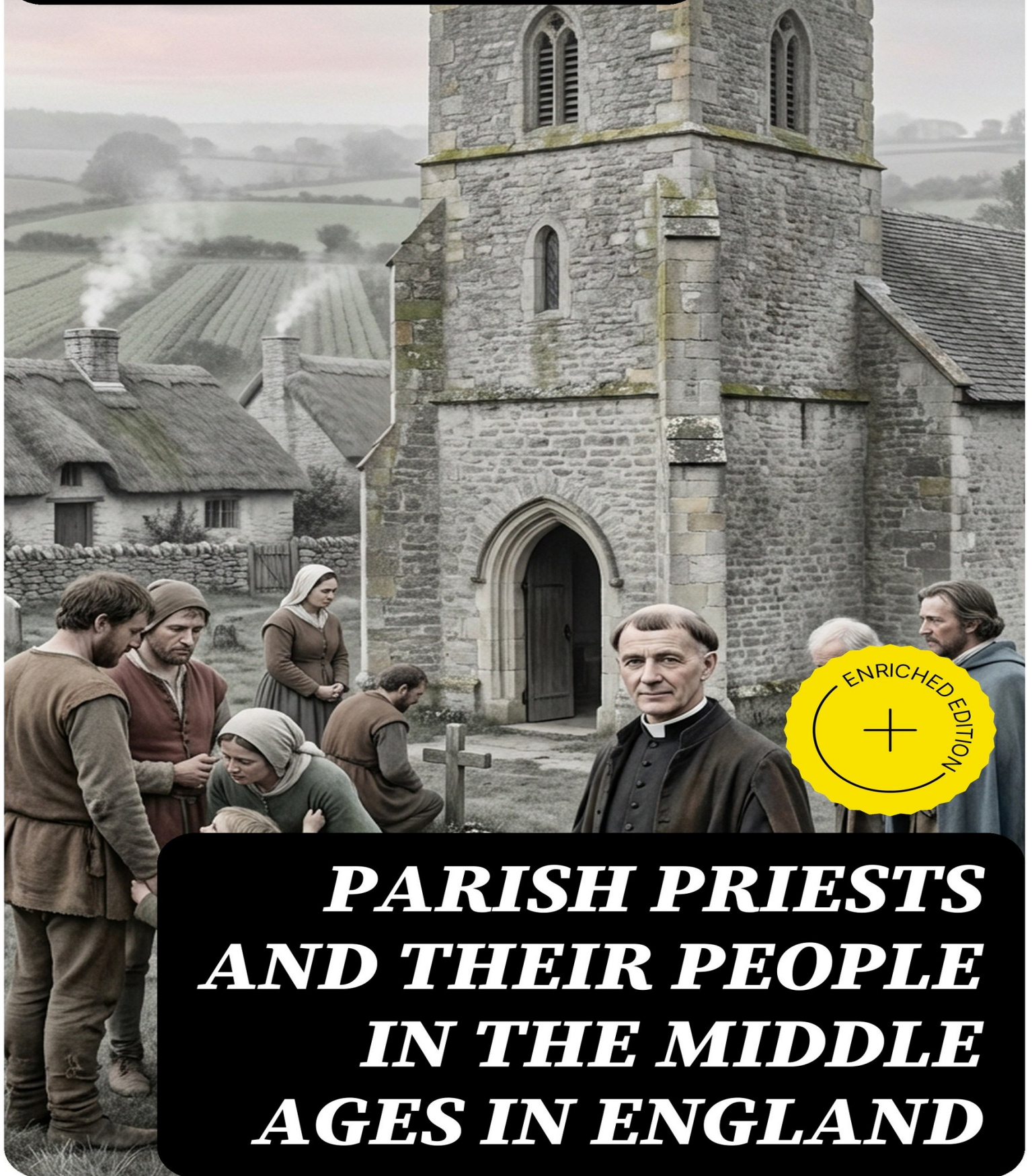
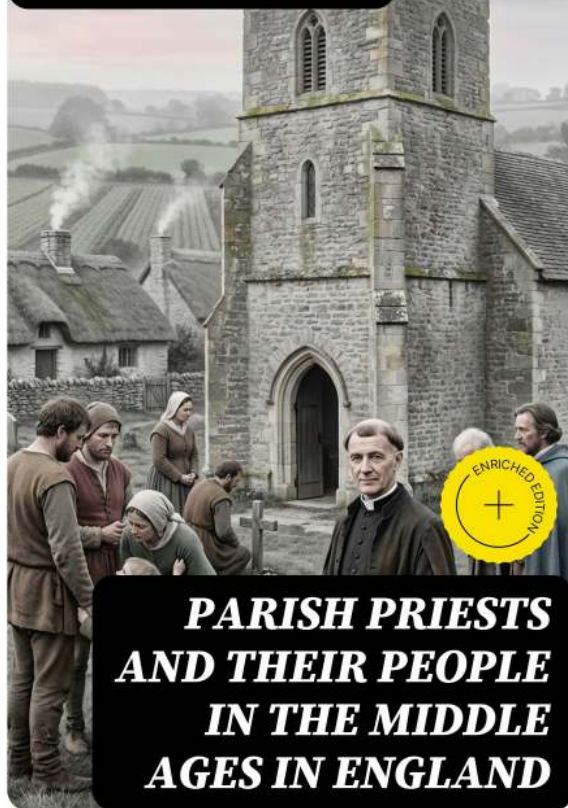


***EDWARD LEWES
CUTTS***



***PARISH PRIESTS
AND THEIR PEOPLE
IN THE MIDDLE
AGES IN ENGLAND***

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Edward Lewes Cutts

Parish Priests and Their People in the Middle Ages in England

Enriched edition.

Introduction, Studies and Commentaries by Quinn Theodore

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PREFACE.

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A great mass of material has of late years been brought within reach of the student, bearing upon the history of the religious life and customs of the English people during the period from their conversion, in the sixth and seventh centuries, down to the Reformation of the Church of England in the sixteenth century; but this material is still to be found only in great libraries, and is therefore hardly within reach of the general reader.

The following chapters contain the results of some study of the subject among the treasures of the library of the British Museum; much of those results, it is believed, will be new, and all, it is hoped, useful, to the large number of general readers who happily, in these days, take an intelligent interest in English Church history.

The book might have been made shorter and lighter by giving fewer extracts from the original documents; but much of the history is new, and it seemed desirable to support it by sufficient evidence. The extracts have been, as far as possible, so chosen that each shall give some additional incidental touch to the filling up of the general picture.

The photographic reproductions of illuminations from MSS. of various dates, illustrating ecclesiastical ceremonies and clerical costumes, are enough in themselves to give a certain value to the book which contains and describes them.

The writer is bound to make grateful acknowledgment of his obligations to the Bishop of Oxford, who, amidst his incessant occupations, was so kind to an old friend as to read through the rough proof of the book, pointing out some *corrigenda*, making some suggestions, and indicating some additional sources of information; all which, while it leaves the book the better for what the bishop has done for it, does not make him responsible for its remaining imperfections.

The writer has also to express his thanks to the Rev. Professor Skeat, Professor of Anglo-Saxon at Cambridge, and to the Rev. Dr. Cunningham, formerly Professor of Economic Science, K.C.L., for their kind replies to inquiries on matters on which they are authorities; and to some others who kindly looked over portions of the book dealing with matters of which they have special knowledge.



DESCRIPTION OF PLATES.

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BURIAL OF THE DEAD

Frontispiece

The illustration taken from a French MS. of the middle of the fifteenth century [Egerton 2019, f. 142, British Museum[\[1\]](#)] will reward a careful study. Begin with the two pictures introduced into the broad ornamental border at the bottom of the page. On the left are a pope, an emperor, a king, and queen; on the right Death, on a black horse, hurling his dart at them.

Go on to the initial D of the Psalm *Dilexi quoniam exaudiet Dominus vocem*: “I am well pleased that the Lord hath heard the voice of my complaint.” It represents a canon in surplice[\[2\]](#) and canon’s fur hood, giving absolution to a penitent who has been confessing to him (note the pattern of the hanging at the back of the canon’s seat). Next consider the picture in the middle of the border on the right. It represents the priest in surplice and stole, with his clerk in albe kneeling behind him and making the responses, administering the last Sacrament to the dying person lying on the bed. Next turn to the picture in the left-hand top corner of a woman in mourning, with an apron tied about her, arranging the grave-clothes about the corpse, and about to envelope it in its shroud. In the opposite corner, three clerks in surplice and cope stand at a lectern singing the

Psalms for the departed; the pall which covers the coffin may be indistinctly made out, and the great candlesticks with lighted candles on each side of it. All these scenes lead us up to the principal subject, which is the burial. The scene is a graveyard (note the grave crosses) surrounded by a cloister, entered by a gate tower; the gables, chimneys, and towers of a town are seen over the cloister roof; note the skulls over the cloister arches, as though the space between the groining and the timber roof were used as a charnel house. The priest is asperging the corpse[3] with holy water as the rude sextons lower the body into the grave[1q]. Note that it is not enclosed in a coffin—that was not used until comparatively recent times. He is assisted by two other priests, all three vested in surplices and black copes with a red-and-gold border; the clerk holds the holy-water vessel. Three mourners in black cloak and hood stand behind. The story is not yet finished. Above is seen our Lord in an opening through a radiant cloud which sheds its beams of light over the scene; the departed soul [de—parted = separated from the body] is mounting towards its Lord with an attitude and look of rapture; Michael the Archangel is driving back with the spear of the cross the evil angel disappointed of his prey. Lastly, study the beautiful border. Is it fanciful to think that the artist intended the vase of flowers standing upon the green earth as a symbol of resurrection, and the exquisite scrolls and twining foliage and many-coloured blossoms which surround the sad scenes of

death, to symbolize the beauty and glory which surround those whom angels shall wait upon in death, and carry them to Paradise?

ORDINATION OF A PRIEST, LATE 12TH CENTURY 94

Gives the Eucharistic vestments of bishop and priest, a priest in cope and others in albes, the altar and its coverings, and two forms of chalice.

ORDINATION OF A DEACON, A.D. 1520 146

Gives the vestments of that period. The man in the group behind the bishop, who is in surplice and hood and “biretta[4],” is probably the archdeacon. Note the one candle on the altar, the bishop’s chair, the piscina with its cruet, and the triptych.

(1) AN ARCHDEACON LECTURING A GROUP OF
CLERGYMEN ON THEIR SECULAR HABITS AND
WEAPONS, 14TH CENTURY 174

He is habited in a red tunic and cap, the clergy in blue tunic and red hose and red tunic and blue hose.

(2) AN ARCHDEACON’S VISITATION 174

A CLERICAL PROCESSION 190

The illustration is taken from a French Pontifical of the 14th century in the British Museum [Tiberius, B.

viii.], and represents part of the ceremonial of the anointing and crowning of a king of France. We choose it because it gives in one view several varieties of clerical costume. There was very little difference between French and English vestments, *e.g.* the only French characteristic here is that the bishop's cope is embroidered with fleur-de-lys. On the left of the picture is the king, and behind him officers of state and courtiers. An ecclesiastical procession has met him at the door of the Cathedral of Rheims, and the archbishop, in albe, cope, and mitre, is sprinkling him with holy water; the clerk bearing the holy-water pot, and the cross-bearer, and the thurifer swinging his censer, are immediately behind him. Then come a group of canons. One is clearly shown, and easily recognized by the peculiar horned hood with its fringe of "clocks." Lastly are a group of bishops, the most conspicuous bearing in his hands the ampulla[5], which contains the holy oil for the anointing.

The photograph fails here as in other cases to give the colours which define the costumes clearly and give brilliancy to the picture. The king's tunic is crimson, and that of the nobleman behind him blue. The archbishop has a cope of blue *semée* with gold fleur-de-lys; the water-bearer, a surplice so transparent that the red tunic beneath gives it a pink tinge; the cross-bearer, a blue dalmatic lined with red over a surplice; the canon a pink cope over a white surplice, and black hood. The first bishop wears a cope of blue, the second of red, the third of pink. The

background is diapered blue and red with a gold pattern. The wall of the building is blue with a gold pattern; the altar-cloth, red and blue with gold embroidery.

INTERIOR OF A CHURCH AT THE TIME OF MASS 204

A SERMON 215

The bishop in blue chasuble and white mitre, people in red and blue tunics, two knights in chain armour, late 13th century.

(1) BAPTISM BY AFFUSION 233

The male sponsor holds the child over the font, while the priest pours water over its head from a shallow vessel. He wears a long full surplice, his stole is yellow *semée* with small crosses and fringed. The parish clerk stands behind him, 15th century.

(2) BAPTISM BY IMMERSION 233

Here the priest wears an albe apparelled and girded, and an amice, but no stole; the sitting posture of the child occurs in other representations, 14th century.

CONFIRMATION. (From a printed Pontifical, A.D. 1520) 238

The bishop wears albe, dalmatic, cope, and mitre, the other clergy surplice and “biretta.”

(1) PRIEST IN SURPLICE, CARRYING CIBORIUM
THROUGH THE STREET TO A SICK PERSON,
PRECEDED BY THE PARISH CLERK WITH TAPER AND
BELL 240

The ciborium, partly covered with a cloth, as in the illustration, which the priest carries, is silvered in the original illustration, and consequently comes out very imperfectly in the photograph.

(2) PRIEST, ATTENDED BY CLERK, GIVING THE
LAST SACRAMENT, 14TH CENTURY 240

BISHOP AND DEACON IN ALBE AND TUNIC,
ADMINISTERING HOLY COMMUNION 246

Two clerics in surplice hold the housel cloth to catch any of the sacred elements which might accidentally fall.

CONFESSION AT THE BEGINNING OF LENT 334

The priest in furred cope, the rood veiled; the altar has a red frontal. The two men are in blue habit. The woman on the right is all in black; the other, kneeling at a bench on the left, is in red gown and blue hood.

MARRIAGE 410

It represents the marriage of the Count Waleran de St. Pol with the sister of Richard, King of England. The count is in a blue robe, the princess in cloth of gold embroidered with green; the groomsman in red, the man behind him in blue, the prince in the background in an ermine cape. The ladies attending the princess wear cloth of gold, blue, green, etc.; the bishop is vested in a light green cope over an appparelled rochet, and a white mitre. The bishop (and in other representations of marriage) takes hold of the wrists of the parties in joining their hands.

VESPERS OF THE DEAD

458

The mourners in black cloaks are at the east end of the stalls; the pall over the coffin is red with a gold cross; the hearse has about eighteen lighted tapers; the ecclesiastics seem to be friars in dark brown habit (Franciscans).

MEDIÆVAL NORWICH. (From Braun's "Theatrum")

492

MEDIÆVAL EXETER. (From Braun's "Theatrum")

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MEDIÆVAL BRISTOL. (From Braun's "Theatrum")

500

KNIGHTS DOING PENANCE AT THE SHRINE OF ST. EDMUND

535

The abbot is vested in a gorgeous cope and mitre; one of the monks behind him also wears a cope over his monk's habit.

References to other pictorial illustrations in MSS. in the British Museum are given in Appendix III., p. [567](#).



PARISH PRIESTS AND THEIR PEOPLE.

CHAPTER I.

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OUR HEATHEN FOREFATHERS.



When we have the pleasure of taking our Colonial visitors on railway journeys across the length and breadth of England, and they see cornfields, meadows, pastures, copses, succeed one another for mile after mile, with frequent villages and country houses, what seems especially to strike and delight them is the thoroughness and finish of the cultivation; England seems to them, they say, like a succession of gardens, or, rather, like one great garden. This is the result, we tell them, of two thousand years of cultivation by an ever-increasing population.

On the other hand, we are helped to understand what the land was like at the time of the settlement in it of our Saxon forefathers, by the descriptions which our Colonial friends give us of their surroundings in Australia or Africa, where the general face of the country is still in its primeval state, the settlements of men are dotted sparsely here and there, the flocks and herds roam over “bush” or “veldt,” and only just so much of the land about the settlements is roughly cultivated as suffices the wants of the settlers.

For in England, in those remote times of which we have first to speak, the land was, for the most part, unreclaimed. If we call to mind that the English population about the end of the sixth century could only have been about a million

souls—200,000 families—we shall realize how small a portion of the land they could possibly have occupied. A large proportion of the country was still primeval forest, there were extensive tracts of moorland, the low-lying districts were mere and marsh, the mountainous districts wild and desolate. The country harboured wolf and bear, wild cattle and swine, beaver and badger, wild cat, fox, and marten, eagle, hawk, and heron, and other creatures, most of which have entirely disappeared, though some linger on, interesting survivals, in remote corners of the land.

Their possession of the country by the English was the result of recent, slow and desultory conquest. Independent parties of adventurers from the country round about the mouth of the Elbe had crossed the German Ocean in their keels, landed on the coast, or rowed up the rivers, and pushed their way slowly against a tenacious resistance. Then, when a party of the invaders had made good their conquest, came its division among the conquerors.

Our own history tells us so little of the details of the Anglo-Saxon conquest, that we have to call in what we know of the manners of their Teutonic neighbours and Scandinavian relatives to help us to understand it. The late Sir W. Dasent, in his “*Burnt Njal*,” says that the Norse Viking, making an invasion with a view not to a mere raid, but to a permanent settlement, would lay claim to the whole valley drained by the river up which he had rowed his victorious keels; or, landing on the coast, would climb some neighbouring height, point out the headlands which he arbitrarily assigned as his boundaries on the coast, and claim all the hinterland which he should be able to subdue.

The chief would allot extensive tracts to the subordinate leaders; and the freemen would be settled, after their native custom of village communities, upon the most fertile portions of the soil which their swords had helped to win. In the broad alluvial lands of the river valleys there would be ample space for several neighbouring townships; in forest clearings or fertile dales the townships would be scattered at more or less wide intervals. The unallotted lands belonged to the general community; it was Folk land, and its allotment from time to time, probably, in theory needed confirmation by a Folk-mote, but was practically made by the supreme chief.

Every township possessed a tract of arable land, which was divided by lot yearly among the families of the freemen; a tract of meadow, which was reserved for hay, cultivated and harvested by the common labour; a wide expanse of pasture, into which each family had the right to turn a fixed number of cattle and sheep; and into the forest, a fixed number of swine to feed on the acorns, mast, and roots.^[1] The people were rude agriculturists, not manufacturers, not traders, not civilized enough to profit by the civilization which the Romans had established in the country; they stormed and sacked the towns, and left them deserted, and selected only the most fertile spots for occupation.

It is a subject of dispute among our most learned historians to what extent the native Britons were slain or retired before the invaders, or to what extent they were taken as captives, or reappeared from their fastnesses after the slaughter was over, to be the slaves of the conquerors.

When we first get glimpses of the situation of things after the conquest, we find that the British language and religion have disappeared from the Saxon half of the country; and this implies the disappearance of the great body of the people. The fact of the continuance of some ancient place-names, chiefly of great natural features, as hills and rivers, and of a few British words for things for which the Teutons had no names, would be sufficiently accounted for by the survival of a very small remnant.

In their native seats the social condition of these Angle and Saxon freemen was patriarchal and primitive; they venerated their chiefs as Woden-born; they elected one of them as their leader in battle; but they did not obey them as their subjects. On questions of general importance the chiefs and wise men advised the Folk-mote, and the people said "Aye" or "No." But their circumstances in their new conquests led to changes. It was necessary to maintain some sort of permanent military organization not only for the defence of their new possessions, and the extension of their conquests against the old inhabitants of the island, but also against the encroachments of rival tribes of their own countrymen. And a supreme chief, to whom all paid a kind of religious veneration, who exercised permanent military authority over lesser chiefs and people, soon became a king; limited, however, in power by the ancient institutions of the Council of the wise men, and the assent or dissent of the Folk-mote.

The several parties of invaders gradually extended their conquests until they met, and then made treaties or fought battles with one another, until, finally, by the end of the

sixth century, they had organized themselves into seven independent kingdoms.

The freemen of each Township managed their own affairs in a town meeting; a number of neighbouring townships were grouped into what was called by the Saxons south of the Humber a Hundred, by the Angles north of the Humber a Wapentake; and each township sent four or five of its freemen to represent it in the Hundred-mote every three months. Three times a year, in summer, autumn, and midwinter, a general meeting of the freemen was held—a Folk-mote—at some central place; to which every township was required to send so many footmen armed with sword, spear, and shield, and so many horsemen properly equipped. At these Folk-motes affairs of general interest were determined, justice was administered by the chief and priests,[\[2\]](#) and probably it was at these meetings that the great acts of national worship were celebrated. Except for these periodical meetings, the scattered townships existed in great isolation. A striking illustration of this isolation is afforded by laws of Wihtred of Kent and of Ine of the West Saxons, which enact—or perhaps merely record an ancient unwritten law—that if any stranger approached a township off the highway without shouting or sounding a horn to announce his coming, he might be slain as a thief, and his relatives have no redress. A subsequent law of Edgar[\[3\]](#) enacts that if he have with him an ox or a dog, with a bell hanging to his neck, and sounding at every step, that should be taken as sufficient warning, otherwise he must sound his horn. The local exclusiveness produced by this isolation, the

suspicion and dislike of strangers, survive to this day in secluded villages in the wilder parts of the country.

These Teutonic tribes were heathen at the time of their coming into the land. Of their religion and its observances our own historians have given no detailed account, and few incidental notices. Our names for the days of the week, Sunday, Moon-day, Tuisco's-day, Woden's-day, Thor's-day, Frya's-day, Saeter's-day, make it certain that our Anglo-Saxon ancestors worshipped the same gods as their Scandinavian neighbours, and probable that their religion as a whole was similar. Their supreme god was Odin or Woden, with whom were associated the twelve Æsir and their goddess-wives, and a multitude of other supernatural beings. In their belief in an All-father, superior to all the gods and goddesses—we recognize a relic of an earlier monotheism. They had structural temples, and in connection with their temples they had idols, priests, altars, and sacrifices. They believed in the immortality of the soul, in an intermediate state, and a final heaven and hell. The souls of the brave and good, they believed, went to Asgard, the abode of the Æsir; there the warriors all day enjoyed the fierce delight of combat, and in the evening all their wounds healed, and they spent the night in feasting in Valhalla, the hall of the gods; the wicked went to Niflheim, a place of pain and terror. But the time would come when the earth, and sun, and stars, and Valhalla, and the gods, and giants, and elves, should be consumed in a great and general conflagration, and then Gimli and Nastrond, the eternal heaven and hell, should be revealed. Gimli—a new earth

adorned with green meadows, where the fields bring forth without culture, and calamities are unknown; where there is a palace more shining than the sun, and where religious and well-minded men shall abide for ever; Nastrond—a place full of serpents who vomit forth venom, in which shall wade evil men and women, and murderers and adulterers.

A knowledge of their religious customs would help us to judge what hindrance they opposed to the reception of the system of the Christian Church; or, on the other hand, what facilities they offered for the substitution of one for the other; but it is only from the assumption that the religious customs of our English ancestors were similar to those of the Norsemen that we are able to form to ourselves any conception on the subject.

In Iceland, conformably to the constitution of its government, each several district (the island was divided into four districts) had its priest who not only presided over the religious rites of the people, but also directed the deliberations of the people when their laws were made, and presided over the administration of justice (Neander, "Church Hist.," v. 418).

Sir W. Dasent says that after the Norse conqueror had marked out his boundaries and settled his people on their holdings, and chosen a site for his own rude timber hall, he erected in its neighbourhood a temple in which his followers might worship the gods of their forefathers, and that this was one means of maintaining their habitual attachment to his leadership.^[4] The evidence leads to the conclusion that both Scandinavians and Teutons had very few structural temples, perhaps only one to each tribe or nation; and

perhaps only three great annual occasions of tribal or national worship. We get a glimpse of one of these structural temples in the story of the conversion of Norway. [5] The great temple at Mære, in the Drontheim district, contained wooden images of the gods; the people assembled there thrice a year at midwinter, spring, and harvest; the people feasted on horseflesh slain in sacrifice, and wine blessed in the name and in honour of the gods; and human victims were sometimes offered.

The English townships, generally, it is probable, had no structural temples, but sacred places of resort, as an open space in the forest, or a hilltop, or a striking mass of rock, or a notable tree or well. The religious observances at such places would probably not be a regular worship of the gods, but such superstitions as the passing of children through clefts in rocks and trees, dropping pins into wells, and others; these superstitions survived for centuries, for they are forbidden by a law of Canute, [6] and one of them, the consultation of wells, so late as by a canon of Archbishop Anselm; [7] and, in spite of laws, and canons, and civilization, and a thousand years of Christianity, some of them survive among the peasantry of remote districts to this very day.

In the “Ecclesiastical History” of Bede, we find notices of only three structural heathen temples in England. The first is that at Godmundingham, which Coifi, the chief of the king’s priests, with the assent of King Edwin and his counsellors and thanes, defiled and destroyed on the acceptance of Christianity at the preaching of Paulinus. Of this we read that it had a *fanum*, enclosed with *septis*, which contained *idola* and *aras*; [8] and since the temple was set on fire and

thus destroyed, it seems likely that the fanum was of timber. The second temple named is the building east of Canterbury, in which King Ethelbert was accustomed to worship while yet a heathen, which, on the king's conversion, was consecrated as a church and dedicated to St. Pancras, and was soon afterwards incorporated into the monastery of SS. Peter and Paul built on the site. This was probably a stone building, and recent researches have brought to light what are possibly remains of it. The third temple is that in which Redwald, King of the East Anglians, after his conversion at the Court of Ethelbert, worshipped Christ at one altar, while his queen continued the old heathen worship at another altar in the same building. It will be observed that all these were the temples of kings, and this accords with the supposition that such structural temples existed only in the chief places for worship of tribes and nations; just as the twelve tribes of Israel had only one great national temple, while they had numerous altars on the "high places" all over the country.^[9]

Again, there is a remarkable absence all through the history of any mention of, or allusion to, the existence of a priesthood ministering among the people. The only priest clearly mentioned is the worldly-minded Coifi spoken of above, but as he is mentioned as "the chief of the king's priests," we assume that there was a staff of them, probably attached to the king's temple at Godmundingham. We suppose that Ethelbert of Kent, and Redwald of East Anglia, would also have a priest or priests attached to their temples; but we find no trace or indication of any others.

priest or rector).

52 A corrody is a grant from a monastery or religious house of board, lodging, or a small pension (often in food or money) for an individual, commonly paid weekly or annually.

53 The Convent (or Abbey) of Haughmond was an Augustinian monastic house near Shrewsbury in Shropshire, active from the 12th century until its suppression in the Dissolution of the Monasteries (c.1536–1540).

54 The phrase 'mother church' here means the principal parish church with legal and pastoral authority over the local congregation, to which chapel services were ordered not to draw away parishioners.

55 In this context 'Bread and Holy Water' refers to basic liturgical elements—the consecrated bread of the Eucharist and blessed water used in rites—and signals that some private chapels were restricted to only essential or limited ceremonial acts.

56 The 'Taxatio' refers to the late-13th-century ecclesiastical valuation (the *Taxatio Ecclesiastica* of 1291) compiled for papal/royal taxation of church benefices, used as a fiscal and administrative record.

57 A trental was a set of thirty Masses said for the dead, typically offered over thirty days as a collective memorial and intercession for a soul's repose.

58 An obit was a commemorative funeral service or annual memorial (often including Mass) held for a deceased person; an 'obit day' denotes the anniversary when that service was observed.

59 'De Profundis' is the Latin incipit of Psalm 130 ('Out of the depths') and was commonly recited in medieval funeral

liturgy and prayers for the dead.

60 The 'Valor' here refers to the Valor Ecclesiasticus, the royal survey and valuation of ecclesiastical revenues (commissioned in 1535 under Henry VIII) used to record church incomes and endowments.

61 A common medieval English place-name for a simple shelter or lodging for travellers; in London it also refers to a specific area or gateway where a parish (here All Hallows the Less) stood over the entrance.

62 A small stream that once flowed through the City of London and was culverted in later centuries; several medieval streets and buildings (including churches) were located over or alongside it.

63 A royal court in England that sat at the Palace of Westminster and dealt with equity, public order, and political cases; it was active from the late medieval period into the 17th century and was abolished in 1641.

64 A medieval figure traditionally credited as the founder of St. Bartholomew's Hospital in London; he is associated with the early 12th century in contemporary accounts and later tradition.

65 A 'Morrow Mass' was a very early morning celebration of the Eucharist in medieval practice, typically held at dawn; it was sometimes endowed as a separate chantry service for prayers for the dead.

66 The Trinity Gild (guild) was a medieval religious and charitable brotherhood in a town which often performed civic functions—maintaining bridges, almshouses, schools, or communal services—and in some places acted like a municipal corporation.

67 Recluses (anchorites or anchoresses) were religious men or women who lived in permanent enclosure—often in a small cell attached to a church—supported by alms or endowments and consulted for spiritual advice.

68 ‘St. Thomas the Martyr’ refers to Thomas Becket, Archbishop of Canterbury who was murdered in 1170 and canonized in 1173; many medieval churches and chapels, including bridge-chapels, were dedicated to him.

69 Thomas Magnus was an early 16th-century English churchman (noted here c.1532) who served as Archdeacon of the East Riding of York and endowed local educational foundations, including a grammar and song school mentioned in the text.

70 Books of rites and ceremonies used mainly by bishops that record the forms for ordination, confirmation, consecration and other episcopal functions; medieval pontifical manuscripts are often illustrated and are used as sources for contemporary vestments and liturgical instruments.

71 ‘Bedesmen’ were persons, often supported by a church, monastery, or charitable foundation, who were maintained to say the ‘bede’ (prayer) for the souls of benefactors; the practice is attested in medieval and early modern England and often involved small pensions or lodging.

72 A "Hundred" was a historic administrative subdivision of a shire (county) in medieval England used for organizing local justice, taxation, and the muster of militia. Its geographic size and specific functions varied widely by

region and changed between the Anglo-Saxon period and later medieval centuries.

73 Latin word meaning a shrine or temple; in this context it denotes a pagan sacred place or sanctuary (used alongside related terms like *delubrum* and *sacellum*).

74 Name of a pagan priest mentioned by Bede who, according to Bede's account (7th century), publicly profaned idols when his kingdom accepted Christianity; the story is from early medieval ecclesiastical history rather than contemporary secular record.

75 A 'Thing' was a Norse or Germanic assembly of freemen for law and decision-making; the 'Froste Thing' here refers to the winter meeting of that assembly (a seasonal regional council in medieval Scandinavia).

76 An old term for corporal punishment by flogging or whipping, commonly used in medieval ecclesiastical and civil contexts as a penance or sentence.

77 Women who in the Middle Ages took religious vows of enclosure and lived as recluses, often in a cell attached to a church where they prayed and received visitors for counsel.

78 Also called the Fourth Lateran Council, a major ecumenical council convened by Pope Innocent III in 1215 that enacted wide-ranging church reforms, including requirements about annual confession and communion.

79 A white linen cloth or garment placed on a newly baptized infant and traditionally offered at the mother's churching; it could be reused for church purposes or converted into ecclesiastical ornaments.

80 Latin for a person who temporarily holds or performs the duties of another officeholder — in ecclesiastical