that of Edward I., Henry III., Henry V., and the Confessor, but all of a later date than the original tombs,' which apparently carry no date.

Before leaving the Abbey the brasses ought to be noticed. Among those in St. Edmund's Chapel, and said to be the best remaining in the Abbey, there is one representing the tomb of Eleanor de Bohun, Duchess of Gloucester, said to have died in 1399. Upon it there is an inscription complete up

to the word 'l'an du,' when the date appears to have been broken off sharp; when or how this was done could not be ascertained. On referring, however, to an old work on the Abbey inscriptions of 1722, the year is there given as 'Grace MCCCLXXXXIX.'

As regards the brasses in the various large and small churches of England, persons interested can refer to two very exhaustive works on the subject, viz., 'Monumental Brasses and Slabs,' by the Rev. Charles Boutell, 1847, and 'A Manual of Monumental Brasses,' by the Rev. Herbert Haines, 1861.

Both these authors show great industry and research, and their works are most interesting, but they use A.D. and Arabic numerals throughout, so it is difficult to realize what figures many of these brasses actually carry, if indeed many of them carry any figures at all.

The earliest existing ones are said to be of 1277, 1289, 1302, and 1306, but these apparently are not dated at all. Others follow, many without dates, and some carrying Roman numerals up to the seventeenth century. The earliest, or one of the earliest, is thus inscribed, 'Anno dni Millmo CCC. nonagesimo tertio' (*i.e.*, 1393).

Some Arabic numerals of the years 1416, 1418, 1420, and 1448 are mentioned, but these are no longer visible or extant, so it is impossible to say

what figures were actually used on these brasses. The Arabic figures to be relied upon only appear in 1627, 1633, 1636, 1648, and so on.

From the above it is fairly conclusive, as far as Westminster Abbey is concerned, that the dating of tombs and monuments with our present figures may be said to date from the first quarter of the sixteenth century, at which time Arabic numerals were creeping into more general use. And previous to this any dates that are to be found there on tombs or brasses would probably be in Roman figures.

The State Records used to be kept in the chapter-house and other places of Westminster, and thither Rymer went daily to collect the material for his great work during the reign of Queen Anne. These have all been now transferred to the Public Record Office in Chancery Lane, but the records pertaining to the Abbey are still there in the muniment room. Mr. Scott, of the British Museum, is now engaged in the work of their examination, arrangement, and partial translation.

In a work entitled 'Antiquities of St. Peter's; or, the Abbey Church at Westminster,' by B. M. Crull (third edition, 1722), there is mention of inscriptions with early dates in Arabic numerals, viz., 1436, 1463, 1470, and 1474. All these are now completely erased, and it is therefore im-

possible to say in what form the figures were originally or actually expressed.

It must be noted, however, that the dates in Crull's work do not appear to have been accurately copied. Throughout Roman and Arabic numerals are used so vaguely that it is difficult to say which were actually inscribed on the tombs whose inscriptions are now entirely effaced.

A few inaccuracies may be mentioned. In vol. i., p. 58, the year of the inscription on the brass of Eleanore de Bohun is given as MCCCXCIX., while on the picture of the brass itself opposite the preceding page it is actually MCCCLXXXXIX.

Again, in the case of John Estney. He is put down in the list of abbots (vol. i., p. 14) as of the year 1498, while the inscription on his tomb at p. 9 is given as Anno Domini 1436. As this last is now entirely effaced, it is impossible to say what the numerals were and how they were written.

Again, in vol. i., p. 69, on the tomb of Nicolas, Baron Carew, and his wife 1471 is written above, while 1470 is given below. As this inscription is now quite illegible, it is impossible to say what the numerals were and how they were written.

At vol. i., p. 99, the date on the tomb of Lady Margaret, Countess of Richmond, and mother of

Henry VII., is given as 1509, in Arabic numerals, while on the tomb it is clearly MDIX.

In vol. ii., p. 85, on the tablet to Martha Price the year is given A.D. MDCLXXVIII. (and this is worthy of note, as it appears to be the second earliest inscription with the abbreviated term A.D. in the Abbey, while the earliest is one dated A.D. MDCLXV., in memory of John Woodward), but on her tombstone the date (p. 123) is given 1678, and as this latter inscription is entirely erased, it is impossible to say how the numerals were written. On the tablet in the wall both the inscription in Latin and the date are clear enough.

Other examples might be quoted from Crull's work to show how the Roman and Arabic numerals have been mixed up together, but the date of 1524 on the tomb of Ruthall, Bishop of Durham, still appears to be the earliest original date in Arabic numerals to be found in the Abbey.

To sum up, then, it may be stated that there are now no original inscriptions existing in the Abbey, either in Roman or Arabic numerals, prior to the sixteenth century, none with Anno Domini before the end of the sixteenth century, and none with A.D. earlier than the last half of the seventeenth century.

TOWER OF LONDON.

A cursory examination of the dates in Arabic numerals scratched or inscribed on the walls of some of the cells, chambers, and dungeons of the Tower of London show that, with one exception, they are not earlier than the sixteenth century.

Before 1854 all the inscriptions were removed from the lower and upper rooms of the Beauchamp Tower to the middle room of the same, probably for preservation or easy reference. Of the ninety-one inscriptions, both dated and undated, there are (with one exception) none earlier than 1537 and 1538. The exception is curious. It is in an inner cell adjoining the State prison room, and runs thus, 'Thomas Talbot, 1962.' The last figure is somewhat obscure in the original, and who Thomas Talbot was is doubtful.

Here we have an early date in Arabic numerals, and between it and 1537 there is no date of this description to be found anywhere in the Tower, while just above it stands 'James Gilmor, 1565,' or 69, the last figure not being very clear.

As far as I have as yet ascertained, this date of 1462 in Arabic numerals is early as regards inscriptions. None so early are now to be found in Westminster Abbey or other cathedrals, or in the numerous documents brought together in Rymer's 'Fœdera.' It may have been an error of the

inscriber, intentionally or inadvertently, who can say ?

There are many inscribed dates of the sixteenth century after 1537 to be found in the Tower, and from this it can be inferred that during that century dating in Arabic numerals was gradually coming into more general use. Many of the early State Records used to be kept in the Tower, but since 1857 they have been removed to the Public Record Office in Chancery Lane.

PARIS.

In the coin department of the Bibliothèque Nationale there is a groschen of Aix-la-Chapelle in silver, with the date, 'Anno Dom. milesimo CCCCXIX.,' engraved upon it in Roman numerals.

I also saw a gold coin of the time of Francis I. (1515-1547), dated 1532 in Arabic numerals, clear cut, but never circulated, and called a 'piece d'essai.' I was told that moneys dated with Arabic numerals came into general circulation in France from 1549, during the reign of Henry II. (1547-1559).

PETERSBURG.

The conservator of the coin department in the Hermitage of St. Petersburg kindly supplied me with the following information regarding the earliest dated coins there.

The Russians apparently used the ecclesiastical

and civil era of Constantinople, viz., 5508 B.C., as their date of the creation of the world, and the moneys were so dated by Peter the Great with Greek letters up to the year 1700 A.D. From 1700 till 1721 the Christian era expressed by Greek letters was used, but some pieces also carry dates with Arabic numerals during that period.

There is a coin of Novgorod marked 103 in Greek letters, said to be equivalent to 7103 from the creation of the world, or A.D. 1595. Another marked 106 in Greek letters = 7106 = A.D. 1598. But in Russia the oldest dated money is said to be 7162 from the creation of the world, equivalent to 1654 A.D., while at the same time there were some gold coins of this date with Arabic numerals on them. Anyhow, the introduction of dating with Arabic numerals in this country appears to be later than the rest of Europe.

The earliest dated inscription in the Russian language as yet discovered is called ‘ The Stone of Tmutarakan,’ whose Prince Glib caused the distance between Tmutarakan and Kertch to be measured over the ice and recorded on the stone. The date on it in Greek letters is 6576 from the creation of the world, corresponding with our A.D. 1068.

At the Bibliothèque Impériale Publique in St. Petersburg I could not ascertain anything about manuscripts with the Incarnation dates on them. I was shown the first book printed in

Russia with a date ; it was a work on geometry, printed at Moscow, and dated from the year of the creation of the world 7216, and also Anno Domini 1708, both in Arabic numerals. The print was excellent, but the plates are said to have been executed elsewhere.

There was also a 'History of the Church of Eusebius' in manuscript, dated the year of the Seleucidæ era (*i.e.*, the era of the Greeks, also called the Syro-Macedonian era), in Greek letters, 773, from which deducting 311 years, 462 of the Christian era is represented.

Also 'The Evangile of Ostramir' in manuscript, dated, from the creation of the world, 6564, in Slav figures, which are the same as the Greek corresponding with A.D. 1056.

The 'Tischendorf Sinaitic Codex' was also examined, but to this no date is attached.

ROME.

In the coin department of the Vatican Library, of which the Professor Cavaliere Camillo Serafini is director, I was shown the earliest dated coin with Arabic numerals in the collection. It was a double giulio, a silver piece of Pope Leo X. (1513-1521), dated 1515, and struck at Parma. There is said to be an earlier one of 1514 somewhere, but the exact place is not known.

There were also in this collection two silver

mezzi (or half) grossi of 1522 and 1523, struck at Parma during the reign of Hadrian VI. (1522-1523).

But, as a rule, Arabic numerals were not in common use in Rome till fifty years later—*i.e.*, about 1570. Still, Paul IV. had a dated coin of 1557 ; there is a gold 'Sede vacante' of 1559 ; a gold Pius IV. of 1563 ; a jubilee coin of Gregory XIII. of 1575, and his medal of 1582.

As regards the coins with Roman numerals, there was shown to me a gold piece called 'Tre Secchini' of Clement VII., dated MDXXIX., and also a demi scudo, of the same Pope and of the same date, struck at Bologna. There is said to be a gold piece of the same Pope dated 1526 in Arabic numerals, but not in this collection.

Here, however, there were also two medallions of Nicolas V., dated MCDIIIL. (*i.e.*, 1447), and one very fine original medallion of the same Pope engraved Nicolas Quintus MCCCCLIIII., signed by Andras Guacelotis, in bronze coulé. Also another very fine original medallion of Sixtus IV., in bronze frappé, and dated MCCCCLXXXI. These two last were made at that time and are evidently genuine.

The following particulars were also given me by my friend Colonel Chambers, Royal Engineers (retired), who is an expert on the subject :

The first coin struck by the Popes is one of

Hadrian I. (722-795). It is a grosso (five or ten sous) of 772, but undated. A specimen of it is in the Vatican collection.

Pius II. (1458-1464) was the first Pope who mentioned the year of his reign thus, AN. IIII., but otherwise undated. The coin was struck at Avignon.

Sixtus IV. (1471-1484) mentions his jubilee thus, AN. JVBILEI, but shows no figures. It may be, perhaps, mentioned that the jubilee of the Popes, generally not individually, is every twenty-five years, when medals were and are still struck to celebrate the same.

Julius III.'s (1550-1555) jubilee commemorative coin was struck at Rome MDL.

In the Zekka or Mint at Rome there is a complete set of medallions struck by the Popes from 1417-1870—*i.e.*, from Martin V. to Pius IX.—in commemoration of the jubilees and other events. There are 757 of these.

It is impossible to find out exactly in what years these medallions were struck ; many of them are evidently not contemporaneous, as will be shown presently.

The earliest dated one in Roman numerals is that of Pope Martin V., and engraved Anno Primo MCDXVII. (*i.e.*, 1417), but whether actually struck then is doubtful.

The next are two of Paul II., dated Anno

MCDLXIV. (*i.e.*, 1464), and Anno Christi MCCCCLXX. The next one of Innocent VIII., dated Anno Domini MCDLXXXIV. (*i.e.*, 1484). The next of Alexander VI., dated MCDXCII. (*i.e.*, 1492), and one of Julius II., dated MDVIII., and so on, some undated, some with the year of the reign of the Pope, and here and there sometimes Roman and very seldom Arabic numerals.

As a rule the Popes used Roman numerals on their medallions and coins, as also on their documents. Still, among the lot mentioned above, there were two early ones dated with Arabic numerals, viz., the jubilee medals of Nicolas V. and Sixtus IV., dated 1450 and 1475 respectively. The next dates with Arabic numerals were two of Pius V., both dated 1571, and five of Gregory XIII., dated 1572, 1575, 1575, 1582, and 1585.

As the two of 1450 and 1475 appeared early for Arabic numerals in the way they were engraved, I purchased duplicates of them and showed these to Professor Serafini and other experts. They informed me that these were not contemporaneous medallions, but were probably struck the latter part of the sixteenth century, perhaps during the reign of Pius V. (1566-1572), but certainly not in the time of Nicolas V. or Sixtus IV. This would then discredit the dates of 1450 and 1475 on these medals, and they cannot be looked upon as genuine contemporaneous ones.

It must therefore be assumed that the double silver giulio of Leo X. of 1515, and the medallion of Pius V. of 1571, are both to be relied upon as the earliest specimens of dates of that period in Arabic numerals. There may, however, be earlier ones still extant, as here the contents of the Vatican collection and of the Mint at Rome are only referred to.

STOCKHOLM.

In the National Museum here, a very excellently arranged one, the director of the coin department, Professor Oscar Montesius, showed me a small silver coin minted at Stockholm, with the date of 1478 (=1478) very clear on one side, and 'Sanctus Ericus Rex' on the other. It appears that he was an old King of Sweden and patron saint of the country, and though long since dead, the Swedes preferred placing his effigy on the coins rather than that of the King of Denmark. This coin was called an Urtug of Stockholm.

The next coin was dated 80 without the 14 before it, but this was said to be a practice of the period, the coin really being of the year 1480.

The next Arabic numeral dated coin was a silver one of 1512 (=1512), struck at Stockholm. And between 1480 and 1512 there appear to be no dated ones in this Museum, which is very rich

in Anglo-Saxon, German, and even Irish coins, all found in Gothland (a large island in the Baltic, and a great centre of trade in early times), and in other parts of Sweden, but without dates.

There is in this Museum also a very good collection of Arabic dated coins commencing with the 79th year of the Hijra, in words, not ciphers, and continuing for many years. Some Oriental coins were found in Gothland, a centre of the early great northern trade route, extending from Afghanistan through Persia to the Caspian Sea, then up the Volga to Kasan, and across Russia to the Baltic, where Wisby, the capital of Gothland, was a great emporium. Then on to Lubeck, Hamburg, and across the North Sea to Scotland and even to Ireland. The great southern trade route was from Persia to the Black Sea, and from there through the South of Europe.

Persons interested in Anglo-Saxon coins will find a great deal of information about them in a work published by Bror Emil Hildebrand, Stockholm, second edition, 1881, written in Swedish, with numerous plates of the coins mentioned in the book, which is called 'Anglo-Saxon Coins in the Royal Swedish Cabinet of Medals at Stockholm, all found in Sweden.'

WISBY,

the capital of the island of Gothland, mentioned above, with its ruined churches and well-preserved old walls, is an interesting place. It was formerly a great emporium of trade both from the East and West; but taken and plundered by the Danes in 1361, it seems never to have recovered its early splendour.

In the Cathedral of St. Maria, said to have been originally built in 1225, but lately restored in a modern style, the earliest date that I could find in Arabic numerals was 1537, and Anno Domini on two flat tombstones. Among the loose old tombstones, very numerous in the churchyard, nearly all the inscriptions were erased. There was one of 27th July, 1566. In the ruined Church of St. Catherine there was a date MC. on an old fragment of a stone, but the rest was missing, so it did not give much information.

VIENNA.

In the Museums here I obtained the following information:

Before the reign of the Emperor Frederick III. of Germany (1439-1493) there are no dates on any of the coins either in Roman or Arabic numerals.

The earliest dated coin was a silver kreuzer of the time of the above-mentioned Emperor, dated

1 ◦ 4 ◦ 5 ◦ 6 (*i.e.*, 1456) in Arabic numerals, in the stage of transformation, as will be presently explained. Other coins of the same sort follow of the years 1458, 1459, 1470, 1482, 1483, 1484, 1485, all with Arabic numerals.

There was also a silver thaler of Sigismund, Archduke of the Tyrol, 1484, in Arabic numerals. Another of 1486 with the same. Also one engraved 'Renatus Dei gratia Dux Lotharingi, 1488.'

There was a real thaler in silver and one also in gold, both with the same year engraved upon them, MCCCCLXXXVII., but no A.D. or Dei Gratia. Also thalers of Maximilian I. (1493-1519) of the years 1518 and 1519, in Arabic numerals, and one thaler with Maximilian's face and date 1519 on one side, and his wife's face and date 1520 on the other. This may have been struck later in their memory.

In the Art and Historical Museum at Vienna the first dated French gold coin there is 1532, and the first dated French silver coin is 1549, both with Arabic numerals. This corresponds with the information given under Paris.

In the same Museum there are three pictures, 12, 27, and 7 (but the numbers are constantly being changed), with early dates upon them. The first, MCCCCLXXXVIIII. ; the second, MCCCCLXXXXIII. ; the third, 1496 in Arabic numerals.

ZURICH—SWITZERLAND.

The Schweiz Landes, or Swiss National Museum (of which Dr. Angst is the head director, and H. Zeller Werdmüller member of the council and honorary director in charge of the coin department), is quite a model museum, as Zurich itself is quite a model town in the way of education.

The honorary director kindly showed me their earliest dated coin with Arabic numerals, a silver groschen, struck at the Abbey of St. Gall, and dated ı ✕ 2 ✕ (*i.e.*, 1424). This is the earliest that I have as yet come across, there being, however, one other of this kind and date in the British Museum, another in the library of Winterthur, and another in the collection of Prince Furstenburg of Donau Esshingen.

It will be noticed that the figures are in the transition state, the same as the early dated coin at Vienna of ı•✕•ч•6 (*i.e.*, 1456), already mentioned, and which comes next in date to the one here described.

It is curious that a coin of such early date was struck at the Abbey of St. Gall, while the town of St. Gall only began to strike coins at the end of the fifteenth century, and with no dates upon them.

In the Zurich collection, next to the coin of 1424 comes some gold florins of Basle, dated

1 Q 93 (*i.e.*, 1493). Also two gold florins, one of the Emperor Frederick and the other of the Emperor Maximilian, both dated 1 Q 93. Also a silver thaler of Berne, a very fine coin struck there, and dated 1 4 93, and another one of the same, 1 X 9 X. The next thaler of Berne is the same coin of 1501, and a silver dicken (third part of a thaler) struck at Basle, and dated J Q 9 9 (*i.e.*, 1499).

The first piece actually struck at Zurich was dated 150 Q (*i.e.*, 1504), a silver dicken, while the first gold coin struck there was one of the value of about ten shillings, and dated 1526.

The series of Zurich records begin only in 1314, and have been published in two volumes. Among them, however, are some earlier documents, one or two of them (said to be authentic) carrying Incarnation dates of the ninth century, but none earlier. It is said also that in 1324 and 1326 Arabic numerals were used in two or three places only in the side-notes on the margin of the documents. Whether these are original or later additions it is difficult to say, and experts only could form perhaps a correct opinion. But Arabic

numerals were used early for marking pages in manuscripts.

From the facts then collected and detailed above it would appear that no European moneys were dated with Arabic numerals till the fifteenth century. During the first three-quarters of that century they seem to have been used very, very rarely; during the last part of that century they were creeping in, but still not used to any great extent, and were generally established in the sixteenth century.

But as regards manuscripts an earlier date must be assigned to them.

To ascertain exactly in what year one, two, or more of the so-called Arabic numerals appeared in the early manuscripts would be a very difficult task to undertake. It would entail a search through all the manuscripts of Europe. And to do this thoroughly a society would have to be formed with local committees in the different countries, which would not be probably worth the expense.

In the British Museum some manuscripts of the fourteenth, fifteenth, and sixteenth centuries have been cursorily examined to ascertain how they were dated during those periods.

The manuscripts of the fourteenth century carry certainly more Roman than Arabic numerals both

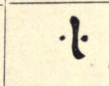
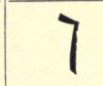
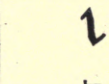
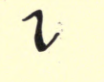
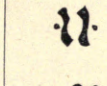
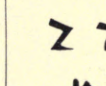
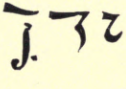
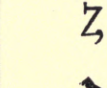
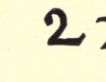
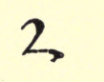
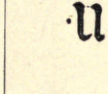
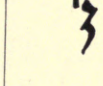
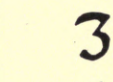
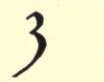
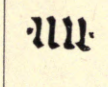
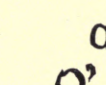
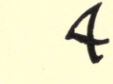
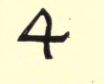
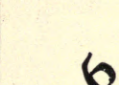
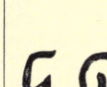
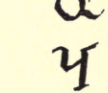
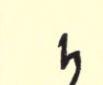
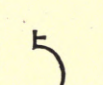
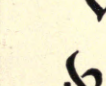
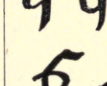
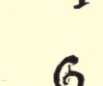
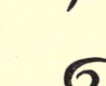
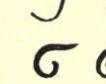
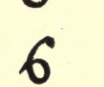
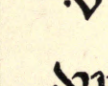
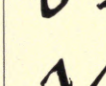
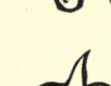
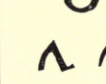
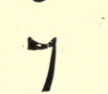
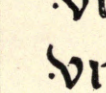
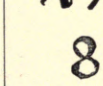
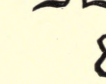
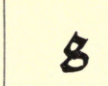
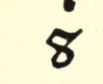
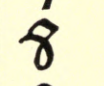
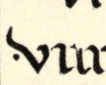
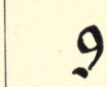
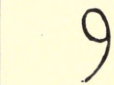
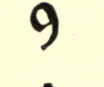
in words and figures, but still the latter appear occasionally at the end of the date.

In 62 manuscripts of the fifteenth century there are 37 with Roman and 6 with Arabic numerals, 11 with a mixture of both Roman and Arabic, and 8 without any date.

In 11 manuscripts of the sixteenth century, 7 carry Roman and 3 Arabic numerals, while one is a mixture of the two.

Now, the transformation of the numerals used in the twelfth, thirteenth, fourteenth, and fifteenth centuries into those used in the sixteenth century, and which have continued down to the present time, must have been a slow and gradual process.

To elucidate this, the following statement taken from certain tables in a French work, entitled 'Paleographie des Chartes et des Manuscripts du xi. au xvii. siècle,' par Alph. Chassant, Paris, eighth edition, 1885, may perhaps be interesting. The first edition of this book was Evreux, 1846 :

No.	Centuries.					
	12th.	13th.	14th.	15th.	16th.	17th.
1.						
2.						
3.						
4.						
5.						
6.						
7.						
8.						
9.						
10.						

From this it will be seen that the numerals used in the twelfth century were still more Roman, or rather Gothic, than anything else.

There is a change in the thirteenth century, during which time it will be remembered that Arabic coins were being dated in figures or ciphers.

The changes are still going on during the fourteenth century, and in manuscripts of that period will be found a mixture of Latin words, Roman numerals, and Arabic figures, as, for instance, milesimo CCC 68.

The figures in the fifteenth century are almost our own, while those of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries are much the same as the ones used at the present time.

To ascertain exactly in what year some of the so-called Arabic numerals appeared in the early manuscripts would be a laborious task. Still, a statement might be prepared from the manuscripts in the British Museum and the Bodleian Library, showing all the dates used in them from the thirteenth to the seventeenth centuries. This would show how letters, words, Roman and Arabic numerals became intermixed, as it were, gradually paving the way to the complete introduction of Arabic numerals from the end of the fifteenth to the middle of the sixteenth centuries.

Alph. Chassant, in his work already mentioned

above, says: 'As for Arabic ciphers or figures, they require still more attention. Although known in France during the thirteenth century, they did not begin to come into general use until the end of the fifteenth century, and were not used in records or public registers until the sixteenth century. Before that time they are to be found in the manuscripts relating to mathematics, astronomy, arithmetic and geometry. They were also used for the chronicles, the calendars, and even for numbering each leaf or sheet of manuscripts. Nevertheless, the use of Roman numerals or figures still prevailed for a long time, and were constantly maintained for marking dates in rolls, records, and registers up to the seventeenth century.'

In an interesting work called 'The Alphabet: an Account of the Origin and Development of Letters,' by Isaac Taylor, London, 1883, a few pages contain remarks on Arabic numerals. But it is doubtful whether these ciphers in the fourteenth century had reached in Europe such a close resemblance to those used at the present time, as stated by Mr. Taylor in his table at p. 266, and explained at p. 268, of his second volume.

Before closing this chapter a person should be mentioned who is said to have invented, or at all events first used, the abacus in Europe, and to have written about geometry, mathematics, and arithmetic in the latter part of the tenth century.

I allude to Pope Silvester II. (999-1003), commonly known under the name of Gerbertus.

It was important to ascertain if Gerbertus made any mention of Arabic numerals in his letters or his works. For this purpose various manuscripts and books connected with him have been cursorily examined, but with no satisfactory results. Indeed, it is difficult to say what figures he used, though from his three years' residence in Spain, perhaps for the purposes of study, he may have been acquainted with the Ghobâr figures, from which, and from the East and West Arabic numerals, our modern figures are said to be evolved (see pp. 207-209 of A. P. Pihan's 'Exposé des signes de numeration,' etc., Paris, 1860, for specimens of these numerals).

Gerbertus himself does not appear to have been acquainted with the zero, which appears in the twelfth century. The Ghobâr figures do not use it either, for in this kind of numeration the tens were expressed by one point over any one of the figures up to 9, the hundreds by two points, and the thousands by three points over their respective figures.

This Gerbertus is rather an interesting personage, and was so advanced in learning, and knew so much for the age in which he lived, that it was said he practised magic, and was on most intimate terms with the devil. His tomb is shown in the Basilica of St. John Lateran at Rome, but it was

erected many years after his death at a later period by a later Pope.

Professor Dr. H. Weissenborn has written about him and his pupil Richer, who wrote an account of the studies of his master. Concerning arithmetic, he says that Gerbertus got a sign (board) maker to fashion a (leather) reckoning table with twenty-seven divisions and a thousand counters or markers of horn. Such would be an early abacus, and this method of reckoning upon it was developed and simplified during the two following centuries, though whether Gerbertus originally got it from the Arabs, as some say, is still a doubtful question.

The only certain light that appears is that Gerbertus knew, or knew of a work by, Josephus Sapiens, or Josephus Hispanus, called 'Libellus de multiplicatione et divisione numerorum,' which, judged by its title, was on the same subject as his own work, 'Libellus de divisione numerorum,' in which by his abacus he teaches the peculiar method called complementary division, the origin of which is unknown.

Now, who this Josephus Sapiens, or Josephus Hispanus, really was (probably a Jew) it is almost impossible to ascertain. The writer is buried in oblivion, and his work is no longer extant, but both are mentioned in two of Gerbertus's letters, said to have been written in 984, the one Ep. xvii. to the Abbot Gerald of Aurillac Monastery, in

which he asks 'for a copy of the said work which had been left with you'; the other, Ep. xxvi. to Bishop Bonifilius of Gerona, containing also a request for the work in question.

This seems to connect Gerbertus more with Josephus Sapiens than (as some have said) with Boetius, whose geometry is now supposed to be rather the work of the tenth or eleventh than of the fifth or sixth centuries. It is to be hoped that some further information will be dug out about Gerbertus and his works, because he appears to have been really an early inquirer into matters connected with figures, and for the age in which he lived also a great scholar.

As far as I have been able to ascertain, nothing in the literary remains of Gerbertus can be found to show that he wrote anything about Arabic numerals, or used them, or even alluded to them in any way. There is evidence to prove that he dealt with the subject of arithmetic and geometry, and also utilized the abacus ; whether he invented this last is not very clear. William of Malmesbury says that he got it from the Arabs. He also wrote or lectured about the astrolabe and astronomy, the information about which he probably got when in Spain.

As regards authorities, Chasles and Nagl seem to think that Gerbertus got his arithmetic and geometry from Boetius, which is now doubted.

Havet and Weissenborn seem to favour the idea that he got them from Josephus Sapiens or Josephus Hispanus, whose name and whose work he mentions in some of his letters.

In conclusion I must insert the following letter from an expert in early manuscripts, who may be looked upon as an authority in these matters :

'Arabic numerals were introduced into Europe long before they made their appearance in manuscripts. Through Spain and Sicily and Syria they were no doubt familiar to mercantile and to scientific men in the twelfth century, but the traces of their use were perishable, and have perished. As far as I am aware, their earliest appearance in extant books and inscriptions is to be looked for in the late part of the fourteenth century ; they are frequent on the Continent in the first half and middle of the fifteenth, and are found occasionally in England in the second half of that century. They were necessary only in accounts and arithmetic, but all the accounts have been destroyed, and examples of arithmetical teaching are very rare before the fifteenth century. On the other hand, there was *no necessity* for them in books and in inscriptions, so that the old Roman system was still maintained in these cases for a couple of centuries after bankers and merchants had been familiar with algorism.'

The transformation of the Ghobâr ciphers and

East and West Arabic numerals into our present figures was gradual, and reached our present stage, at all events in England, more in the sixteenth than in the fourteenth century. The details given in the preceding pages rather tend to prove this theory. It must be further noted that as Incarnation dates prior to the ninth century (*i.e.*, 801-900) must be regarded with some suspicion, so Arabic numerals inscribed on coins, churches, monuments, or anywhere prior to the fifteenth century (*i.e.*, 1401-1500), must be examined carefully as to the style and shape of the figures, and inquiries made as to whether they are really contemporaneous or added at a later date. A greater latitude may be given to manuscripts, but in England any carrying Arabic numerals before the fourteenth century (*i.e.*, 1301-1400) should also be most carefully examined in the manner described above.

CHAPTER IV.

ABOUT THE DATES OF THE BIRTHS, ACCESSIONS, AND DEATHS OF OUR ENGLISH KINGS AND QUEENS, GOING BACKWARDS FROM QUEEN VICTORIA TO WILLIAM THE CONQUEROR.

For English history from the earliest times to the reign of Henry VII. the Benedictine monks are responsible. Now, the date of the arrival of these Benedictines in England, and the date of the commencement of their writing these histories and other works under different names, are very difficult to fix with positive historical accuracy.

It is true that a complete history of the rise and progress of the order has come down to us, but when search is made for the records on which this history is based, it appears to be the product of a later period than the early dates assigned to its original foundation by St. Benedict in A.D. 529.

Now, the early history of England is founded upon the so-called histories of Gildas, Nennius, Bede, the Anglo-Saxon Chronicles, and the old chroniclers generally. In the total absence of

records, registers, and other documentary proofs, it is evident that all these works are based simply upon legend and tradition, and that the dating of them has been fixed at a much later period.

It will be noticed that all these histories begin early and ever flow downwards. In this chapter it is proposed to reverse that system, and commencing with the reign of our present Sovereign Queen Victoria, to go backwards to the reign of William the Conqueror. It is not contemplated to write a history of all these Kings and Queens, extending from the present time to A.D. 1066, or more than eight hundred years, but only to show the dates of their births, accessions, and deaths, and the evidence on which these are established.

It is to be hoped that some enterprising person will do the same for the long list of Popes, going backwards from the present reigning Pope Leo XIII. to Pius IX., Gregory XVI., Pius VIII., Leo XII., Pius VII., Pius VI., and so on, giving authentic data for the dates of their births, accessions, and deaths.

There can be no reasonable doubt that the dates given from Queen Victoria up to 1509, the year of the accession of Henry VIII., may be taken as undisputed and correct. But it is otherwise when an attempt is made to ascend beyond that epoch. We enter into a period universally admitted to be one of great darkness. Our sources of information

are scant in amount and doubtful in quality, and these remarks apply to the whole of the fifteenth, fourteenth, and earlier centuries. There appear to be no official gazettes or newspapers, no State Records kept in any organized way, no registers, calendars, or diaries from which alone positive history can be written.

Our reigning Sovereign the Queen Alexandrina Victoria was born on Monday, the 24th of May, 1819, at 4.15 a.m. at Kensington Palace. This was notified in the *London Gazette* of Tuesday, 25th May, 1819. The *Times* of the same date gives the names of those present, viz., the Duke of Sussex and others.

The date of the Queen's accession was 20th June, 1837, as notified in the supplement to the *London Gazette* of Tuesday, 20th June, 1837, giving also the list of the Lords, etc., present at the Council at Kensington Palace, and the Declaration of the Queen. The *London Gazette* of 23rd June published a copy of the Public Proclamation, the Order, dated Court of St. James, 21st June, 1837, for alteration in the Prayer-Book, and two Proclamations by the Queen. Further details are to be found in the Lords and Commons Journals, the *Times*, *Morning Post*, and other newspapers. The coronation took place on Tuesday, the 28th of June, 1838.

Queen Victoria has now reigned over sixty

years. To perpetuate the memory of this long and glorious reign, and to establish a good fixed date for future ages, and on which they could rely, it would be very appropriate to establish a new English era to be called the Victorian era, dating from the 1st January, 1837, the year of her accession to the throne. The current year of 1900 would be V.E. 64.

William IV. was born on Wednesday the 21st of August, 1765, at the Queen's Palace, St. James's Park, as notified in the *London Gazette* of Tuesday, 20th August, to Saturday, 24th August, 1765. His accession to the throne was on Saturday the 26th June, 1830, published in the *London Gazette Extraordinary* of the same day, while the said paper of the 27th June contains the Proclamation, and a Supplement to the same paper of the 28th June gives the Public Proclamation. The coronation took place on Thursday the 8th of September, 1831.

His death took place at Windsor on Tuesday the 20th June, 1837, at 2.12 a.m. Discrepancies occur as to the exact time when the King expired, such as 'within a few minutes of two o'clock,' 'about 3.20 a.m.,' but the bulletin signed by three physicians gives the time as 2.12 a.m. The event was notified in a Supplement to the *London Gazette* dated 20th June, 1837. A second Supplement of the same date gives the order for mourning (Lord

Chamberlain's office). A third Supplement of the 21st June contains further orders for mourning (the Earl Marshal, the Horse Guards, and the Admiralty). The above is further verified by the Journals of the Lords and Commons, the *Times*, *Morning Post*, and other papers.

George IV. was born on Thursday the 12th August, 1762, at 7.30 a.m., as notified in the *London Gazette Extraordinary* of the same date. His accession was on Saturday the 29th January, 1820, while the *London Gazette Extraordinary* of Sunday the 30th January contains the usual documents relating to a royal death and an accession, the same being found in the *Morning Post* and other newspapers. The coronation is dated 19th July, 1821.

The King died on Saturday the 26th June, 1830, at 3.15 a.m., as notified in the *London Gazette Extraordinary* of the same date. A bulletin signed by two physicians [Holford and Tierney] was issued. The *London Gazette Extraordinary* of Sunday, 27th June, contains a Proclamation of the accession of Prince William Henry Duke of Clarence to the throne. The newspapers of that time give further details.

George III. was born at 7.30 a.m. on Wednesday the 24th May, 1738 (old style, corresponding with 4th June new style). In 1752, by the adoption of the new style, eleven days were left out of

the calendar, the 3rd September being reckoned as the 14th. The birth was notified in the *London Gazette*, No. 7,704, of 24th May to the 27th, 1738.

His accession to the throne was on Saturday the 25th October, 1760. The *London Gazette* of October 21st to 26th, of 26th to 28th, and of November 1st to 4th, gives the usual documents relating to a royal death and an accession. The coronation is dated the 22nd September, 1761.

The King died on the 29th January, 1820, as notified in the *London Gazette Extraordinary* of 30th January, 1820. A certificate of all the five physicians in attendance, along with a letter from the Duke of York, was sent to Viscount Sidmouth, and the other usual documents appeared in the Gazette. The *Morning Post* and other newspapers gave biographies and eulogies of the deceased.

George II. was born at Hanover on the 30th October, 1683. No notice of this has been traced in the *English Gazette*, but 'Royal Genealogies,' by James Anderson, D.D. [1732], gives the date.

The King's accession is dated Sunday, 11th June, 1727, as notified in the *London Gazette* of June 13th to 17th. On 14th June the Lords of the Privy Council at Leicester House order the Proclamation of George II. He was publicly proclaimed next day, 15th June, at the usual places, and the usual orders appear in the next two

numbers of the Gazette. The coronation took place on the 11th October, 1727.

The King died on Saturday the 25th October, 1760, between 7 and 8 a.m., a sudden death, but no medical certificate. The *London Gazette* of October 21st to 26th and following numbers, as also the newspapers, give details.

George I. was born on the 28th May, 1660, according to Anderson's 'Royal Genealogies,' but no official Gazette. His accession is dated Sunday 1st August, 1714, as notified in the *London Gazette*, No. 5,247, of 31st July to 3rd August, 1714, and the usual orders. The coronation was on the 20th October, 1714. He died about 1 a.m. on Sunday 11th June, 1727, at the house of the Duke of York, at Banbury. The *London Gazette* of Tuesday 13th June to Saturday 17th June, 1727, gives a brief account of the sudden illness and death of the King. No medical certificate.

Queen Anne was born on 6th February, 1663-1664, Anderson's 'Royal Genealogies' being the authority. Her accession is dated Sunday 8th March, 1701-1702, as notified in the *London Gazette*, No. 3,790, of 5th to 9th March, 1701-1702. Here it may be stated that from 1155 up to 1752 the new year commenced always on the 25th of March in England. The day after the 31st December, 1751, was called the 1st of January, 1752, and the year in future commences

always on the 1st of January. In Scotland the 25th March was used as the beginning of the year till 1599, when the day after the 31st December, 1599, was called the 1st January, 1600.

According to the above systems and change of dates, a Scotch historian would record the date of the execution of Charles I. as having occurred on the 30th January, 1649, while English historians of that period would notify it as the 30th January, 1648.

Queen Anne's coronation took place on the 23rd April, 1702, and she died at 7.30 a.m. on Sunday, the 1st August, 1714. A brief announcement of her death, after convulsion fits (but no medical certificate), is given in the *London Gazette*, No. 5,247, of 31st July to 3rd August, 1714.

William III. and Mary II. were born respectively on 4th November, 1650, and 30th April, 1662, both dates being given in Anderson's 'Royal Genealogies.' They ascended the English throne on the 13th February, 1688-1689, a Wednesday, as stated in the *London Gazette*, No. 2,427, of 11th to 14th February, 1688. Their coronation was on the 11th April, 1689.

The Queen died at Kensington about 1 a.m. of 28th December, 1694, notified in the *London Gazette*, No. 3,040, of 27th to 31st December, 1694; while William died on 8th March, 1701-1702, a Sunday, at 8 a.m., and recorded in the *London*

Gazette, No. 3,790, of the 5th to 9th March, 1701. The memory of William ought to be enshrined in the hearts of all Englishmen, for he and Oliver Cromwell were the real founders of the liberties of England.

James II. was born on the 14th October, 1633, according to Anderson's 'Royal Genealogies,' the *London Gazette* not being then in existence. He ascended the throne on Friday, the 6th February, 1684-1685, as notified in the *London Gazette* from 5th to 9th February, 1684. The usual formal documents are given, and the speech of the new King to the Privy Council is interesting.

He was crowned on the 23rd April, 1686, abdicated on the 11th December, 1688, and died in France on the 16th September, 1701. The authorities for his death are the *London Gazette,* No. 3,739, from the 15th to 18th September, 1701; also a Paris letter dated 17th September; also the *London Gazette,* No. 3,742; also a letter from Loo, dated 27th September, 1701, referring to King Louis having declared the Prince of Wales King of England.

Charles II. was born on the 29th May, 1630, according to Anderson's 'Royal Genealogies,' but there appears to be no official record. And here it will be interesting to state what existed at that time, or, rather, what has come down to us in the shape of newspapers.

The first date in the British Museum Catalogue of Newspapers (Burney collection) is 1603. But this has no reference to news, the entry being, 'His Majesty's [*i.e.*, James I.] Conference with the Lords and Bishops of January 14th, 1603-1604.' Then His Majesty's speech of March 19th, 1603-1604, and other papers of that description follow.

The first notice of news is in 1619, and in this volume for 1619 are also found scraps of news for 1620, 1621 and 1622, all apparently pertaining to foreign countries, and no domestic intelligence. In 1622 the *Weekly News* for May 23rd to 30th and June 18th are given, but the weekly numbers are incomplete.

In 1623 begins a series of weekly papers, such as the *Nevves of this Present Week*, also called the *Last Nevves; More Newes of the Affairs of the World*, and such like headings. Numbers are wanting here and there, but still only foreign affairs are dealt with.

From 1625 the *Weekly Newes* disappears from the catalogue until 1630, and between that and 1641 the existing papers are few and meagre. But in 1641 there is a marked increase of foreign and domestic intelligence, and this goes on increasing with the appearance of several papers called *Mercurius Aulicus*, *Mercurius Anglicus*, etc.

Of the *Mercurius Aulicus* there are four volumes in 1643 and two in 1644. After 1643 many other

'Mercuriuses,' with names attached to them, such as *Britannicus*, *Civicus*, *Rusticus*, *Medicus*, *Bellicus*, etc., appear and disappear at intervals, but in reality none of these papers could be called a newspaper in the sense of a paper of the present day.

In addition to the many 'Mercuriuses' with names attached to them, there appear also the *Kingdom's Weekly Intelligencer*, the *Intelligencer* and *Moderate Intelligencer*, etc. In November, 1665, there is the first mention of the *Oxford Gazette*, which continues till the 1st February, 1666, from which date the *London Gazette* comes on the scene, and is to be found in the so-called King's Library in the British Museum complete with a few exceptions from 1666 to the present time. This Gazette only contained official news such as the Government wished to communicate to the people. Consequently there is not much in the shape of news to be extracted from it except regular dates, which, of course, are most important. But the deficiencies of the *Gazette* were to a certain extent supplied in London by the coffee-houses, and in the country by the newsletters.

On the 3rd May, 1695, the law which had subjected the press to a censorship expired, and from that date may be said to begin the rise of the British press. What progress it has made up to the present time is known to all.

The many 'Mercuriuses' seem then to have disappeared, and were succeeded by *Intelligence*, *Domestic and Foreign*, the *English Courant*, followed by the *Daily Courant;* and many 'Posts,' such as the *Postman*, the *Postboy*, the *London Post*, the *Flying Post*, etc. In fact the name of 'Post' seems to have supplanted the name of 'Mercury.'

For dating purposes, then, the years 1619 to 1641 may be taken as the dawning commencement of the newspaper; and a most important episode it was, for, as Macaulay has truly said, the only history of a country is to be found in its daily newspapers. Perhaps it was on this account that he commenced his 'History of England' with the reign of James II.

To return to Charles II. His accession to the throne appears to be dated the 8th May, 1660, as notified in the *Mercurius Publicus*, by order of the Council of State, 3rd to 10th May, 1660; and in 'The *Parliamentary Intelligencer*, comprising the sum of foreign intelligence, with the affairs now in agitation in England, Scotland and Ireland. For information of the people. Published by order of the Council of State. From Monday, 7th, to Monday, 14th May, 1660.' It describes the Proclamation.

But the actual Restoration appears to be dated 29th May, 1660, notified in the *Mercurius Publicus* of 24th to 31st May, and in the *Parliamentary*

Intelligencer of 28th May to 4th June, 1660. The coronation did not take place till the 23rd April, 1661.

The King died on Friday the 6th February, 1684-1685, and this was notified in the *London Gazette* and other papers.

Richard Cromwell was proclaimed Protector on Saturday the 4th September, 1658, 10 to 11 a.m., as notified in the *Mercurius Politicus*, No. 432, of 2nd to 9th September. He resigned on the 25th May, 1659.

Oliver Cromwell was proclaimed Protector on Friday the 16th December, 1653 (see the Proceedings of State Affairs, No. 221, dated 15th to 22nd December, 1653). He was installed at Westminster Hall on the 26th June, 1657, and died about 3 p.m. on the 3rd September, 1658, as stated in the *Mercurius Politicus,* No. 432, of 2nd to 9th September, 1658. It is not said that these papers are published by authority.

Charles I. was born at Dunfermline on the 19th November, 1600, as given in Anderson's 'Royal Genealogies,' but no official Gazette. He ascended the throne on the 27th March, 1625, as the following State Papers testify: Collection of Proclamations Carolus I., No. 1, and MS. copy; also Proceedings, Nos. 2 and 3 of 28th March, 1625, and Minutes of Proceedings of Privy Council, supposed to be of 28th March, and Letters Patent

authorizing use of existing official seals till further orders.

The newspapers or letters of this period are very scanty, only about ten for 1625, being bound in the volume for 1624 of the Burney Collection. The King was crowned on the Feast of the Purification, 26th February, 1626-1627.

He was executed at Whitehall on Tuesday the 30th January, 1648-1649, between the hours of 12 and 1 p.m., or 1 and 2 p.m. His death-warrant is preserved in the Library of the House of Lords, while the Commons Journal and the State Trials give further official corroboration. It will be interesting to quote here some newspapers and other works alluding to the subject.

'A Perfect Diurnal of some passages in Parliament, etc., 29th January to 5th February, 1648, No. 288,' gives a brief account of the execution, mainly reporting the King's speech on the scaffold.

The *Moderate Intelligencer*, etc., of the 25th January to 1st February, 1648, No. 202, in the account gives the day as 30th January, 1648, which is correct according to the old style.

The same paper, No. 203, 1st to 8th February, 1648, states that there were omissions from the King's speech in the previous number, and that additions have been made by the auditors, from whom alone the journalist derived his report.

Baker's 'Chronicle,' first edition 1641, followed

by continuation of the same to 1684. He names as the last of modern writers, and from whom he has collected the Chronicle, a Mr. Duchesne, who wrote a History of England from the beginning to the year 1641.

Clarendon's 'History of the Rebellion,' vol. i., published in 1702. Stated in anonymous preface to have been begun in 1641 by the Earl of Clarendon, Lord High Chancellor, and Chancellor of the University of Oxford. There are allusions to the Journals of the two Houses, but dates are sparsely given. Unsatisfactory account of the death and burial of the King, and Carlyle is severe on the official inveracity of the book.

James I. was born on the 19th June, 1566, according to Anderson's 'Royal Genealogies,' but there is no official record. He ascended the English throne on the 24th March, 1602-1603, for which there is the authority of State Papers, and a Proclamation. The coronation was on the 25th February, 1603-1604, and he died at noon on the 27th March, 1625, according to the State Papers and Calendars of the reign of Charles I., edited by John Bruce, 1858.

Queen Elizabeth was born on the 7th September, 1533, between 3 and 4 p.m., as given in Anderson's 'Royal Genealogies,' but no official documents. She ascended the throne on the 17th November, 1558, as recorded in State Papers and Calendars for

1547-1580, edited by R. Lemon, 1856, and also in the Commons Journal and Camden's 'Annales.' There is a discrepancy between Lingard and Froude as to the places of proclamation. She was crowned in 1559.

The Queen died on the 24th March, 1602-1603, corroborated by State Papers, Holland Correspondence, and Calendar for this Reign, edited by Mrs. Green, 1870.

Queen Mary was born on 8th February, 1515, according to Anderson's 'Royal Genealogies,' but no official documents. She ascended the throne on 16th July, 1553, after deposing Lady Jane Grey, who reigned only ten days (see State Papers and the Calendar for 1547 and following years). The coronation took place in the same year, 1553, and she died on the 17th November, 1558, mentioned in the calendar as above.

Edward VI. was born on 12th October, 1537 (Anderson's 'Royal Genealogies'). He ascended the throne on the 28th January, 1546-1547, according to the State Papers for January and February, relating to the coronation, which was fixed for 20th February, but Hall's 'Chronicle' gives 19th February as the date. He died on the 6th July, 1553, for which there are several authorities, such as the Lords' Journal, Rymer, Council Book, and Harleian MS.

From this reign the custom became uniform for

each Sovereign to date his or her accession to the crown from the day of the demise of his or her predecessor. They were crowned after their accession, some earlier, some later. The dates will be found in Dean Stanley's 'Historical Memoirs of Westminster Abbey.'

Henry VIII. was born on the 28th June, 1491 (Anderson's 'Royal Genealogies'), but no official documents. He ascended the throne on the 22nd April, 1509, and was crowned the same year. To show how few official papers were existing at this time, it may be stated that the Journals of the House of Lords only begin on the 21st January, 1508-1509, and the Journals of the House of Commons on the 8th November, 1547. There were no written records of proceedings of the Privy Council till the 8th August, 1540, and no State Paper Office till 1578. An interesting statement about the earlier records and State Papers will be found in Walter Rye's 'Records and Record Searching,' second edition, pp. 27-29, 66-76.

The King died on the 28th January, 1546-1547, and in State Papers, vol. i., 1830, will be found directions for the publication of Henry's will.

The time is now arriving when English history begins to lapse into a dark period, which gets darker as it ascends to the time of the Norman Conquest, and darker still before that period.

Much reliance cannot be placed on the earliest manuscript chronicles of England, prepared in the Benedictine monasteries, and their date is uncertain. Some original documents may have been used, but many of them have not come down to us.

The subject is both large and interesting, and will be dealt with in the next chapter. An attempt will be made to discuss these early chroniclers and their works, and to show on what basis the Tudor historians were able to work, and from what sources they drew their facts and inferences.

It is probable that early English history was first formulated on legend, tradition, speculation, and invention. Bacon regards the time of Henry VII. as 'ancient,' and the figure of the King as dim and uncertain. He was made the wise King, and his life was written up to that ideal, but party spirit and partisanship then, as now, entered largely into the biographies of distinguished personages.

Henry, Earl of Richmond, the son of Edmund, Earl of Richmond, is said to have been born in 1455 or 1457, but the month or year cannot be traced to a certainty. His accession to the throne is said by some to be 1485, by others 1486. He was proclaimed King on the battlefield of Mirivell, eight miles from Leicester, near the Abbey of Mirivell, otherwise known as the Battle of Bosworth Field, fought on the 21st or 22nd of August, 1485

or 1486, between Henry and his followers, and Richard Duke of Gloucester, and his adherents. This Richard (generally known in our histories as Richard III.) was killed in the battle, and the crown on his head is said to have been transferred to that of Henry.

Henry VII. died of consumption at his favourite palace of Richmond, after a reign of twenty-three years and eight months, on the 22nd April, 1509, in the fifty-second year of his age; so says Sir W. Dugdale, King-of-Arms in the time of Charles II. If this be true, Henry would have been born in 1457, ascended the throne on the 22nd August, 1485, and died on the 21st April, 1509. But there are variant statements as to each of these dates, which it seems impossible to reconcile, but 1485 is now generally recognised as the date of his accession.

Before leaving the reign of Henry VII., it will be interesting to notice two Latin-writing foreign ecclesiastics who lived and wrote during that period, the one Bernard André of Toulouse, Friar of the Order of St. Augustine, the other Polydore Vergil of Urbino.

Mr. James Gairdner, in his preface (1858) to Bernard André's 'History of Henry VII.,' says: 'At the commencement of the Tudor period the only writers of note were one or two foreigners who wrote in Latin, and it is from their works, not

from the works of Englishmen, that we derive our principal knowledge of those times.'

Moreover, Gairdner regarded Bernard André's work as the only strictly contemporary record of the days of Henry VII. But even this is doubtful, and the details that have been furnished about André himself, that he was blind, Poet Laureate, tutor to Prince Arthur, Royal Historiographer, Royal Orator, Prefect of the Royal Library, also of the Printing Office, must all be accepted with considerable caution.

He is said to have been in England from about 1486 to 1521, in which year he died in London at the Religious House of Austin Friars, and was buried in their cemetery.

The other Latin writer of that time was Polydore Vergil, of Urbino, a secular priest, Archdeacon of Wells, and the last legate from the Pope to collect Peter's pence in England, being sent here for that purpose during the reign of Henry VII. He appears to have been a favourite with Henry VIII., who gave him preferment, and to that King Polydore dedicated his 'Anglia Historica,' in MDXXXIII.

Though a Tudor panegyrist, this writer is of the first importance. He is vague and rhetorical, but states that he came hither about 1496. He further states that literary culture was introduced into England about the times of Henry Tudor, especially

under the auspices of the Lady Margaret (his mother); and he distinctly conveys the impression that there was hardly an educated Englishman competent to teach a grammar school before John Colet, founder of St. Paul's School.

Polydore Vergil, in the dedication of his 'English History' to Henry VIII. (1533), also distinctly states that there is a general ignorance about Britain—now called England—the origin of the people, the manners of the Kings, etc., because no English history worth speaking of is extant. Leaving his remarks about the alleged authors of early times, such as Gildas, Bede and others, to be dealt with in the next chapter, here the question is confined to this point: What did this Italian-English ecclesiastic know of the rise of the Tudor house, of which it is alleged, without contradiction, that he was a protégé?

Every line that he has written on the question should be examined with the closest scrutiny. There seems to be in the man that peculiar mixture of credulity and scepticism which we observe in accomplished Catholic priests of the present day. He laughs at his friend Gavin Douglas, Bishop of Dunkeld, because that prelate brought him a silly attempt at Scottish story. He scoffs at the few bald monkish chronicles about England that have come into his hands, yet presents us with this smooth, varnished tale of English Kings from im-

possible times to Henry VIII. as if it were all gospel.

And, what is still more curious, another most important Latin-writing historian of the time, John Leland ('De Britannicis Scriptoribus'), alleged to have been the first Royal Antiquary, recognises Polydore, attacks him on account of his Italian arrogance and hauteur, and denounces his Anglican history in the most violent language.

These Latin writers have been neglected by our modern critics. But the key to the true knowledge of the nature of English history is to be found above all in them. Moreover, it is interesting to compare Shakespeare's historical plays with Polydore Vergil's history. Little incidents mentioned in the latter are to be found in the former; and from these it must be concluded that Shakespeare and his mysterious collaborators used this history, or had translations or summaries prepared from it, to enable them to write those historical plays for which they are so justly famous.

To return now to Henry VII.'s supposed predecessor, Richard III., the date of whose birth is unknown. The date of his accession to the throne is uncertain, some writers giving 1483, others 1484, while the date of his death depends on that of the Battle of Bosworth Field, in 1485 or 1486. It is, however, now generally admitted that the dates of

1483 for the accession and 1485 for the battle are supposed to be the correct ones.

The total absence of official documents compel us to fall back on writers and chroniclers who all belonged to the Lancastrian or Tudor party. All these make out Richard to be a monster in human form, with every vice and no virtue. His life, ascribed to Sir Thomas More, has been generally accepted by historians from the later sixteenth century, but the treatises of George Buck, or Buc, or De Buc, and of Horace Walpole, should also receive the most careful consideration.

Edward Prince of Wales, known as our Edward V., never came to the throne. The date of his birth is unknown, but being a child at his father's death in 1483, the Duke of Gloucester, his uncle (afterwards Richard III.), was chosen Protector, and he is said to have had the Prince and his younger brother, the Duke of York, murdered in the Tower in 1483 or 1484. Polydore Vergil does not recognise any Edward V., only Prince Edward of Wales, put to death with his brother in the Tower.

Edward IV., son of Richard Duke of York, was born about the year 1433, but the exact date is not known. As regards his accession, a Council was called by old custom at West monastery (Westminster) on the iii. Calends July (29th June), in the year of human salvation ('Anno Salutis

Humanæ') 1461. This is stated by Polydore Vergil, but Sir Harris Nicolas, in his 'Chronology of History,' gives 4th March, 1460-1461, as the date of Edward IV.'s accession to the throne. The restoration of Henry VI., it is said, took place in October, 1470, but he died in 1471.

King Edward IV. is supposed to have died in 1483, at the age of fifty, but there are no official documents, and the chroniclers have to be consulted. David Hume, in his 'History of England,' quotes Cotton, Statutes at large, William of Wyrcester, or Worcester, Fabyan, Grafton, Monstrelet, Comines, but their writings have still to be most carefully examined and tested, and especially their system of dating, if any dates are supplied by them.

It was during the reign of Edward IV. that the first book was printed in England by William Caxton in 1477. It is said that he first began to print books in Bruges in co-operation with Colard Mansion, the first printer of Bruges, in 1474. Very full details about them and other printers will be found in G. H. Putnam's most interesting work, in two volumes, entitled 'Books and their Makers during the Middle Ages,' 1897.

The completion of the invention of printing is generally attributed to Gutenberg, in Mayence, and dated 1450. But Laurens Koster, of Haarlem, is said to be the first inventor and printer of books from block type, in 1430, or about twenty years

earlier than Gutenberg, who, however, first invented the movable type, though the same is also claimed for Koster by his supporters.

The long controversies on this subject have not yet been finally settled, but honour can equally be allowed to both the Hollander and the German for a discovery which has in very truth enlightened the inhabitants of this planet to a most extraordinary degree, and facilitated the civilization of mankind. In 1898 a copy of the first Bible printed by Gutenberg at Mayence, but without date, was sold by auction in London for the large sum of £2,950.

This Bible is supposed to have been printed in 1455 or 1456, but carries no date. The first printed and dated Bible is that of 1462, expressed in Roman numerals. But there is a Psalter with a date of 1457, and Mr. Bernard Quaritch, of 15, Piccadilly, has another of 1459, both dates being in Roman numerals, and these are two of the earliest dated and printed books in existence.

Henry VI. was born in December, 1421. J. Rous, or Ross, of Warwick says that he was born on the Feast of St. Nicolas, and was not a year old when his father died, in August, 1422. This John Ross was a priest, and wrote 'Hist. Regum Angliæ,' which is meagre, but instructive as an early sketch of royal romance. The boy Henry was proclaimed King the last day of August,

1422. Some say that he was eight, others that he was nine months old at the time.

He was deposed in March, 1460-1461, but restored for a very brief period in 1470, and after various adventures died in 1471. Some say he was murdered, others that he died a natural death from grief. The Croyland Chronicle says that he died some time near Ascension day, but the year is not distinctly given. It will be noted that in these times the dating was very vague, the fast days or feast days of the Church being the usual landmarks, or perhaps some well-known event which was generally referred to as so many years before it, or so many years after it. Dates as we now understand them were in a confused state at that period.

There appear to have been no official documents or authorities in any scientific sense of the word. The monkish chroniclers are the only sources of information, and so Polydore Vergil's history must perhaps be looked upon as the most reliable.

Henry V. is said to have been born in 1388, but there is no evidence concerning it. He ascended the throne on the 5th Ides of April (*i.e.*, 9th April), 1413. Sir Harris Nicolas gives the 21st March, 1412-1413, while J. Ross of Warwick has no date. Thomas Walsingham, a Benedictine monk of St. Albans, is quoted as an authority and writer during the fifteenth century,

but he appears to be unknown to John Boston, the Benedictine of Bury St. Edmunds, and to Polydore Vergil.

Henry V., it is said, died the end of August, 1422, but the details of his reign as given by Polydore Vergil are very meagre, and the year of his death not expressly given. The contemporary writers of this period are not much to be relied upon.

Henry IV. is said to have been born in 1366, but the day or the month cannot be correctly ascertained. He was created King at a Council held on the 3rd of the Ides of October (*i.e.*, 13th), 1399, according to Polydore Vergil. Walsingham gives the day of translation of St. Edward (*i.e.*, 13th October), 1399, as that of his accession; while the Rev. F. C. Hingeston, in the Rolls Series, 1860, says the 30th September, 1399, Sir Harris Nicolas giving the same date.

In the Royal and Historical Letters (Rolls Series, 1860, same as above) the first alleged letter of Henry is dated 3rd October. The preface to these Letters is worth reading, beginning with a quotation from Sir H. Ellis on History and Romance.

The date of the death of Henry IV. is given by some as 1413, without any month, by others as the 20th March, 1413. Our ignorance of the times of Henrys IV., V., VI., and the Wars of the Roses, is great, and they are shrouded in mystery.

Richard II.—The date of his birth is unknown, but the date of his accession is given as 1377. According to Polydore Vergil, the Princes of the Kingdom held a Council at West monastery (Westminster) and declared Richard to be King, in the orders of Kings of that name the Second, son of Prince Edward, and eleven years old. This was on the xvii. Calends of August (*i.e.*, 16th of July), year of human salvation (A.S.H.), 1377. No official records of any sort, and Polydore cites no authorities.

The King died A.S.H. 1399. His body was buried at Langley, or King's Langley, twenty miles from London, by the Dominicans. David Hume, in his 'History of England,' quotes as authorities for this reign certain chroniclers, viz., Thomas Walsingham, Froissart, Henry of Knighton, Thomas Otterbourne, and others. All these require to be thoroughly examined, and most especially with regard to the forms of dating, if any, used by them. Their record of events cannot be regarded in any way as official documents, though Hume never appears to have had any doubts about their veracity or their dates, or, if he had, does not allow his suspicions to appear.

The exact date of the birth of Edward III. is unknown, but he is said to have ascended the throne on the 20th January, 1326-1327. Polydore Vergil says that the Black Prince died on 6th Ides

July (*i.e.*, 10th), 1376, aged 46, and that King Edward died in the tenth month afterwards, which would be May, 1377, but, as usual, gives no sources or authorities regarding his statements. Sir Harris Nicolas gives the 21st June, 1377, as the date of the death of this King.

Edward II.—Date of birth officially unknown, but said to have been crowned on 10th Calends of March (*i.e.*, 20th February), 1307-1308. He died in 1327, in the 43rd year of his age and 19th of his reign, having been, according to rumour, murdered. The body was carried to the monastery of St. Peter's, Gloucester, where lived monks of the Order of St. Benedict. So much from Polydore Vergil, but Sir Harris Nicolas gives the 8th July, 1307, as the date of his accession, and 20th January, 1326-1327, as the date of death.

Edward I.—Date of birth officially unknown. He is said to have been proclaimed in 1272, and crowned on 19th August, 1274, according to Hume. But Polydore Vergil states that Edward (after first William the Norman) the First was made King in his 35th year, which was the year of human salvation (A.S.H.) 1274; no date of day or month given. Polydore further adds that he died in the 69th year of his age and after the 34th year of his reign, on the Nones of July, no year; but the accession of Edward II. is given as 1308. The dates of accession and death specified by

Sir Harris Nicolas are 20th November, 1272, and 7th July, 1307.

No sources or authorities are given by Polydore, but Hume gives Walsingham, Trivet, Hemingsford, Matthew of Westminster, Roger Hoveden, or Roger of Hoveden, and Matthew Paris, all chroniclers, some of whom will be alluded to in my next chapter. The question of interest arises as to the date of the beginning of Benedictine literary effort in England, and this has not yet been properly solved.

Henry III.—Date of birth officially unknown. Consecrated by the Pope's Legate, or, as some have it, by the Bishops of Winton and Bath, on the 5th Calends December (*i.e.*, 27th November), 1217, but crowned in 1220. He died 16th Calends December (*i.e.*, 16th November), 1273. This from Polydore's history, but no sources or authorities are given. The dates are sparsely given for this long reign, sometimes using the phrase, 'year from the birth of Christ,' instead of the 'year of human salvation.' The dates of accession and death given by Sir Harris Nicolas are 28th October, 1216, and 16th November, 1272.

John.—Date of birth officially unknown. Polydore says that he ascended the throne A.S.H. 1201, but Hume gives the year 1199, and Sir Harris Nicolas 27th May, 1199. The date of death is given by Polydore as 14th Calends November (*i.e.*,

19th October), or, according to another tradition, the day before the Ides of November (*i.e.*, 12th November) in the 17th year of his reign plus six months and twenty-seven days, but the year not stated, which Hume gives as 1216, and Sir Harris Nicolas as 19th October, 1216. Under 1215 there is no mention of Magna Charta, but Polydore Vergil simply says that the King met the Lords (*principes*) three miles from Windsor Castle, and conceded their demands. No mention of Runnymede. It is said that the quarrel arose out of the non-restitution of the laws of Edward the Confessor, and the abrogation of others which were not to the popular advantage.

Baker's 'Chronicle' (edition 1641), under date 1214-1216, refers to the demands of the Lords of the Realm, and to the production by them of a Charter of Henry I. They met John at Running Mead, but nothing is said of the signing or putting a seal to any Great Charter. It is a question of the liberties of the Lords only, for the people did not get many rights till the Great Civil War and the reign of William III.

Before leaving King John it may be stated that the earliest records, in the shape of Charter, Patent and Close Rolls, date from the 1st, 3rd and 6th years of his reign. The attention of any persons interested in these matters is drawn to the works of Mr. Thomas Duffus Hardy, dated 1833, 1835 and

1837, from which much information can be obtained.

The Pipe Rolls date from the reign of Henry I., and Mr. Walter Rye, in his 'Records and Record Searching,' says that 'Next in date and importance to Domesday come the Pipe Rolls, which are perhaps, all things considered, the most interesting series of records.' The Pipe Roll Society has printed a series of these Rolls, and still continue their work.

All the above Rolls are to be found now in the Public Record Office, Chancery Lane, a full description of which will be found in Walter Rye's work.

Richard I.—Date of birth officially unknown. Ascended the throne A.S.H. 1189, and died 8th Ides of April (*i.e.*, 6th April), A.S.H. 1200, in the 43rd year of his age. No sources or authorities given by Polydore Vergil, and his only other dates are 1190, 1193, 1199. Sir Harris Nicolas's dates of accession and death are 3rd September, 1189, and 6th April, 1199.

Henry II.—Date of birth officially unknown. Said to have ascended the throne on xiiii. Calends of January (*i.e.*, 19th December), 1154, and died the day before Nones of July (*i.e.*, 6th July), A.S.H. 1189, in the 61st year of his age, and 34th year and 7 months of his reign. These dates tally with those of Sir Harris Nicolas. King

Henry is said to have been buried by the Benedictines of Chinon, where he died.

Stephen.—Date of birth officially unknown. He ascended the throne on viii. Calends of January (*i.e.*, 25th December), A.S.H. 1136, and died on viii. Calends of October (*i.e.*, 24th September), year from Christ's birth 1154, and was buried at the monastery near Faversham built by himself. All this from Polydore Vergil, who gives no named sources, only 'something written,' and alleges that the events of A.S.H. 1153 were all entered in certain Acts for the benefit of posterity. These Acts do not appear to be now forthcoming.

The dates of accession and death of Stephen are given by Sir Harris Nicolas as 26th December, 1135, and 25th October, 1154.

Henry I.—Date of birth officially unknown. He ascended the throne, it is said, on the Nones of August (*i.e.*, 5th August), in the year from birth of Christ 1101, and from advent of the Normans 35. Saluted King and consecrated by Maurice Bishop of London, at West monastery (Westminster), A.S.H. 1101. He died Calends of December, or, as some say, 3rd Nones of the same month (*i.e.*, 3rd December), 1136, in the 67th year of his age, and 35th year plus 3 months and 11 days of his reign, and was buried by the monks of the Order of St. Benedict at Reading. This

from Polydore Vergil, who gives no sources or authorities.

During this reign there is said to have been an Anglo-Saxon antiquarian revival, which is important if true, or if, indeed, there was anything to revive. It is more probable that the writing of historical manuscripts and chronicles began about this period, for only two historical works, said to be of an earlier date, viz., 'The Anglo-Saxon Chronicle' and Bede's 'Ecclesiastical History,' have come down to us. Details about these will be supplied in the next chapter.

The dates of the accession and death of Henry I. are given by Sir Harris Nicolas as the 5th August, 1100, and 1st December, 1135.

William Rufus, or Rouse, or the Red.—Date of birth officially unknown. Made King and consecrated by Lanfranc on the 5th Calends October (*i.e.*, 27th September), in the year of our salvation 1088, and the 22nd of the advent of the Normans. He died 3rd Nones August (*i.e.*, 3rd August), 1101, having lived 43 years and reigned nearly 13 years. No sources or authorities given by Polydore.

The dates of accession and death are given by Sir Harris Nicolas as the 26th September, 1087, and the 2nd August, 1100.

William the Conqueror was declared King and crowned 8th Calends January (*i.e.*, 25th December),

1066. He died on the 8th Ides of September (*i.e.*, 6th September), 1087, in the 74th year of his age and 21st of his reign. These bare facts are supported by no authorities, and Sir Harris Nicolas gives the 9th instead of the 6th September as the day of his death.

In this chapter of about thirteen pages Polydore refers to divers matters, but not to much connected with the life and reign of William. If the reader chooses to compare the few pages of Polydore on this reign with the stout volumes of Thierry, and, again, with the larger works of the late E. A. Freeman on 'The Norman Conquest,' he will understand how the tale has gradually developed in the succeeding centuries. If reliable evidence and records did not exist at the time of William the Conqueror and his successors, it must be admitted that much has been collected at a later period.

Before finishing with this reign something must be said about the celebrated Bayeux tapestry said to have been worked by his Queen Matilda and her ladies in commemoration of the invasion and conquest of England by the Normans. If this needlework is the very same that is said to have been made after the Battle of Hastings, it should be looked upon as one of the wonders of the world. While all the old cathedrals and castles in Normandy have had to be repaired from the very foundations, or in many cases rebuilt, this linen-

work still holds the field as an original production of those times.

It is said to be *first* mentioned in an inventory of the treasures of the Bayeux Cathedral in 1476 (that is 400 years after its supposed manufacture), as hung round the nave of the church on the day of the exposition of the relics, viz., the 1st of July each year. Apparently it was then lost sight of till the first quarter of the eighteenth century.

In 1588 De Bourgeville wrote much about the Cathedral of Bayeux, and everything connected with it, but did not allude to the tapestry.

In 1631 Du Moulin, and in 1646 D'Anneville, both Normans, chronicled the conquest of England in their histories of Normandy without alluding to this tapestry.

L'Abbé de la Rue, Chanoine Honorable de Bayeux in 1821, assures us that the tapestry is first mentioned in an inventory of the treasures of the church in 1369, but that the item contains no allusion to Queen Matilda, and an extract from this inventory does not appear to be now in existence. The Abbé de la Rue further declared that he had read over the immense collections about the ecclesiastical and literary antiquities of Normandy, gathered together by Du Moustier, who died in 1662, without discovering any allusion to the tapestry in question.

In 1705 Hermant, Curé de Maltot, at the com-

mand of the Bishop of Bayeux, published a portion of the history of that diocese. He pointed out that we were indebted to Maistre, or Master Wace for some remarkable particulars relative to the expedition of William, and furnished a very ample account of Odon, or Odo, the first of that name, and the thirty-first Bishop of Bayeux. He noticed also the day of the exposition of the relics, which always took place on the 1st July, and even cited various precious articles from the inventory, but did not mention the tapestry. At page 352 of his work he gives important facts: 'Dans le repertoire qui fut fait le 16 Mai de l'an 1475 des biens du Tresor de l'Église de Bayeux il y est fait mention de plusieur reliques, d'ornamens precieux, d'une Contre table au chœur, et d'une image de Notre Dame,' etc., but no mention whatever of the tapestry.

In 1721, on the death of Mr. Foucault, a drawing of about thirty feet of the tapestry was found in his collection. It became the property of Mr. de Beze, or Bezier, who made it over to Mr. Lancelot, who, when he composed an academical memoir on the drawing in 1724, had not ascertained whether it represented a basso-relievo, or a fresco, or stained glass, or tapestry.

Father Montfauçon, about the year 1728, obtained from Bayeux the information he wanted, and despatched Mr. Antoine Benoit to make a

drawing of the entire tapestry. Mr. Lancelot also secured a qualified correspondent at Bayeux, and both the antiquaries completed their learned illustrations in 1730.

On the 9th May, 1730, a full description of the tapestry was given to the French Academy, and since then the attention of the learned world has been called to it, and copies made of it for England and elsewhere at various times.

In 1792 it was taken out of the sacristy of the Chapter House and placed as a covering on some waggons of baggage, but was saved by a Mr. Le Forrestier, who gave the people some coarse canvas in its place. Later on the Commission of Arts of the district of Bayeux prevented its being cut up into pieces to adorn a civic car.

In 1803 it was taken to Paris for exhibition at the Louvre, and was further shown in some of the towns of France by the orders of Napoleon, who was anxious to stir up the feelings of the people in favour of another invasion of England.

It was eventually returned to the Bayeux Municipality, who placed it in the College Library, but exhibited it every year for fifteen days in the parish church. In 1816 it was reclaimed by the clergy, but their request was refused by the Municipal Council, and it was removed from the College to the Hôtel de Ville, where it was rolled on a cylinder, and unrolled

when shown to foreigners or visitors. In 1842 it was removed to the Public Library, repaired, stretched out, and placed under glass.

It is 227 feet in length, by about 20 inches in breadth, and divided into seventy-two compartments, with inscriptions in Latin at the top naming some of the people, and explaining what they are doing. On the margin of cloth both above and below the historical scenes are worked grotesque figures of all sorts, both human and animal, hunting, tillage, scenes from ancient fables, etc. The colours of the workings are blue (dark and light), yellow, brown or buff, green (dark and light) and red. In the whole there are 49 trees, 41 boats or ships, 37 houses, 202 horses and mules, 55 dogs, 505 animals of different kinds, 623 persons, or a grand total of 1,512 in all.

In 1871 the Kensington Museum authorities were allowed to take a copy of the whole. It was done by photography and then coloured, and these are now to be seen in the South Kensington Museum.

Tradition says that this tapestry was made by Queen Matilda, wife of William the Conqueror, and her ladies after the Battle of Hastings, said to have taken place in 1066. It is difficult to believe that linen originally worked upon about that date could last, under all the vicissitudes gone through, up to the present time, only having been repaired

in 1842. If, however, this theory is correct, the only solution can be that replicas of the same have been made, and this would account for the excellent condition of the work now to be seen daily at Bayeux.

The probability is that the Bayeux Tapestry was made at some much later date to represent the scenes described in the work of 'Le Roman de Rou (Rollo) et des Ducs de Normandie,' written, it is said, about 1160 by Maistre, or Master Wace, a Norman poet. The date cannot be positively relied upon, but a full text of this poem was published by Frederick Pluquet, Rouen, 1827, while translations of parts of it, relating to the Norman Conquest, were made in prose by Edgar Taylor in 1837, and in verse by Sir Alexander Mallet in 1860. In the preface to the last-named work there is a doubt expressed as to whether the poem was written from the tapestry, or the tapestry made from the description contained in the poem.

It is said that Wace was born in the island of Jersey at the beginning of the twelfth century, was made a Canon of Bayeux, and died in England about 1184. He makes no mention of the tapestry in his work, but his account of the whole of the expedition of William, both before and after the Battle of Hastings, could have been well worked up afterwards, any time between the thirteenth

and beginning of the eighteenth century, and represented in what is now called the tapestry of Bayeux. Many works of early authors have been illustrated during the present century; indeed, such has been quite a common practice from all time, and has apparently been followed in the present case.

The date of the work is impossible to fix, but the probability is that it is much later than generally imagined or believed. As already stated, it is said to be mentioned for the first time in 1476, in the inventory of the treasures of the Bayeux Cathedral as follows: 'Une tente tres longue et étroite de telle (toile) a broderie de ymages et escripteaux faisans representations du conquest d'Angleterre lequelle est tendu environ le nef de l'Église le jour et par les octaves des reliques.' This may have been a later interpolation inscribed in the inventory, and it is curious that it is not mentioned in the inventory of 1475, alluded to by Hermant, Curé de Maltot, in his work of 1705.

Between 1476 and 1724 no trace or mention of the tapestry can be found anywhere. All the authors who wrote about Bayeux, its history and antiquities, in 1588, 1631, 1646, 1650 and 1705 do not even allude to it in any way. The first reliable record we have of the existence of this tapestry is in 1730, when the subject was taken

up and reported on by the antiquaries, and after that there is a full and reliable record.

In 1836 Bolton Corney wrote a very clear and interesting pamphlet entitled 'Researches and Conjectures on the Bayeux Tapestry,' in which he set forth his views to the effect that 1205 is the period for which he contends as that of the most remote antiquity of the tapestry, but supplies no positive or reliable evidence on the subject. About Wace he says: 'Maistre Wace, a canon of Bayeux, who wrote an account of the conquest about the year 1160, gives it as a report that Harold swore on the relics at Bayeux. In the tapestry it is stated positively. If it had been in existence could Wace have doubted its authority? This circumstance alone forcibly argues a date posterior to Wace.'

Again: 'The Cathedral of Bayeux was burned in 1160, and Philippe de Harcourt, who then held the bishopric, expended immense sums in its restoration. If the tapestry had been acquired in his time, would not the circumstances have been stated in the inventory about to be submitted to his descendant?'

Other works in English on this tapestry may be noted. 'The Bayeux Tapestry,' represented by autotype plates, with historic notes, by Frank Rede Fowkes, published by the Arundel Society, 1875, is the most complete and interesting; 'The

Bayeux Tapestry,' elucidated by the Rev. John Collingwood Bruce, London, 1856, is also interesting, but rather too full of the imaginations and conjectures of the author.

But enough of the Bayeux tapestry. I have alluded to it at some length so as to show how a tradition is handed down, and copied into every history, cyclopædia, and work of reference so that at last it is believed to be almost a positive fact. My own personal opinion is that its date is nearer 1720 than 1070 or 1205; but, as has been already stated, the date cannot be positively fixed.

Some mention must also be made of the great Domesday Book, the preparation of which during the reign of William the Conqueror was one of the most important events of the time, as it supplies a great amount of useful information concerning that period. Indeed, it may be said to contain the best early documentary evidence on the subject of the lands and the people of England that has as yet come down to us.

Those persons who have studied the so-called Domesday Book for years maintain that there is still a mine of information to be derived from it. Sir H. Ellis, in his Preface to a General Introduction to Domesday Book in 1883, says: 'Illustrations of the most important kind, upon our ancient institutions, services and tenures of land, are still to be drawn from it.'

As regards the date, it may be said that the work was ordered to be undertaken at a time subsequent to the total reduction of the island by William the Conqueror. It is probable that surveys and lists were first made for the different counties separately; these were forwarded to Winchester, and subsequently embodied into two volumes, forming now what is called the Domesday Book.

The first volume, a large folio, begins with Kent and ends with Lincolnshire. It is written on 382 double pages of vellum (each page having a double column), and contains thirty-one counties.

The second volume is in quarto on 450 double pages of vellum, but in a single column, containing three counties, viz., Essex, Norfolk and Suffolk.

When the survey was first made it was called 'Rotulus Wintoniæ,' or 'Scripturæ Thesauri Regis,' or 'Liber de Wintoniæ,' or 'Liber Judiciarus,' or 'Liber Regis,' but the name it is generally known by is that of 'Domesday' and 'Liber Censualis Angliæ.'

The order generally observed in writing the survey is to set down at the head of every county the King's name, 'Rex Wilhielmus,' and then a list of the bishops, religious houses, churches, and great men according to their rank that held of the King *in capite* in that county, likewise of his thanes, ministers and servants, etc.

There is a list of tenants *in capite* (chief),

who held their lands immediately from the King.

Also a list of persons, monasteries, etc., entered in Domesday as holding lands in the time of King Edward the Confessor, and through later years anterior to the survey.

Also an abstract of the population of the different counties of England at the close of the reign of William the Conqueror as far as the same is actually recorded in the Domesday Survey, but this is evidently very imperfect. This abstract, as regards the actual number of people in the counties surveyed, is not much to be depended upon, but it is very interesting, as it gives the names of all the different classes of people existing at that time. An alphabetical list and definition of each class will be found in Sir H. Ellis's Introduction, mentioned above, as also in Walter de Gray Birch's book upon Domesday, published by the Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge, London, 1887.

It is said that many Saxon Charters were forged at the time of the Domesday Survey to make good titles for the monks to their properties when the Norman Commissioners came among them; and this is highly probable.

Now, all this work must naturally have taken some considerable time. It is difficult to fix an exact date for the commencement and completion of this most valuable survey. The date, given in

Latin words at the end of the second volume, runs thus: 'In the one thousandth and eighty-sixth year from our Lord's Incarnation, but the twentieth year of the reign of King William, this description was made not only throughout the three counties, but also throughout the others.' This, however, may have been a later addition.

Besides the Domesday proper, or Great Domesday Book, as described above, there are others, viz., the Exon Domesday, the Inquisitio Eliensis, the Winton Domesday, the Bolden Book, and other Domesday Books mentioned by Walter Rye in his 'Records and Record Searching,' but more fully described by C. P. Cooper in his very interesting and valuable work, 'An Account of the most Important Records of Great Britain,' etc., London, 1832.

A reference to these will give much information to persons who may be interested in such matters, so that it is unnecessary to enter into fuller details about them here. Cooper further gives a full account of the Cottonian, Harleian and Lansdowne MSS., all of which might be again thoroughly examined and tested from a paleographical and chronological point of view, especially in connection with the various kinds of datings explained in this work and attempted to be classified.

In the preceding pages the dates of the births,

accessions and deaths of our English Kings and Queens have been given wholly or partially. It will be observed that there is full and reliable official evidence for the dates of the birth and accession of our reigning Sovereign Queen Victoria, and for the births, accessions and deaths of William IV., George IV. and George III.; then the official evidence for the days of the week and the hours of the births of the preceding Kings disappear. The dates of the accessions and deaths of George II., George I., Queen Anne, William and Mary, James II., Charles II., and Oliver Cromwell, are officially notified in gazettes and newspapers. State Papers furnish authority for the dates of the accessions and deaths of Charles I., James I., Queen Elizabeth, Queen Mary, Edward VI. and Henry VIII.

From Henry VII. upwards to William the Conqueror there appear to be no official gazettes, no newspapers, no State records, registers or calendars, and darkness is beginning to set in. As a guide into these dark ages, Polydore Vergil's 'English History' has been taken.

But Polydore Vergil gives no sources or authorities for his information, which goes back to the earliest times, to what may really be called prehistoric. It must be supposed that the Benedictines supplied him with their data, and with much of the material which appeared in their own

writings, but when they themselves first began to write their chronicles is still a mystery.

It is true that Mr. George H. Putnam, in his most interesting work, 'Books and their Makers during the Middle Ages,' vol. i., London and New York, 1896, has given us an uninterrupted series of dates from A.D. 410, ascribing the foundation by Benedict of the monastery of Monte Cassino to A.D. 529, and of that of Vivaria, or Viviers, in Calabria, to Cassiodorus in A.D. 531, but whether these dates can be really substantiated by documentary or any reliable evidence is doubtful. They were probably dates calculated by the Benedictines themselves at a later period, and so handed down to us.

Putnam describes three stages or periods, the first beginning with the foundation of the monasteries above mentioned, and continuing their manuscript work until the last decade of the twelfth century, when the earliest record of an organized manuscript-book business in the Universities of Bologna and Paris can be traced. He then says: 'The beginning of literary work in the Universities to which I refer as indicating a second stage did not, however, bring to an end, and in fact for a time hardly lessened, the production of manuscript books in the monasteries;' and continues: 'The third stage of manuscript-book productions in Europe is said to begin with the

first years of the fifteenth century, and to have continued till about twenty-five years after the invention of the printing-press in 1450.'

From the above it is clear that the whole of the preparation of the manuscripts circulated in Europe was for many hundred years in the hands of the ecclesiastics. There was no publication, contradiction or criticism, and undoubtedly they wrote with a prejudice in favour of their own order, a very close Corporation. It is on these works that most of our early histories have been founded, copied and transmitted down to our own times.

Putnam admits that there was no organized manuscript-book business until the last decade of the twelfth century, and even then it seems to have been very limited. The beginning of the fifteenth century is a landmark for a great increase of literary activity, and the revival of letters may be said to date from that period. But the beginning of the sixteenth century is still more important; printing had come into general use, the dark ages were disappearing and fresh lights pouring in on every side.

For ready reference a table showing the historical years of the reigns of English Kings and Queens, going backwards from our reigning Sovereign Victoria to William I., is appended:

Victoria, 1837-
William IV., 1830-1837.
George IV., 1820-1830.
George III., 1760-1820.
George II., 1727-1760.
George I., 1714-1727.
Anne, 1702-1714.
William III. and Mary, 1689-1702.
James II., 1685-1688.
Charles II., 1660-1685.
The Commonwealth, 1649-1660.
Charles I., 1625-1649.
James I., 1603-1625.
Elizabeth, 1558-1603.
Mary, 1553-1558.
Edward VI., 1547-1553.
Henry VIII., 1509-1547.
Henry VII., 1485-1509.
Richard III., 1483-1485.
Edward V., 1483-1483.
Edward IV., 1461-1483.
Henry VI., 1422-1461.
Henry V., 1413-1422.
Henry IV., 1399-1413.
Richard II., 1377-1399.
Edward III., 1327-1377.
Edward II., 1307-1327.
Edward I., 1272-1307.
Henry III., 1216-1272.

John, 1199-1216.
Richard I., 1189-1199.
Henry II., 1154-1189.
Stephen, 1135-1154.
Henry I., 1100-1135.
William II., 1087-1100.
William I., 1066-1087.

CHAPTER V.

ABOUT THE EARLY CHRONICLERS.

During the reigns of Henry VII. and Henry VIII. there lived three men who are well known as having been well acquainted with the literature existing at that time, and whose works have come down to us. Their names are John Boston, a Benedictine of Bury St. Edmunds; Polydore Vergil of Urbino; and John Leland, the first person who received the title of Royal Antiquary and Librarian to the King Henry VIII.

(1) JOHN BOSTON,

said to be the Benedictine bibliographer of Bury St. Edmunds, is of uncertain date. It was stated by the discredited Bale that Boston was our first bibliographer, and lived before Leland, but there is no proof of this statement. The Benedictines assign him to the fifteenth century, but cannot date him accurately. Leland, who visited Bury, and found few books there, does not even name him.

Yet here was a monk who is said to have made the tour of 187 religious houses for the purpose of making a list of their books, which has been printed by Bishop Tanner in 'Biblioth. Brit. Hibern.,' 1748. The manuscript is lost, or at all events at present cannot be traced. As, however, the catalogue reflects nearly the same state of literature with that in Leland, it may be assumed that he belonged to the greater part of the reign of Henry VII. and the earlier part of that of Henry VIII.

(2) POLYDORE VERGIL,

an Italian secular priest, collector of Peter's pence in England, and Archdeacon of Wells, has been already mentioned in the preceding chapter. The date of his arrival here, departure, and death are not known for a certainty. We can only assume that he was an early Tudor writer.

His two works, 'Anglica Historia' and 'De rerum Inventoribus' (On Inventions), are part of one system, and cross-references are made in the two. The history is dedicated to King Henry VIII., and the preface is dated London, August, MDXXXIII. In the text, however, the last dates are A.S.H. (year of human salvation), 1530, 1535, 1538. The first edition was printed at Basle in 1534, in twenty-six books, while the

twenty-seventh book was added to the third edition of 1555.

Here it may be noted that in the printed editions of his work Roman numerals are alone used in the text, with Arabic numerals in the margin, which last are perhaps a later addition. In the original manuscript, which has not come to light, Roman numerals were probably only used, but this is only a conjecture.

It may be asked, Why has this writer been so much neglected, or thrown in among other sources, as, for instance, by David Hume? It can be explained in many ways, but let one or two reasons suffice for the moment. He was an Italian; he wrote with an air of condescending superiority towards Englishmen with few exceptions; and if his statements are at all near the truth, it must be admitted that our ancestors were less literate than Italians, French, or Germans about 400 years ago.

Now, this Italian humanist and secular priest from Urbino made statements and has put forward pretensions which, though angrily received and jealously denied in some quarters, have never been, and never can be, refuted.

It cannot be said that he was, or could be, a very exact man according to our present standard; but in a time when there was no literary man strictly independent of the Roman Church, he appears to have come as near that ideal as possible.

A man of taste, he shows frequently contempt for superstition, 'old wives' fables,' 'monkish miracles,' etc. He writes, in short, with an easy consciousness of superiority over his contemporaries in reference to the matter of history, and this remark applies to both of his Latin works referred to above.

A complete translation of the two would be useful and interesting, but as yet only a small part of the history has been translated and published by the Camden Society.

(3) JOHN LELAND,

a secular priest, said to be the first who enjoyed the title of Royal Antiquary. Here again dates are wanting, but he is supposed to have been born about 1509. He studied at St. Paul's School, at Cambridge, Oxon, and also at Paris. On the eve of the dissolution of the monasteries, he made a six years' literary tour of England during the period of 1533 to 1539.

In a letter addressed to King Henry he says, in the most absolute manner, heaping up his words for emphasis, that he has visited every city, burgh, castle, villa, village, college, convent, abbey, monastery, church, manor, farm or other place worthy of note, and annotated all that was to be observed.

He is supposed to have been digesting his notes

about 1546, and to have died in 1552 of madness. His writings came into the hands of Sir John Cheke, and on his death the greater part came to William Baron Paget and Cecil Baron de Burghley, husband of Cheke's sister. The 'Collectanea' were left by Cheke to the Rev. H. Purefay, and to his relative Wm. Burton of Lindley in the year 1612.

The work 'De Scriptoribus Britannicis,' about British writers, was published by Antony Hall, Oxford, 1709. He, a clergyman and antiquary, tells us in his preface that after Leland's death the work came into the hands of John Bale, the bibliographer, who foully blotted and interpolated it, and then transferred it to his 'Centuriæ.' Then Pits, the bibliographer, a most audacious plagiarist, followed him, and though he had never seen Leland's book, often extravagantly praises him. So far there was none to recover the genuine Leland. The excellent Thos. Gale had thought of publishing him, and of illustrating him by the aid of Boston of Bury. Thomas Tanner took up the same business, but became otherwise engaged. Finally, Hall copied the autograph, and had it carefully printed with indices in 1709, 2 vols., 8vo.

As Leland is a bitter rival of Polydore, the comparison between the two is instructive as showing the ideas of each on various authors and

subjects. Polydore speaks with contempt of native writers, with the exception of Gildas and Bede and one or two others; puts himself forward as the first respectable writer on the subject, and frequently boasts of his candour and love of truth.

Leland retorts: 'Polydore relates English affairs on almost every page with the greatest ill-faith. The fellow, most modest forsooth, and of an extreme contempt for all glory, scarce mentions one or two of our many writers, who have been foully and miserably spoiled, if you except a perhaps fictitious Gildas and Bede, and this in contempt. I would say more of the arrogance of Polydore if I did not fear his wrath,' etc.

'Let not the Italian take upon himself too much in our affairs under the title of eloquence.' 'What shall I answer to the vainest varieties of Polydore Vergil? Let him weave again the knotty, rough, confused and misshapen web of his history. Otherwise how can he put an honest face on a work begun under such ill auspices. I know not: however, he may rear his Italian crest!'

How suggestive is the fact that there could be so violent a disagreement about particulars of history between the contemporary writers of Henry VIII., nearly 400 years ago! It rather tends to confirm the idea that history was not yet agreed upon or accepted as it appears to be at the

present time. In fact, English history had not yet been actually established.

Now, in 1895 there was printed, by order of the trustees of the British Museum, a Guide to the Manuscripts, Autographs, Charters, Seals, Illuminations and Bindings exhibited in the Department of Manuscripts and in the Granville Library. From pages 84 to 108 will be found in this pamphlet a small typical selection of chronicles and other manuscripts intended to illustrate the manner in which the history of this country was recorded and handed down before the invention of printing.

It is evident that this brochure is written from the present orthodox point of view. Not a doubt of any sort is expressed as to the genuineness or veracity of the chronicles in question. Moreover, it is filled up, not with the dates as such existed (if there were any) in the originals, but with a continuous flow of dates written in Arabic numerals ; and as these last were not introduced till long after some of these manuscripts were alleged to be written, the pamphlet does not therefore give a really accurate description of these various documents. An ignorant outsider would naturally suppose that all these dates in Arabic numerals actually existed in the manuscripts themselves, which of course was impossible, and this might have been explained.

must first be introduced. About him the editor of the Guide says: 'The earliest history of Britain was written by Gildas about the year 560, containing an account of the Roman conquest and occupation, the departure of the Romans (in 410) and the invasion and conquest of the island by the Saxons. Of this history there is no manuscript in the British Museum except a badly-burnt fragment of the tenth century.'

It will be interesting to note here what John Boston, Polydore Vergil and John Leland tell us about Gildas. The first furnishes very slight evidence; the second had found only two copies in the country, and says: 'There is another Book (let me timely warn the reader of a wicked fraud) most falsely entitled "Commentary of Gildas," doubtless composed by some wretched forger for the purpose of corroborating the story of some upstart. This most shameless of rogues that ever existed had made up a tale from some new author, talking often about Brut, or Brutus, things that Gildas never dreamed. The more craftily to deceive his readers, he added some things of his own, so that you might believe there were two Gildases, or that this work was an epitome of a former work of Gildas. Even a person of middling education may detect the trick and the fraud in either case.

I have taken care to have the work of Gildas himself published, that there may be no mistake for the future'; and in 1525 Polydore published the 'Historiole of Gildas.'

John Leland, writing about Gildas, says: 'His life is shrouded in crassest darkness which I cannot penetrate,' and guesses that he was taught by the monks of Bangor with other vague conjectures. Furthermore, has seen a spurious Gildas at Merton College, Oxford, and doubts the genuineness of Polydore's Gildas, but fears a rap on the knuckles from that scholar. He also went on a hunt for more information about Gildas at Glastonbury, and in Wales, but vainly.

As there appears to be no literary remains of Gildas now extant, and no evidence as to when and where he lived, he can hardly now be looked upon as a reliable historian, for we really know nothing about him.

NENNIUS,

the supposed author of the 'Historia Britonum.' About him the editor of the Guide says: 'The next history to it' (*i.e.*, to Gildas) 'in date is that of which a copy is here exhibited. It is attributed to Nennius on the authority of a prologue contained in one manuscript, which states that it was composed in the year 858; but there are some grounds for believing that it is really considerably older.

In any case, nothing is known of the author's life. It contains the history of Britain in Latin from the Roman Conquest to the year 687, but is so full of legendary matter that its authority can be but little depended on.'

Nennius appears to be unknown both to John Boston and Polydore Vergil, but John Leland alludes to him in an amusing and very important chapter (xlvii.). In his usual grandiose style the antiquary refers to the formerly illustrious glory of the writer, which has become so obscured that he is at a loss how to restore it! Perhaps he may be able to let in light, if not through a window, at least through a chink!

He proceeds to tell us how lately (1533-1539) he visited Emavale Abbey in Yorkshire, and found it 'well filled with books.' He found an old copy inscribed 'Nennius on the Origin of Britain,' and greedily read it through, and came to the conclusion that some sciolist of a monk had produced the book 'in favour of Nennius,' even as another had written a spurious Gildas. The whole work was crammed with 'splendid lies, old wives' fables, and prodigies in a barbarous manner.' A fictitious and hired trifler had taken the place of the true Nennius. 'Many of the oldest authors have utterly perished at the hands of these too busy deflowerers.'

Anxiously he searched in many places for

Nennius's book. At last, after much toil, he discovered two copies which appeared to be very old, wherein he found a corrupt history of the author. He had much about the Britons, Arthur, and the Saxon tyranny. He studied in Ireland. It is clear from comparison that Henry of Huntingdon copied Nennius, but without knowing his name.

One thing Leland noted in the preface, that Nennius was said to be the disciple of one Elbod, of whom Leland has found slight and jejune mention in some writers; also of Samuel the Briton, another disciple of Elbod.

It is curious that Polydore Vergil should find two Gildases and Leland two Nenniuses. The obviously fabulous work, which will not impose upon the most credulous, is made to enhance the value of the better-written book.

BEDE,

the reputed author of the 'Historia Ecclesiastica Gentis Anglorum.' According to the editor of the Guide, 'The Venerable Bede is the first great historian of England, and most of our knowledge of the history of our country down to his time is derived from his work. He was born in 674, lived all his life as a monk at Jarrow, in Northumberland, and died in the act of translating the Scriptures into English in 735. His "Ecclesiastical History of the English," written in Latin,

deals primarily with the English Church; but owing to the intimate connection of Church and State in those days, it is also to a very great extent a general history of the country. It begins with a summary (taken from Gildas and other authors) of events from the invasion of Cæsar, in B.C. 55, to the preaching of Christianity by Augustine in 597. From 597 to 731 the history is given in full detail, being based upon contemporary records collected by Bede and his own personal knowledge. It is the chief authority for the history of the introduction of Christianity into England, both in the south by Augustine from Rome, and in the north by Aidan from Iona.'

'More than 130 manuscripts of Bede are known. The copy here shown (Cotton MS., Tiber., A. xiv.) is one of the earliest, having been written at the end of the eighth century or early in the ninth, and consequently not long after the lifetime of Bede himself. It belonged to Sir R. Cotton, and was considerably damaged in the fire among his books at Ashburnham House in 1731. A still older copy is exhibited in Case B., No. 33.'

Let us now see what the writers in the reign of Henry VIII. say about Bede.

The Benedictine of Bury, John Boston, in Bishop Tanner's 'Biblioth.' of 1748, gives the date of Bede's death as 734, in the fifty-ninth year of his age, and says that he flourished A.D. 706.

The first word of the dedication, and the last word of the book, 'Amen,' are given. The list of his works given at the end is the usual early list, but additions are made.

In 195 monasteries of England it appears that at the time of the first draughting of the list there were only seven copies of the 'Ecclesiastical History' to be found, viz., at Bury St. Edmunds, Forde, Merton, London St. Paul's, Saresbury, Waltham, St. Albans.

A later hand (it is impossible to say of what date) has added the following list of houses where it was to be found, viz.: Quarr, Waverley, Tynemouth, New Monastery, Durham, Helmedesham, or Hedesham, Gisbourne, De S. Cruce (Holy Cross), De S. Andres (St. Andrews), Chichester, St. Fredeswile, Croyland.

Polydore Vergil gathered from the dedication and particulars at the end of the book that it had been written under Ceowulph, Northumbrian King. He infers that Bede died about the end of Ceowulph's reign, but can give no date except that 'he flourished about 700.' He further adds that Bede 'touched upon events from the advent of C. J. Cæsar to his own time in a very brief little work.'

But Leland is much more profuse, and in chap. lxxxvii. praises Bede extravagantly, and calls him 'a miracle in a barbarous age.' He

gives no date of year, but only names three Northumbrian kings under whom he flourished. Leland further adds that in all the printed copies he has seen, the last chapter of Book V., containing the autobiography, is missing. He is, therefore, obliged to resort to the autobiography as given by the Benedictines of Malmesbury, and to subjoin from the same source what he considers a shortened list of Bede's volumes, but adds that 'many books have been falsely ascribed to Bede,' and mentions some tracts on Natural Science, etc.

Leland then resumes his eulogy of this author as an immortal man of letters; wonders how his works, composed at Jarrow, can have survived the violence of the Danes and of William the Norman; tells of his oratory to be seen at Jarrow, etc. He then makes a violent attack on Hector Boethius, 'the idlest fool that ever wrote history,' who has written like an old woman about Bede so as to raise Leland's laughter and bile. Hector almost makes an Italian of Bede, who never was in Italy; associates him with Melrose; makes him die at Durham, where there was no monastery till the time of the Conqueror. And then Leland hurls the last chapter of Bede's 'History' (which he has already said is not to be found in the printed editions), and other Benedictine writers, at Hector, adding a reference from Melancthon, and ending with a hexameter—

'England celebrates thee: the whole world resounds thy name.'

That a monk who lived all his life in a corner of Northumberland, apparently without records or works of reference, should have written a complete ecclesiastical and general history of England extending over several hundred years, and using a regular system of Incarnation datings before they were established in France, Germany, or Italy, is somewhat extraordinary. It really appears to be almost as great a miracle as the many miracles recorded in the work itself.

It must also be noted that no original manuscript of this history, or, indeed, of any of his other reputed works, have come down to us in his own handwriting. It is, further, impossible to say how his literary remains were dealt with, how copied, and when, or what dates were really used in them.

The Rev. Charles Plummer, M.A., in his excellent Latin edition of Bede's historical work (Clarendon Press, Oxford, 1896), appears to have based his text on a complete collection of four of the oldest-known manuscripts, viz., four of the alleged eighth century. He further alludes to forty-two other manuscripts of the work, extending from the tenth to the fifteen and sixteenth centuries, thus showing that the work must have been copied and recopied many times.

As Bede's original work is not now in existence, his own actual dating cannot be given. But if the datings given by Plummer in his edition are the same as those given in the alleged eighth-century manuscripts (and of this I have no doubt), we are face to face with one of the mysteries of chronology.

It has been already stated in a previous chapter that the Incarnation datings did not begin in Italy, France, or Germany, or Europe until the beginning of the ninth century. Mr. A. Gery says that 'the use of the Incarnation date in the West of Europe did not become general till after the year 1000.' It is difficult, therefore, to understand how a perfect system of dating by the Incarnation year existed in England (always a backward country to introduce novelties) so early as the beginning of the eighth century. It stands to reason, therefore, that these manuscripts must be of a later date than they are supposed to be, or must have been interpolated.

It will also be noticed in Plummer's valuable text that while the Incarnation datings are regularly inserted and methodically followed throughout the work, none of the letters, inscriptions, or epitaphs quoted and transcribed carry Incarnation dates. The dates used are from the building of the city of Rome; the Ides, Nones and Calends, Indictions, and the years of the reign

of the Emperors, all legitimate datings as used at that period.

There is only one exception, at p. 122, vol. i., in a letter from the Pope Honorius to the Bishop Honorius, where at the end of the regular dating comes 'Id est anno dominicæ incarnationis DCXXXIIII,' and this looks very like a later addition. Many of the letters are not dated at all.

The dates on the manuscripts of Bede's history, copied between the eighth and the end of the fifteenth centuries, must be regarded with some suspicion. The printing of the work began at the beginning of the sixteenth century, and various editions followed each other in various places, such as Strasburg, Paris, Antwerp, Bale, Louvain, Heidelberg, Cologne, London. Translations of the work have also been made in English by different people.

Some twelve hundred years ago there may have lived in a monastery in the North of England a pious, and for the time in which he lived a learned, monk of the name of Bede. What he wrote has not come down to us in his own handwriting, so it is impossible to say what he did write, or what he did not write, or what dates he used. He may, however, have left literary remains, and these may have been utilized by the Benedictines after his death, and at the time they were beginning to formulate early English history. When that date

really occurred it is difficult to fix now for a certainty, but Bede has ever been a great ideal of these black monks.

Historians, chronologers, antiquaries and others have fixed the date of Bede from the latter part of the seventh century to the first part of the eighth century. The exact date of the year of his birth and of the year of his death is not positively known, and various dates are given. John Boston says he died in 734, at the age of fifty-nine; if so, he would have been born in 675. Dom Mabillon, the famous Benedictine of St. Maur, in his voluminous work on the writers of his Order, says 673, while other authors give 672, 677, 678. The British Museum Guide Book says he was born in 674 and died in 735.

The manuscripts prepared by the Benedictines, and of which copies have come down to us, were written under the name of Bede. It may be that portions of them were prepared from Bede's literary remains, or that, being known in those times as a man of learning, his name was affixed to the history so as to give it weight and authority, as also to other works said to have been written by him.

'THE ANGLO-SAXON CHRONICLE,'

says the British Museum Guide, 'is the earliest history of this country in English. The first part

of it, from the invasion of Cæsar (B.C. 55) to the reign of Alfred (A.D. 871-901), is believed to have been compiled by order of King Alfred; and from that time it was carried on by successive chroniclers, whose names are not known, in various monasteries down to the year 1154, forming a sort of Annual Register of the most important events in each year. It is thus not only one of the most valuable authorities for the history of England, especially from the time of Alfred to the Norman Conquest, but an unique record of the development of the language from the early Anglo-Saxon form until it approaches the character of English as we now know it.

'The copy here shown (Cotton MS., Tiber, B. iv.) was written towards the end of the eleventh century; the Chronicle is brought down to the year 1016 in one hand, and continued in several others to 1079. It belonged to Sir H. Cotton, and suffered damage in the fire at Ashburnham House in 1731.'

Neither John Boston, nor Polydore Vergil, nor John Leland appear to make any mention of the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle. This is curious; but still, if it was in existence in their time, perhaps they did not come across it, or perhaps they were only occupied with works in Latin.

A careful examination of the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle, written by the Benedictines without

names, and of the 'Ecclesiastical History of England,' also written by the Benedictines under the name of Bede, should be made. There appears to be a striking link of connection between these two works. The former looks like a first attempt to formulate English history on some kind of historical and chronological basis; the latter seems to be an extension of this work with fewer dates but more details. When they were both written it is difficult to say.

The existing manuscripts of the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle do not contain any Incarnation dates, only the terms 'Anno,' 'An,' or 'A' being used, and the figures in Roman numerals. Bede, on the other hand, contains a series of Incarnation dates, which were not in use in Europe at the time that Bede is alleged to have written his history. The years are given in Roman numerals.

It would appear that up to the date of the introduction of the Christian era, the Christians in various countries used the dates (if ever they used any) in use in the countries in which they lived.

This was followed by the use at first of the word 'Anno,' to denote the Christian year, followed later by the use of the term 'Anno Incarnationis Dominicæ,' or 'Domini,' which continued for a long period, followed by the use of other terms, such as 'Anno Nativitatis,' 'Anno Trabeationis,'

'Anno Domini,' 'Anno Christi,' 'Anno Gratiæ,' 'Anno Salutis,' and, finally, 'A.D.'

It will be noticed that 'Anno' is the term used throughout the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle, and it may be that this work is the first work now extant in which an attempt is made to formulate English history. It is possible that the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle is really older than Bede's 'Ecclesiastical History,' but in what year they were commenced it is impossible to say.

KING ALFRED

is said by some to have been an author, historian, and translator from the Latin into Anglo-Saxon. The British Museum Guide only refers to him as follows: 'The Anglo-Saxon Chronicle is the earliest history of this country in English. The first part of it, from the invasion of Cæsar (B.C. 55) to the reign of Alfred (A.D. 871-901), is believed to have been compiled by order of King Alfred.'

About him John Boston, the Benedictine of Bury St. Edmunds, writes: 'This is all he has to say—no copy of any work is indicated in the 200 and more religious houses.'

Polydore Vergil ('Angl. Hist.,' p. 105) says: 'Alured [*i.e.*, Alfred] at twenty years of age began to study, and soon became so learned that he turned into his native tongue the Dialogues of St. Gregory, the work of Boëtius on the consola-

tion of philosophy, and the Psalms of David out of the Latin, that all might easily understand them. But some say that Verefied, Bishop of Worcester, translated the Dialogues and Boëtius at Alfred's request. Death prevented him from translating all the Psalms.'

John Leland ('De Brit. Script.,' chap. cxv.) gives an unwilling testimony of his ignorance. He says that Alfred, or Alured, or Ealfrid, was anointed King at Rome by the Pontiff, Leo IV., according to William of Malmesbury, but Leland will not have it so. Alfred never was anointed by Leo of Rome. He argues the point, showing the self-contradiction of the tales in his hands. He sketches the story of Alfred's struggles with the Dacians (Danes). Then he gropes after a history of the Academy of Isidis Vadum, or Oxford, formerly Beau Site (Bellositum), quoting John Ross of Warwick, who, he says, died in 1491. The story about Alfred's connection with Oxford is now admitted to be an impossibility.

Following Asser and William of Malmesbury, the following works are set down to Alfred (1) Enchiridion, (2) translation of the Psalter, unfinished.

On the authority of Ealred of Rievaulx, a Benedictine, he learns that Alfred wrote a pleasing and edifying book of Parables. Alfred also put

forth a book on Laws in the Saxon tongue, of which Leland saw a copy a few years ago at Christ Church or Farnhamburne. There are those who declare that Alfred translated Orosius, Boëtius, and the English history of Bede into the Saxon tongue.

In addition to Asser and William of Malmesbury, the testimony of Roger Hoveden is cited in reference to the literary exertions of Alfred. All three writers form a chorus to sing the praises of the great Alfred, the tale about his monastic foundations following from the same sources.

Leland then gives an extract from Henry of Huntingdon, some Latin verses in praise of Alfred, and an extract from an epitome of Asser's Annals, giving the date of the King's death as 26th October, A.D. 900, in the 29½th year of his reign and 51st of his age.

It is the Winchester Benedictines who claim their monasteries of Peter, of Hyde, and the New Monastery as receptacles of the corpse of Alfred.

All that can be said on the above is that no work of Alfred's appears to be extant at the present time, and whether he ever wrote any is excessively doubtful. The Benedictines wanted to make out that in Alfred's time there was considerable literary culture, and used his name freely as an author and translator.

appears to be unknown both to John Boston and Polydore Vergil. But Leland says (chap. cxix.) that he has dug out 'a few particulars about Asser from the thickest shades of antiquity into the light.' He traces this monk to Merevia Demeterum (St. David's, Pembrokeshire), formerly the metropolis of all Wales, repeats the legend how King Ealfrid (Alfred) heard of him, patronized him, and entrusted to him three monasteries of old name, Congersbury, Banival, and Grancestre.

Leland then cites a short life of Grimvald or Grimbald, anonymous, showing a connection between the Norman monastery of St. Bertin and the concocters of the Alfred myth in England. He further says that Asser became Bishop of Sherborne, wrote a commentary on Boëtius's work, and also annals to glorify Alfred.

At the present time the whole story may be regarded more as legendary or traditional than historical. It must be remembered that about this time—earlier or later, the exact date cannot be fixed—the Benedictines were engaged in laying the foundation of a history of England. Bede was the first great man, then Alfred, and around them there is much legend and tradition, but really no positive history.

Before leaving Alfred and Asser, attention may

be drawn to certain letters and communications which appeared in the *Times* of March 17th, 18th, 19th, 26th, and June 21st, 1898, in connection with the commemoration of the 1,000th anniversary of King Alfred's death, which is said to have occurred in October, 900 or 901. The communication under the heading of 'The Real Alfred,' in the *Times* of the 17th March, should be specially read, for it is evidently written by a person who knows what he is writing about.

WACE'S 'ROMAN DE ROU.'

About Wace the editor of the British Museum Guide writes: 'Wace was a Norman, born in Jersey, and lived from about 1100 to 1170. He wrote a poetical history of the Norman Conquest in French, which contains by far the fullest description of the Battle of Hastings. Wace had known many men who had fought in the battle, and his account is full of minute details of the fighting.

'The copy here exhibited [Royal MS. 4, C. xi.] was written in the thirteenth century. The passage selected is part of the account of the Battle of Hastings. The following is Sir A. Malet's translation of the lines which describe the palisade formed by the English, and the arrangement of the English forces.'

This work is not mentioned by the Triumvirate

of the early Tudor period, the reason, perhaps, being that it was not written in Latin. When it was actually written it is difficult to say. It ought to be carefully studied in connection with the celebrated Bayeux tapestry, already noticed in the previous chapter under the reign of William the Conqueror. It is an open question whether the book preceded the tapestry, or the tapestry the book. Personally, I am rather inclined to think that the tapestry was intended to illustrate the book, and was worked after it, but that is only an opinion. If Wace was really writing about 1130 or 1140, the many men he knew who had fought in the Battle of Hastings in 1066 must have been rather aged.

SIMEON OF DURHAM,

the reputed author of 'Historia Dunelmensis Ecclesiæ.' The British Museum Guide says: 'For several centuries after the Norman Conquest the writing of history was carried on almost exclusively by monks. The greater monasteries trained a succession of writers, some of whom merely recorded in their chronicles such events as concerned the monasteries themselves, with a sprinkling of notices of outside occurrences of general interest; while others devoted themselves to the production of regular histories of the country from the earliest times down to their own day. One such flourish-

ing school of histories is found in the North of England, carrying on the traditions of Bede. Simeon, a monk first of Jarrow and afterwards of Durham, was directed by his superiors about the years 1104-1108 to write a history of the Church of Durham, which he brings from the establishment of Christianity in Northumbria by Aidan, in 635, down to the year 1096. Like nearly all literary works down to the fifteenth century, it is written in Latin. It is principally occupied with religious matters, and is a valuable link in the history of the Church of England. He also wrote a general history based largely upon Bede and on Florence of Worcester, whose chronicle comes down to 1116.'

Neither John Boston nor Polydore Vergil make any mention of Simeon of Durham and his works ; but Leland (chap. clx.) praises Simeon highly, and says : ' He wrote the history of the Northumbrian nation from the time of Bede of Jarrow to the reign of Stephen the Tyrant.' He adds that ' one Roger of Howden deduced by the same series a history from Bede to the reign of King John,' and censures Roger because he ' pillaged the flowery pastures of Simeon absolutely without mentioning his name.'

It would be interesting to know from what sources Simeon of Durham drew his historical facts from 635 to 1096. There appear to have

been no records of that period, and no manuscripts except those in the monasteries, where it is evident they were now busily formulating English history, and were agreed upon their system of deductions and continuations, destined to be placed under authors and dates.

WILLIAM OF MALMESBURY,

the reputed author of 'Gesta Regum Anglorum.' The Guide says: 'This writer was born about 1095, and died about 1143. Nearly the whole of his life appears to have been spent in the monastery of Malmesbury, of which he ultimately declined the abbacy, preferring to retain the librarianship. He was an active historian, writing "The Acts of the Kings of England," in which he summarizes the early history from 449 to 731, where Bede had already covered the ground, and then continues it in greater detail down to 1125; "The Acts of the Bishops of England," an ecclesiastical history from 597 to 1125; and the "New History," a continuation of his earlier work, from 1126 to 1142. He is the most important historian since the time of Bede, to whom he deliberately set himself to be a successor, and he had a high idea of an historian's duty, trying to trace causes and describe characters, as well as to record events.'

John Boston gives no date for this author, but says that he wrote on the 'Deeds of the Kings of

England,' five books, but no copy of it is indicated in any of the 200 and more religious houses.

Polydore Vergil, in his 'Angl. Hist.,' makes no allusion whatever to this voluminous writer and able Latinist, who wrote probably in as good a style as Polydore himself.

John Leland, in 'De Brit. Script.,' chap. clxvi., says that William was famous in the reigns of Henry I., son of William the Great; of Stephen the Tyrant; and of Henry, son of Matilda Augusta (Empress); that he died (no date), and was buried at Meildem (Malmesbury).

Leland further says that he often has his books in hand, and always finds great pleasure in them—William is so diligent, so elegant in style, and so judicious. He then proceeds to cite what seems on the surface to be the self-advertisement of William in the preface to his second book on 'English Kings,' but which is in reality one of the Benedictine advertisements of an able writer. William is supposed to profess a knowledge of logic, of physics, of ethics, and especially of history, which is the true teacher of morality. Having read foreign historians, he thought he would do something for the history of our nation.

Leland continues: William of Malmesbury was called Bibliothecary or Librarian, as he has learned from the titles of old books; but he knows not whether he was so called from the books he was

to write, or because he was Prefect of the Malmesbury Library. He thinks the latter more probable. He was also Precentor of Malmesbury Church, an office highly valued in old times among the monks. He would have been Abbot of Malmesbury (he tells you so in the preface to his 'Itinerary'), but he preferred, 'such was his modesty and contempt of glory,' to give way to John.

'It only remains for me,' says Leland, 'to indicate the titles of the books which he wrote'; and here is the list translated from the Latin:

'On the Series of the Evangelists,' in some sort of verse, fifteen books.

'Life of St. Patrick,' two books.

'Life of St. Benignus.'

'Life of Indrach, Lord or Petty King of Ireland.'

'Life of St. Dunstan.'

'On the Antiquity of Glassoburgh' (Glastonbury Monastery).

'Life of St. Aldhelm,' an elegant and rotund book.

'Itinerary.'

'Commentaries on the Lamentations of Hieremia' (Jeremiah), four books.

'On the Kings of the English,' dedicated to Robert Count Claudian, Earl of Gloucester, bastard son of Henry I., five books.

'Novels of History,' *i.e.*, Henrican, three books.

'On the Deeds of the English Pontiffs,' four books.

'On the Miracles of Mary Virgin,' four books.

'Epitome of the History of Haimon of Fleury' (Floraicensis), monk from Justinian to Charles the Great.

It will be noted that John Boston attributes only one book to William of Malmesbury, but could not find a copy of it in any of the 200 religious houses. Polydore Vergil makes no mention of this voluminous writer, while Leland almost crushes us with the list of William's works, but adds at the end of his chapter: 'When I was lately at Meildem (Malmesbury), (1533-1539), I inquired for his tomb; the monks were so in the dark that only one or two had ever heard of him.'

It is difficult to believe that all these works quoted by Leland were written by William of Malmesbury during his lifetime, as it is said that he died aged about forty-eight. That they were all the work of Benedictines is evident, and apparently placed under the name of William; but when they were all written it is impossible to say, some earlier perhaps, some later. It rather looks as if the long list was the work of the Benedictines of this monastery extending over a period of years, and William's name was attached to all these manuscripts, he having a great reputation for

learning and literary talent. Like Bede, he was considered a mighty scholar, and the same procedure appears to have been adopted in both cases, but there is no evidence to prove it.

HENRY OF HUNTINGDON,

the reputed author of 'Historia Anglorum.' The Guide says: 'This work forms an exception to the rule that medieval history was the work of monks. Its author was probably a native of Huntingdon, born about 1080 and brought up in the palace of Bishop Blouet of Lincoln; and between 1110 and 1120 he was made Archdeacon of Huntingdon. The history begins with Cæsar's invasion, and in its first edition ended in 1129; subsequent editions brought it down to the death of Stephen in 1154. The greater part of it is derived from Bede and the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle. As an historian, Henry of Huntingdon is intelligent, but easy-going, and prefers moralization to research.'

Of him and his 'Historia Anglorum' John Boston, the Benedictine of Bury, gives the date A.C. MCXXXV., and names also other works, 'On Kings of the Whole World,' 'Series of British Kings,' and 'Saints of England.' He indicates four copies of his English history: one at Bury St. Edmunds; one at Gypewic Petri (Ipswich ?); one at Novus Locus (Newstead); and one at St.

Paul's, London. Further, it would appear that there were about twenty copies in all of various works ascribed to him in 195 religious houses in England, but the list of his writings does not correspond with that of Leland.

Polydore Vergil mentions this alleged writer on an early page of his 'Anglican History' as an excellent historian, but this was in reference to King Brut and his posterity, and never alludes to him again.

John Leland is more profuse, and says Henry of Huntingdon lived during the reign of Stephen the Tyrant and Henry II., but gives no year. He further states that Henry wrote pleasing verses in praise of Ælfleda, daughter of Alfred the Great, and that in mature years he took to writing history, and showed himself superior to others. The following is a list of his works:

Eight books of Epigrams.

Eight books on Love.

Eight books on Herbs, Aromas, Gems.

A little treatise on Weights and Measures

Last of all a felicitous history of English affairs is set down to him, in ten books.

'ROGER OF HOVEDEN, OR HOWDEN,

in Yorkshire,' says the Guide, 'had a very different training from that of most medieval historians. He was not a monk, but a secular cleric, and

having obtained a post in the household of Henry II., was employed on the King's service in embassies and negotiations, and finally as an itinerant justice. He is consequently a representative of the Civil Service of his day. After 1189 he retired, and died probably soon after 1201. His chronicle provides an interesting example of the methods of the early historians, who incorporated their predecessors' works into their own with the utmost freedom. It begins where Bede ends, in 731, and finishes in 1201. For the part from 731 to 1148 he simply copied an earlier chronicle, written at Durham, called "The History of the English since the Death of Bede," which was itself compounded from the histories of Simeon of Durham and Henry of Huntingdon; while, to go still further back, Simeon's history was largely derived from Florence of Worcester, and an early Northumbrian chronicle coming down to 802. From 1148 to 1169 Hoveden's narrative appears to be original, though partly based on the chronicle of the Abbey of Melrose and the lives and letters of Becket. From 1170 to 1192 his work is merely a revision of the chronicle ascribed to Benedict of Peterborough. Finally, from 1192 to 1201 he is an original and independent witness. Hoveden is the last of the line of northern historians, and, as just shown, he incorporates much of his predecessors' work. In style he is moderate and impartial.'

John Boston does not mention either this historian or his work, but Polydore Vergil has one brief reference to 'R. Howden, writer of Annals after Bede,' for the name of Carliolan (Carlisle), and Roger says it is in British 'Carleil,' in Latin 'Lucabalia.'

Leland, in his chapter ccvi., about British writers, conjectures that Roger was a student of Roman and Ecclesiastical Law, but omits to give his reasons.

He, however, quotes the annals of Walter of Coventry, another of the Benedictine writers, for the statement that Hoveden was one of the domestics of Henry II., who appointed him to visit the monasteries of Norwich and other places. He then undertook to write history. If he had possessed in addition to good faith a more elegant Roman style, he would have been pre-eminent.

Leland further says that Roger began his annals where Bede left off, and brought them down to the third year of John, in whose reign he died, having, it is alleged, been famous under Henry II. He was deeply versed in the legends of the Cuthbertine monks of Durham.

All the above about Roger of Hoveden is interesting, for, unconsciously as it were, it gives us some details as to how our early English history was manufactured. All the chroniclers seem to have followed each other in regular order,

copying what had come down to them without verifying in any way the truth or probability of their statements, and accepting everything with blind faith. This may be said to have continued from the time that English history first began to be formulated down to the time of the Tudors. Whether all the names of the authors and their dates are correct, is a matter upon which people must form their own opinions.

WILLIAM OF NEWBURGH,

the reputed author of 'Historia Anglicana.' The Guide says: 'William, surnamed Petit or the Small, was born in 1136, and entered the Abbey of Newburgh, in Yorkshire. He became famous in the neighbourhood as a student of history, and undertook his principal work, the "English History," at the special request of the Abbot and Convent of Rievaulx. It begins with a short summary from the Conquest to 1135, but from the accession of Stephen to 1198, where it ends, it is a detailed and contemporary history, written with judgment and impartiality, but generally in a rather dry style.'

John Boston says that William of Newburgh, or Newbridge, flourished A.C. MCLX., and wrote a history of the deeds of the English, five books in Latin, and was a Canon apparently at Rievaulx. Only one copy of the work is indicated, to be found

in the house of the Friar Preachers (Dominicans) of Thetford.

Polydore Vergil cites William of Newburgh as an Englishman who flourished about A.S.H. MCXCV., in the reign of Richard I., King of the English. His preface gives credit to Gildas in his account of Brito and the British. The denunciation of Geoffrey Arthur's 'ridiculous figments' immediately follows, and Polydore does not again name William of Newburgh.

John Leland has an amusing chapter (clxxiii.) on William the Little, who, he says, was of Bridlington, Canon of Newburgh Monastery, near the Circuline (?) forest, and celebrated about the time of Richard the Leonine. William wrote a history of the English, which he (Leland) recently found in Wells Library. William attacks Geoffrey Arthur of Monmouth so savagely that you might think he was hired to do so.

It would appear that only two copies of the work are indicated by Leland, the one at Wells being the one probably used by the Italian Archdeacon, who is again rated soundly by Leland for following the opinion of William the Little. Leland goes on to say that whatever Geoffrey was, Polydore had to follow him in six hundred places, or hold his peace. But both Geoffrey and William had no exact knowledge of British times.

The difference of thirty-five years between John

Boston and Polydore Vergil will be noted; also the disputes about the accuracy of the early historians, which clearly show that English history, such as it was in those times, had not been finally established.

MATTHEW PARIS,

the supposed author of 'Historia Anglorum.' The Guide says: 'The greatest of all the monastic schools of history was that of St. Albans, and the greatest of the St. Albans' historians was Matthew Paris. The Scriptorium, or literary department, of this abbey was established between 1077 and 1093; and the office of historiographer, or writer of history, was created between 1166 and 1183. The first St. Albans chronicle was probably the work of John de Cella, Abbot of St. Albans from 1195-1215. This extends from the Creation to 1188, and is a compilation from the Bible and earlier historians and romancers of an entirely uncritical character. Roger of Wendover, historiographer of the abbey early in the thirteenth century, continued this compilation from 1189 to 1201, and carried on the history from 1201 to 1235, as an original historian. The whole work down to 1235 frequently passed under Wendover's name, and with the title of *Flores Historiarum.* In 1236, on Wendover's death, Matthew Paris, who had entered the monastery in 1217, succeeded him

as historiographer. He then transcribed Wendover's work with additions and corrections of his own, and continued it as far as 1259. This entire work constitutes the *Greater Chronicles* which pass under Paris's name, being partly his own and partly a re-editing of his predecessor's work. But he also wrote an independent *History of the English*, or *Lesser History*, extending from 1067 to 1253, rehandling his materials according to his own judgment instead of simply adopting the records of his predecessors. As a contemporary historian Matthew Paris is invaluable. He had ample means of collecting information and material; he was acquainted with the leading men of the day, including Henry III., who even invited him to be present on an important occasion that he might be able to record it accurately. He is a lively and vigorous writer, criticising freely and with much independence, and supporting the popular cause against the King's misgovernment, and especially against the aggressions and extortions of the Pope's legates. He died in 1259.'

About Matthew Paris, John Boston says that he flourished about A.C., with no date, and that he wrote a history or book of chronicles, but no copy indicated in any of the religious houses.

Polydore Vergil makes no mention of him.

Leland (chap. ccxlix.) thinks he was an Englishman, because the name Pariis or Parish was, and

is, common in England, 'unless it is thought that he was called Parisian from having studied in Paris.' The matter is uncertain. Leland then repeats the Benedictine legend to the effect that Canute the Great founded two monasteries: one in the Fen Country, about eight miles from Norwich (the chief city of England next to London), and commonly called St. Benedict's, or St. Benet's Holme, over which Reps, the learned Bishop of Norwich, a friend of Leland, presides; the other in Norway, also called Holme. At the request of Pope Innocent the house of St. Albans sent Matthew to restore the declining religion of the Norwegian monastery to its pristine purity, which work he completed, and returned with great applause to St. Albans.

He devoted himself to study, and seeing the great need of history, he began with the last year of King Henry II., and wrote the history of our nation to the 37th year of Henry III. with the greatest diligence and good faith. He added an appendix, entitled 'Additionments'; he wrote also 'Memoirs of Twenty-two Abbots of St. Albans,' from which Leland had learned a good part of the antiquity of Verulam; he also wrote a 'Life of Edward Rich, Archbishop of Canterbury,' on the instruction supplied by Richard Vicanius and Roger Bacon. Leland finishes, 'I would say more of Matthew Paris, but have not the material.'

From the above it would seem that more is known about Matthew Paris in the nineteenth century than was known about him in the sixteenth century. John Boston could not find any copy of his work ; Polydore Vergil does not even mention him; and Leland somewhat limits his historical productions. Now, the editor of Matthew Paris, in the Master of the Rolls Series, was astounded at the ignorance of Leland, but this would rather show that Leland only stated what was known in his time, or what he himself knew about him.

In Baker's Chronicle, first edition, 1641, Matthew Paris is named as an authority, but there is no mention of an 'Historia Major,' and he is said to have brought his work down to the year 1259, while Leland gives 1253.

ADAM MURIMUTH,

the supposed author of the *Continuatio Chronicorum*, was, according to the Guide, 'born in 1275, was Doctor of Civil Law at Oxford, and acted for his University and for the Chapter of Canterbury in legal matters. He was also frequently employed on diplomatic service by King Edward II., and was Canon successively of Hereford and St. Paul's. His *Continuation of the Chronicles* (which he began to write after 1325) starts from the year 1303, but until 1337 it is

very meagre in its information. In 1337 Murimuth retired to the rectory of Wraysbury, and from this point his history becomes full and interesting. He continued it year by year down to his death in 1347. It is of particular value for the campaigns of Edward III. in France.'

Neither John Boston nor Polydore Vergil mention this author. But John Leland highly praises 'A. of Murinath, Canon of St. Paul's Church,' and says, 'he wrote the history of sixty years, *i.e.*, from A.D. 1320 to 1380, and lived under Edward the Third and Richard the Second.'

It will be noticed that there is some considerable difference between the datings of the Guide and of Leland. If Adam Murimuth died in 1347, according to the former, he could not have written history up to 1380, according to the latter. But probably it is not the same person, as there were two Murimuths. The chronicle of St. Albans, alluded to at p. 103 of the Guide, is not mentioned by John Boston or Polydore Vergil. John Leland alludes to them once only, and as the names of the writers of the chronicle and their dates seem to be uncertain, further notice of it would not be satisfactory. They may have been later productions than generally supposed.

the reputed author of the *Polychronicon*. The Guide says: 'This work was the most popular history extant in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, and even later. The author was a monk of the abbey of St. Werburgh in Chester, and died in 1363. His chronicle is a universal history of the world in Latin, from the Creation to the time of Edward III., and it is preceded by a geographical description of the world, especially of Great Britain. In its first form the history closed at 1326, but the author subsequently brought it down to 1342, and continuations of it beyond this date were frequently made by other writers. As an independent authority it is not of much value; but it was the standard history of its day, and shows the condition of historical and geographical knowledge at that time. Its popularity is proved by the fact that besides circulating largely in Latin, it was translated into English. The translator was John de Trevisa, chaplain to Lord Berkeley, who completed his work in 1387. On the invention of printing, Trevisa's translation was printed by Caxton in a slighty modernized form in the year 1482.'

John Boston makes no mention either of the book or of Ralph Higden.

Polydore Vergil mentions the book, but has not

apparently discovered the name of the author. No date is given.

John Leland (chap. cccliv.) calls Ralph Higden monk of the Chester monastery, and makes him out 'twice as good' as Polydore, but in language so vague that we cannot form an opinion as to whether he had read the book or not.

In this work there are signs of the working of a literary confederation of the Benedictines, which culminated in a general sort of history from the Creation, and is brought down to the time of Edward III. But the dating is very vague, and it is difficult to say exactly when it was all written. Another work of the same description, only written in French, is

'THE CHRONICLE OF THE BRUT.'

The Guide says: 'This was one of the most popular histories of England in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries. It was first written in French by an unknown author in the reign of Edward III., and took its name from the fact that it begins with the legendary colonization of England by the Trojans under Brut or Brutus. In its earliest form it ends in 1332. A revised edition, in which the accounts of the reigns of Edward II. and Edward III. were enlarged, appeared shortly afterwards; and in 1435 this was translated into English by John Maundeville, rector of Burnham

Thorpe in Norfolk. The history was then brought down to the year 1418, and in this shape it became very popular and was largely circulated. A further continuation was added to it, bringing the narrative down to 1436; and finally, on the invention of printing, Caxton continued it to the year 1460, and printed it in 1480. This edition, with additions and alterations, was frequently reprinted in the course of the next fifty years, but since then the chronicle has never been reprinted. The early part of the history is based upon the romance of Geoffrey of Monmouth (the source of most of the legends concerning early English history), and has no historical value. From the reign of Edward I. it has some original matter, but its chief interest is as the first popular history of England which circulated in the English language.' The chronicle is not mentioned by any of the Triumvirate.

This ends the British Museum Guide to the manuscript chronicles of England, and it may be presumed that the ones mentioned are considered the most trustworthy or the most interesting. There are, however, many other manuscripts said to have been written by Geoffrey Arthur of Monmouth, Saxo Grammaticus, Marian the Scot, Florence of Worcester, Walter of Coventry, Ralph de Diceto, Gervase of Canterbury, all Benedictines; also by Nicolas Trivet, a Dominican or Black

Friar, Roger Bacon, and many others. Details about them all are hardly necessary, but Geoffrey of Monmouth and Roger Bacon will be specially noticed, as it is interesting to know what was said about them in the sixteenth century.

GEOFFREY ARTHUR OF MONMOUTH,

a Benedictine, is said to have written a history of the Britons, and was esteemed in the reign of Henry I., but no alleged date is given. John Boston says that no copy of the work is indicated in any of the 200 religious houses.

Polydore Vergil in his 'Anglican History' scoffs at this writer, who is called 'G. Arthur,' because he wrote so much about King Arthur, derived from ancient fragments of the Britons, and he also put forward the prophecies of Merlin, etc.

John Leland (chap. clxi.) describes him as of Monmouth, which takes its name from two streams, the Mona and the Vaga (Wye). He thinks that Geoffrey must have been a monk, for there was lately a Benedictine convent at Mona, of the antiquity of which he (Leland) knows nothing. 'In these times the monks were the only learned men. Neither Oxford nor Cambridge flourished. The monks did not pamper their bellies, but fed their minds. Geoffrey was good at poetry and prose; not even the Italians, who did not

always write so purely and exactly, would deny this'—a hit at Polydore, who is alluded to as Codrus.

'Whatever the merit or otherwise of Geoffrey's style, he is to be praised for having rescued a great part of British antiquity from oblivion. Hang the Codri who think and write otherwise! It must be admitted, however, that Geoffrey sometimes erred and dealt in uncertain and idle tales. And what historian, prithee, has not stuck in the same mud? Geoffrey is pardonable—he confesses that he merely translated from the British into the Latin tongue.'

Then follows a long discussion with Codrus (Polydore) on the question of King Arthur, but Antony Hall tells us that it has been marked with crosses in the manuscript as cancelled, because Leland wrote a separate Latin treatise, 'Defence of Arthur,' in reply to Polydore.

Leland then proceeds to tell how Walter, Archdeacon of Oxford, being a friend of Geoffrey's, and a great book-hunter, while travelling in Armorica (Brittany) lighted upon a history of Britain in the British tongue. With joy he returned to England with his treasure, and handed it over to Geoffrey, as one skilled in the British tongue, to be translated. And Ralph of Chester, another Benedictine, tells us that Walter himself wrote a private history from the British.

(This was Walter Mapes, on whom there is a separate chapter, but Leland had never seen this book.)

Geoffrey's work in eight books was dedicated to Robert Duke of Gloucester; he also translated into Latin the prophecies of Merlin Ambrose. In many copies it forms an additional book of the British history, so says Leland, but Geoffrey is, I believe, now admitted not to be the author of the Merlin book.

Leland had also read in the annals of John Abbot of Burgh (?) that Geoffrey was designated Bishop of Eloium, called in British 'Llan Elior'—*i.e.*, church or place on the river Ely, and recently called St. Asaph.

Since Leland's time Geoffrey's work has been discredited as a history, and is now looked upon as a romance full of legendary matter; but miracles and marvels always formed a great part of early Benedictine literature. These acute people knew human nature well, and understood the extreme credulity of the human race. 'In Shakespeare's time it is said that Geoffrey's legends were still implicitly believed by the great mass of the people, and were appealed to as historical documents by so great a lawyer as Sir Edward Coke. They had also figured largely in the disputes between the Edwards and Scotland. William Camden was the first to prove satisfactorily that

the "Historia" was a romance' ('Encyclopædia Britannica,' under Geoffrey of Monmouth).

The fact is that both the classes and the masses generally prefer fiction and fancy to truth and actuality. Even in the nineteenth century this is shown in an extract of a letter addressed by Colonel Olcott, President of the Theosophical Society in America, to the Pundit Dayananda Sarasvati, then the Chief of the Arya Samaj in India, in June, 1878, preparatory to his starting for that country accompanied by the late Madame Blavatsky : 'I clearly infer from your letter—that part where you speak of the phenomena of giving life to a dead man, healing lepers, moving a mountain, and touching the moon "as betraying an irreligious spirit," and sure to give rise to many misfortunes—that you disapprove of miracle-working. You esteem it as much inferior to the study of philosophy, and one's innate spiritual powers. This is wisdom, and we recognise it as such. But the masses here, like the masses everywhere, are averse to philosophy and hunger after marvels. Their understandings seem attainable only through their imagination and senses. The mediums show their marvels, and we vainly offer them the discussion of philosophy. Perhaps we have not used the best methods. A conviction that this may be so brings us to your feet for instruction and guidance.'

Again, Muhammad the Apostle never claimed the power of working miracles or possessing any supernatural powers, as is shown in many passages of the Koran (chaps. vi., vers. 37, 57, 109; xvii., vers. 61, 93-96; xxix., ver. 49). But the Mohammedan masses, like the masses everywhere, prefer miracles to historical facts. And so it comes about that the later the life of Muhammad the greater the number of his miracles, and the more of them the better for the popularity of the work. Indeed, the same remarks may be applied to many of the literary productions of the Benedictines. The Dialogues of Pope Gregory I. show to what an extent even a Pope added miraculous stories to the literature of the day (see Gregorovius' 'History of the City of Rome in the Middle Ages').

ROGER BACON,

a Franciscan Friar, is said to have flourished during the reign of Henry III. (1216-1272), but the date of his birth and death cannot be accurately fixed. He is not mentioned by John Boston or Polydore Vergil.

John Leland (chap. ccxxxvi.), after a eulogy of this famed friar, in his usual inflated style says that 'he wrote a vast number of books, which were formerly in a multitude of copies diffused through the libraries of all Britain, but which

now—shame to say!—(about 1546) have been cut out of their cases, have been furtively removed, or have been mutilated so that they are rarely found. You might more easily collect the leaves of the Sybil than the names of the books he wrote.'

There follows then a list of thirty tractates which are extant under his name, partly theological, partly philosophical, in a crude sense. The only historical work in the list is the last, 'On the Life of Edmund Archbishop of Canterbury.' Leland does not say that he had read any one of them.

If the reader cares to examine the books of biography, the many encyclopædias and other works of reference, he will find under the name of Roger Bacon a voluminous account of this wonder of the age, this author of many works, great natural philosopher and also theologian. It is curious therefore that Leland could not find much that he had written. Of course it may be urged that many of the books were ordered to be destroyed by the ecclesiastics as being too far in advance of the time. Still, if all these works were really destroyed in the thirteenth or fourteenth centuries, and neither John Boston, Polydore Vergil, nor John Leland could name them in the sixteenth century, how has all the information been obtained about this great genius in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries?

Leland only mentions about thirty of Bacon's works. A few years later, 1549-1557, Bale, in his 'English Writers,' gives no less than eighty works under the name of the prolific friar; while Pits (time of Elizabeth and James) expresses amazement at the mass of alleged 'Bacon' writings under his name. The writer of an article in the 'Biographica Britannica,' 1747, is also astonished at the mass of Baconic literature, and does not 'know what to think.' He would have known what to think had he or his colleagues understood the system of monastic literature.

It is evident, then, that from some early time (the exact date of which it is difficult to fix) up to the sixteenth century the Benedictines produced a mass of literature at different places, written under various names, and probably all having some connection with each other. There seems to have been a constant flow, but who the writers were, when they actually wrote, and what was published under their own names or in the names of other people, is still an open question.

The dates of many of these manuscripts appear to have been settled (not by the dates in them, for very often there were none) by the art or science of paleography. Now, the study of paleography is most interesting, but it cannot be considered infallible. It has affixed a seventh, eighth, ninth, tenth, eleventh, twelfth, thirteenth, fourteenth,

fifteenth and sixteenth century to a mass of manuscripts, but still it sometimes makes mistakes. One of the tests connected with it is chronology, which in the case of many of these old chronicles has been somewhat neglected. We can form now a pretty accurate idea when Incarnation datings came into use. The same can be said of Arabic numerals, and the terms 'Anno Domini' and 'A.D.' A careful comparison of these manuscripts with regard to the style, form and nature of these datings, and to the century given to them by the paleographists, would be most interesting. Whether it would be worth all the time, trouble and expense is another matter.

CHAPTER VI.

SOME DESULTORY CONCLUSIONS.

It is related of a certain gentleman that when asked his opinion about money investments, he invariably replied that he believed Consols were safe. In the same way, if anybody was to ask me for a safe date for the commencement of English history, I should reply that the accession of Henry VIII. to the throne in 1509, or the beginning of the sixteenth century, was a safe date to begin with.

Backwards from 1900 to 1666, the year of the publication of the *London Gazette*, there is a complete system of regular datings which can be generally accepted. From 1666 to the beginning of the sixteenth century the evidence in the shape of Calendars, State Records and Letters, Journals of the Houses of Lords and Commons, and other documents, is good and trustworthy. Positive English history may be said therefore to commence from that period, viz., A.D. 1501, to the present time.

From the first years of the reign of Henry VII. backwards to that of Henry II. there is a much darker period. Accounts of the various documents of those times will be found in the excellent works of C. P. Cooper, S. R. Scargill Bird and Walter Rye, who have all written on the subject of the Public Records.

For ready reference, a list of some of these records is here given, viz. :

The Domesday Books.

The Statutes of the Realm, beginning with Henry III., but very imperfect till the reigns of Henry VII. and Henry VIII.

The Rolls of Parliament, nothing earlier than the 18th of Edward I., *i.e.*, 1289-1290.

The Parliamentary Writs, Petitions, etc., from the time of Edward I., but very imperfect.

Rolls of the Curia Regis from Richard I. to Henry III.

Pleas of the Crown from Henry III.

The Roll Records and Books of the Exchequer from Henry III.

The Hundred Rolls from Edward I.

The Placita de Quo Warranto from Edward I.

The Nonæ Rolls from Edward III.

The Charter Rolls from King John.

The Patent Rolls from King John.

The Close Rolls from King John.

The Fine Rolls from King John.

The Pipe Rolls from Henry II.

The Chancery series of 'Inquisitiones post-mortem' from Henry III.

The Exchequer series of the same from Edward I.

The Originalia from Henry III.

Calendars of Chancery Proceedings from Richard II.

Early Wills. Two series: one of the City of London from 1258, the other at Doctors' Commons from about 1350.

There may be some other minor records, but apparently, excepting the Domesday Book proper, nothing of importance before Henry II. As a matter of fact all our early records are very imperfect, and many missing. So far as I have been able to ascertain, the datings are as a general rule according to the year of the reign of the King, while datings by the era are very exceptional.

In the absence of regular calendars, registers, gazettes, or newspapers, the information to be obtained from these records is of course most useful and interesting. At the same time, it cannot be regarded as of a very first-class character, and under these circumstances it will be sufficient to consider the period from Henry VII. to Henry II., or say even to the reign of William the Conqueror, as coming under the head of Probable English History.

Previous to the reign of William the Conqueror, we come into a still darker age. Reliable facts are scanty, while records do not seem to exist, and we have to fall back upon legend and tradition aided by early Charters, many of which are of a very doubtful character, both as regards their dates and their originality.

It is difficult to fix the period when English history first began to be formulated and placed on parchment or vellum, paper being a later discovery. So little remains of the works said to have been written by Gildas and Nennius that we can hardly form a proper opinion about them.

I may be wrong, but the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle seems to be the first attempt to classify and to date events, but when this was commenced it is impossible to say ; perhaps it was followed by the ' Ecclesiastical History of England,' transcribed under the name of Bede.

It is curious to note that between these two works and their reputed datings, and the commencement of the chroniclers in the twelfth century, there is a lapse of some three or four hundred years. Is it possible that the dates of the two earlier works have been miscalculated, and that they are really the product of a later time ? Anyhow, as they stand at present, they form the basis of our English history, which can be classed only as Possible English History from the time of

the Norman Conquest up to the fabulous or mythical period.

Professor James E. Thorold Rogers, in his 'History of Agriculture and Prices in England from 1259 to 1703,' gives us the benefit of his long researches into original and contemporaneous records extending over a period of some 450 years.

He says that, except the Pipe Rolls, very few documents other than charters and records of legal proceedings exist before the last twenty years of the reign of Henry III. (1216-1272). He further mentions that dating by the Christian era was a most exceptional practice during the period from 1259 to 1400. His words are, 'Occasionally, but very rarely, the year of the common era is given.' The year of the reign of the King was commonly used.

While the Professor gives us the usual system of dating from 1259 to 1400, the Paston Letters furnish their evidence from 1422 to 1509. It is safe, therefore, to conclude that dating by the Christian era in England did not come into common use till the sixteenth century, and not into general use till a later period.

As regards the first datings by the 'Anno Incarnationis Dominicæ,' it seems impossible to fix them exactly. Some details on the subject have been given in the first chapter of this work,

but further research might throw more light on what is now somewhat lost by the lapse of ages.

It may be generally admitted that Incarnation dating was not used till the ninth century, and not commonly used till the tenth or eleventh centuries. If this be really the case, then all documents carrying this form of dating prior to the year 801 must be regarded with some suspicion, and a searching inquiry made into the accuracy or genuineness of this early date.

One curious fact is that there are more Incarnation datings in England during those doubtful years than in any other country in Europe. It is further stated that St. Augustine brought Christianity and Incarnation datings to England from Rome in 596, while at that period it does not seem to have been in use in Rome, Italy, France, Germany, or anywhere else.

The term 'Anno Domini' came after that of the Incarnation. The first mention of it that I have come across in Papal documents is of the year MLVIIII. and MLX., but seldom used till some years later.

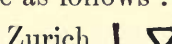
In Rymer's work the first mention of the term is as follows: 'Actum London in Domo Militiæ Templi XI Kal Octob Anno Domini millesimo ducentesimò decimo nono' (*i.e.*, 1219). Other instances also occur during this reign of Henry III. (1216-1272), viz., Anno Domini MCCXXIV.,

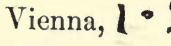
again, Anno Domini MCCLI., but still used very rarely.

The first use of the term 'A. D.' that I have as yet met with will be found in the analysis of the catalogues of early printed books at the end of Chapter II. of this work, viz., one of A. D. MCCCCLXXI., and three of A. D. MCCCCLXXXI. In Westminster Abbey the earliest use of this term appears to be A. D. MDCLXV. Moreover, the term does not appear at all in Rymer's works, which end in 1654, or in any of the letters of the fourteenth or fifteenth centuries.

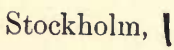
As regards the dates in Arabic numerals on European coins, it has been shown (chap. iii.) that the Arabs themselves did not use them upon their own moneys in figures (not words) till the beginning of the seventh century of the Hijra, *i.e.*, A. D. 1204-1301.

The earliest dates in Arabic numerals on coins now existing in some of the museums of Europe are as follows :

Zurich,  , *i.e.*, 1424.

Vienna,  , *i.e.*, 1456.

Berlin, 1468.

Stockholm,  , *i.e.*, 1478.

Copenhagen, 1496.

Rome, 1515.

Paris, 1532.

London, a Scotch gold bonnet-piece, 1539.
English crown and half-crown, 1551.
English gold coin, 1553.

In the British Museum there is, however, a Swiss piece of 1424 (1424), the same date as the Zurich one, while the earliest English dated coin with Roman numerals is one of MDXLIX.

St. Petersburg, the beginning of the eighteenth century.

Without a very prolonged search and inquiry, it is difficult to say what dates expressed in Arabic numerals could be found on any tombs, monuments, or inscriptions of the fifteenth century. As yet, I have not come across any except the date of 1462 in the Tower of London, but there are doubtless others, though probably rarely to be found anywhere.

My conclusions, then, are that all dates in Arabic numerals on coins, monuments, inscriptions, etc., prior to the fifteenth century, *i.e.*, before 1401, must be regarded with suspicion. The style or form of figure in which they are engraved must be carefully noted, and as much information as possible should be obtained as to how and when these numerals were inscribed, so as to ascertain if they are really contemporaneous.

As regards Arabic numerals in manuscripts, an earlier margin must be allowed, but even in

these the use of such figures before the fourteenth century, *i.e.*, before 1301, must be received with caution. They should be examined both as regards their form, shape, and style, and it should be particularly noted if they are used marginally only, or interpolated, or likely to be a later addition.

Next to printing, the exchange of the use of the heavy Roman for the lighter Arabic numeral was of the greatest comfort and benefit to the civilization and commerce of our small planet. Like everything else connected with man, the process of its introduction seems to have been a remarkably slow one.

INDEX.

BILLING AND SONS, PRINTERS, GUILDFORD.

ERRATA.

Page 37, line 7, *for* ‘ Nicolas Harris ’ *read* ‘ Harris Nicolas.’
Page 92, line 1, *for* ‘ 722 ’ *read* ‘ 772.’
Page 176, line 11, *for* ‘ Gery ’ *read* ‘ Giry.’
Page 177, line 15, *for* ‘ Bale ’ *read* ‘ Basle.’