

THE  
CHRONICLE OF THE SLAVS

BY

HELMOLD, PRIEST OF BOSAU

*Helmoldus, presbyter Bosoviensis*

TRANSLATED WITH INTRODUCTION AND NOTES

BY

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THE HARROWING OF HELL FROM  
DÜRER'S "LARGE PASSION," 1510

The gates of hell have been broken down, but the devils are still fighting desperately though impotently against Christ, who is concerned with rescuing his "saints."

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TO  
JAMES WESTFALL THOMPSON

## PREFACE

This is Helmold's book, and he wrote two prefaces, one for each of its two divisions. Preliminary remarks by the translator may, therefore, seem uncalled for; indeed, may be regarded as an intrusion. The formality of a preface, however, affords an opportunity to add the perspective of long years to the forewords which Helmold himself wrote. Obviously he could little sense the great interest which would attach to his work about the eastern frontier of an expanding Germany in the twelfth century. Nevertheless, it is for the picture which he gives of this movement that Helmold's chronicle is valuable today, for in it are captured the vital elements of that pioneering era in Germany of which so little can be known from other contemporary accounts.

I wish to express my indebtedness to Professor Austin P. Evans, editor of this series, for the invaluable assistance and constant encouragement which he has given. Miss Ida M. Lynn, of the Columbia University Press, has offered helpful criticism throughout the various stages in the production of this work. I am grateful, too, for the aid generously given by my colleagues, Professors Robert E. Dengler and Robert E. Galbraith.

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MAP OF THE HELMOLD REGION, 2



## INTRODUCTION



THE HELMHOLD REGION

## THE BACKGROUND OF HELMOLD'S CHRONICLE

When Charles the Great conquered the Saxons the Frankish frontiers reached two peoples which before that time had been nearly unknown to history—the Danes and the Slavs. They were too primitive to write about themselves, and their belongings were not such as could resist time and the weather of their habitat. Unlike the Germans of the migrations they did not come into immediate contact with peoples who could write about them. In the writings of the classical peoples the Scandinavian Germans, the Danes and their kin, the Norwegians and Swedes, and the Slavs received but few and meager notices. When, however, the western Germans under Charles began their expansion eastward, they had learned to write and, therefore, could be to the Danes and Slavs what the Greeks and Romans had been to the Germanic tribes of the migration period. Nevertheless, intimate accounts, narratives revealing the character of these peoples, were not immediately written. The first notable records of the northern or Saxon phase of this extension of German civilization are the *Gesta Hammaburgensis ecclesiae pontificum*, written by Adam of Bremen in the Salian period, and the *Cronica Slavorum*, written by Helmold of Bosau in the reign of Frederick Barbarossa. Adam begins his story with Charles's conquest of Saxony and reviews the relations of the Saxons (in particular of his church at Hamburg-Bremen) with the Danes and the Slavs, to the fall of his patron, the magnificent archbishop Adalbert, in the early years of the reign of Henry IV. There Helmold begins. In his history the Saxons conquer the Slavs of the lower Elbe country and establish themselves once more on what had been German soil.

### THE DANES AND SLAVS

In the time of Charles, the Danes occupied the peninsula to which they have given their name, southward to the Eider River

and the nearby islands in the Baltic Sea. Neither Adam nor Helmold was interested in their early history; they were satisfied to note that the Danes were a restless people ruled by many warlike chieftains who owed nominal allegiance to a king, vexatious pirates and marauders given to making raids into Saxon and Slavic territory, and fierce pagans who cruelly resisted conversion to Catholicism. Charles the Great sensed the difficulties which he would encounter if he advanced upon them. Moreover, he did not wholly trust the Saxons, only recently conquered and converted. Consequently he sought to do little more than defend his frontiers against them. His son, Louis the Pious, however, undertook to interfere in a quarrel among them over a royal succession and to send missionaries into their land. Politically his intervention netted him nothing but the increased enmity of the Danes. Although his efforts in the name of religion were rewarded by few conversions, they brought to the fore Ansgar,<sup>1</sup> a missionary of Christ-like zeal for saving souls, and led to the establishment of a bishopric for him at Hamburg, dedicated by the pope and the Frankish king to the conversion of the Danes, Norwegians, and Swedes.<sup>2</sup> Ansgar's successors at Hamburg-Bremen<sup>3</sup> made little headway in their mission field.<sup>4</sup> As late as 880 two Saxon bishops and Bruno, one of the founders of the Liudolphing line of Saxon dukes who in 919 received the kingship of Germany, were killed battling with the Danes.<sup>5</sup> For years thereafter annals and chronicles record the bloody doings of the Danes deep in the heart of Saxony, but the memory of

<sup>1</sup> Apparently Ansgar was not the first choice for leader of the northern mission as Rimbert seems to represent in his *Vita Anskarii* (chap. 7), but Autbert, a relative of the abbot of Corvey, who made the nomination. Autbert's sickness and death cleared the way for the recognition of Ansgar's ability. Tamm, *Anfänge des Erzbistums Hamburg-Bremen*, p. 10.

<sup>2</sup> The beginnings of the bishopric of Hamburg are not clearly known. Much of what Charles the Great is said to have planned with respect to it has been seriously questioned. Cf. *Vita Anskarii*, chap. 12; Adam, i, 14 (15); Hauck, *Kirchengeschichte Deutschlands*, II, 621 and notes.

<sup>3</sup> The see of Bremen was united with that of Hamburg and made an archbishopric by Ludwig the German. *Vita Anskarii*, chap. 22; Adam, i, 27 (29).

<sup>4</sup> *Vita Anskarii*, chap. 24; Adam, i, 17 (19); Hauck, *op. cit.*, II, 628.

<sup>5</sup> *Ann. Fuld.*, an. 880; Adam, i, 38 (40); Widukind, *Rerum gest. Sax.*, i, 16; Thiet., ii, 23; chap. 7, *infra*.

Ansgar and his mission still lingered with his followers in the see of Hamburg-Bremen. Ultimately the Danes, the Norwegians, and the Swedes embraced the Catholic faith, not so much through the efforts of prelates, however, as through those of the kings who in the course of time reduced the petty chieftains to submission and welded their peoples together to form states.

The Slavs or Wends<sup>6</sup> lived east of the Germans. When in the centuries of Roman decadence the German peoples forsook their deeply wooded, cheerless, ancestral territories for the cleared fields, balmy climate, and more friendly skies of the classical lands south of the Danube and west of the Rhine, the Slavs took possession of the deserted country and multiplied in the land. By nature not a warlike people, it was their lot to be harassed in central Europe by Asiatic nomads and Germans. The nomads, bursting out of Asia like cyclonic storms, were scarcely more merciless than the Germans. The Huns, Avars, Bulgars, Magyars, and other less well known but equally fierce marauders, ruthlessly broke up the tribes; they made the Slavs help fight their battles, protect their frontiers, and provide their food. Slav experience with roving German tribes, such as the Goths and the Scandinavians, could not have been more bitter. When the Franks and their successors, the Saxons and others, began to move eastward the lot of the Slavs who were in their way was far from enviable.

Peisker, writing in the *Cambridge Medieval History*,<sup>7</sup> happily likens the Slavs to a soft anvil and the nomads and Germans to hard hammers which beat upon the anvil. The figure admits of extension. It may be assumed that the softer metal of the anvil

<sup>6</sup> The Germans called the Slavs Wends; the Slavs called themselves Slavs. The origin of the two names has never been satisfactorily explained. Rostafinski offered an occupational derivation. Cf. résumé in *Bulletin international de l'Académie des sciences de Cracovie: Classe de philologie, d'histoire et de philosophie, 1908-1909*, p. 109. The older, and still generally accepted, explanation is that the Slavs called themselves Slawene, Slowene, i.e., *distincta voce praediti*, those who can understand one another, in contrast with their name for their western neighbors, the Germans, *njem, njemetz*, meaning *mutus, alius linguae*, those who cannot be understood. Cf. *Cambridge Medieval History*, II, 421 n. 2. When Helmold speaks of the Slavs or Wends he refers to the Slavs living along the German frontier, particularly that of Saxony, without regard for what those peoples called themselves.

<sup>7</sup> Vol. II, chap. xiv.

would bear the imprint of the blows which it received. Thus, some Slavic tribes acquired a taste for horse flesh and mare's milk from the nomads,<sup>8</sup> and along the Baltic coast they fared out on the sea like the pirate vikings.<sup>9</sup> Still the anvil continued an anvil. In spite of progress in civilization the Slavs remained a soft metal, ever subject to the relentless pressure of their neighbors. They seldom produced great warriors, like Alaric or Theodoric or Clovis, who could lead them in brilliant offensive movements. They built up few great and lasting states which could serve as protecting bulwarks against the inroads of their enemies. On the whole they did little more than perfect their defensive warfare.

#### THE GERMANS

The Germans, whose deeds constituted the hammer blows that beat down upon the Slavic anvil, were, to be sure, hard as steel, but by no means the hardest steel. The Germans were not united. The Saxon nobles and churchmen had their own individual objectives, and in their striving for these objectives they often came into conflict. In these quarrels the Slavs, arrayed now on one side, now on the other, were frequently pitted against one another. Had they been united they might have parried some of the hammer blows and saved themselves from extinction in the West. The Saxons, moreover, lacked support from the other German stems. The emperors were too much involved in the struggle to make their kingly power more vital in both Germany and Italy, their imperial power truly Roman. They could not spare the necessary time, energy, and revenue to the German movement eastward, however much they recognized that their power and prestige would have been enhanced thereby. Even the sovereigns of the Liudolphing house resigned to others their ducal title in Saxony, that they might concentrate their strength on the advancement of their royal and imperial authority. The popes, too, sometimes pursued policies detrimental to the interests of the Saxon missions, and in the late eleventh

<sup>8</sup> Adam, iv, 18.

<sup>9</sup> Chap. 109, *infra*.

century they engaged the Salian emperors in a mortal conflict that did much to delay the conversion of the Elbe Slavs.

The Saxony which, thus divided, almost alone continued Charles the Great's movement in the north was geographically triangular in shape. The northern angle rested on the North Sea coast near the mouth of the Elbe River; the eastern angle was at the confluence of the Elbe and the Saale; and the western, near the Rhine in the Ruhr-Lippe region. From angle to angle was an eight-day journey,<sup>10</sup> roughly, about two hundred miles. To Saxony, also, belonged some territory outside the triangle beyond the Elbe, including a northern extension, wherein dwelt the Nordalbingian Saxons, and a southern extension, inhabited principally by the Slavic Sorbs, kin of the Serbs in the Balkans.

About the early history of the Saxons, Adam and Helmold apparently cared little. By their time the early divisions of the land—Westphalia, Angria, and Eastphalia—had ceased to have much significance. Only Nordalbingia, also called Transalbingia, inhabited by the Ditmarshians, the Sturmarshians, and the Holzations, or Holsteiners,<sup>11</sup> was of importance, partly because Hamburg lay in this territory, partly because it was the frontier section of Saxony in which both writers were primarily interested.

Although Saxony was long a land innocent of the feudal institutions which quickly developed in other parts of Europe after the period of Charles the Great, the Danish-Slavic menace caused landowners of ability to learn the secrets of leadership and to enlarge their holdings. Among these landholders were the Liudolphings who in three generations built so well in Saxony that the duchy became the strength of the fourth of the line, Henry the Fowler, when in 919 he was elected king of Germany. Henry, however, continued as duke in Saxony after his

<sup>10</sup> Adam, i, 1.

<sup>11</sup> Cf. chap. 6, *infra*; Zeuss, *Die Deutschen und die Nachbarstämme*, pp. 388-97. Neither Adam nor Helmold mentions the ancient Angrarii and Eastphalians. Westphalia is merely located by Adam, i, 2, and mentioned by Helmold, chaps. 57, 63, 65, 92, 98, *infra*, only incidentally or as yielding colonists who settled on the lands of the Slavs.

election. He would permit no great landholding family or churchman to rise up there to dispute his word; nor would he interfere with the other great dukes in the internal affairs of their territories if they were reasonably amenable to his will in matters of general interest. With his son, however, counsels changed. If Henry I's conception of the constitution of the German monarchy had been federal, that of Otto I was unitary. The great dukes of Germany were to abide by the royal will in the management of their duchies, as well as in the general concerns of the realm. Such a policy necessarily scattered his efforts and invited rebellion. He could not, therefore, have held Saxony as had his father, even if its retention had been his wish. Soon after his election Otto reorganized the duchy and established margraviates on its borders. These march lands he committed to the care of faithful henchmen, like Count Siegfried in the Sorb country and Hermann Billung in the north. To Hermann he assigned the greater part of old Saxon Angria and Eastphalia, the vogtship of the archbishopric of Hamburg-Bremen, and the margraviate of the Slavic Abodrites and Wagiri. Hermann ably and loyally managed these extensive possessions along with his own by no means inconspicuous ancestral holdings in Nordalbingia. To him and to Count Siegfried (also to Siegfried's son, Gero) Saxony owed both protection and further expansion eastward, while Otto had them to thank for retaining his grip on the duchy.<sup>22</sup>

By this course, however, Otto had unwittingly raised up a power in Saxony which became ambitious. When Hermann died in 973 his son Bernhard I (973-1011) succeeded him and served the lesser Ottos faithfully. However, these emperor kings were too much engrossed with their Italian affairs to be very considerable factors in northern concerns, and their absenteeism favored both the assumption of greater powers by the dukes and the appropriation of lands and revenues that still belonged to the sovereign. A host of other differences in interests developed when

<sup>22</sup> Artler, *Die Zusammensetzung der deutschen Streithräfte in den Kämpfen mit den Slaven*, p. 28; Kretschmer, *Historische Geographie von Mitteleuropa*, p. 189.



the southern, Salian emperors succeeded the Liudolphings, differences which led to clashes between the later Billung dukes—Bernhard II (1011-59), Ordulph (1059-72), Magnus (1072-1106)—and Henry III and Henry IV. Although this Saxon-Salian quarrel seems trivial in comparison with the greater contest between the Empire and the Papacy with which it became identified, the results on the Saxon frontier were noteworthy and did not escape the notice of Helmold. With keen historical insight he concludes a long, and not very trustworthy, account of the deposition of Henry IV: "I have of necessity anticipated the disturbances within the Empire and the several wars of the Saxons, because they gave the Slavs by far the most important occasion to rebel."<sup>13</sup>

The year Henry IV died, 1106, saw also the end of the Billung dukes of Saxony. The last of the line, Magnus, was survived only by daughters, Eilica and Wulfhild.<sup>14</sup> Through them ensued complications from which in the course of time emerged the dominant lay figures of Helmold's narrative. Henry V gave the duchy of Saxony to Lothar, count of Supplinburg,<sup>15</sup> scion of one of the many lesser families that had risen high enough to be noticed and favored, in the years in which the imperial dreaming loosened the grip of the German kings on their ancestral domains. Lothar had married Richenza, the heiress of the Nordheim fortunes. These fortunes had been compounded with those of the margraves of Meissen, when Richenza's father, Henry the Fat, the son of Otto of Nordheim, had married Gertrude, the heiress of the Meissen family.<sup>16</sup> Lothar, however, was at least partly a victim of the means by which he himself had risen. He was survived only by his daughter, Gertrude; by marriage she transferred his possessions and title to Henry the Proud, duke of Bavaria.<sup>17</sup> Henry the Proud had inherited not only the Bavarian duchy, which Otto of Nordheim had lost (1070) to his

<sup>13</sup> Chap. 33, *infra*.

<sup>14</sup> Chap. 35, *infra*.

<sup>15</sup> Cf. *Annal. Saxo, an.*, 1106; chaps. 35, 41, *infra*.

<sup>16</sup> Kretschmer, *Historische Geographie von Mitteleuropa*, p. 227; Jaffé, *Lothar, passim*.

<sup>17</sup> Cf. chaps. 35, 54, 56, *infra*.

father, Henry the Black,<sup>18</sup> through a shift of the political winds, but also the western part of the Billung family possessions which his mother, Wulfhild, had inherited from Magnus, the last of the Billungs. Therefore, the marriage of Henry the Proud of Bavaria brought about a further consolidation of Saxon lands. This new Saxony, together with Bavaria, came to Henry the Lion, Helmold's lay hero and one of the greatest of medieval administrators and statesmen. Eilica, the other daughter of Magnus Billung, married Otto, count of Ballenstedt. Their son was Albert the Bear who won fame and fortune through his development of the eastern part of the Billung family possessions, which comprise roughly modern Brandenburg.

By the side of Henry the Lion and Albert the Bear stood two Adolphs, counts of Holstein, as great developers of their estates. Their line had risen in the Weser basin,<sup>19</sup> the county of Schauenburg (later corrupted into Schaumburg), through the favor of Conrad II. Lothar of Supplinburg granted to Adolph III of Schauenburg in vassalage Nordalbingia, the Danish mark, and the Slavic territory of Wagria, when the line of dukes that had served the Billungs in this region became extinct in 1110.<sup>20</sup> Adolph III of Schauenburg, who thus became the first count of Holzatia or Holstein (1110-22), was succeeded by his son, Adolph II (1126-64), who reduced Wagria in 1139 and settled it with Germans invited from other parts of Saxony and from the Low Countries.

#### THE CHURCH ON THE FRONTIER

Quite as important as these territorial and feudal changes in Saxony were the developments which took place in its religious constitution. On both sides of the Elbe there developed great ecclesiastical estates, whose regents in the course of time assumed a feudal character. Monasteries multiplied in Saxony but did not play so important a rôle politically as did the bishoprics. The

<sup>18</sup> Adam, iii, 60 (59); chap. 27, *infra*.

<sup>19</sup> Kretschmer, *op. cit.*, p. 231.

<sup>20</sup> Cf. chap. 36, *infra*; Kretschmer, *op. cit.*, p. 364.

Church in Saxony owed its organization to Charles the Great and Louis the Pious who divided the territory into nine dioceses.<sup>1</sup> For a long time these dioceses were struggling institutions. The lands with which they were endowed were largely undeveloped and exposed to the forays of Danes and Slavs and, later, even of Hungarians.<sup>2</sup> There could, moreover, be little thought of converting the heathen Danes and Slavs so long as the Saxons were but nominally Catholic. For decades only Hamburg-Bremen gave evidence of any interest in the missions, but its archbishops, remembering Ansgar's mission, thought almost exclusively in terms of the Scandinavian peoples. Among the Slavs the archbishops did very little. Indeed, the first Liudolphing king himself, Henry the Fowler, was apathetic; although he conquered the Wends, he did not try to bind them with religious ties to his Saxons.<sup>3</sup> So far as his preparations ultimately to subdue the Hungarians permitted, Henry I seemed to content himself with the policy of Charles the Great in Slavia—peaceful submission and the payment of tribute.

Henry's son Otto I was of another mind. He more firmly established the Saxon bishops as territorial lords and actively furthered the Wendish, as well as Scandinavian, missions. This conduct was in keeping with his German policy in general. He entrusted bishops with the administration of extensive territories, he kept them at court with him so long as he needed them, and

<sup>1</sup> Bremen, Verden, Minden, Münster, Paderborn, Halberstadt, Hamburg, Hildesheim, and Osnabrück. The archbishops of Köln and Mainz were represented as metropolitans. In the religious settlement of 777 the bishopric of Würzburg and probably that of Liège received mission spheres in Saxony; also the monasteries of Fulda, Amorbach, Hersfeld, and Corbie. Later insurrections made reassignments necessary. Hauck, *Kirchengeschichte Deutschlands*, II, 341-43, 346.

<sup>2</sup> Not until Unwan (1013-29), of the wealthy old Saxon family of the Immedinger, was made archbishop by Henry II did the Hamburg-Bremen church begin to prosper. Henry II seldom failed to consider the personal affluence of a possible candidate for a see; the appointee was expected to use his wealth in the development of his diocese. Adalbert (1043-72) also was wealthy in his own right. Adam, ii, 47 (45) 199; iii, *passim*; Thompson, *Feudal Germany*, p. 130. Diocesan lines in Saxony, moreover, were determined often without reference to the *Gauen*. Contrast the respect in which the clan was held in Ireland. Bellesheim, *Geschichte der katholischen Kirche in Irland* (Mainz, 1890-91), I, 91.

<sup>3</sup> Indeed, he hindered their conversion by establishing what Widukind, *Rerum gest. Sax.*, ii, 3, called a colony of robbers near Merseburg to prey on them. Cf. Hauck, *op. cit.*, III, 78-79.

he gave them lands that they might support him against insubordinate nobles. The king appointed the prelates, but the yardstick by which he measured candidates for the episcopate was often not so much pastoral zeal as devotion to his interests. To insure the loyalty of his bishops, control of the papacy was highly desirable.

The results of Otto's policy, which in many respects was but a revival of that of Charles the Great, are evident throughout Helmold's narrative of Saxon-Slav history. When the kings of Germany used discretion in their selection of bishops, they secured the services of educated and devoted men who were sincerely interested in the maintenance of law and order. And if the kings watched these churchmen wisely, they also secured strong supporters for their struggles with the feudal lords. However, bishops were human then, as they are now. High political office, extensive territorial jurisdiction, and great revenues, combined with their by no means ordinary authority as bishops, could turn the heads of those whose spirituality was not well founded. Spiritually shallow prelates, regardless of their apparent devotion to the crown, would be as ready as any of the lay nobles to take advantage of weak kings, or of strong kings when they were minors or long absent from their realms. Even spiritually minded bishops sometimes found it hard to recognize the rights of weak Caesars in the dispensation of God, especially since Caesars, strong or weak, were, or at least seemed to be, not always mindful of God's rights in their conduct of public affairs. Bishops, too, often found so much secular work to do in their dioceses that they were distracted from their ecclesiastical duties. Little wonder, then, that after the weak rule of the second and third Ottos, Henry II, though religiously inclined, should have sought to control the German church with the dual purpose of securing the ends Otto I had had in mind and of reforming the Church. Finally, bishops were officers of a super-racial, super-national institution with traditions transcending those of the German state or of its dynasties. How long the head of the Church would endure the warping of an ecclesiastical office depended on

his ability to see the evil results to his institution and to its spiritual mission and on his power to assert himself.

The effects of these developments on the character of the German episcopate and on the missions and therefore on the power of the Germans to incorporate with themselves the conquered peoples, were far from happy. Neither worldly minded nor religiously devoted bishops, distracted by the numerous secular duties of their political offices, were liable to have time to devote to the missions. If their diocesan resources were meager and their metropolitans either could not or would not aid them, it is probable that their missionary zeal ebbed. They might, of course, make the missions support themselves by obtaining the king's permission, which he rarely failed to grant, to levy tithes upon the Slavs. Such a policy, however, was bound to alienate further those already none-too-friendly people. Nevertheless, such tithes became the rule rather than the exception in the Slav country, retarding the missions and causing much restlessness that at times even ended in revolts. If the first great northern Slav rebellion in 983 may be traced to the greed of the lay lords of Saxony, especially to that of the Billungs, the second great insurrection in 1018 may in part be traced to the exasperation caused by episcopal exactions.<sup>4</sup> The missions also suffered from the opposition of the nobles to the tithing policy. The tithes lessened the amounts which could be imposed as tribute by the nobles and increased the difficulties of collection. Many nobles also feared the hierarchs because of their political power and bore them grudges for the lands and offices which they had acquired through the favor of the kings. Finally, on becoming emperors, the kings were often long absent from Germany, and during such periods the bishops, as royal agents, lacked their leadership and support.

In Oldenburg (the Starigard of the Wagrian Slavs) Otto I established, probably in 968,<sup>5</sup> the diocese of which Helmold later

<sup>4</sup> Cf. chap. 18, *infra*; Thompson, *op. cit.*, p. 407.

<sup>5</sup> The date is much disputed. Cf. Adam, ii, 16 (14); chap. 12, *infra*; Hauck, *op. cit.*, III, 106-9 and notes; Köpke-Dümmier, *Otto der Grosse*, p. 505 n. 2; Curschmann, "Die Entstehung des Bistums Oldenburg," *Historische Vierteljahrschrift*, XIV (1911), 182-98.

was a priest and endowed it with lands from the income of which it could proceed with the evangelization of the heathen. By the might of the emperor, exercised largely through his lieutenant in this region, Hermann Billung, those properties were made productive. Northeastern Saxony and Wagria became populous and abounded in towns and villages and monasteries.<sup>6</sup> Destruction, however, soon overtook the "plantation." In 982 Otto II was defeated in Calabria and the Billung Bernhard I, by moving to his aid, made possible a pagan reaction in both Denmark and Slavia.<sup>7</sup> Not until 996 did a peace without victory come to the Saxons and then only ruins were left of the prosperous settlements of the days of Otto I. Nearly two hundred years after the storm, Helmold, then a young man, ranged the forest which extended from the town of Lütjenburg into Schleswig and saw in the almost impenetrable solitude "traces of the furrows which had separated the plowlands of former times" and "in many streams ancient embankments, once thrown up to collect the tributary waters for the mills," when that whole region was inhabited by the Saxons.<sup>8</sup>

For many years after the uprising of 983 the see of Oldenburg was but a name. It was revived as a matter of course but received very little support from its metropolitan church. The prelates of Hamburg-Bremen were interested in the Scandinavian lands. Volkward, one of the bishops of Oldenburg, must have regarded the prospects of the diocese as hopeless, for he went to Sweden as a missionary and his successor, Reginbert, took his title from the Slavic town of Mecklenburg, because he could not occupy the see.<sup>9</sup> The successor of the latter, Bernhard, was fortunate in having at Hamburg-Bremen a metropolitan, Unwan, who was willing to support him. Now, after nearly forty years (Bernhard was bishop of Oldenburg from 1013 or 1014 to 1023) there could be some thought of rehabilitating the diocese. To this end

<sup>6</sup> Chap. 12, *infra*.

<sup>7</sup> Adam, ii, 24 (21); Thiet., iii, 20 (12); chap. 13, *infra*; Uhlirz, *Otto II und Otto III*, pp. 178-79.

<sup>8</sup> Chap. 12, *infra*; *Ann. Qued.*, an. 996; Thompson, *op. cit.*, p. 491.

<sup>9</sup> Adam, ii, 46 (44); Thiet., vi, 43 (30); *Ann. Qued.*, an. 992; chap. 17, *infra*.

Bernhard began to inquire what possessions and revenues his church had received from Otto I. With difficulty the bishop persuaded the Slavs to promise payment of tithes; but his pains availed him little. The Billung duke, "wholly infected with avarice, loaded the Slavs of the vicinity—whom he had reduced either by means of wars or treaties—with such burdensome taxes that they were neither mindful of God nor in any way friendly toward the priests."<sup>10</sup> Bernhard then went off to live the rest of his life with his friend, Bernward of Hildesheim.<sup>11</sup> His ill-timed inquisition and the grasping conduct of the Billung duke were largely responsible for the second great Slav uprising in 1018.

Gottschalk, the leader of this rebellion, soon repented of his wrath and lived to make amends for the evil that he had wrought. After some years of exile at the court of Cnut the Great he returned, a convert to the Christian religion, to reclaim his Abodrite heritage. Politically he may have dreamed of a Slav state in feudal dependence on Saxony; religiously he was resolved that the Slavs should acknowledge and support the Church. Both Adam of Bremen and Helmold were enthusiastic in their admiration of Gottschalk.

The work of God so prospered in his hands that a countless multitude of pagans thronged to receive the grace of baptism. . . . The churches which had been demolished of old were rebuilt. The call went out into all the lands for priests and ministers of the Word, who were to instruct the untutored pagans in the teachings of the faith . . . and it came to pass that his territories abounded in churches, and the churches in priests.<sup>12</sup>

Gottschalk's days were those of the great Adalbert, archbishop of Hamburg-Bremen from 1043 to 1072 to whom Adam of Bremen devoted the third book of his *Gesta*, regarded by some as one of the best character studies to be found in medieval literature.<sup>13</sup> Adalbert had been given<sup>14</sup> the northern archbishopric by

<sup>10</sup> Chap. 18, *infra*.

<sup>11</sup> Cf. Thangmar, *Vita Bernwardi*, chap. 49; *Ann. Hildesh.*, an. 1022.

<sup>12</sup> Chap. 20, *infra*.

<sup>13</sup> Hauck, *op. cit.*, III, 649 n. 2. Cf. Johnson, "Adalbert of Hamburg-Bremen," *Speculum*, IX (1934), 147-79.

<sup>14</sup> Lambert of Hersfeld gives the date 1045, but *vide* Hauck, *op. cit.*, III, 649 n. 1; Thompson, *op. cit.*, pp. 185-199.

the Salian Henry III to hold in leash the disaffected Saxons and their ambitious dukes, Bernhard II and Ordulph.<sup>15</sup> Adalbert must have considered the northern see preferable even to the Roman, for he declined the offer of Henry III to make him pope when in 1046 the emperor put an end to the papal schism at Sutri.<sup>16</sup> True to the Ansgarian tradition of the church at Hamburg-Bremen, Adalbert turned his attention to the Scandinavian missions. In the northern lands the kings, converted to Catholicism through their connections with England,<sup>17</sup> had brought about the conversion of their subjects. Following German precedents they also began to organize the Church with a view to controlling it without consulting the prelates at Hamburg-Bremen. The situation was embarrassing for Adalbert, who could rightfully insist on the ancient jurisdiction of his see in the north.

Right, however, was one thing, the will of the Danish kings another. Adalbert, therefore, conceived the idea of turning his papal legateship of the north into a patriarchate.<sup>18</sup> Thus he thought he could save at least the appearance of jurisdiction in the Scandinavian lands. The Danes, the Norwegians, even the Swedes could then have their churches and their bishops under their own archbishops. All, however, would be nominally subject

<sup>15</sup> The ambitious Danes with whom the Billungs had allied themselves likewise had to be restrained. Magnus (1042-47), Svein Estridsson's predecessor, had given his daughter in marriage to the Billung Ordulph, son and successor of Duke Bernhard II (1011-59). Magnus "coveted possession of the mouths of the rivers flowing into the Baltic in the interest of the Danish Baltic trade, while the Saxon Duke wanted to provoke the Abodrites and Wilzi into a new revolt which would destroy the churches again being established in their lands, use the rising as a pretext for Saxon intervention, and so establish his dominion and tribute over them without any competition from the church." The allies defeated the Slavs at Lyrskog Heath in Schleswig (1043) and in consequence the Danes made sure of their hold on Wollin at the mouth of the Oder and the Billungs held the Abodrites in their grip. Thompson, *op. cit.*, p. 411.

<sup>16</sup> Adam, iii, 7.

<sup>17</sup> For Cnut *vide* Adam, ii, 49 (47), 55 (51); Bresslau, *Konrad II*, I, 103. Olaf Tryggvasson (996-1000) and St. Olaf II (1015-30) also used English priests and bishops to bring about the conversion of the Norwegians. Cf. Adam, ii, 37 (35), 57 (55); iv, 34 (33). Olaf the Lap-King (993-1024), who was the first Christian king of Sweden, named a Scandinavian to the bishopric he founded at Scara. *Ibid.*, ii, 58 (56), 62 (60). Unwan, archbishop of Hamburg-Bremen, secured from these kings the recognition of his metropolitan rights through his kindly diplomacy and through the cordial relations which obtained between Cnut the Great and Conrad II.

<sup>18</sup> Adam, iii, 33 (32), 59 (58); Dehio, *Geschichte des Erzbistums Hamburg-Bremen*, II, 203-10; Hauck, *op. cit.*, III, 659 n. 1.



to him and to his successors in the see of Hamburg-Bremen because of their position as patriarchs. The plan was not unacceptable to Svein Estridsson, then reigning in Denmark, and nine dioceses under an archbishop came into existence in Scandinavia<sup>19</sup> (not including the sees already established), chiefly on paper. To the German and Wendish territories of his province Adalbert hoped to add Verden, and to divide the whole into twelve dioceses.<sup>20</sup>

Adalbert, unfortunately for himself, did not realize that there was little or no precedent for a patriarch in the western Church and did not foresee that the popes of his day, Leo IX and his successors, inspired by Cluniac ideals, would not be disposed to set up so powerful a prelate as a patriarch might become, between themselves and the lower episcopate; certainly not in Germany where the papal centralizing tendency was straining relations with the Salians, who insisted, naturally, on the ancient tradition of dynastic Church control. Adalbert, moreover, did not recognize that neither he nor his predecessors had laid a solid foundation for a German patriarchate in Scandinavia or in Slavia. In the north the missions might still be struggling institutions but for the kings; in Slavia the Wends might still be worshipping their pagan gods but for the fortunate power of the Abodrite chief, Gottschalk. Finally, Adalbert did not reckon with the powerful Billung dukes of Saxony who feared and hated him both as a patriarch *in spe* and as a statesman of the Empire representing Salian interests in northern Germany.

While Henry III lived Adalbert was not without some protection; but Henry III died in October, 1056, leaving a boy six years old to succeed him. Adalbert was caught in the storms of the minority, during which he stood faithfully by his Salian sovereign. The archbishop might have weathered this tempest if the Billung dukes, Ordolph (died 1072) and Magnus, his

<sup>19</sup> Adam, iii, 33 (32), 77; iv, 2.

<sup>20</sup> Pahlen on the Eider, Heiligenstadt, Ratzeburg, Oldenburg, Mecklenburg, Stade, Lesum, Wildeshausen, Bremen, Verden, Ramesloh, and Friesland. Adam, iii, 33 (32); chap. 22, *infra*; Hauck, *op. cit.*, III, 661 n. 1.

successor, had not used the opportunity to settle their score with him. Relentlessly they stripped him of two-thirds of his diocesan properties.<sup>21</sup> His fall, moreover, precipitated the third great Slavic uprising in 1066. The Wilzi and Rugiani, Gottschalk's eastern neighbors, obdurate pagans and fiercely jealous of their freedom, had long regarded his Christian principality as a menace. Taking advantage of the turmoil in Germany, they fell upon the Abodrite country and eastern Saxony and left the region a waste. Gottschalk was murdered.<sup>22</sup> Of the bishoprics planned by Adalbert, only Mecklenburg and Ratzeburg came into being by the side of Oldenburg, without bishops, however, until 1149 and 1154, respectively.<sup>23</sup> In Denmark Eric Ejegod (1095-1103) secured the establishment of a Danish archbishopric at Lund.<sup>24</sup>

Now the prelates of Hamburg-Bremen should have confined their efforts to the conversion of the Slavs; but the successors of Adalbert still dreamed of jurisdiction in the northern lands or were concerned with the development of their own church rather than of the churches under their suffragans. Helmold, who disdained to do more than notice Adalbert's patriarchal plan,<sup>25</sup> often complained about the waywardness of the archbishops. Of these, Hartwig (1148-68) especially incurred his ill will. Hartwig had, indeed, made Vicelin, a missionary who had labored long in Wagria, bishop of Oldenburg in 1149,<sup>26</sup> the first bishop to occupy the see since Adalbert's fall had precipitated the Slavic insurrection of 1066. Hartwig, however, had named and consecrated Vicelin without consulting the young duke, Henry the Lion, whom Hartwig feared and thwarted whenever he could.<sup>27</sup>

<sup>21</sup> Adam, iii, 41 (40), 43 (42), 44 (43), 49 (48); Thompson, *op. cit.*, pp. 413-14.

<sup>22</sup> Adam, iii, 50-51 (49-50); chaps. 22-24, *infra*.

<sup>23</sup> Cf. chaps. 24, 69, 77, *infra*; Kretschmer, *Historische Geographie von Mitteleuropa*, pp. 423, 424.

<sup>24</sup> Helmold does not refer to the establishment of this archbishopric. Cf. Kretschmer, *op. cit.*, p. 436.

<sup>25</sup> ". . . de quibus narrare supervacuum est, eo quod sapientibus ineptiae quaedam et deliramenta visa fuerint." Chap. 22, *infra*.

<sup>26</sup> Chap. 69, *infra*.

<sup>27</sup> There was also contention between the archbishop and the duke over lands. Hartwig was the heir of the counts of Stade in Saxony and would not give up his territorial rule on becoming archbishop. He gave to his see the allodial lands he held within the limits

The duke withdrew his support from Vicelin and even deprived him of the tithes which remained to the see of Oldenburg. When Vicelin at length yielded to Henry the Lion, Hartwig proved troublesome. Clearly the Slavic bishoprics were but pawns in the struggle of the principals, the archbishops of Hamburg-Bremen and the duke of Saxony. Their bickerings appear on every page of Helmold's chronicle. The Wendish country at length was Christianized; less, however, because of what Vicelin and his successors could do than because of the settlement of the region by Germans and the ruthless extermination of the Slavs by Henry the Lion.

## HELMOLD'S LIFE

About Helmold little is known. Schmeidler, in the preface to his edition of the text, presents all the facts that can be directly derived from the chronicle and from other attested sources.<sup>1</sup> With some justice his reviewers attack him for conservatism. One of them, Ohnesorge, ventures to outline Helmold's life in greater detail by constructing it from the attitudes which the chronicler assumes toward certain persons and facts, his manner of writing and other evidence varying in its degree of directness. In replying, Schmeidler expands the biographical paragraphs of his earlier writing and shows the tenuous nature of much of Ohnesorge's argument.<sup>2</sup>

The first record of Helmold to be found reveals him as a deacon signing a document concerning Vicelin in 1150.<sup>3</sup> Since there is no reason to believe that Helmold received a dispensation from the provisions of the canon law of that time, by 1150

of the archdiocese. These lands Henry the Lion promptly seized. Cf. *Alb. Stad., an. 1144*; *Ann. Palid., an. 1145*.

<sup>1</sup> Pages vi-x.

<sup>2</sup> Ohnesorge, "Einleitung in die lübeckische Geschichte. Teil I: Name, Lage und Alter von Altlübeck und Lübeck," *Zeitschrift des Vereins für lübeckische Geschichte und Altertumskunde*, X (1908), 1-254; *idem*, "Ausbreitung und Ende der Slawen zwischen Nieder-Elbe und Oder," *ibid.*, XII (1910), 113-336; XIII (1911), 1-180; *idem*, "Neue Helmold-Studien," *Zeitschrift des Vereins für hamb. Geschichte*, XVI (1911), 90-199; Schmeidler, "Helmold und seine Cronica Slavorum," *Zeitschrift des Vereins für lübeckische Geschichte und Altertumskunde*, XIV (1912), 185-235.

<sup>3</sup> Leverkus (ed.), *Urkundenbuch des Bistums Lübeck*, I, no. 4.

he must have attained the age of twenty-five required for the diaconate. It is generally agreed that he was born in or before 1125, probably between the years 1118 and 1125. Ohnesorge believes that Helmold was born in or near Fuhlen in the Schaumburg region of Westphalia and that Vicelin's uncle was the pastor of the church which Helmold's parents attended.<sup>4</sup> He thus establishes between the two men a possible early acquaintanceship and accounts for the entrance of Helmold into Vicelin's community of Segeberg. Schmeidler, however, rejects Ohnesorge's thesis by pointing to Helmold's statement, "I have heard him [Vicelin] say many times . . ."<sup>5</sup> and to the fact that the chronicle betrays no more affection for the Fuhlen region, nor more intimate knowledge of it, than for the northern Harz country, centering about Goslar, Hildesheim, and Brunswick. Schmeidler inclines to the belief that Helmold was a native of the latter region. Apparently the chronicler had been in Hildesheim and had seen the Church of Saint Michael originally erected by the artist-bishop Bernward.<sup>6</sup> He alone tells of the six hundred families who, fleeing from the persecution of Cruto, left their homes on the Elbe to settle in the Harz land.<sup>7</sup> Unquestionably the heroes of the siege of Dasenburg, the stronghold of the obstreperous Widukind, were the miners from the Rammelsberg in the Harz who "undertook the difficult and unheard of task of boring into the base of the mountain" and stopping up the springs which supplied the defenders with water.<sup>8</sup> Helmold also detailed the position of Goslar in a civil war, when he might have generalized as he did concerning other cities affected by the same disturbance.<sup>9</sup>

Not less inferential must be statements about Helmold's

<sup>4</sup> Chap. 43, *infra*.

<sup>5</sup> Chap. 42, *infra*. Cf. Ohnesorge, "Neue Helmold-Studien," *Zeitschrift des Vereins für hamb. Geschichte*, XVI (1911), 179 sqq.; Schmeidler, "Helmold und seine Cronica Slavorum," *Zeitschrift des Vereins für lübeckische Geschichte und Altertumskunde*, XIV (1912), 204. Ohnesorge had earlier argued for Holstein as the birth land of Helmold. "Einleitung in die lübsche Geschichte. Teil I: Name, Lage und Alter von Altlübeck und Lübeck," *Zeitschrift des Vereins für lübeckische Geschichte und Altertumskunde*, X (1908), 25-28.

<sup>6</sup> Chap. 18, *infra*.

<sup>7</sup> Chap. 26, *infra*.

<sup>8</sup> Chap. 107, *infra*.

<sup>9</sup> Chap. 105, *infra*.

family. From the fact that he gives a clear, even intimate, description of Lothar's building of the stronghold at Segeberg in 1134 it is concluded that Helmold must then have been in or about that place.<sup>10</sup> His father may have been one of the *operarii* or one of the Saxon colonists who took up their abode under the castle's protection or possibly even a member of the garrison which Lothar posted in the fortress. If one of the former—an *operarius* or colonist—Helmold's father may have been a peasant; if one of the garrison he may have been of that fairly numerous class which it is hard to distinguish as free or noble in rank. In favor of a peasant origin is the fact that Helmold is interested in the economic phases of life—the land, crops, fishing—more than in the cultural, and that he seldom displays insight into what is going on behind the scenes of the political stage; indeed, he is sometimes exceedingly naïve, accepting political camouflage for political fact.<sup>11</sup> Furthermore, Helmold does not appear to have risen higher than the pastorate of Bocau.<sup>12</sup>

Whatever his origin, he seems to have spent his boyhood in or about Segeberg. In his rambles he may have been in Nezenna, not far from Segeberg, where as a youth (*adolescentulus*) he saw, according to his own statement, the ruins of a chapel and a refectory built of masonry.<sup>13</sup> If these were Helmold's years of care free boyhood, they were not many. In 1138 Pribislav of Lübeck descended upon Lothar's fortress, destroying it and the dwellings of the Saxons settled in its vicinity. Vicelin and his brethren fled to Wippenthorp, in Slavic called Faldera, his first foundation on the Slav frontier of Holstein or Holzatia.<sup>14</sup> Of his

<sup>10</sup> Chap. 53, *infra*.

<sup>11</sup> For example, Henry the Lion abandoned the war against the Slavs in July, 1164, because an embassy had come from Constantinople to Brunswick. Cf. chap. 101, *infra*; Ohnesorge, "Neue Helmold-Studien," *Zeitschrift des Vereins für hamb. Geschichte*, XVI (1911), 161-199; Schmeidler, "Helmold und seine Cronica Slavorum," *Zeitschrift des Vereins für lübeckische Geschichte und Altertumskunde*, XIV (1912), 210.

<sup>12</sup> Cf. Ohnesorge, "Einleitung in die lübeckische Geschichte. Teil I: Name, Lage und Alter von Altlübeck und Lübeck," *Zeitschrift des Vereins für lübeckische Geschichte und Altertumskunde*, X (1908), 38 n. 91.

<sup>13</sup> Chap. 14, *infra*.

<sup>14</sup> Chap. 55, *infra*. Vicelin came into Slavia in 1126 and was assigned to pastoral duties in the Gau Faldera in which he established this house probably in the following year. When

own fate and that of his family, Helmold says nothing. The destruction of Segeberg may have thrown him upon the world, an orphan whom Vicelin compassionately took into his community. Another possibility is that Helmold had entered the community before 1138 and was therefore among the brethren who fled to Faldera.<sup>15</sup>

In the preface to the first book of the chronicle Helmold states that he attended the school conducted by the Swabian master Gerold in Brunswick. Ohnesorge has proved that Gerold could not have come to Brunswick before the year 1139.<sup>16</sup> Vicelin must have sent his young men abroad for their schooling since it is unlikely that the facilities of Faldera on the frontier would have developed in twelve years an adequate scholasticate. Brunswick, where Lothar, a mighty supporter of the Faldera mission, frequently stayed, was the natural place for Vicelin to send his students. In Brunswick were also centered the interests of the Guelphs who in the near future were to boast a Henry the Lion. From the character of his chronicle it may be surmised that Helmold was under Gerold's tutelage from 1139 to 1142 or 1143. In those years his attention was necessarily diverted from current affairs to his studies. Helmold's narrative of events in Saxony is for this period meager in comparison with that for the years before 1139 and after 1143.<sup>17</sup>

When peace once more descended upon the land, the foundation which had been built at Segeberg about 1134 was rebuilt in the neighboring town of Högersdorf, called in Slavic Cuzelina,<sup>18</sup> but Vicelin's headquarters remained at Faldera. Thither the young scholastic returned from the school at Brunswick to be disciplined in the ways of the community and with the years

Bishop Gerold dedicated the foundation in 1163; he renamed it Neumünster. Chaps. 47, 94, *infra*.

<sup>15</sup> Cf. Schmeidler, "Helmold und seine Cronica Slavorum," *Zeitschrift des Vereins für lübeckische Geschichte und Altertumskunde*, XIV (1912), 194, 211.

<sup>16</sup> "Neue Helmold-Studien," *Zeitschrift des Vereins für hamb. Geschichte*, XVI (1911), 182-199.

<sup>17</sup> Schmeidler, "Helmold und seine Cronica Slavorum," *Zeitschrift des Vereins für lübeckische Geschichte und Altertumskunde*, XIV (1912), 199-204.

<sup>18</sup> In 1143. Chap. 58, *infra*.

to be advanced by Vicelin through the minor orders of the priesthood to the diaconate when the document mentioned before provides the first written notice of his existence in 1150. Helmold must have remained in the house at Faldera until 1156, since his account of Vicelin's affairs, his last days and death has a personal tone, and happenings at Cuzelina are indirectly reported.<sup>19</sup> The chronicle of those later days at Faldera is more adequate and, about certain events, more vivid than it is for the period when Helmold was studying at Brunswick. This vividness betrayed Ohnesorge into believing that in the years 1143-1156 Helmold was close to the Schaumburg count, Adolph II—indeed, was with him when Saint Bernard of Clairvaux cured the crippled boy at Frankfort and on his campaign against Niclot. In refutation of Ohnesorge's contention Schmeidler urges that a man in so advanced a position as the former claims for Helmold would have developed more political acumen than the chronicler reveals and in 1156 would certainly have known by experience as well as from report that no people is more hospitable than the Slavs.<sup>20</sup>

In 1156 Helmold accompanied his former master, Gerold, now bishop of Oldenburg, on the first visitation of his diocese. Of this journeying Helmold writes in the first person, only to become impersonal again until in 1163 he refers to himself as pastor at Bosau on the Plöner-See, attending at the bedside of the dying Gerold.<sup>21</sup> In this period, 1156-63, Helmold is silent about two events of major personal importance. How did he, a member of a monastic community, come to be in 1156 the traveling companion of a secular officer of the Church? When did he become a priest and pastor at Bosau? Helmold's silence about these two events bespeaks for him heroic self-restraint.

The fact that Helmold accompanied Gerold on his episcopal visitation almost necessarily implies that he left his community.

<sup>19</sup> Chap. 66, *infra*.

<sup>20</sup> Cf. Ohnesorge, "Neue Helmold-Studien," *Zeitschrift des Vereins für hamb. Geschichte*, XVI (1911), 149-67; Schmeidler, "Helmold und seine Cronica Slavorum," *Zeitschrift des Vereins für lübeckische Geschichte und Altertumskunde*, XIV (1912), 197-98; chaps. 59, 62, 83, *infra*.

<sup>21</sup> Chaps. 83, 84, 95, *infra*.

On returning from Rome Gerold would not have stopped at Faldera and while there have invited Helmold to accompany him into Wagria. The community at Faldera had on Vicelin's death elected to live under the secular jurisdiction of the archbishop of Hamburg-Bremen. Because Gerold had not as yet effected a reconciliation with that prelate, his superior, he would have been likely to regard the clerics at Faldera as unfriendly to him. Helmold, however, thought highly of Gerold and had evidently opposed the course of his brethren. "After the death of Vicelin," he writes, "the brethren of Faldera withdrew from subjection to the bishopric of Oldenburg out of aversion for its work," and again, "the house . . . had transferred itself to the church at Hamburg with a view at once to its advantage and to its quiet."<sup>22</sup> This transfer of jurisdiction would have made his leaving the community at Faldera a simple as well as a canonically regular matter, subject to the condition that he would not become a wandering cleric. Helmold knew Gerold, and the bishop, a stranger in his diocese and unreconciled with his metropolitan, would have been likely to welcome Helmold. The latter, too, very probably knew the Slavic language, of which Gerold just as probably was for practical purposes still ignorant. Ohnesorge gives proofs that Helmold knew Slavic;<sup>23</sup> and, since Vicelin's foundations were both mission stations and training schools, there is every reason to believe that he had learned that language. It is not unlikely, furthermore, that Helmold had in mind going out some day into the mission fields. Vicelin had done that, and Vicelin had profoundly influenced Helmold as a young man. The chronicle breathes the spirit of the missionary in the field. Gerold, moreover, needed priests, and a cleric well trained in the religious life and thoroughly imbued with the pastoral spirit could without scruples be quickly raised to the priesthood. The bishop, then, must have ordained Helmold during or after the visitation of his diocese and, since Bruno whom Vicelin had

<sup>22</sup> Chaps. 80, 83, *infra*.

<sup>23</sup> "Neue Helmold-Studien," *Zeitschrift des Vereins für hamb. Geschichte*, XVI (1911), 147-49.



appointed to Bosau had left the post on his superior's death,<sup>26</sup> forthwith appointed Helmold to that pastorate.

At Bosau, Helmold finished his chronicle: the first book probably between July, 1167, and June, 1168; the second toward the end of the year 1172.<sup>25</sup> When the work was begun cannot be determined, but from the eighty-fourth chapter of the first book to the end of the chronicle the matter and the spirit in which it is presented change.<sup>26</sup> The affairs of the Vicelin foundations become secondary to those of a public character, whether ecclesiastical or political. The composition is that of a man ripe in years and of some importance, having to do with men of affairs. Withal, however, he is strictly objective and restrained—not once, with the exception of the data noted, does he appear in his narrative. There can be no doubt that ordination to the priesthood benefited Helmold. There is a vast difference between being a cleric in major orders in a religious community and a priest in the world charged with the responsibility of a congregation. Bosau was not an unimportant post; in Wago's time it had been regarded as a "worthy residence."<sup>27</sup> Helmold enjoyed the confidence of his bishop. As a pastor he would attend synods in Lübeck where it must have been known that he was writing a history of northern Saxony. He dedicated his work to the chapter at Lübeck. Of some significance is the fact that in the preface to the first book the dedication reads *reverendis dominis ac patribus* and in the preface to the second book, *venerabiles domini et fratres*. From his contacts with Gerold and his brother Conrad, who succeeded Gerold

<sup>25</sup> Chaps. 75, 84, *infra*.

<sup>26</sup> Schmeidler (ed.), *Helmold*, p. xi von Breska, "Ueber die Zeit in welcher Helmold die beiden Bücher seiner Chronik abfasste," *Forschungen zur deutschen Geschichte*, XXII (1882), 603-4. Von Breska suspects that Helmold planned to write a third book and Arnold of Lübeck, *Chron. Slav.*, i, prol., Helmold's continuator, states that the second book had been left unfinished. Helmold's last chapter, however, apparently refutes this belief. His story comes to a natural, if very informal end. What more was there to say. There was peace between the Saxons and the Danes, and the Slavs who survived were quiet and submissive. Henry the Lion had triumphed and, if Helmold had lived to see the day, the duke's end would have been too bitter for him to tell.

<sup>27</sup> Schmeidler, "Helmold und seine Cronica Slavorum," *Zeitschrift des Vereins für lübeckische Geschichte und Altertumskunde*, XIV (1912), 215 sqq.

<sup>28</sup> Chap. 14, *infra*.

in the see, and with clerics at Lübeck he could obtain information about movements of major importance. If his informants colored their contributions in the hope of faring better than they deserved with posterity, they failed. Helmold conscientiously adheres to the principles of historical writing which he enunciates in the preface to the second book. From his own flock in Bosau he could glean information about details and incidents which men of higher rank could easily forget to mention or would not be likely to notice.<sup>28</sup>

The date of Helmold's death may not even be conjectured. In 1170 a *Helmoldus prepositus* signed a document originating in Lübeck; again, in 1177, a *Helmoldus presbyter*. Schmeidler is confident that both signatures are those of the chronicler for he can find no other Helmold in the Lübeck region of that time. Each of the signatures occurs after those of the canons of the Lübeck chapter, indicating that Helmold did not belong to that body. Both times the signature is above those of the diocesan clerics, indicating that Helmold was the foremost pastor of the diocese. Why, however, did he entitle himself *prepositus* in 1170 and not in 1177? Could Bishop Conrad have made Helmold provost of an institution at Bosau that had failed by 1177? Schmeidler suggests this possibility only to dismiss it; there is not a shred of evidence for such conjecture.<sup>29</sup> Helmold's passing was as unheralded as his birth; his chronicle, however, affords abundant evidence of a noble, useful, truth-seeking life.

#### HELMOLD AND HIS CRITICS

Helmold based his chronicle on his own knowledge, on reports of contemporaries, for the most part eyewitnesses, and on certain written accounts. His own knowledge seems to have been well grounded, and his oral sources either sound traditions or competent men. Among the latter, no doubt, were Bishop Vicelin and

<sup>28</sup> For example, the story about the terror of the knights when the Slavs captured the Saxon camp, chap. 100, *infra*.

<sup>29</sup> "Helmold und seine Cronica Slavorum," *Zeitschrift des Vereins für lübeckische Geschichte und Altertumskunde*, XIV (1912), 219-21.

the men who had been associated with him, as well as Bishops Gerold and Conrad, who succeeded him. Helmold may also have obtained some information from Count Adolph II and his followers. Most of the written sources upon which Helmold depended can be easily determined. They are not many and, with the exception of Adam of Bremen's *Gesta* and perhaps some that are now lost, had slight influence upon his relation of Saxon-Slav affairs.<sup>1</sup>

Nevertheless fierce controversies have taken place over Helmold's use of his oral sources, and over his veracity and his manipulation of what he found written.<sup>2</sup> Critics pointed out that he had not dealt fairly with his metropolitan see.<sup>3</sup> To prove that his own bishopric, Oldenburg-Lübeck, was quite as old as the archbishopric of Hamburg-Bremen, Helmold was said to have invented a bishop, Marco. To exalt and also to enrich his own bishopric, Helmold was accused of falsifying his account of Henry, the son of the Abodrite prince Gottschalk, and of tampering with the facts of the life of Vicelin.

If these criticisms had remained unrefuted, about a hundred years of Saxon-Wendish history would have rested on uncertain foundations.<sup>4</sup> A number of scholars, however, appeared in defense of Helmold. A bishop named Marco was discovered who, although seated at Schleswig, had had charge of episcopal work in the diocese of Oldenburg.<sup>5</sup> In his account of the Slavic prince

<sup>1</sup> Schmeidler (ed.), *Helmold*, p. xvi.

<sup>2</sup> Schmeidler, *op. cit.*, pp. xi-xvi, summarizes the course of these controversies. Cf. Regel, *Helmold und seine Quellen*, *passim*.

<sup>3</sup> Lappenberg, "Zur bevorstehenden Ausgabe von Helmold," *Archiv der Gesellschaft für ältere deutsche Geschichtskunde*, VI (1838), 554-66; *idem*, "Ueber die Chronologie der älteren Bischöfe der Diocese des Erzbistums Hamburg. A. Die Bischöfe von Aldenburg," *ibid.*, IX (1847), 384-440; Hirsekorn, *Die Slavenchronik des Presbyter Helmold's*; Schirren, *Beiträge zur Kritik älterer holsteinischer Geschichtsquellen*; *idem*, "Ueber Vizelins Priesterweihe," *Forschungen zur deutschen Geschichte*, XVII (1877), 376-89.

<sup>4</sup> As von Breska, *Untersuchungen über die Nachrichten Helmold's* (p. 1) puts it, "auf unzuverlässigem Sumpfboden."

<sup>5</sup> Wigger, "Ueber die neueste Kritik des Helmold," *Jahrbücher und Jahresberichte des Vereins für mecklenb. Geschichte*, XLII (1877), 21-63; Bresslau, "Bischof Marco. Ein Beitrag zur Helmoldkritik," *Zeitschrift für Geschichtswissenschaft*, XI (1894), 154-63; Tessen-Węsierski, *De tribus episcopis Sleswoicensium a sede condita primit.* Cf. Völkel, *Die Slavenchronik Helmold's*.

Henry, Helmold, it was shown, had followed traditions current in Saxony and Holstein. These traditions, common knowledge in the country and at the time in which Helmold wrote, the chronicler would not have dared to falsify. The controversy over Helmold's treatment of Vicelin also ended in Helmold's favor after every detail had been tartly examined and checked.<sup>6</sup>

Other critics carefully examined the chronicle with reference to Adam of Bremen's *Gesta*. In the first twenty-four chapters of his history Helmold followed Adam often verbatim or in paraphrase, but it was found never slavishly. He checked Adam's statements, freely correcting or amplifying them either from his own knowledge or from other sources. Then, too, Helmold had his own point of view.<sup>7</sup> For example, Adam attributed the success of the Saxon mission chiefly to the churchmen; Helmold, not forgetting the work of the religious, nevertheless gave a considerable share of the credit to the secular authorities. Adam exalted the work of the prelates of Hamburg-Bremen; Helmold, that of their suffragans of Oldenburg-Lübeck. Possibly Helmold reasoned that the metropolitans could not have been very different in the past from what they were in his day, and in his day the archbishops, thoroughly feudalized, did not a little to obstruct the work of the missions.<sup>8</sup> Also, Helmold at Bosau was nearer things as they were than was Adam at Bremen. Adam's interests were Ansgarian. Helmold's interest in the Danes and their actions was largely limited to their effect upon the situation in Slavia. He called his work a chronicle of the Slavs. He reflects better than does Adam the mind of the missionary in the field.

Indeed, the missions determined his entire outlook: he had words of praise for everyone and everything that contributed to their success; words of censure for anyone and anything that stood in the way of their furtherance. He rebukes Henry IV and

<sup>6</sup> Höhlbaum, "Vicelin und seine Biographien," *Forschungen zur deutschen Geschichte*, XVII (1877), 209-99; Schirren "Ueber Vizelins Priesterweihe," *ibid.*, XVII (1877), 376-89; Böhmer, *Vicelin: ein Beitrag zur Kritik Helmolds und der älteren Urkunden von Neumünster und Segeberg*; Jaffé, *Lothar*. Cf. Schmeidler (ed.), *op. cit.*, pp. xiv, xv.

<sup>7</sup> Von Breska, *Untersuchungen über die Nachrichten Helmolds*, pp. 11-12; Regel, *Helmold und seine Quellen*, pp. 8-15.

<sup>8</sup> Chap. 69, *infra*.

Henry V for pursuing policies which retarded the work of conversion and praises Lothar of Supplinburg for his desire to spread the faith.<sup>9</sup> Helmold criticized Henry the Lion for having in his earlier years thought more of collecting tribute from the Slavs than of making Christ known to them, for exacting so much in dues from them that they murmured when tithes were imposed and would only reluctantly accept the Christian religion.<sup>10</sup> Count Adolph of Holstein was also freely praised for the help and protection that he gave the missions and was at the same time freely censured for the obstacles which he placed in the way of their development.<sup>11</sup> Like Henry the Lion, Adolph was a politician. He feared that Vicelin's activities might eventually make of the bishopric of Oldenburg-Lübeck in his lands what the archbishopric of Hamburg-Bremen had been, and still was, in those of the duke. Adolph did not wish to see his revenues curtailed by the extension of the tithing system, especially since his financial condition was seldom satisfactory. The bishoprics, too, might offend the Slavs who adhered to their pagan cults and, as a result, disturb friendly relations with their chief, Niclot. Indeed, these relations when ruptured by the crusade of 1147 did arrest the development of Adolph's territories; this operated to interrupt and diminish the collection of the tribute due him from the Slavs. Toward Vicelin, consequently, Adolph was lukewarm. If the count was friendly toward the bishop it was because Henry the Lion was well disposed toward him, but Adolph did not zealously support his mission work. On the whole Helmold was moderate in his criticism of the count: after all, the latter did maintain peace and order and thus forward God's work even though his motives were not always religiously Simon-pure.<sup>12</sup>

If Vicelin and his successor, Gerold, drew Helmold's praise, Hartwig of Hamburg-Bremen roused his ire. In the archbishop's contest with Henry the Lion the Slavic bishoprics were

<sup>9</sup> Chaps. 40, 41, 53, 54, *infra*.

<sup>10</sup> Chaps. 68, 88, *infra*; von Breska, *op. cit.*, pp. 5-6.

<sup>11</sup> Chaps. 56, 57, 62, 67, 69, 71, 73, 75, 84, *infra*.

<sup>12</sup> Chaps. 67, 100, 101, *infra*; von Breska, *op. cit.*, pp. 7-9.

the losers. If, on the one hand, the archbishop needed these sees to overcome the duke and to enable him to have suffragans to support his archiepiscopal dignity, he could not, on the other hand, properly second them and their work because his quarrel with the duke was costly. Helmold only dimly perceived the economics of the situation. What he did see was that Hartwig's policy handicapped Vicelin's work to his dying hour; that Hartwig was unfriendly toward Gerold, his successor, because Gerold had obtained his see from the duke; and that Hartwig was not unselfishly interested in the missions.

Even popes were measured by the same yardstick of mission interest as were the lay lords and the prelates. Although loyal to the papacy, Helmold freely exposed the inconsistencies of the men who represented it. The chronicler was seldom well informed about Italian affairs, even about the Investiture contest in Germany,<sup>13</sup> but his chapters on these topics reflect his feelings and his ability to see more than one side of the papal-imperial quarrel. In spite of his Saxon origin and point of view and his insistence upon clerical privileges, Helmold wrote that Henry IV, sinning and repenting in the era of Grace, did not find what David, sinning and repenting in the unfeeling era of the Law, had found—forgiveness. With keen insight into the relation of the Investiture contest to the Slavic mission, Helmold observed that it gave the Slavs opportunity to rebel and, therefore, retarded the work of their conversion.<sup>14</sup>

Ultimately, too, Helmold is interested in how the dispositions and ways of the peoples that enter into his story affect their response to God's word and promote or retard its dissemination among the heathens. The Saxons were valorous and formidable; they were proud, would always lead, but at the same time were forgetful of the fact that victory was of God.<sup>15</sup>

<sup>13</sup> Chaps. 28-30, 32, 33, *infra*. Cf. chaps. 59, 81, 106, *infra*.

<sup>14</sup> Chap. 33, *infra*.

<sup>15</sup> Chaps. 16, 18, 21, 25, 34, 38, 65, 71, 84, 99, 100, *infra*. Adam of Bremen also condemns the Saxons for these faults: for example, ii, 71 (69); iii, 22 (21). Adam writes (iii, 23[22]): "Audivi etiam, cum veracissimus rex Danorum sermocinando eadem replicaret, populos Sclavorum iam dudum procul dubio facile converti posse ad christianitatem, nisi obstitisset avaricia Saxonum."

Probably they suffered at his hands to some extent because of the slight repute in which he held some of their dukes. Toward the Holzatians, or Holsteiners, Helmold was not well disposed. They were proud, warlike, booty loving,<sup>16</sup> still quite pagan, though nominally Christian, when Vicelin came into their midst.<sup>17</sup> He accused them of having contemplated the murder of their Schauenburg count, the devastation of their own country, and emigration *en masse* to Denmark in preference to paying as much in tithes as the other Saxon peoples.<sup>18</sup> Although their count had given them the preference in the taking up of the lands wrested from the Slavs, they, Helmold intimated, called in the Slavs to expel the colonists whom Count Adolph had settled in the border lands.<sup>19</sup> In brief, they seriously hindered Adolph's plans for the peaceful development of his territories and hence the conversion of the Slavs. Helmold noted, too, that the Nordalbingians, because of their position on the frontier, possessed characteristics peculiar to the Slavs, notably generosity and thieving.<sup>20</sup> Nevertheless, he gave them credit for their readiness to make war upon the Slavs and for their happy response to Vicelin's ministrations.<sup>21</sup>

The Danes, Helmold observed, were good fighters, but unfortunately were often afflicted with tyrannical rulers and with numerous civil wars.<sup>22</sup> The kings of the Danes are dilatory and dissolute and always drunk from continual feasting; the Danes are "pugnacious at home, unwarlike abroad," are his characteristic observations about this people.<sup>23</sup>

For the Slavs, Helmold had some degree of respect. They were a treacherous people, tenacious of their paganism, cruel to their captives, given to thieving and piracy.<sup>24</sup> He approved of the destruction of their woodland shrines.<sup>25</sup> He praised them, however, for their sense of hospitality, even though it cloaked their

<sup>16</sup> Chaps. 38, 67, 92, 93, *infra*.

<sup>17</sup> Chap. 92, *infra*.

<sup>18</sup> Chap. 47, *infra*.

<sup>19</sup> Chaps. 5, 70, 85, 109, *infra*.

<sup>20</sup> Chaps. 6, 13, 25, 26, 34, 36, 38, 48, 52, 62, 64, 65, 84, 102, 108, *infra*.

<sup>21</sup> Chap. 84, *infra*.

<sup>22</sup> Chap. 47, *infra*.

<sup>23</sup> Chap. 63, *infra*.

<sup>24</sup> Chaps. 47, 67, *infra*.

<sup>25</sup> Chaps. 65, 85, 109, *infra*.

propensity to rob.<sup>26</sup> It may be suspected that he sympathized with the Slavs also for the sins committed against them and the fate of their race.

Helmold was as independent in the use of the few other biographies, annals, and chronicles of which traces are evident in his work, or to which he referred, as he was in the use of Adam of Bremen's *Gesta*. Helmold made direct use of the *Vita S. Willehadi* and Rimbert's *Vita Anskarii*. He drew on Ekkehard of Aura's *Chronicon universale* from memory; so also probably on the *Annales S. Disibodi* and the *Annales Rosenveldenses*. Other sources which earlier critics supposed Helmold had consulted—*De bello Saxonico* and the *Annales Palidenses*—have been ruled out by later studies; likewise a metrical *vita* of Bishop Vicelin.<sup>27</sup> Only once did he transcribe a document,<sup>28</sup> how accurately cannot be determined for the original has not been discovered. Writing at Bosau, distant from archival centers, it is likely that he was forced to rely largely on his memory in giving the substance of documents which he may have seen or known from what others, who had access to them, may have told him. That Helmold was careful in the use of such material seems to be proved by the fact that he did not assume to make exact statements of what was in documents, even when he would naturally have wished to be exact, as, for example, with regard to the gifts made to the diocese on the occasion of the translation of the see from Oldenburg to Lübeck.<sup>29</sup>

By and large, then, Helmold has well withstood the criticism which has been directed against him. If at times his statements are proved inaccurate when checked against other sources and if his account is not based upon documents, their weaknesses are offset by his keen powers of observation. That he was a keen observer is apparent from his use of the remains of the earlier

<sup>26</sup> Chaps. 83, 84, *infra*.

<sup>27</sup> Schmeidler (ed.), *op. cit.*, pp. xvii-xviii; Manitius, *Geschichte der lateinischen Literatur des Mittelalters*, III, 496-97.

<sup>28</sup> Chap. 92, *infra*.

<sup>29</sup> Chap. 90, *infra*; Regel, *Helmold und seine Quellen*, pp. 26-28.



German occupation of the Slav country as evidence, his appreciation of racial characteristics, and his delineation of living personalities. Even the far-from-trustworthy chapters on the emperors' affairs in Italy are neither cause for reproach nor without value. Could one reasonably expect the hamlet of Bosau to have an accurate knowledge of distant events when the "Main Streets" of today, with incomparably superior agencies for gathering news, know so little of what *is* going on in the world? These chapters are valuable as a record of what people on the northern frontier, with Danes and Slavs to worry about, *thought* had happened, which was after all the basis of their opinions and of their attitudes on public questions.

## HELMOLD'S STYLE

In respect of the literary qualities of his work Helmold does not stand out among his contemporaries. His style is sometimes commonplace and even monotonous, but it is not lacking in the merits belonging to simplicity and straightforwardness. There are no erudite allusions. His borrowings from biblical and classical sources are not so many "purple patches." Indeed, Latin was for Helmold a perfectly natural means of expression, although one suspects that he occasionally worked out passages in his native tongue before rendering them in Latin. The glossary which his editor compiled includes few terms that cannot readily be understood by one familiar with the North German writers of Helmold's period. The additions which Manitius made to Schmeidler's glossary are illustrative: *cervicosus*, *animequus*, *compatriota*, *compotacio*, *demembracio*, *feriatio*, *frustratorius*, *genimen*, *inactus* (for *sine actione*), *iuracio*.<sup>1</sup> Constructions also frequently depart from classical usage but not more often than is usual with other medieval writers.

<sup>1</sup> Manitius, *Geschichte der lateinischen Literatur des Mittelalters*, III, 497, also directs attention to Helmold's use of the words *mirica* and *allec*. *Mirica* in Helmold means *Heide* (heath), as in Luther's Bible translation (Jer. 17: 6; 48: 5), whereas its real meaning is tamarisk (*Tamarix gallica*). Ducange knows the word only in the plural, *miricae*, that is, *terrae incultae*. *Allec* in Helmold evidently refers to herring, whereas it more regularly signifies *Fischbrühe* (fish broth). Ducange, however, knows it also as *pisciculus ad salsamenta idoneus*.

Helmold's style is much colored by that of the Vulgate version of the Bible. This biblical influence is perhaps most apparent in the citation of numbers: *multitudo populorum, multitudo gentium, innumera multitudo, multus nimis*. Less apparent is the borrowing of phrases, a word or two, sometimes the greater part of a verse. In the order here indicated the following are most frequently drawn upon: I Maccabees, Psalms, Genesis, I and II Kings, Isaiah, Deuteronomy, II Chronicles, II Maccabees, Exodus, III Kings, Job, I Chronicles, and Jeremiah. Interest in the accounts of the wars of the Jews and of the deeds of their heroes was evidently strong on Helmold's troubled frontier. Similarly the Gospels of Luke and Matthew, the Acts of the Apostles and the Gospel according to John are considerably exploited in the order given. Not many books of the Bible are unaccounted for in Helmold's chronicle. Of the Old Testament seven—Leviticus, I Esdras, Obadiah, Micah, Habakkuk, Zephaniah, and Haggai—are not quoted; of the New Testament only two—II Thessalonians and II John.

Next to the Bible, Adam of Bremen is the authority to whom Helmold is most heavily in debt. This indebtedness is not limited to the use he makes of the *Gesta* in the first twenty-four chapters of his chronicle; he is indebted to him also for his style as well as for certain words and phrases. Traces of Boethius (*De consolatione philosophiae*), Sulpicius Severus (*Vita Martini*), and Paul the Deacon (*Historia Romana*) appear now and then. Of the Church Fathers there is evidence of only one, Tertullian (*Ad nationes*).

Helmold borrows modestly from classical sources and in this almost entirely from the poets. Of these, Virgil and Ovid lead, the former being represented by the *Aeneid* and the *Georgics*, the latter by *Epistolae ex Ponto*, *Heroides*, *Metamorphoses*, *Remedia amoris* and *Tristia*. Terence (*Andria*) appears twice and Lucan (*Pharsalia*), Plautus (*Menaechmi*), and Valerius Flaccus (*Argonautica*), once each. Manitius finds an expression

traceable to Horace's *Carmina*.<sup>2</sup> Of the prose writers Helmold draws from Sallust (*Catilina*, *Jugurtha*) and the *Res gestae Alexandri Macedonis* of Julius Valerius.<sup>3</sup>

The preference shown for the works of the poets is suggestive of Helmold's nature. His chronicle abounds in verse of which only the most obvious lines have been preserved in this translation. This metrical diction appears not to have been carried over from other sources but to be Helmold's own. Very often his words trip metrically, apparently without his having intended it; thus, *Ibi fomes est errorum; iactum semen verbi Dei; quamvis enim in eisdem; post non multum vero tempus*.<sup>4</sup> Poetic also are Helmold's moods. If he lingers at the bedsides of the dying, it is not because he is morbid, but because as a priest he is interested in showing that there is a relation between holy living and holy dying. Passages descriptive of such experiences frequently border on the poetic. Though a priest, Helmold was a Saxon, and there is abundant proof in the pages of his chronicle that the Saxons of his day still loved to fight. In picturing battle scenes he excels, but he usually brushes aside the details which interest the military strategist to present the dramatic elements in the encounters.

Helmold may have been an effective pulpit orator; certainly, he knew well how to write stirring addresses. In classical style speeches are inserted in his writings wherever possible. Before going forth to battle, the principals in a war address their armies, or even the enemy, and these harangues are often masterly analyses of conditions, issues, and other aspects of the strife. For example, in the crusade of 1147 the Slavs attacked Süssel at a time when the stronghold was depleted of its fighting strength. The handful of Frisian defenders was considering surrender when a priest, Gerlav, rose to protest:

<sup>2</sup> Also to *Catonis disticha*. Manilius, *op. cit.*, III, 497.

<sup>3</sup> Schmeidler, "Zur Sprache Helmolds," *Neues Archiv der Gesellschaft für ältere deutsche Geschichtskunde*, XXXVI (1911), 538-42.

<sup>4</sup> Chaps. 5, 6, 99, *infra*. Cf. Manilius, *op. cit.*, III, 496 n. 3.

What is it, O men, that you wish to do? Do you suppose that by surrendering you will ransom your lives or that the barbarians will keep their word? You err, men, my compatriots. Yours is a foolish supposition. Know you not that of every kind of newcomer, no people is more detested by the Slavs than the Frisians? Truly our savor is abhorrent to them. Why, then, throw away your lives, of your own accord hasten to destruction? I abjure you by the Lord, the Maker of the world, to Whom "there is no restraint . . . to save . . . by few,"<sup>6</sup> that you try your strength yet a little while and join battle with the enemy. For so long as this wall surrounds us, we are masters of our arms and of our weapons; life is for us founded in hope, but nothing is left us if unarmed other than ignominious death. Rather, plunge into their vitals your swords, which of their own accord they bespeak for themselves, and be avengers of your blood. Let them taste your valor. Let them not go back with a bloodless victory.<sup>6</sup>

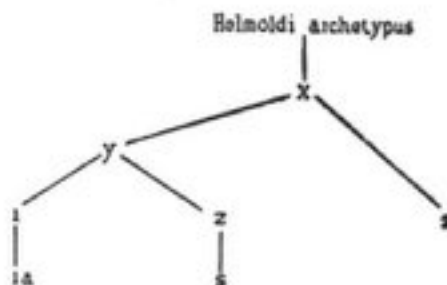
#### THE TRANSMISSION OF THE TEXT

Although Helmold wrote in the twelfth century the original manuscript of his chronicle is not extant. Between the original and the oldest manuscript extant there may be two, one of which was probably made directly from the original. The genealogy of the extant codices may be conjectured, and Schmeidler offers a diagram which attempts to make their relationship clear.<sup>1</sup> In

<sup>6</sup> I Sam. 14: 6.

<sup>6</sup> "Quid est," inquit, "O viri, quod agere vultis? Putatis vos dedicione vitam redimere aut barbaris fidem inesse? Fallimini, viri compatriotae, stulta est haec opinio. An nescitis, quia in omni advenarum genere apud Slavos nulla gens detestabilior Frosis? Sane fetet eis odor noster. Quare igitur abicitis animas vestras ultro properantes ad interitum? Contestor vos per Dominum, factorem orbis, cui non est difficile salvare in paucis, ut adhuc paululum experiamini vires vestras et conseratis manus cum hostibus. Quam diu enim vallo hoc circundamur, sumus manuum nostrarum et armaturae compotes, vita nobis in spe sita est; inermibus vero preter ignominiosam mortem reliquum nichil est. Gladios igitur vestros, quos ultro sibi expetunt, mergite prius in medullis eorum et estote ultores sanguinis vestri. Hauriant gustum audaciae vestrae nec victoria redeant incruenta." Chap. 64, *infra*.

<sup>1</sup> Cf. *op. cit.*, pp. xx-xxviii. The diagram:



this diagram the two manuscripts now lost are lettered x and y. The codex numbered 1 was copied from y before 1400; it is preserved in the library of the University of Copenhagen and is known as the Boeckel Codex because it once belonged to one Martin Boeckel, a doctor of the Civil and Canon Law and an official of the city of Lübeck. From codex 1 was copied codex 1a, also known as the Bordesholm Codex<sup>2</sup> because it very probably originated in that place about 1472. This codex is also preserved in the library of the University of Copenhagen. In the fifteenth century at a place unknown, a third codex, numbered 2, was made from an exemplar, x, which probably was the parent of the exemplar from which codex 1 was derived. Codex 2 is now preserved in the public library at Lübeck. From the no longer extant codex z, which was evidently made from y, Sigmund Schorkel, a physician in Naumburg, edited the first printed edition<sup>3</sup> of Helmold's chronicle. Schmeidler considers the Schorkel printing comparable to a codex (S) because of the changes and corrections the editor made in the text.

The chronicle was subsequently put into print by a number of different editors. The first of these editions was the work of Reinerus Reineccius<sup>4</sup> who collated the texts of the Lübeck codex (2), of Schorkel (S), and of a recension no longer extant prepared by Christian Distelmeier. Reineccius relied more on the Schorkel than on the Distelmeier version, which is unfortunate,

<sup>2</sup> Vicelin's monastery of Neumünster was moved thither about 1330. Cf. chaps. 47, 94, *infra*.

<sup>3</sup> *Helmoldi, historici ac presbyteri ecclesiae lubecensis, Historiarum liber, scriptus ante annos pene 400 et ab autore inscriptus Chronica Slavorum . . . antehac nunquam editus. Insertae sunt et de Romanis imperatoribus memorabiles historiae, dignae cognitione.* Editus studio M. Sigismundi Schorckelii, . . . Francofurti, apud P. Brubachium, 1556.

<sup>4</sup> *Chronica Slavorum seu Annales Helmoldi, presbyteri buzoviensis in agro lubecensi: hisque subjectum derelictorum Supplementum Arnoldi, abbatis lubecensis. Quae omnia e diligentis codicum manuscriptorum collatione fideliter restituta et accessione locupletissima, hoc est sex librorum, adaucta sunt: opera et studio Reineri Reineccii Steinhemii. In fine adjecimus Appendicem tergerinam, de communibus gentium germanicarum et henetarum appellationibus; de illustribus Billingorum familia; de genealogia stirpis Estensis, quarum haec paternam illa per aviam Wulfhildis maternam Henrico Leoni originem dedit. . . . Accessit item Historia de vita Henrici III. imp. et Hildebrandi pont. rom. cognomento Gregorii VII.* Francofurti, apud Andream Wechelum, MDLXXXI. There was another printing of the Reineccius version, apparently without alterations, Frankfurt, 1631. For an account of Reineccius *vide Allgemeine deutsche Biographie*.

for, although he described the latter and noted some of its readings in the margins of his work, possession of more of the Distelmeier rendering would be very helpful in establishing a purer text of the chronicle. Henry Bangert, rector of the public school at Lübeck, prepared the third edition<sup>5</sup> of Helmold's work for the press, using Schorkel (S), Reineccius, codices 1, 2, and one which was probably destroyed when the *gymnasium* in which it was kept at Stettin burned in 1677. But for its having preserved some of the readings of the Stettin codex, the Bangert version would be nearly worthless. Leibnitz included Helmold in his *Scriptores rerum Brunsvicensium*,<sup>6</sup> but his text, following Bangert's without any serious attempt to correct errors, is of no value. The first critical edition was prepared by J. M. Lappenberg for the *Monumenta Germaniae historica*. Lappenberg's text appeared in the *Scriptores rerum Germanicarum* series of the *Monumenta* in 1868 and in the folio edition the following year.<sup>7</sup> The latest edition,<sup>8</sup> that on which this translation is based, by Schmeidler is the result of a thorough study of the extant codices and the earlier printings.

Ernest von Kirchberg, who died about 1378, made what Wattenbach calls a translation of Helmold's chronicle into verse—26,000 lines, known as the *Chronicon Mecklenburgicum seu Magnopolense rhythmicum*, the *Mecklenburgische Reimchronik, 772-1378*.<sup>9</sup> The first German translation of historical

<sup>5</sup> *Chronica Slavorum Helmoldi, presbyteri bosoviensis, et Arnoldi, abbatis lubecensis, in quibus res slavicae et saxonicae . . . exponuntur. Henricus Bangertus e mss. codicibus recensuit et notis illustravit.* Lubecae, sumptibus S. Wessellii, 1659. Part of the Bangert printing was reissued with new preface and title: *Chronica Slavorum Helmoldi, presbyteri bosoviensis, et Arnoldi, abbatis lubecensis. . . Henricus Bangertus e mss. codicibus recensuit. . . Johannes Mollerus autem diatriba historico-critica de Helmoldo ejusque vita, ac Chronico Slavorum, nec non hujus continuatoribus atque editoribus, auxit.* Lubecae, apud P. Bockmannum, 1702.

<sup>6</sup> *Scriptores rerum brunsvicensium illustrationi inservientes, antiqui omnes et religionis reformatione priores. . . 3 vols. in-fol., Hanoverae, 1707-11.*

<sup>7</sup> XXI, 1-99.

<sup>8</sup> *Helmoldi presbyteri Bosoviensis cronica Slavorum. Editio secunda post Iohannem Lappenberg recognovit Bernhardus Schmeidler. Accedunt versus de vita Vicelini et Sidonis epistola.* Hannoverae et Lipsiae, Hahn, 1909.

<sup>9</sup> Wattenbach, *Deutschlands Geschichtsquellen im Mittelalter*, II, 341. Kirchberg's chronicle is printed in E. J. de Westphalen (ed.), *Monumenta inedita rerum Germanicarum, praecipue Cimbricarum et Megapolitensium* (Lipsiae, 1739-45), IV, 593-840.

value did not appear until 1852, when J. C. M. Laurent produced it for *Die Geschichtschreiber der deutschen Vorzeit*. It was based on the Lappenberg version (prepared for the *Monumenta* but printed sixteen years later) and was provided with a foreword by that editor. Wattenbach revised the Laurent translation for a new edition of the *Geschichtschreiber* in 1888; it also was based on the Lappenberg text. In 1910 Schmeidler brought out a second revision of the translation for the same collection to accord with his edition of the chronicle. The chronicle has also been translated into Danish<sup>10</sup> and Polish.<sup>11</sup>

Aside from accuracy in handling the text and fidelity to its thought, objectives common to all translations, this rendering of Helmold's work attempts to preserve something of the style in which the chronicle was written. Accordingly, when the use of "and," "but," "however," or "therefore" appeared necessary to indicate the chronicler's own way in his narrative, the word has been retained with only passing regard for good English usage. Likewise few attempts have been made to avoid the repetition of words and phrases occurring in the original. By these and other devices it has been thought some of the roughness and ruggedness of the frontiersman's style may have been reproduced. Wherever possible place names have been given in the modern German or Anglicized form. Only material considered especially helpful toward an understanding of Helmold's narrative has been included in the footnotes. The same principle has been extended to the general bibliography from which well-known works, unless frequently cited, and titles incidental in their application have been excluded. The Authorized Version of the Bible has been used and cited except when it departed too far from the text. Reference has been made in the footnotes to

<sup>10</sup> Schmeidler, p. xxx, states that there are two Danish versions, 1880, 1881. Apparently there is but one Danish translation by P. Kierkegaard, *Praesten Helmolds Slævekronike*, (Kjøbenhavn, 1881), published for Selskabet til historiske Kildeskriesters Oversættelse. The version of 1880 probably is a preliminary issue in that Society's *Skrifter*.

<sup>11</sup> *Helmolda Kronika sławiańska z XII w., z języka łacińskiego na polski język przełożona. Z mapką ułożoną przez Jana Papłońskiego. Warszawa, 1862. Vol. I of Źródła do dziejów sławiańszczyzny.*

Helmold's biblical and other borrowings only when they are quoted by him or the effort to preserve them involves unusual phraseology. Words included in brackets are questionable though they appear to be both necessary and quite likely Helmold's. The reasons for chapter titles in brackets are indicated in footnotes. For convenience, Helmold's "Contents" have been moved from their places in the text and incorporated in the Contents of this book.



THE CHRONICLE OF THE SLAVS  
WRITTEN BY THE VENERABLE  
PRIEST HELMOLD

THE FIRST BOOK

## [ P R E F A C E ]

To the reverend lords and fathers, canons of the holy church at Lübeck, Helmold, unworthy servant of the church which is in Bosau, voluntarily acknowledges the obedience he owes.

I have meditated long over what work I might undertake with which to render my mother, the holy church at Lübeck, some honor for my curacy. Nothing more fitting came to mind than that I should write in her praise of the conversion of the Slavic race, that is to say, of the kings and preachers by whose assiduity the Christian religion was first planted in these parts and afterwards restored. In this endeavor the worthy-to-be-imitated devotion of writers who lived before us encouraged me. Because of their great desire to write, very many of them forsook all the stir of worldly affairs that in a retired leisure given to contemplation they might find the way of wisdom, preferring that to fine gold and every kind of rich treasure. In extending their keen talents to the invisible things of God and in seeking to fathom even the mysteries, some often strove beyond their powers. Others, however, whose strivings were not so ambitious, stayed within the boundaries of their dispositions and out of their simplicity added to the treasures hidden in letters. They set forth many things about kings and prophets and the manifold issues of wars from the very beginning of the world, bestowing praise upon the virtuous, execration upon the wicked in their writings. In the dark haze of this world everything would be hidden if the light of letters failed. Blameworthy, therefore, is the arrogance of the moderns who, though they behold now as of old many things proceeding from the depths of the judgments of God, have closed up the veins of their eloquence and turned away to the wanton vanities of this life. I think, indeed, that the pages of this work ought to be dedicated to the praise

of those who at different times by deed, word, often even by the shedding of their blood, enlightened the country of the Slavs. Their glory may not be passed over in silence for, after the destruction of the church at Oldenburg, they by the Lord's favor brought the renowned city of Lübeck to so honorable an eminence that it excelled all the most celebrated cities of the Slavs both in material opulence and in divine religion. Some of the deeds done in our lifetime I have, indeed, passed over. That, however, which I have learned from the sayings of aged men or have come to know through observation I have resolved with the Lord's help to recount faithfully and as fully, naturally, as the importance of the happenings in our times has provided abundant material to chronicle. In this task I have been urged on, not by temerity but by the persuasion of my teacher, the venerable bishop Gerold, who first of all made the church at Lübeck distinguished both in its see and in its clergy.

[ HERE BEGINS THE FIRST BOOK ]

1. THE DIVISIONS OF THE SLAVS

I judge it worth while at the beginning of this record to set forth in an historical survey something about the provinces, the character, and the customs of the Slavs, to see, namely, in how great a web of error they were entangled before their conversion, so that from the seriousness of their plight the efficacy of the divine cure may the more easily be discerned. Now there are many tribes of Slavs living on the shore of the Baltic Sea. A bight<sup>1</sup> of this sea stretches from the western ocean<sup>2</sup> toward the east. It is called the Baltic because, after the manner of a baldric, it extends in a long sweep through the Scythian regions even to Greece. It is also named the Barbarian Sea or Scythian Lake from the barbarous peoples whose lands it washes. Many nations are seated about this sea. The Danes and the Swedes, whom we call Northmen, occupy the northern coast and all the islands it contains. Along the southern shore dwell the Slavic nations of whom, reckoning from the east, the Russians are the first, then the Poles who on the north have the Prussians, on the south the Bohemians and those who are called Moravians and the Carinthians and the Sorbs.<sup>3</sup> But if one counts Hungary as a part

<sup>1</sup> From this point to the end of the chapter Helmold depends much on Adam of Bremen for his information and also expressions. Cf. Adam, i, 7 (8); ii, 19-22 (16-19); iv, 10, 12, 13, 16, 18; schol. 14 (15), 116 (115), 120 (116). Helmold, however, amplifies Adam's account by locating more definitely the seats of the Prussians, Bohemians, Moravians, Carinthians, and Sorbs with respect to the Poles and by supplying the data about the Hungarians. For Helmold's modifications *vide* Regel, *Helmold und seine Quellen*, pp. 9-11. Adam in turn depends on the *Translatio S. Alexandri* and Einhard's *Vita Karoli*, chap. 12. Livy and Tacitus are also reflected, respectively, in the opening lines of the chapter and in the description of Prussian regard for springs and groves. On the derivation of the name Baltic, and on Adam's conception of the geography of this sea *vide* Beazley, *Dawn of Modern Geography*, II, 529 *sqq.*; Kretschmer, *Historische Geographie von Mitteleuropa*, pp. 128-30.

<sup>2</sup> The North Sea, also called the British Ocean. Kretschmer, *op. cit.*, p. 129.

<sup>3</sup> According to Peisker, *Cambridge Medieval History*, II, 437, the Avar tore the North-Carpathian Serbs apart, transplanting some into the Balkans, Serbia and Montenegro, and others into the Elbe-Saale country. The latter were subject to Samo in the seventh century

of Slavania, as some would because it is different neither in customs nor in language, the compass of the Slavic tongue becomes so great that it nearly beggars estimation.

With the exception of the Prussians all these nations are honored by the name of Christian. It is a long time since Russia received the faith. By the Danes, Russia<sup>4</sup> is also called Ostrogard because, situated in the east, it abounds in all good things. It is known, too, as Chunigard because the Huns are supposed first to have been there. Its chief city is Kiev. By what teachers the Russians came to the faith, I have not the least knowledge, except that in all their observances they appear to imitate the Greeks rather than the Latins. For a short [passage] over the Russian Sea brings one into Greece.

Although the Prussians do not yet know the light of the faith, [they are, nevertheless] men endowed with many natural gifts. Most humane toward those in need, they even go out to meet and to help those who are in danger on the sea or who are attacked by pirates. Gold and silver they hold in very slight esteem. They have an abundance of strange furs, the odor of which has inoculated our world with the deadly poison of pride; but these, indeed, they regard as dung, to our condemnation, I believe, for we hanker after a marten-skin robe as much as for supreme happiness. Therefore, they offer their very precious marten furs for the woolen garments which we call *faldones*. Many praiseworthy things could be said about this people with respect to their morals, if only they had the faith of Christ whose missionaries they cruelly persecute.<sup>5</sup> At their hands

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and usually were allied with the Abodrites against the Saxons and Wilzi in Charles the Great's time. The Saxon emperors maintained a firm hold on the Sorb country because of its strategic position on the German frontier. Lesser groups included with the Sorbs were the Lusizi, Milzi, Glomuzani or Daleminzi, Siusli, and Plisni. Cf. Wendt, *Germanisierung*, I, 12-13; Thompson, *op. cit.*, pp. 462 n. 4, 531.

<sup>4</sup>The scholium, 120 (116), which Helmold copies, is evidently not of Adam's composition for it contradicts his text; thus, Ostrogard refers to Russia in the scholium, to a city, identified with Novgorod on the Wolchow River or with Ostrov above Pskov, in the text; ii, 22 (19); iv, 11.

<sup>5</sup>Their protomartyr was a Czech who changed his name from Woitech to Adalbert at Magdeburg where he was educated. Under Otto II he was bishop of Prague, later archbishop of Gnesen. The Prussians put him to death at Königsberg (April 23, 997). Cf. chap. 15, *infra*. Hauck, *Kirchengeschichte Deutschlands*, III, 245-51.

Adalbert, the illustrious bishop of Bohemia, received the crown of martyrdom. Although they share everything else with our people they prohibit only, to this very day, access to their groves and springs which, they aver, are polluted by the entry of Christians. They take the meat of their draft animals for food and use their milk and blood as drink so freely that they are said to become intoxicated. These men have blue eyes, ruddy faces, and long hair. Living, moreover, in inaccessible swamps they will not endure a master among them.

The Hungarian nation was once most powerful, vigorous at arms, and very terrifying even to the Roman Empire. Now, after the overthrow of the Huns and of the Danes, a third incursion took place, that of the Hungarians who wasted and ravaged all the border kingdoms. With the immense host which they had assembled they took forcible possession of all Bavaria and Swabia, devastated, besides, the country lying along the Rhine, and visited Saxony, even to the British Ocean, with fire and slaughter. With what great efforts on the part of the emperors and losses on the part of the Christian army they were undone and brought into subjection to the divine laws, many know and history sets forth.

The Carinthians are neighbors of the Bavarians. They are men diligent in their religious practices. There is not a nation more honorable or more pious in the worship of God and in its reverence of priests.

Bohemia has a king and men who are warlike, abounds in churches, and is rich in the divine religion. It is divided into two dioceses, Prague and Olmütz.

Poland is a large province of the Slavs and coterminous, they say, with the kingdom of Russia. It is divided into eight dioceses. At one time it had a king, but now dukes govern it and, like Bohemia, it is tributary to his imperial majesty. The Poles and Bohemians use the same kinds of weapons and observe the same customs in warfare. As often as they are called into wars foreign to them they prove, indeed, brave in conflict, but exceedingly

hard-hearted in rapine and murder. They spare neither monasteries, nor churches, nor cemeteries. But they do not for any reason implicate themselves in foreign wars except under the express condition that the treasure, which the protection afforded by sacred places should keep safe, is declared subject to pillage. It even happens, therefore, that because of their eagerness to get booty they often illtreat their best friends as they would the enemy. For this reason they are very seldom summoned, no matter what are the straits of the wars. Let these remarks about the Bohemians and the Poles and the other eastern Slavs suffice.

## 2. THE CITY OF JUMNE<sup>1</sup>

Where Poland ends one comes into a most extensive Slavic province, that of the people who of old were called Wandali, but now Winithi or Winuli.<sup>2</sup> Of these people the first are the Pomeranians, whose settlements extend as far as the Oder. The Oder, the largest stream in the Slavic regions, rises in the depths of the forest of the Moravians who live in eastern Bohemia, where the Elbe also has its source. Although not at a great distance from each other, these rivers are very different in their flow. The Elbe, rushing toward the west, waters in its uppermost course the country of the Bohemians and the Sorbs; in its middle course it separates the Slavs from the Saxons; in its lowermost it divides the diocese of Hamburg from that of Bremen and then sweeps like a victor into the British Ocean. The other river—that is, the Oder—tending toward the north passes through the territory of the Winuli peoples, dividing the Pomeranians from the Wilzi.<sup>3</sup> At its mouth, where its waters swell those of the

<sup>1</sup> In this chapter Helmold draws on Adam, ii, 21-22 (18-19); iv, 18, 20; schol. 14 (15), 16 (17), 56 (57), 121 (117), but supplies "Winithi" as an alternative name for "Wandali," notes the location of the Moravian Forest, records that Jumne "was" the largest of all European cities, that it was rich in the wares of "all," not simply of "all the northern nations" and that "until it was destroyed" its inhabitants adhered to paganism.

<sup>2</sup> Helmold, following Adam, erroneously identifies the Wandali with the Winithi or Winuli as Slavs. Schmeidler notes (*Adam*, p. 76 nn. 1, 2) that the Lombards had been called Winuli or Winili by Paul the Deacon. Winithi may be an older form of the now current word, Wend. Possibly a remnant of the Lombards or Vandals was Slavised.

<sup>3</sup> The Wilzi were in Helmold's time a federation composed of the Circipani, Kicini, Tholenzi, and Redarii. The name of the federation changed from time to time. Einhard

Baltic Sea, there once stood Jumne, a most noble city and widely known as a trading center for the barbarians and Greeks who lived about it.\* Because great and scarcely credible things are told in praise of this city, I shall note some facts about it which are worth relating. It was truly the largest of all the cities of Europe, and there lived in it Slavs and a mixed population of other peoples, Greeks and barbarians. Alien Saxons also received the right to live there on equal terms with the others, provided only that during their sojourn they did not openly profess the Christian faith. Until that city was destroyed, its inhabitants blundered about in pagan rites. Otherwise, so far as morals and hospitality were concerned, a more honorable or kindlier folk could not be found. Rich in the wares of all nations, Jumne lacked nothing that was either charming or rare. This most opulent city a king of the Danes is said to have encompassed with a very large fleet and destroyed to its very foundations. Remains of the old town are still to be seen. There Neptune may be observed in a threefold mood: the island is washed by the waters of three straits, one of which they say is of a very green appearance; another, whitish; while the third rages furiously in perpetual tempests.

Other Slavic peoples there are, also, who live between the

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in his *Vita Karoli* (chap. 12) and *Annales* (an. 789) calls them "Welatabi" which, if Zeuss (*Die Deutschen und die Nachbarstämme*, pp. 655 n. 1, 679) is right in his conjecture, may relate the Wilzi with the Οὐέλεται of Ptolemy and so indicate the connection of these Baltic Slavs with Slavs in Thrace. In Helmold's age the Wilzi were also known as the Lutici, a name which Schmeidler (*Adam*, p. 77 n. 11), thinks is suggestive of the Slavic stem *lyut*, meaning fierce, wild. Charles the Great knew the Wilzi as allies of the Saxons and the sworn foes of his friends, the Abodrites. When the Saxons yielded to the Franks and accepted Christianity the Wilzi became their enemies and, as will appear, were responsible for many a Slavic uprising.

\*This city also called Jumna, Jumneta, and Vineta, is the modern Wollin, a name derived from the Vuloini, a Slavic tribe which once lived in the region. There is little reason to believe that Helmold exaggerates the metropolitan importance of Jumne. Certainly, its strategic position attracted the Danes when they became sufficiently consolidated as a people under Gorm the Old (ca. 860-935) to have a commercial policy—the taking possession of the mouths of the German rivers flowing into the Baltic Sea. Jumne was probably conquered (960) by Gorm's successor, Harold Blue-Tooth (935-85), and committed to the keeping of the famous pirate brotherhood, the Jomsvikings. Cf. Gjerset, *History of the Norwegian People*, I, 170 and note; Thompson, *Feudal Germany*, pp. 534 n. 8, 535 n. 3; Kretschmer, *Historische Geographie von Mitteleuropa*, p. 125; Schmeidler (ed.), *Adam*, p. 79 n. 1.



Oder and the Elbe and in a great bend stretching southward. Among them are the Heruli, or Heveldi,<sup>5</sup> who live along the Havel and the Dosse rivers, the Leubuzi<sup>6</sup> and Wilini,<sup>7</sup> the Stoderani,<sup>8</sup> and many others. Then, beyond the sluggish current of the Oder and the territory peopled by the several Pomeranian tribes, there lies toward the west the country of the Winuli, of those, namely, who are called Tholenzi and Redarii.<sup>9</sup> Their town is the very widely known Rethra,<sup>10</sup> a seat of idolatry, where a great temple had been erected to the demons, the chief of whom is Redigast. His image is ornamented with gold,<sup>11</sup> his bed bedecked with purple. The fortified center of this town has nine gates and is safeguarded on all sides by a deep lake. A wooden bridge, over which the way is open only to those who would make sacrifices or seek oracular advice, affords a means of crossing. Next, one comes to the Circipani<sup>12</sup> and Kicini whom the

<sup>5</sup> Adam and Helmold, confusing them with the German tribe of the migration period, call them Heruli. The Heveldi evidently took their name from the River Havel; hence, the medieval "Land Havelberg" which in the fourteenth century was known as the Prignitz district. Kretschmer, *op. cit.*, p. 337. In the Annals of Quedlinburg (*an.* 997) which Thietmar (iv, 29) follows, this region is called Stoderania. Here Helmold places the Brizani and Stoderani, chaps. 37, 89, *infra*. Adam does not mention the former and does not definitely locate the latter. The two names probably refer to two subdivisions of the Heveldi, like the Doxani, whom Helmold notes only indirectly through the river, the Dosse, along which they lived. The principal towns of the Heveldi were Havelberg and Brunabor. Henry the Fowler took the latter (928-29); today it lives in Brandenburg. Cf. Widukind, *Rerum gest. Sax.*, i, 35.

<sup>6</sup> They dwelt between the Elbe and the Oder. Schmeidler thinks they are to be identified with the inhabitants of Liabusua (Libusua) mentioned by Thietmar (i, 16; vi, 59; vii, 20) and located on the confines of Lausitz. Zeuss' opinion to the contrary still has force (*op. cit.*, p. 653 and note).

<sup>7</sup> Adam mentions the Wilini but once as living with other Slavic tribes between the Elbe and the Oder, and this is Helmold's only reference to them. There has been much dispute concerning their identity. Cf. Zeuss, *op. cit.*, p. 653; Schmeidler (ed.), *Adam*, p. 78 n. 3.

<sup>8</sup> *Vide note 5, supra.*

<sup>9</sup> *Vide note 3, supra.*

<sup>10</sup> The location of Rethra was the subject of dispute until 1922 when Schuchhardt and Koldewey unearthed its *urbs tricornis ac tres in se continens portas*, as Thietmar (vi, 23) minutely describes it in his chronicle. Cf. Schmeidler, *Hamburg-Bremen und nordost Europa*, pp. 341-58; Thompson, *op. cit.*, pp. 388-91. The fanc, which was in the keeping of the Redarii, was the scene of the suffering of many Christians, among them John of Mecklenburg. *Vide chap. 23, infra.*

<sup>11</sup> According to Thietmar (vi, 23) it was of wood, adorned with gold and carved with inscriptions.

<sup>12</sup> Their name is geographical: *cures (cuereu)* for *per* or *supra* and *Panis* for the Peene River, north of which they lived. Schmeidler (*Adam*, p. 77 n. 6) gives them more definite

Peene River and the town of Demmin separate from the Tholenzii and Redarii. The Kicini,<sup>13</sup> and Circipani live on this side<sup>14</sup> of the Peene; the Tholenzii and Redarii, on the other. Because of their bravery these four peoples are called Wilzi, or Lutici. Beyond them are the Linguones<sup>15</sup> and Warnavi.<sup>16</sup> Next come the Abodrites,<sup>17</sup> whose town is Mecklenburg. Next, in our

boundaries, the Recknitz, Nebel, Trebel, and Ostpeene Rivers. Cf. Zeuss, *op. cit.*, p. 657 n. 3, *supra*.

<sup>13</sup> Their principal towns were Wostrow on the Nebel, Wotenick near Demmin, and Kessin, from which they probably took their name, near the modern Rostock. Ulrici, *Die Völker am Ostseebecken*, p. 33; Zeuss, *op. cit.*, p. 656; n. 3, *supra*.

<sup>14</sup> That is, Helmold's side, Saxony, westward.

<sup>15</sup> The Linguones, also called Lini and Linoges, were probably kindred of the Abodrites and lived along the east bank of the Elbe north of its junction with the Havel in the region of the modern Putlitz in Westprignitz. Earlier sources mention the Smeldingi, Bethenici, and Morizani as their neighbors but neither Adam nor Helmold notes them. Helmold copies his notice of the Linguones from Adam (ii, 21) but changes the sense of his source by interpolating scholium 16 (17) immediately before his remarks about them. Consequently, the Linguones lived, according to Helmold, *ultra* the Wilzi instead of *ultra* the Polabi. Adam, furthermore, specifies that they lived within the limits of the diocese of Hamburg, a fact which Helmold fails to state. Helmold mentions the Linguones but once more as living a quiet life in a fertile region where they were attacked without provocation by Mistue, the son of the Slavic prince, Henry, in 1112 (?). *Vide* chap. 37, *infra*.

<sup>16</sup> Kindred of the Abodrites, the Warnavi lived in the diocese of Hamburg on the Warnow River, possibly near a place called Warnow in the neighborhood of Grabow.

<sup>17</sup> The Abodrites or Obotriti lived in western Mecklenburg, but if their kindred—the Wagiri, Linguones, Warnavi, Dravani, and possibly the Brizani—are reckoned with them, they held the east bank of the Elbe from the Havel River nearly to Hamburg. Wendt, *op. cit.*, I, 11; Kretschmer, *op. cit.*, p. 171. From the Elbe their line ran due north to the Baltic Sea near Haddeby. They called their chief *civitas* Wiligrad, which the Germans translated into Magnopolis, Mecklenburg. *Velu* is the Slavic word for "great" and *grad* for "town"; *mikkil* is Old High German for "great." Beltz, *Zur ältesten Geschichte Mecklenburgs*, pp. 17-18; Krek, *Slavische Literaturgeschichte*, p. 357 n. 1. Besides Mecklenburg the Abodrites held Schwerin and Malchow and in Charles the Great's time a trading post on the Baltic which the Danes called Reric. *Einhardi annales*, ann. 808, 809. Hence, Adam, ii, 21 (18); iii, 20 (19), also calls the Abodrites Reregi. The Abodrites had probably been driven into the Elbe country by the Huns in the fifth century or by the Avars in the sixth. There, on the German frontier, they were drawn into the Frankish wars with the Saxons. They fought with Charles the Great against the Saxons, but gave up the alliance under Louis the Pious because of his Danish policy. East of the Abodrites lived the Wilzi with whom the Abodrites were always at war. *Einhardi annales*, an. 808. When Charles the Great deported the Saxons who lived between the Elbe and Weser rivers he let the Abodrites settle in Wagria, eastern Holstein, for in Wagria they could stand between the Danes and the Saxons. Charles the Great, however, found the Abodrites unequal to the commission and consequently erected a mark against the Danes. After Charles the Great Abodrite history is told by Helmold. Divided between a Christian and a pagan faction, caught between the Saxons and the Wilzi, they were little by little reduced; their country became the modern Mecklenburg, but not until the thirteenth century was the last ember of resistance trampled out and not until the Thirty Years' War was the Slavic tongue stilled in this region. Thompson, *op. cit.*, pp. 462 and n. 4, 504, 538, 567.

direction, are the Polabi,<sup>18</sup> whose town is Ratzeburg. On crossing the river Trave, then, one comes into our province of Wagria.<sup>19</sup> Its city was once Oldenburg by the sea. There are also in the Baltic Sea, islands that are inhabited by Slavs. One of these islands, called Fehmern, is opposite the Wagiri and so near that it may be seen from Oldenburg. Another and far greater island is situated opposite the Wilzi and is inhabited by the Rani, also known as the Rugiani,<sup>20</sup> the strongest of the Slavic peoples and the only one having a king. So much are the Rani feared on account of their familiarity with the gods, or rather demons, whom they honor with a greater devotion than do the other Slavs, that nothing can lawfully be done in public matters without their sanction. These, then, are the peoples of the Winuli who are spread over these regions and provinces and islands of the sea. This whole race of men is given to idolatry, is always restless and moving about, making piratical raids upon its enemies, the Danes on one side and the Saxons on the other. Very often, therefore, and in many ways have great emperors and priests ingeniously tried somehow to bring this stiff-necked and unbelieving people<sup>21</sup> to a knowledge of God's name and to the grace of the faith.

<sup>18</sup> The Polabi were also called Polabingi. Their name is derived from the Slavic *po* for "on" and *Labe* for "Elbe." The term is used in a broad and in a narrow sense. Broadly, it includes the Abodrites, Wilzi, Sorbs, with all their sub-divisions and kindred, and Polabi. Their territory extends from the Elbe to the Oder and Bober, and from the Harz Mountains to the Baltic and the islands along the coast. Adam and Helmold use the term in the narrow sense, referring only to the people whose lands lay along the east bank of the Elbe from the Elde to the Bille and Trave Rivers and whose chief *civitas* was Ratzeburg. Their location in what is now Lauenburg, western Mecklenburg and Schönburg to Lübeck, exposed the Polabi to all the vicissitudes of the German-Slav wars. Kretschmer, *op. cit.*, p. 357.

<sup>19</sup> Wagria, inhabited by the Wagiri, is roughly the same as the present East Holstein. Cf. chap. 12, *infra*.

<sup>20</sup> Peisker, *Cambridge Medieval History*, II, 456, considered their fierceness and skill as pirates evidence of viking blood. In their keeping, too, was the temple of Svantowit, the chief god of the Slavs. Cf. chap. 108, *infra*. In 1168 the Rugiani were conquered and the temple at Arkona destroyed by Waldemar, king of Denmark. So thoroughly did the Dane wreak vengeance upon an ancient and troublesome enemy that the whereabouts of the fane was a subject of speculation until 1921 when Schuchhardt discovered what was left of it. Petsch, "Die neuen Ausgrabungen auf Arkona," *Forschungen und Fortschritte*, VI (November 10, 1930), 413-14; Thompson, *op. cit.*, pp. 388, 391 n. 1.

<sup>21</sup> Cf. II Chron. 30:8; Acts 7:51.

## 3. HOW CHARLES CONVERTED THE SAXONS TO THE FAITH

Of all the zealous propagators of the Christian religion who through the merit of their faith have won praiseworthy eminence, Charles shines out ever the most glorious, as a man to be extolled by every writer and to be placed in the front rank of those who labored for God in the northern parts. For by the sword he overcame the most fierce and rebellious Saxon folk and subjected it to the laws of Christendom. Now the Saxons,<sup>1</sup> as well as the Thuringians and the other peoples who dwell along the Rhine, are recorded from antiquity to have been tributary to the Franks. Since they afterwards lapsed from Frankish rule, Pepin, the father of Charles, made war on them, which war, however, his son prosecuted with greater success. The conflict with the Saxons was long drawn out. Waged with great animosity by both sides, with greater losses, however, to the Saxons than to the Franks, it went on continuously for thirty-three years. It might, indeed, have been ended sooner but for the obstinacy<sup>2</sup> of the Saxons, who, preferring to preserve their liberty by force of arms, devastated the territories of the Franks even to the Rhine. Thus, with scarcely a year free from warfare, the Saxons are recorded to have become at length so exhausted that ten thousand of those who lived along both sides of the Elbe with their women and children were transported into Francia. The year in which this was done was the thirty-third of the long Saxon war, the thirty-seventh of the emperor Charles's reign, and the historians of the Franks regard it as memorable because Widukind, the inciter of the rebellion, abdicated his tyranny, submitted to the Empire and with other leaders of the Saxons received baptism.<sup>3</sup> Then Saxony was finally

<sup>1</sup> At this point Helmold again turns to Adam, i, 8 (9), 9 (10), 11 (12), 12 (13), 14 (15, 16), who himself is in debt to the *Vita S. Willehadi*, chaps. 5, 6, 8; Einhard's *Vita Karoli*, chaps. 7, 14, and *Annales*, *ann.* 778; and the *Annales* of Fulda, *ann.* 785, 808-11.

<sup>2</sup> Adam, i, 8 (9), follows Einhard, *Vita Karoli*, chap. 7, in using *perfidia*, which Helmold changes to *pertinacia* and adds the clause, "preferring to preserve . . . of arms."

<sup>3</sup> Widukind received baptism and apparently retired from the conflict in 785, not at the end of the war in 804 or 805 as Helmold reckons.

made into a province. Although the most brave Charles had achieved this victory in war, he trusted not in himself but in the Lord God of hosts and attributed his mighty deeds to the assistance of His grace. He also, with great consideration and with thought of the supernal reward, determined to relieve the Saxon people, although they ill deserved it, of all the tribute they owed and to preserve to them their ancient freedom, lest perchance, overburdened with taxes and tribute, they be moved to rebel and relapse into the errors of paganism. These terms, moreover, were proposed by the king and accepted by the Saxon people—that they renounce their worship of devils, receive the sacraments of the Christian faith, become tributaries and subjects of the Lord God, offering the priests the lawful [tithe] of all their beasts and the fruits of the fields or crops, and that they become one people with the Franks to whom they had been joined. Saxony was, therefore, divided into eight dioceses and put under most worthy pastors<sup>4</sup> who would by word and example imbue the rude minds of her people with the faith. The Caesar, finally, provided most honorably for the support of these clerics with generous munificence. In this wise was the task of making a new plantation in Saxony accomplished and confirmed with full strength. The uncouth Frisians then also received the grace of the Christian faith and from that time the way was prepared across the Elbe for the preachers of the Word of God. They went out, swift messengers, to announce the gospel of peace throughout the length and breadth of the north.<sup>5</sup> As at that time the Slavic tribes were likewise subjected to the rule of the Franks, Charles is said to have committed Hamburg, the city of the Nordalbingians, to the governance of a certain saintly man, Heridag, whom he designated as bishop of the place.

<sup>4</sup> According to Adam, i, 11 (12), the archbishops of Mainz and Köln. Cf. *Introd.*

<sup>5</sup> Of these preachers the Northumbrian St. Willehad was the most prominent. After strenuous labors in Wigmodia near the North Sea, between the Elbe and the Weser, he was consecrated (787) bishop of Worms, but fixed his residence at Bremen where he built his cathedral in 789. The *Vita S. Willehadi* was written by a cleric of Bremen between 838 and 860. Cf. Hauck, *Kirchengeschichte Deutschlands*, II, 318 sqq.

Further, he built a church there.<sup>6</sup> This same church at Hamburg he proposed to establish as the mother church of all the Slavic and Danish peoples. This project the emperor Charles was prevented from carrying out as perfectly as he desired by the death of Heridag, the priest, and by the wars with which he himself was occupied. For this most victorious prince, who had conquered all the kingdoms of Europe, is said to have undertaken last of all a war with the Danes. Now the Danes and the other peoples who live beyond Denmark are called Northmen by the historians of the Franks. After their king, Göttrik, had brought the Frisians and also the Nordalbingians, the Abodrites and other Slavic peoples under tribute, he threatened even Charles with war. This strife seriously retarded the emperor's plan concerning Hamburg. When at length, by the dispensation of God, Göttrik died, there succeeded him Hemming, his cousin, who soon made peace with the emperor and recognized the Eider River as the boundary of the kingdom.<sup>7</sup>

Not long afterwards Charles departed this life, a man most upright in religious as well as secular affairs and the first to merit elevation from the kingship of the Franks to the imperial position. For the dignity of the Caesars<sup>8</sup> after Constantine was seated in Greece, to wit in the city of Constantinople, and for many generations enjoyed a praiseworthy existence. But with the lack there of men of royal stock, this high office visibly declined to the point where the government, for which in its primitive vigor three consuls at a time, or dictators, or even Caesars scarcely sufficed, passed at length under womanish rule. Since, therefore, rebels rose up on all sides against the Empire and since nearly all of the kingdoms of Europe fell away from its control and Rome herself, the mother of the world, was worn away by frontier wars and had no defender, it pleased the

<sup>6</sup> Unlike the early history of the diocese of Bremen the beginnings of the church of Hamburg are until Ansgar's time very uncertain. Cf. Hauck, *op. cit.*, II, 620.

<sup>7</sup> Göttrik (also Gottfried, Godfrey) seems to have been king only in Jutland.

<sup>8</sup> For this passage on the Empire Helmold draws on the *Vita S. Willehadi*, chap. 5, in which, however, there is no reference to any action by the Holy See.

Apostolic See to convene a solemn council of saintly men and to enter into common consultation about the general need. Thus, by the consent of all and with the approval of all, Charles, the illustrious king of the Franks, was honored with the crown of the Roman Empire, because, by reason of what he had merited in respect of the faith and of the glory of his power no less than of the victories he had won in his wars, no one in the world seemed to be his equal. In this manner was the imperial title transferred from Greece to Francia.

#### 4. THE DIVISION OF THE KINGDOM

After Charles, the king of the Franks and august emperor of the Romans, passed into heaven with the rich reward of good deeds, Louis, his son, succeeded him in the realm. He was thoroughly in accord with his father's desires and exercised the same liberality toward the service of the house of God and all the clergy. So generously did he devote the vast wealth of his kingdom to the embellishment and glory of the Church, that he made bishops, who through their charge of souls are princes of heaven, princes also of the realm. When he learned what had been his father's design with respect of Hamburg, he immediately took counsel<sup>1</sup> with wise men and caused that most saintly man, Ansgar, whom he had at one time directed to preach to the Danes and Swedes,<sup>2</sup> to be consecrated archbishop of the church of Hamburg. Louis established that city as the metropolis for all the northern peoples that the ministry of the Word of God might go forth with greater success among all the barbarous nations. And this did come to pass, for at the instance of the prelates of the church of Hamburg, the Word of God was spread among all the Slavic, Danish, and Northman peoples and the icy cold of the north was dissolved by the warmth of the Word of God. For many days and very many years the missionaries labored to

<sup>1</sup> Helmold makes use of Adam, i, 15 (17), 16 (18), 22 (24), who uses Rimbert's *Vita Ansharii*, chap. 12, and the *Annales Fuld.*, ann. 841, 843.

<sup>2</sup> He was selected to accompany Harold back to Denmark in 826, but little came of his mission at that time. His consecration as archbishop of Hamburg occurred in 831.

their utmost among these peoples; but so deep was the darkness of their errors and so obstinate their rank idolatry that it could be neither promptly nor easily overcome. The many storms of the wars, which after the death of the most pious Louis spread more widely, also retarded not a little the conversion of the pagans. When he was taken from this world, civil wars arose; namely, the quarrels among his four sons over the principate. Thus, there sprang up among the brothers much discord and a very great war in which, as the historians testify, all of the Frankish peoples were consumed. The dissensions were at length allayed by the mediation of Pope Sergius<sup>2</sup> and the kingdom was divided into four parts in such wise that Lothar, the eldest, would possess Rome with Italy and Lotharingia with Burgundy; Ludwig, the Rhine with Germany; Charles, Gaul; Pepin, Aquitaine.

#### 5. THE MISSION OF SAINT ANSGAR IN SWEDEN

The situation at this time, when discord among the brothers gave rise to the tremendous commotion of warfare and weakened the divided empire, prompted many to feel that the time was opportune for revolt. Among the contentious the first or most important were the Danish people, superior in strength of men and arms. They subjected first the Slavs and the Frisians<sup>3</sup> to tribute; then coming up the Rhine with their pirate fleet they laid siege to Köln; and up the Elbe, totally destroyed Hamburg. The celebrated city and the newly built church all went up in flames; nay, even the province of the Nordalbingians and whatever lay near the river fell prey to the ravages of the barbarians. Saxony was shaken with a great terror. The saintly archbishop

<sup>2</sup> Sergius II did not become pope until the year after the framing of this treaty at Verdun, 843.

<sup>3</sup> In this chapter Helmold depends on the *Vita Anskarii*, chaps. 16, 17, 23-25, and on Adam, i, 21 (23), 25 (27), 26 (28), 29 (31), who in turn makes use of the *Annales Fuld.*, ann. 836, 837. Cf. *Ann. Bert.*, an. 837. Only Adam mentions this raid. Since the *Annales Colonienses brevissimi* and the *Annales Bertiniani* record the murder in Köln of some Danish emissaries in 836, it has been conjectured that this raid was an act of vengeance. Hamburg was destroyed in 845. Cf. Vogel, *Die Normannen und das fränkische Reich*, p. 74 n. 4.



of Hamburg, Ansgar, and other preachers assigned to Slavia and to Denmark were driven from their seats by the high passion of the persecutors and were dispersed in every direction. Ludwig to whom, as we said above, Germany had been given and who throughout was like his glorious father, in name as well as in piety, planned in this wise to repair the loss of the church at Hamburg. The see of Bremen, which by the death of its bishop<sup>2</sup> was then vacant, was to be joined with that of Hamburg, making them thereafter not two dioceses, but one diocese. Since each of the cities was much in danger of piratical incursions, it was expedient that one be built up with the help of the other, and that they support each other. When, therefore, confirmation of this proposal was received from the Apostolic See, everything which had been worked out in the mind of the pious prince was carried into effect.<sup>3</sup> The church of Bremen was united with that of Hamburg, the saintly Ansgar was given rule over both and there was "one fold and one shepherd."<sup>4</sup>

Not long after, when the fury of the Danes had abated somewhat, they began to rebuild the ruins of the city of Hamburg, and the Nordalbingian people returned to their own homes. Archbishop Ansgar also went often on embassies for the Caesar to the king of the Danes, with whom he pleaded zealously to the advantage of both realms and for the maintenance of peace. He won great favor and friendship with the king who, though pagan, had reverence for Ansgar's faith. [The king]<sup>5</sup> even gave him permission to establish churches in Schleswig and Ribe and assured him in advance that no one would be allowed to

<sup>2</sup> Leuderic who died August 24, 845.

<sup>3</sup> Pope Nicholas I issued (May 31, 864) the bull which authorized the union of Hamburg and Bremen under Ansgar. Jaffé, *Regesta pontificum* (2d ed.), no. 2759. Regel (*Helmold und seine Quellen*, pp. 18-22) proves that Helmold had seen only the part of this document which Rimbert includes in his *Vita Anskarii*, chap. 23. Concerning the troubles of Ansgar after the Northman raid of 845 and the controversy with the archbishop of Köln, the metropolitan of Bremen, over the union of Bremen with Hamburg vide Adam, i, 27 (29); Hauck, *Kirchengeschichte Deutschlands*, II, 624-26.

<sup>4</sup> John 10: 16.

<sup>5</sup> Eric I and all of the royal stock of the north except a boy, Eric II, perished in a revolution in 854. Eric II at first cruelly persecuted the Christians, but Ansgar won him over so that he favored his mission work. Adam, i, 28 (30), 29 (31).

interfere with those who desired to receive baptism and to observe the Christian laws. Without delay priests were directed to the accomplishment of this mission. As the riches of divine grace thus gradually increased in the Danish folk, the archbishop was moved by a great desire to rise up for the conversion of the Swedes. Before he proceeded upon this arduous mission he asked for a letter and a legate from the king of the Danes. Setting out with a large company, he came after a sea voyage to Björkö, the principal city of Sweden. There he was received with much favor and joy by the faithful whom he himself had won for Christ on a mission to which he had at one time been assigned, before he was raised to the honors of the episcopate. He secured from the king<sup>6</sup> assurance that those who wished would be allowed freely to assume the Christian title. When he had established in Sweden a bishop and priests, who were in his stead to provide for religious service and for the salvation of the people, and had exhorted everyone to persevere in the faith, he returned to his own see. From that time on, the seed of the Word of God which had been scattered among the Danish and Swedish peoples began to bear richer fruit. Although among these same people there afterwards arose many tyrants, who visited their cruelty not only on their own Christian folk but also on foreign nations, Christianity, nevertheless, is known from the very beginning of its establishment in Denmark and Sweden to have grown so strong that even if at times it tottered in the driving storms of persecution, it never failed entirely.<sup>7</sup>

#### 6. THE CONVERSION OF THE RUGIANI

Of all the peoples of the northern nations, the country of the Slavs alone has remained more obdurate and slower of belief than the rest. Now there are, as was said before, many Slavic peoples of whom those who are called Winuli or Winithi belong

<sup>6</sup> Olaph, or Oleph, whose identity it has not been possible to determine with certainty.

<sup>7</sup> Helmold disagrees with Adam. The latter writes that the Swedes forgot Christianity and went back to paganism and that the Danes retained but little of the faith which Ansgar had preached. Cf. i, 52 (54), 61 (63).

for the most part to the diocese of Hamburg. For in addition to the honor of being the metropolitan see for all the nations and kingdoms of the north, the church at Hamburg has also, as a diocese, its own prescribed boundaries; embracing, namely, the remotest part of Saxony which lies across the Elbe and is called Nordalbingia. Within it dwell three peoples, the Ditmarshians, the Holzatians, and the Sturmarians. Thence the line is extended to include the Winithi, those who are called Wagiri, Abodrites, Kicini, Circipani, and as far as the Peene River and the city of Demmin. There the diocese of Hamburg ends.<sup>1</sup> One cannot but wonder how those most worthy bishops and preachers of the Gospel, Ansgar, Rimbert, and the sixth in the succession, Unni,<sup>2</sup> whose great zeal for the conversion of the heathen is manifest, should have so far concealed their efforts in behalf of the Slavs that it could be said that neither they nor their ministers had achieved any success among them. This misapprehension was due, I think, to the invincible obstinacy of the people and not to the torpor of the preachers, whose souls were so imbued with the conversion of the heathen that they spared neither their strength nor their lives. For a record<sup>3</sup> of great antiquity tells how in the time of Ludwig II there went out from Corvey monks remarkable for their sanctity who in their thirst for the salvation of the Slavs exposed themselves to dangers and death for the sake of making known the Word of God. After wandering through many of the Slavic provinces, they came to the people called the Rani, or Rugiani, who dwell in the midst

<sup>1</sup>To this point Helmold depends on Adam, ii, 17 (15), 21 (18); iv, 13. Pope Clement II in 1047 attributed the same boundaries to this diocese. Schmeidler (ed.), *Adam*, p. 72 n. 5.

<sup>2</sup>Helmold properly changes the text of Adam, who includes the bishops of Bremen before Ansgar in his list of the archbishops of Hamburg and so makes Unni the ninth prelate of the see. With Unni there came about a religious renaissance in Hamburg and in its northern missions. Conrad I set aside the election *a clero et populo* of another to make Unni archbishop (917). Unni zealously promoted the Danish missions and, though he could not tame the ferocious anti-Christian, Gorm the Old, at least won the neutrality of his son, Harold Blue-Tooth. From Denmark Unni passed into Sweden, neglected since Ansgar's time, and died at Björkö, September 17, 936. Adam, i, 54-62 (56-64); Hauck, *Kirchengeschichte Deutschlands*, III, 80 sqq.; Regel, *Helmold und seine Quellen*, p. 16.

<sup>3</sup>Wilmans, *Die Kaiserurkunden der Provinz Westfalen*, I, 94-113. The monastery of Corvey in Westphalia was founded (815) by monks of the monastery of Corbie in Picardy.

of the sea. With them error was at home and idolatry had its throne. Full of confidence, however, these missionaries preached the Word of God and won over the whole island. They also founded there an oratory in honor of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ, and in commemoration of Saint Vitus, who is the patron of Corvey. God afterwards permitted affairs to change. The Rani fell away from the faith, forthwith drove out the priests and worshipers of Christ, and turned religion into superstition. Putting a creature above the Creator, they worship as God, Saint Vitus, whom we recognize as a martyr and servant of Christ.\* Not a barbaric state under heaven abominates Christians and priests more. They glory only in the name of Saint Vitus, to whom they have with the most elaborate rites even dedicated a temple and an image, attributing to him in particular a primacy of divinity. Oracular responses are there sought also by all the provinces of the Slavs and annual sacrifices duly performed. Even merchants who happen to come into these parts are not given leave either to buy or to sell until there has been laid before the god of the Rani whatever is most valuable in their merchandise. Then only may the merchants expose their goods in the market place. The Rani revere their flamen not less than they do their king. From the time when first they renounced the faith to this very day the Rani have persisted in this superstition.

#### 7. THE PERSECUTION OF THE NORTHMEN

The work of imbuing the Slavic peoples and other heathens with the faith was in truth from the very beginning seriously interfered with by that tempest of wars which the turbulent Northmen brought upon almost the whole world. The hosts of the Northmen were recruited from the bravest of the Danes, Swedes, and Norwegians who at that time chanced to be united under one principate. First of all they brought under tribute the

\* On the credibility of this story *vide* Schildgen, "St. Vitus und der slavische Swantowit in ihrer Beziehung zu einander," *Programm der Realschule zu Münster, 1881*; Krek, *Slavische Literaturgeschichte*, pp. 396-402; Thompson, *Feudal Germany*, p. 449 n. 2 (bibliography). Helmold returns to this god, chaps. 52, 108, *infra*. His shrine was at Arkona on the island of Rügen.

Slavs who were close at hand and then they harassed the other neighboring realms by land and sea. Their strength had, indeed, been increased not a little by the weakening of the Roman Empire which after the time of the elder Louis was exhausted, as has been said before, first by the civil wars and then by its division into four parts ruled by as many petty kings. Well known is it<sup>1</sup> that at that time the Northmen, coming up the Loire, burned Tours and, ascending the Seine, besieged Paris, and that the terror stricken king Charles gave them a land to live in, which received the name Normandy from its being possessed by the Northmen. Then they laid waste Lotharingia and conquered Frisia. But our Ludwig, the king of Germany, either by treaties or through battles, so far held back the Northmen that, although they devastated the whole of Francia, they did not do the slightest harm to his realm. After his death

Wild barbarism ruled without restraint.

The Bohemians, the Sorbs, the Susi, and other Slavs, whom he had subjected to tribute, then threw off the yoke of servitude. Then, also, was Saxony laid waste by the Northmen or Danes. Duke Bruno was killed with twelve of his counts, and Bishops Theodoric and Markward were slain.<sup>2</sup> At that time, also, Frisia was ravaged and the city of Utrecht demolished.<sup>3</sup> Then the pirates burned Köln and Trier and stabled their horses in the palace at Aachen. The people of Mainz began to erect fortifications in fear of the barbarians. The son of Ludwig, the young

<sup>1</sup> With the exception of the lines about Charles the Fat, the succession of the archbishops of Hamburg, and some explanatory data this chapter is from this point based on Adam, i, 28 (30), 38 (40), 40 (42), 47 (49), 51 (53), 52 (54). Adam derives some of his information from the *Annales Fuld.*, ann. 850, 853, 880, 881, 887, 891. Both Adam and Helmold are confused in their connection of events. Cf. Vogel, *Die Normannen und das fränkische Reich*, pp. 280-90.

<sup>2</sup> Ludwig the German, who died in 876, had committed the defense of Saxony to one Liudolph whose sons were Bruno and Otto, the latter known as "the Illustrious." They ably defended the land and promoted the interests of the family. Otto the Illustrious was the father of Henry I, the Fowler. The battle in which Bruno lost his life was fought February 2, 880, somewhere on the Lüneburg Heath. Theodoric was bishop of Minden and Markward, of Hildesheim. Cf. Thiet., ii, 23 (15); Hauck, *Kirchengeschichte Deutschlands*, II, 630; Dümmler, *Geschichte des ostfränkischen Reichs*, II, 136-38.

<sup>3</sup> Maestricht not Utrecht was destroyed.

Charles,<sup>4</sup> who at this time returned from Rome, confronted the Northmen with a large army at the river Meuse. Surrounding and pressing in upon them, on the fifteenth day he at length compelled surrender. He did not, however, punish the captive tyrants of the Danes with the severity which they as enemies of God deserved, but, to the lasting humiliation and serious injury of the Church, spared the impious ones and after accepting their oath and entering into an alliance with them permitted them to leave his presence very richly laden with gifts. When they had secured their baneful freedom, they scorned the naïveté of the young king and, again uniting their forces, perpetrated such carnage as exceeds the measure of belief. Why say more? Cities with their inhabitants, bishops with all in their flocks, were struck down at one time. Noble churches were burned, together with multitudes of the faithful. On this account Charles was cited in the diet and deposed from the kingship for his folly; Arnulf, his brother's son, succeeded him. Bringing together an army, he advanced into the territories of the Danes and in many hard-fought battles destroyed them even to the point of extermination. The war was directed from on high<sup>5</sup> for, though a hundred thousand pagans were killed in conflict, scarcely a Christian was found to have fallen. In such wise was an end made of the persecution of the Northmen. The Lord avenged the blood which His servants had for seventy years poured forth. These events took place in the time of Archbishop Adalgar, who was the successor of the blessed Rimbert and the third after the blessed Ansgar. When Adalgar died, Hoger followed him in the see and after him, Reginward. As for the succession of kings, Ludwig the

<sup>4</sup> Charles the Fat (876-87). When they heard of his advance Gottfried and Siegfried, who had perpetrated some of the outrages mentioned above, retired to a camp which they had built at Elsloo. There Charles besieged them for two weeks and then made the peace referred to in the text. The emperor let the vikings keep their plunder and besides paid them 2,412 pounds of silver and ceded lands to their chiefs. Cf. *Ann. Fuld.*, an. 882; Dümmler, *op. cit.*, I, 203-05.

<sup>5</sup> Orosius, *Historiarum adversus paganos libri*, vii, 15. The figure given for the number of Danish dead is no doubt an exaggeration. Adam also used the number seventy for a long period of years.

Child ruled after Arnulf.<sup>6</sup> In this Ludwig the stock of Charles the Great came to an end. He was presently deposed from the kingship and was succeeded by Conrad, the duke of the Franconians.<sup>7</sup>

#### 8. THE INVASION OF THE HUNGARIANS

While Conrad reigned<sup>1</sup> there occurred a baleful invasion of the Hungarians, who ravaged not only our Saxony and the other provinces on this side of the Rhine, but also Lotharingia and Francia beyond the Rhine. At that time churches were burned, crosses mutilated and held to mockery by the barbarians, priests murdered before their altars, clerics herded together with the populace either to be executed or to be led into captivity. The marks of this fury have endured to our own age. The Danes with the help of the Slavs also plundered first the Nordalbingian, then the Transalbingian Saxons, and made Saxony quake with great terror.<sup>2</sup> Over the Danes there ruled at that time Gorm, a most savage worm,<sup>3</sup> I say, and not moderately hostile to the Christians. In his determination utterly to destroy Christianity in Denmark, he drove the priests out of his territories and even tortured many to death. But after King Henry, Conrad's son,<sup>4</sup> who feared God even from his boyhood and placed all reliance upon His mercy, had triumphed over the Hungarians in mighty battles, he struck the Bohemians and the Sorbs, who had been subdued by other kings, and the other Slavic peoples with such force in one great encounter that the rest (and few were left) of their own accord promised to the king that they would pay

<sup>6</sup> Adalgar died May 9, 909, and Hoger, December 20, 915. In the fifteenth century the Boeckel codex was annotated: "Wasted away by a long illness, this emperor, Arnulf, could be preserved by no medicinal art from being consumed by lice." He died, as a matter of fact, of a paralysis hereditary in the family, December 8, 899.

<sup>7</sup> He died August or September, 911. Adam, i, 52 (54), also makes this mistake.

<sup>1</sup> Conrad I (911-18). All of this chapter but the introductory clause and a few words here and there is quoted or paraphrased from Adam, i, 53 (55), 55-62 (57-64); ii, 1.

<sup>2</sup> The Transalbingian Saxons lived east of the Elbe.

<sup>3</sup> Adam's (and Helmold's) text reads: *Worm regnavit, crudelissimus, inquam, vermis.*

<sup>4</sup> Helmold supplies *filius Conradi*, but Henry was the son of Otto the Illustrious, not of Conrad. Cf. chap. 7 n. 2, *supra*.

tribute and to God that they would be Christians.<sup>5</sup> Then he invaded Denmark with an army and in the first battle so thoroughly terrified King Gorm that the latter pledged himself to obey his commands and, as a suppliant, sued for peace. The victorious King Henry fixed the boundary of the kingdom in Schleswig, which is now called Haddeby,<sup>6</sup> appointed a margrave, and ordered a colony of Saxons to settle there. When the most saintly archbishop, Unni, who had succeeded Reginward in the see, learned that by the mercy of our God and the valor of King Henry the obstinacy of the Danes and of the Slavs had been overcome, and that the door of the faith had been opened to the heathen, he determined to go in person throughout the whole length and breadth of his diocese. Accompanied, therefore, by many religious, he came to the Danes over whom the most cruel Gorm still held sway. The latter he could not bend on account of his inborn savagery, but he converted his son, Harold, and made him so faithful to Christ that, although he himself had not yet received the sacrament of baptism, he permitted the public profession of Christianity, which his father ever hated. And so, after the saint of God had ordained priests for the several churches in the kingdom of the Danes, he is said to have commended the multitude of believers to Harold. Seconded also by his aid and legate, Unni went into all the islands of the Danes, preaching the Word of God and comforting in Christ the faithful whom he found captive there. Then he crossed the Baltic Sea, as the great preacher Ansgar had done, and not without difficulty came to Björkö, the principal city of Sweden. Thither no teacher had dared to go in the seventy years since the death of the saintly Ansgar save only one, as we read, Rimbert.

<sup>5</sup> Near Lenzen, September 4, 929. Henry's campaigns against the Slavs occupied the years 928-32, although minor operations took place in 933 and 934. Cf. Waitz, *Heinrich I*, pp. 127-31 and *passim*.

<sup>6</sup> Adam errs here, for the Haddeby in question lies farther to the south. The Eider River was the boundary. Biereye, *Beiträge zur Geschichte Nordalbingiens im 10. Jahrhundert*, pp. 10-14. Widukind, *Rerum gest. Sax.*, i, 40, states that Henry fought not Gorm but one of his sons, King Chnuba (Cnut). Cf. Thiet., i, 17 (9); Waitz, *op. cit.*, pp. 159-62, 277-81.



Björkö, the most celebrated town of the Goths,<sup>7</sup> is situated in the middle of Sweden on a bight of the Baltic Sea. For this reason Björkö is a most desirable port to which all the ships of the Danes, Norwegians, and likewise those of the Slavs and Sembi and of other peoples of Scythia<sup>8</sup> are wont to come regularly for the various necessities of trade. Landing at this port on his unusual errand, the confessor of the Lord began to address the people. The Swedes and the Goths had, indeed, entirely forgotten the Christian religion because of the manifold perils of the times and the bloody ferocity of their kings. By the favor of God's grace they were, however, once more recalled to the faith by the holy father Unni. When the evangelist of God had completed his mission and was arranging for his return, he suddenly fell ill and laid down the burden of his wearied body in Björkö. He had fought the good fight and he died in the nine hundred and thirty-sixth year of the Lord's incarnation. The venerable Adaldag succeeded him in the see.

#### 9. THE CONVERSION OF HAROLD

In that same year the glorious emperor<sup>1</sup> Henry departed this life and his son Otto, surnamed the Great, was established in the realm. At the beginning of his reign he endured many wrongs from his brothers. The king of the Danes, who had been tributary to Otto's father, also threw off the yoke of subjection and took up arms in behalf of freedom. First of all he murdered the margrave who was over Schleswig, also called Haddeby, together with the legate of King Otto, and utterly wiped out the whole colony of Saxons which had been established there. The Slavs, no less disposed to change, also set

<sup>7</sup> A considerable part of Sweden north of the coastal districts, Scania, Blekinge, and Smaland, was known as Göthland.

<sup>8</sup> Scythia, according to Adam, here included Sweden, Finland and the northern parts of Russia. Sembi is another name for the Prussians.

<sup>1</sup> More correctly, king. Twelfth century writers did not always distinguish carefully between *imperator* and *rex*. Henry I died July 2, 936, and Otto I was crowned at Aachen August 31, 936. Cf. Köpke-Dümmler, *Otto der Grosse*, Excurs 2. Helmold draws on Adam, ii, 3-5, for this chapter.

about rebelling and many times terrorized the Saxon frontiers. As soon as King Otto was freed from the plottings of his brothers, with the support of divine help he executed judgment and justice unto his people. After he had brought into subjection to his rule nearly all the kingdoms which had seceded after the death of Charles, he took up arms against the Danes.<sup>2</sup> He marched his army across the Danish frontier, which at one time had been at Schleswig, and devastated the whole region with fire and sword, even to the farthest sea which separates the Northmen from the Danes and which to this very day is called the Ottensund<sup>3</sup> for the victory of the king. When he was returning he was attacked by King Harold at Schleswig. In the battle, which was manfully contested on both sides, the Saxons gained the victory and the Danes withdrew in retreat to their ships. When conditions at length were favorable for peace, Harold submitted to Otto and, on getting back his kingdom from the latter, bound himself to receive Christianity in Denmark. Without delay Harold was baptized together with his wife, Gunnhild, and his little son, whom our king raised up from the sacred font and named Svein Otto. At this time Denmark accepted completely the faith and was divided into three dioceses which were subjected to the metropolitan of Hamburg.<sup>4</sup> The most blessed Adaldag, then, was the first to consecrate bishops for Denmark and from this time on, the church at Hamburg began to have suffragans. Indeed, such increase followed these beginnings of heavenly mercy that the churches of the Danes seem to abound in the manifold fruits of the northern nations from that time even to this day. When the most valorous King Otto had duly settled his affairs in Denmark, he turned his army to the subjugation of the rebellious Slavs. These people, whom his father had conquered in one great war, he

<sup>2</sup> This story of Otto's war on Denmark is questioned. Adam does not mention Otto II's expedition against Harold Blue-Tooth because he here attributed it to Otto I.

<sup>3</sup> The Kattegat. Cf. Schmeidler (ed.), *Adam*, p. 63 n. 4.

<sup>4</sup> Hauck (*Kirchengeschichte Deutschlands*, III, 92 199., 100 n. 3) thinks that this consecration of bishops for Jutland, not Denmark, took place in 947 or shortly before. The three sees were Schleswig, Ribe, and Aarhus.

now pressed with such energy that for the sake of their lives as well as for the sake of their fatherland, they freely proffered the victor both tribute and conversion to Christianity. The whole of the pagan folk was baptized. Then were churches first built in Slavia. Concerning these events some matters may be more fitly discussed in the setting in which they occurred.<sup>1</sup>

## 10. DUKE HERMANN

When after these events<sup>1</sup> the most victorious King Otto was called into Italy to free the Holy See, he is said to have taken counsel as to whom he should leave behind him as vice-gerent to give justice in the lands which lay along the barbarian frontier. For since the time of Charles, Saxony had had no duke except the Caesar himself because of the ancient rebelliousness of its people. So that in his absence the Danes or Slavs might not plot revolt, the king let necessity persuade him for the first time to delegate his position as ruler in Saxony to Hermann.<sup>2</sup> I think it necessary to recall some facts about this man and his progeny because they have in our times come to be very powerful. This man was born of poor parents and is said to have been content at first with his paternal inheritance of seven hides and as many tenants. Then, because he was shrewd of mind and prepossessing in appearance as well as trustworthy and humble in his bearing toward his lords and peers, he quickly attracted notice at court and [won] the confidence of the king himself. On discovering the assiduity of the young man, the king enrolled him in the number of his aides. Later he appointed him to be the tutor of his sons and soon, as his fortunes prospered, even committed to him prefectural posts.<sup>3</sup> It is said that in the energetic administra-

<sup>1</sup> Chaps. 12, 14, *infra*, for which Helmold draws on Adam, ii, 26 (24).

<sup>2</sup> In this chapter Helmold does little more than add the observations about the Slavs to what he draws from Adam, ii, 2, 8-11 (7-9).

<sup>3</sup> The following account of Hermann Billung is generally questioned. Cf. Köpke-Dümmeler, *Otto der Grosse*, Exkurs 3; Steindorff, *De ducatus, qui Billungorum dicitur, in Saxonis origine et progressu*. Helmold has in mind Henry the Lion and Albert the Bear when he supplies the information that Hermann's progeny had "in our times come to be very powerful."

<sup>4</sup> Like those of a count.

tion of these offices, when tenants of his own were cited in his court for theft, he rendered a decision condemning them one and all to death. The novelty of this act at the time endeared him to the people and soon distinguished him at court. Indeed, on acquiring the ducal power in Saxony, he governed the province with judgment and justice and to the end of his life remained zealous in the defense of the holy churches.<sup>4</sup>

On having thus entrusted his power in this region to so excellent a man, the most pious king departed into Italy.<sup>5</sup> There he held a council of the bishops and brought about the deposition of Pope John, surnamed Octavian, who stood accused of many crimes. He did this notwithstanding the pope's absence, for the latter had fled to escape judgment, and he had the *protoscriniarius* Leo consecrated in his stead. Soon afterward he himself was crowned emperor by Leo<sup>6</sup> and hailed as Augustus by the Roman people in the twenty-eighth year of his reign. Since the coronation of Charles at Rome one hundred and fifty-three years had elapsed.<sup>7</sup> At this time the emperor and his son spent five years in Italy,<sup>8</sup> fighting with the sons of Berengar and restoring Rome to her ancient freedom. Upon his return

<sup>4</sup> Hermann died March 27, 973. Like Adam, Helmold has the churches of Hamburg and Bremen in mind.

<sup>5</sup> In August, 961. Pope John XII (Octavian) had called Otto I to his aid against Berengar II of Ivrea in 960.

<sup>6</sup> Adam confuses events, and Helmold does not correct him. Otto I was crowned emperor February 2, 962, by Pope John XII, not by the pope he later set up, Leo VIII. While Otto was campaigning against Berengar of Ivrea, John XII turned against him. Otto returned to Rome and caused John XII to be deposed by a synod composed chiefly of Italian prelates, December 4, 963. On this occasion the *protoscriniarius* Leo was chosen pope and he took the name Leo VIII. Otto then again went off to fight Berengar. In his absence the Romans drove out Leo VIII, recalled John XII and, when he died shortly afterward (May 14, 964), elected a worthy cleric, Benedict V. The Boeckel codex is annotated in fifteenth century script here: "Note: In Otto's absence the Romans created a third pope, Benedict. After Otto had on this account brought together a great army he besieged Rome until they presented the intruder, Benedict, to him. When Pope Leo was returned to his seat and everything was quiet, Otto went back into Saxony, taking with him Pope Benedict, who at length died and was buried in Hamburg."

<sup>7</sup> Otto I was crowned emperor in the twenty-sixth year of his reign, the hundred and sixty-second after the coronation of Charles the Great.

<sup>8</sup> The war lasted not five years, but three years and four months, from August 961 to January 965. Otto I's son, the second of the name, did not come to Italy until October 967, with his father's third expedition. He had been crowned king at Aachen, May 16, 961. John XIII crowned him emperor on Christmas day 967.

thereafter to his fatherland he gave his entire attention to the conversion of the heathen, particularly the Slavs. This work turned out according to his wishes, for God in all things concurred with and strengthened the right arm of the most pious king.

#### II. ARCHBISHOP ADALBERT

After the Slavic tribes had been subjected to and united in the Christian faith, Otto the Great built on the banks of the river Elbe the renowned city of Magdeburg and designated it as the metropolitan see for the Slavs. He had Adalbert, a man of the greatest sanctity, consecrated there as its archbishop.<sup>1</sup> This man was, therefore, the first prelate to be consecrated in Magdeburg and he administered his episcopal office with untiring energy for twelve years. By his preaching there he converted many of the Slavic people. His consecration took place in the thirty-fifth year of the reign of the emperor, one hundred and thirty-seven years after the consecration of the saintly Ansgar.<sup>2</sup> To the archbishopric of Magdeburg was subjected all of Slavia as far as the Peene River. There were five suffragan bishoprics: of these Merseburg and Zeitz are situated on the Saale River; Meissen, on the Elbe; Brandenburg and Havelberg, farther inland.<sup>3</sup> The sixth bishopric of Slavia is Oldenburg.<sup>4</sup> The emperor Otto had

<sup>1</sup> Otto I founded the bishopric and built the cathedral of Magdeburg, but not the city. Magdeburg was an old German-Slav trading center and first appears in history in the time of Charles the Great; it did not become important until Otto I founded a Benedictine monastery there in 937 and secured papal approval for his design to establish an archbishopric in 962. Hauck, *Kirchengeschichte Deutschlands*, III, 109-36.

<sup>2</sup> John XIII consecrated Adalbert in Rome, probably October 18, 968; certainly, Adalbert consecrated two suffragan bishops in Magdeburg on Christmas day of that year. Since he died June 21, 981, he ruled thirteen years. Likewise, his consecration in all probability took place in the thirty-second or thirty-third year of Otto's reign, one hundred and thirty-six years after Ansgar's consecration in 832, as Adam reckoned.

<sup>3</sup> Zeitz is situated on the Weisse Elster, not on the Saale River, and the see was moved to Naumburg in 1032 because that site was less exposed to attack by the Slavs. Kretschmer, *Historische Geographie von Mitteleuropa*, pp. 428-32.

<sup>4</sup> This bishopric was probably founded in 948, but subject to the metropolitan see of Mainz until 968, when it was transferred to the jurisdiction of Hamburg-Bremen. Curschmann, "Die Entstehung des Bistums Oldenburg," *Historische Vierteljahrschrift*, XIV (1911), 182-98. Hauck (*op. cit.*, III, 107 n. 3), summarizes the controversy over the date of the founding, but note Schmeidler (ed.), *Adam*, p. 72 n. 1. To this point in the chapter Helmold follows Adam, ii, 15 (13), 16 (14); what follows he writes from his own knowledge.

originally decreed that this bishopric should, like the others, be subject to Magdeburg, but Adaldag, the bishop of Hamburg, later asked for it because it had been included within the limits of his church by ancient imperial charters.

## 12. BISHOP MARCO

The Oldenburg which in the Slavic tongue is called Starigard, that is "Old Town," is situated in the country of the Wagiri on the western reaches of the Baltic Sea and is the farthest point in Slavia.<sup>1</sup> This city and province were at one time inhabited by very brave men because through their location on the border of the whole of Slavia they had as neighbors the Danish and Saxon peoples, and the inhabitants were always the first either to make war or to bear the brunt of all the wars brought on by others. There are, however, said to have been among them at times rulers mighty enough to bring under their control all the territory of the Abodrites and of the Kicini and of those who were farther distant. When, as was said above, all the Slavic country was conquered and reduced, the city of Oldenburg also received the faith and became very rich in the number of believers. To this town the most excellent Caesar appointed the venerable Marco bishop and placed in his charge the entire country of the Abodrites as far as the Peene River and the city of Demmin.<sup>2</sup> The Caesar also committed to his care the well-known city of Schleswig, which is likewise known under the name of Haddeby. At that time Schleswig with the adjacent province, which extends from the Schlei Sea to the Eider River, was subject to the sway of the Roman Empire. Its lands were extensive and fruitful in crops but for the most part deserted because, being

<sup>1</sup> That is, to the west. Helmold is only slightly in debt to Adam in this chapter, ii, 26 (24); schol. 15 (16), 29. Von Breska (*Untersuchungen über die Nachrichten Helmolds*, pp. 19-26), contends that Helmold had innocently used one, perhaps two, spurious accounts exaggerating the extent of the original donations to the see of Oldenburg in this and chapters 13, 14, and 18 following. Schmeidler is of the opinion that Helmold followed popular traditions.

<sup>2</sup> According to Adam Egward was the first bishop consecrated for Oldenburg in 968. Marco was bishop of Schleswig (948?-965?) and probably also administered affairs in the diocese of Oldenburg.

situated between the ocean<sup>3</sup> and the Baltic Sea, they were frequently laid waste by hostile visitations. When, however, through the mercy of God and the valor of Otto the Great a lasting peace was everywhere established, the deserted places of Wagria and the country of Schleswig began to be re peopled, and there was not left any corner which was not conspicuous for its towns and villages, and also for its many monasteries. There remain to this day numerous indications of that old occupation, especially in the forest which extends in a wide sweep from the city of Lütjenburg into Schleswig. In its vast and scarcely penetrable solitude traces of the furrows which had separated the plowlands of former times may be descried among the stoutest trees of the woods. Wall structures indicate the plans of towns and also of cities. In many streams ancient embankments, once thrown up to collect the tributary waters for the mills, show that all that woodland had once been inhabited by the Saxons.<sup>4</sup> The first bishop placed in charge of this new plantation was, as I have said, Marco, who cleansed in the sacred font of baptism the Wagrian and Abodrite peoples.

When he died Schleswig was distinguished by an extraordinary prelate. The governance of the see of Oldenburg was bestowed upon the venerable Egward who converted many of the Slavs to the Lord. He was consecrated by the saintly Adal-dag, archbishop of Hamburg. Now the congregation of the faithful grew and nothing happened to the detriment of the new plantation in the whole period of the Ottos. Of these, I have learned, there were three, every one animated by equal zeal for the conversion of the Slavs. And all the land of the Wagiri, of the Abodrites, and of the Kicini was filled with churches and priests, with monks and nuns dedicated to God. The church at Oldenburg was consecrated to the memory of Saint John the Baptist and distinguished by the honor of being the mother church. The church at Mecklenburg was built in

<sup>3</sup> The North Sea.

<sup>4</sup> Cf. Thompson, *Feudal Germany*, p. 491.

honor of the Prince of the Apostles, Peter, and a convent of nuns was attached to it. The bishops of Oldenburg, besides, held the rulers of the Slavs in great respect because, through the munificence of the great prince Otto, they had been provided with an abundance of worldly goods from which they could dispense generously and win for themselves the good will of the people. An annual tribute from all the land of the Wagiri and Abodrites was given to the bishop. It was, indeed, regarded as taking the place of a tithe and was made up of a measure of grain, of forty small bundles of flax, and of twelve pennies of pure silver from every plow; in addition to this, one penny was given to the collector of the tax. The Slavic plow consisted of so much land as could be worked by one pair of oxen or by one horse.<sup>5</sup> To set forth in detail the towns or the goods or the number of manors which were in the possession of the bishop is not the purpose of this work because "old things are passed" into oblivion and "behold all things are become new."<sup>6</sup>

## 13. BISHOP WAGO

In the thirty-eighth year<sup>1</sup> of his reign as king and the eleventh as emperor, the great prince Otto, the conqueror of all the nations of the north, departed happily to the Lord and received burial in his city of Magdeburg. His son Otto, the middle one, succeeded him and energetically governed the Empire for ten years. As soon as he had overcome Lothair and Charles, the kings of the Franks,<sup>2</sup> he transferred the war into Calabria and died at Rome after he had beaten the Saracens and been beaten by them and by the Greeks.<sup>3</sup> The third Otto, although still a

<sup>5</sup> Cf. Thompson, *op. cit.*, pp. 399 and n. 3, 485 n. 3, 532.

<sup>6</sup> II Cor. 5: 17.

<sup>1</sup> Adam refers the death of Otto I, May 7, 973, to the thirty-eighth year of the pontificate of Adaldag, archbishop of Hamburg-Bremen.

<sup>2</sup> Otto II by no means conquered King Lothair (954-86) of the West Franks and his brother, Charles, duke of Lorraine. Cf. *Cambridge Medieval History*, III, 207-08.

<sup>3</sup> This Italian war (980-83) was waged to win the marriage portion of his Byzantine wife, Theophano. Otto won at Cotrone (the ancient Croton) but not long after fell into an ambush from which he escaped although his army was almost annihilated. Otto II died in Rome December 7, 983. Adam does not notice Otto II's war with Harold Blue-Tooth for the reason that he attributes it to Otto I. *Vide* chap. 9 n. 2, *supra*.



boy,<sup>4</sup> succeeded to the throne and for eighteen years distinguished the scepter by a strong and just rule.

At the same time Hermann, the duke of the Saxons, died and left as heir his son, Benno, who also is remembered for having been a good and brave man, except that he departed from his father's policy in burdening the people with exactions.<sup>5</sup> At Oldenburg Wago succeeded on Egward's death. Wago lived very prosperously among the Slavs and, it is said, had a very beautiful sister whom a chieftain of the Abodrites, named Billug, coveted. Because he frequently made advances to the bishop regarding his suit, certain friends of the bishop with incautious and insulting words opposed his plea, saying that it was not right that a most beautiful virgin should be united with an uncultured and boorish man.<sup>6</sup> This affront Billug pretended not to notice and, smitten with love, did not cease to urge his suit. The bishop feared lest serious harm might come upon the young church if he did not listen favorably to the suit, and he gave Billug his sister in marriage. By her, Billug had a daughter named Hodica. Her uncle, the bishop, placed her in a convent of nuns, trained her in the Sacred Scriptures, and made her abbess over the nuns who lived in Mecklenburg although she had not yet come of years. It was this especially which gave her brother, Mistislav, offense.<sup>7</sup> He was impelled to hate, secretly to be sure, the Christian religion by the fear that through this precedent foreign ways might be introduced into those regions. He frequently upbraided his father for loving empty inventions, as if he were out of his mind, and for not fearing to depart from the laws of his fathers, as he had done first by marrying a German woman, then by consigning his daughter to a monastic

<sup>4</sup> Born in the summer of 980. Uhlirz, *Otto II und Otto III*, p. 135 n. 15.

<sup>5</sup> Adam and Helmold call Bernhard I, Benno. He was duke from 973 to 1011. Thus far Helmold draws his information from Adam, ii, 24 (21). The story of Billug and Mistislav in this and the following chapter probably rests on a contemporary saga, but belongs to the diocese of Mecklenburg rather than to that of Oldenburg and Wagria. Von Breska, *Untersuchungen über die Nachrichten Helmolds*, pp. 22-23.

<sup>6</sup> Cf. Thompson, *Feudal Germany*, pp. 392 n. 2, 505 n. 3.

<sup>7</sup> There is much doubt as to his identity, but he may possibly be the "Mistizlav" mentioned by Thietmar, ix, 5 (viii, 4).

cloister. As with these arguments he often goaded his father, the latter by degrees began to change his mind and even to think of repudiating his wedded wife and of bringing about a change. Fear, however, held him back from doing so; the undertaking of serious business is always difficult. Moreover, the valor of the Saxons was very formidable. War would of necessity follow immediately upon the repudiation of the bishop's sister and the sundering of religious connections.

#### 14. THE TREACHERY OF BILLUG

Now, it happened that one day the bishop came into the city of the Abodrites, Mecklenburg, on a visitation. Thither also Billug and his chiefs had repaired to receive him with pretended devotion. The princeling of the Abodrites addressed the prelate, thus engrossed with public matters:

I am under great obligations to your holiness, venerable father, although I well recognize that I am in no way able to requite them. Personal favors which you have conferred on me, I for the present forego mentioning because they are manifold and call for lengthy discourse. I feel constrained to dwell on the general good of the land as a whole. Your solicitude about the establishment of churches and the salvation of souls has, indeed, been manifest to all. The number of times you have through your foresight warded off harsh measures on the part of the princes, thus enabling us to live peacefully and quietly in the favor of these princes, is not unknown. Were it, therefore, required of us, we should without hesitation devote ourselves and our possessions to your honor. One slight petition, however, I do not hesitate to lay before you; deny me not.<sup>1</sup> There is among the Abodrites an episcopal tribute, regarded as a tithe; namely, from every plow, which consists of two oxen or of one horse, a measure of grain and forty bundles of flax and twelve pennies of approved money, besides one penny which is due to the collector. I ask that you permit me to make this collection and to allot it to the support of your niece, my daughter. That I may not, in making this request, by chance appear to be injuring you or to be lessening your revenue, I shall add to your possessions in each and every *Burgward* which is in the country of the Abodrites such villages as you yourself may select, except those which by imperial concessions have already come under episcopal jurisdiction.

<sup>1</sup> 1 Kings 2: 16, 20.

Not noticing the treachery concealed in the fine words of the cunning man and thinking, too, that the exchange would not be detrimental to him, the bishop without delay granted his petition. He selected, indeed, estates of very ample extent and, as I have noted above, resigned to his brother-in-law the collection of the tribute for the use of his daughter. The bishop stayed yet for some time among the Abodrites, allotting the properties which his settlers were to work, and when all his affairs were arranged returned to the land of the Wagiri, a place which was more convenient for him and where he was out of danger. The disposition of the Slavs, by nature untrustworthy and prone to evil, had to be guarded against. In addition to others, the bishop had two noteworthy residences<sup>2</sup> at which he very often tarried, one on the royal estate called Bosau, the other on the river Trave, in a place named Nezenna,<sup>3</sup> where there was also a chapel and a refectory built of masonry. The foundations of these buildings I saw when I was a youth because they are not far from the foot of the mountain which the ancients called Eilberch and the moderns, Segeberg,<sup>4</sup> from the castle built on its summit.

After a considerable time, as Bishop Wago was occupied in other parts and went less frequently into the country of the Abodrites, the above-mentioned Billug, together with his son Mistislav, took advantage of opportunities gradually to unfold the plot which he had laid against his lord and pastor. By stealthy plundering he began to lay waste the episcopal possessions which the bishop had commended to his protection as vassal and relative and in an under-handed way to send his own serfs to steal away from the settlers their horses and other property. He directed his efforts even to this end that, as he

<sup>2</sup> *Curtis*, which might be hamlet communities or, as in this case, probably fortified manor houses. *Villae* were open, unfortified villages. A *Burgward* was, as Henry I organized the conquered Slav country, a military base which in the course of time became the center of the civil and ecclesiastical as well as military administration of the near-by country. Thompson, *Feudal Germany*, pp. 482, 483 and n. 1.

<sup>3</sup> Gnissau near Lübeck.

<sup>4</sup> Kalkberg near Segeberg, west of Lübeck. Cf. chaps. 49, 53, *infra*.

deprived the bishop of his right to the tithes, so would he strip him of his possessions and, having struck down the head, the service of God could the more easily be extinguished. At length, however, the bishop came into the country of the Abodrites and, on holding there a reckoning with his settlers, clearly perceived by whose machinations such villainies were being perpetrated on his possessions. No wonder that at this discovery he was deeply moved with amazement and at the same time with fear, for he had found the most atrocious plotters to be those whom he had thought his best friends. Apprehending the failure of the new plantation, he now became seized with indecision. However, he fell back on a policy which for the moment seemed to be safest and sought to discover whether by persuasion he could possibly remedy the evil which had gradually stolen in. He began with many blandishments to wheedle his brother-in-law into giving up his designs and foregoing the exposure of the ecclesiastical possessions to the plundering of robbers. He said that if he did not come to his senses, he would incur not only the displeasure of God but also that of his imperial majesty. Parrying these remonstrances, Billug replied that he had never been guilty of such gross deception toward his lord and father, for whom he had ever had the warmest affection; that if anything of the sort had taken place, it had happened through the wiles of the robbers who came from the Rugiani and Wilzi and did not spare his own holdings; and that he would, indeed, willingly give his advice and aid in restraining them. Thus the simple man was easily persuaded to give up the judgment he had formed. After the bishop had departed, satisfied with this explanation, the promise made him was at once broken. The plotters returned to their shameful undertakings and set fire to the villages in addition to robbing them. Moreover, they threatened with death all the settlers who belonged to the bishop's jurisdiction, should they fail to leave their farms without delay. And so desolation came in a short while upon these possessions.

In addition to these misdeeds this same Billug broke his

marriage vows by repudiating the bishop's sister. This act was the particular occasion of ill feeling and the state of the church gradually became precarious. Nor was there at hand any means by which the condition of the young church could be fully restored because Otto the Great had long ago departed this life and both the second and the third Ottos were occupied with their Italian wars. On this account the Slavs, trusting to the advantages of the situation, began little by little to strive not only against the divine laws but also against the imperial commands. Only Duke Benno of Saxony seemed to possess some power, although but a tenuous shadow, respect for which checked the impulse of the Slavs so that they neither renounced the Christian faith nor took up arms.

When Wago died, Ezico succeeded to the see. He received his consecration from the most saintly Adaldag, archbishop of Hamburg.<sup>5</sup> We have learned that four bishops lived before the destruction of the church of Oldenburg; namely, Marco, Egward,<sup>6</sup> Wago, and Ezico in whose time the Slavs kept the faith. Churches were erected everywhere in Slavia and many monasteries were built in which men and women served God. Witness to this is Master Adam who eloquently recounted the deeds of the bishops of the church of Hamburg and who, in recalling that Slavia was divided into eighteen cantons, stated that all but three had been converted to the faith of Christ.

#### 15. SVEIN, THE KING OF THE DANES

At the same time Boleslav,<sup>1</sup> the most Christian king of the Poles, in alliance with Otto III, subjected to tribute all of Slavia beyond the Oder and also the Russians and Prussians at

<sup>5</sup> Adaldag died April 29, 988. Both Wago and Ezico had been consecrated by him, perhaps before 984.

<sup>6</sup> From this point Helmold follows Adam, ii, 26 (24), and Adam cites Svein, the king of the Danes, as his authority.

<sup>1</sup> Helmold freely intermingles in this chapter information of his own with that which he draws from Adam, ii, 26-29 (24-27), 31 (29), 32 (30); schol. 24 (25). The reference is to Boleslav Chrobry (992-1025) and the year 994. Thompson, *Feudal Germany*, pp. 641-46.

whose hands Bishop Adalbert had suffered martyrdom.<sup>2</sup> Boleslav then brought Bishop Adalbert's remains into Poland. The princes of the Slavs who are called Winuli, or Winithi, were at that time Mistislav, Naccon, and Sederich<sup>3</sup> under whom there was continuous peace and the Slavs served as tributaries. One may not, however, properly pass over the fact that this Mistislav, prince of the Abodrites, who openly professed but secretly persecuted Christ, abducted his sister Hodica, a virgin dedicated to God, from the convent of nuns which was in Mecklenburg and gave her in a most lustful marriage to a certain Boleslav. The other nuns whom he found there he either handed over in marriage to his warriors or sent into the country of the Wilzi or Rugiani, and desolation thus came upon that convent.

Because of the sins of men God permitted in those days the peace which was with the Danes and the Slavs to be disturbed and allowed a wicked man to try to oversow with tares the fair growing grain of divine religion. For among the Danes the son of the most Christian king Harold, Svein Otto,<sup>4</sup> inflamed by a diabolical spirit, set on foot many conspiracies against his father because he desired to deprive him of the throne, now that Harold was advanced in years and less strong, and to root out entirely the work of the divine plantation from the territories of the Danes. Harold, as has been said above, had at first been a heathen. When converted to the faith of Christ by the teaching of the great father Unni, he behaved himself with such devotion to the Lord that there has not arisen among all the kings of the Danes one like him. He drew the vast reaches of the north to a knowledge of the divine faith and made all that country notable for its churches and its priests. Remarkable as was this man for his zeal in godly matters, not less remarkable was he

<sup>2</sup> Chap. 1 n. 5, *supra*.

<sup>3</sup> Widukind, *Rerum gest. Sax.*, iii, 50, mentions Naccon as an Abodrite prince active in 955. No Slavic prince named Sederich is known; it has been suggested that the name is not Slavic but Scandinavian, Sithric. Schmeidler (ed.), *Adam*, p. 86 nn. 8-10; Thompson, *op. cit.*, p. 665.

<sup>4</sup> The Forked Beard (Tveskjoed), 985-1014. Cf. chap. 9, *supra*, where it is stated that Svein Otto as a child was baptized with his father.

in worldly wisdom. With regard to that which manifestly pertained to the government of the kingdom, he was so distinguished that out of respect for his reputation to this day not only the Danes but also the Saxons strive to observe the laws and judgments which he gave. At the instigation, however, of those who refused to serve God and to keep the king's peace, the Danes one and all conspired to renounce Christianity, set the impious Svein upon the throne and declared war against his father Harold. Even as the latter had from the beginning of his reign ever placed his trust in God, he also then most particularly commended to God the issue of the event, sorrowing not so much over his own danger as over the sin of his son and the trials of the Church. When he perceived that the tumult could not be quelled without war, he unwillingly took up arms at the exhortation of those who strove to keep their fidelity to the Lord and to the king inviolate. War, therefore, ensued. In the conflict the party of Harold was beaten and many fell covered with wounds. Severely wounded, Harold himself fled from the battle, boarded a ship and escaped to Jumne, the most renowned city of the Slavs. There he was kindly received, contrary to his expectations, for the people were barbarians. After some days he failed because of his wound and passed away in the confession of Christ. He deserves to be enrolled not only among the kings pleasing to God, but also among the glorious martyrs. He had reigned fifty years.

On Harold's death Svein, who had possessed himself of the kingdom, began to give free rein to his passionate cruelty by carrying on a most grievous persecution against the Christians. All the wicked ones in the countries of the north stood up together, rejoicing that now the way was open to their malice—namely, for wars and disturbances—and they began to harass the neighboring countries by land and sea. First they collected a fleet of warships, rowed across the British Ocean by the shortest route, and landed on the banks of the Elbe River. There without warning they burst upon the peaceful and unsuspecting

people, ravaged the whole coast of Hadeln and all the land of the Saxons along the river bank until they came to Stade, which is a convenient haven for ships descending the Elbe. Counts Siegfried and Dietrich and the other nobles<sup>5</sup> to whom the safety of the province was entrusted, quickly learned this sad news and rushed to meet the barbarians. Although they were very few in number, the need of the hour constrained them to attack the enemy in this port of Stade. In this furious battle the valorous Saxons were completely overcome and the Danes conquered. The counts and the other nobles and knightly men who survived the slaughter were bound, chained, and dragged to the ships. Count Siegfried fled in the night with the help of a fisherman and escaped captivity. Enraged at his getting away the barbarians severed the hands and feet of all the noble men whom they had in chains, cut off their noses, and threw them half dead on shore. Then they plundered the rest of the land with impunity. Another band of the pirates who had gone up the Weser laid waste all the country along that stream as far as Lesum and reached the Glinster Moor with a large number of captives.<sup>6</sup> When there they made a certain captive Saxon knight lead the way, he took them into the most untraversable parts of the swamp. There they were fatigued after some time and were easily dispersed by the Saxons who trailed them. Twenty thousand of them perished. The name of the knight who led them into the *impasse* was Heriward; his praise is sounded the year round by the Saxons.

#### 16. HOW THE SLAVS RELINQUISHED THE FAITH

About the same time ended the year of the incarnation of the Word, 1001, in which the most valiant emperor Otto III sank, overtaken by an untimely death, after he had thrice entered

<sup>5</sup> Thietmar of Merseburg, iv, 23-25 (16), and the Annals of Hildesheim and Quedlinburg (an. 994), name three brothers, Henry, Udo, and Siegfried, the sons of Count Henry of Stade. Dietrich was the uncle of Count Ethelger, one of the local nobles. The battle took place June 23, 994.

<sup>6</sup> Lesum is on the Wümme River near Stade; the Glinster Moor is near Glinstedt in East Havelland.



Rome a victor.<sup>1</sup> There succeeded him on the throne the most pious Henry, remarkable for his justice and sanctity, the one, let me recall, who founded the bishopric of Bamberg and provided for churchly worship with the amplest munificence. In the tenth year of Henry's reign the duke of Saxony died, Benno, a man conspicuous for his thorough probity and zealous defense of the churches. Bernhard, his son, inherited his princely dignity; he departed, however, from his father's happy courses. Discord and turbulence never ceased in this country from the time he was established as duke,<sup>2</sup> for the reason that in presuming to rise against the emperor Henry he moved all Saxony to rebel with him against the Caesar. Then he rose against Christ and brought terror and confusion upon all the churches of Saxony, those especially that would not join in the malicious rebellion I have noted.<sup>3</sup> In addition to these misfortunes this duke, entirely unmindful of the esteem in which both his father and his grandfather had held the Slavs, through his avarice cruelly oppressed the nation of the Winuli and sheerly drove it into paganism. At that time Margrave Dietrich and Duke Bernhard held dominion over the Slavs, the former possessing the eastern country, the latter, the western.<sup>4</sup> Their villainy forced the Slavs into apostasy. This heathen folk, still immature in the faith, had previously been treated with great lenience by the most noble princes who had tempered their rigor toward those

<sup>1</sup> In May 996, February 998, and November 1000. Otto III died January 23, 1002. *Cambridge Medieval History*, III, 172-77, 214. Helmold compiled this chapter with numerous changes and additions of his own from Adam, ii, 42-45 (40-43), 48 (46); schol. 27 (30), 28 (31), 30 (28), 31 (32). Von Breska (*Untersuchungen über die Nachrichten Helmolds*, pp. 26-29) argues very plausibly that Helmold had used another written source for this chapter, had tried to reconcile it with the source he had used for chapters 13, 14, and 18, had failed and consequently fallen back on Adam; hence the confusion of events. Regel (*Helmold und seine Quellen*, pp. 12-14) accepts von Breska's conclusions, but Schmeidler comments, "*nec probari nec refelli posse conseo.*"

<sup>2</sup> Bernhard I, whom Helmold calls Benno, died February 9, 1011; his son, Bernhard II, ruled 1011-59. Hirsch, *Heinrich II*, II, 302-3.

<sup>3</sup> Both the annals of Quedlinburg for the year 1020 and of Hildesheim (incorrectly for 1019) mention hostilities between Henry II and Bernhard II. The duke's proceedings against the churches, especially that of Hamburg-Bremen under Unwan, preceded this war. Helmold substitutes *deinde* for Adam's *novissime* in this passage. Cf. Hirsch, *op. cit.*, III, 114, 117-18.

<sup>4</sup> Dietrich was margrave in the Nordmark.

about whose salvation they were zealously concerned. Now, however, they were pursued by the margrave and Duke Bernhard with such cruelty that they finally threw off the yoke of servitude and had to take up arms in defense of their freedom. Mistivoi and Mizzidrag were the chiefs of the Winuli under whose leadership the rebellion flared up.<sup>5</sup> Now the story goes, and it is ancient lore, that this Mistivoi sought and was promised the hand of Duke Bernhard's niece. Then the chief of the Winuli in his desire to show he was worthy of the engagement with a thousand horsemen accompanied the duke into Italy and there nearly all of them were killed. When he returned from the expedition, he asked for the maiden who had been promised to him, but Margrave Dietrich opposed the plan, vociferating that a kinswoman of the duke should not be given to a dog. On hearing this the Slav chieftain departed in great indignation. When, therefore, the duke had taken other counsel and had sent messengers after him to say that the desired nuptials might take place, Mistivoi is said to have answered: "It is only right that the highborn niece of a great prince should be married to a man of exalted rank and not, indeed, be given to a dog. The great thanks that are given us for our service is that we are now considered dogs, not men. Well then, if the dog be hale he will take big bites." And with these words he returned into Slavia. First of all he went to the city of Rethra, which is in the land of the Lutici, called together all the Slavs who lived to the eastward and made known to them the insult that had been offered him and that in the language of the Saxons the Slavs are called "dogs." But they said: "You, who spurned your co-tribesmen

<sup>5</sup> This Mistivoi appears also in Widukind, *Rerum gest. Sax.*, iii, 68, about the year 963, and in Thietmar, iii, 18 (11); iv, 2, for the years 983-84. Helmold, following Adam, attributes to Mistivoi the deeds and the experiences of the Mistislav mentioned by Thietmar, ix, 5. Adam in general puts together events which happened between 983 and 1018 and refers them to the years 1011-13, and Helmold does not correct him. Mizzidrag has not been identified. The story which follows concerns Bernhard II in Adam, but fits only Bernhard I. Adam also had Mistivoi seek the lady's hand *filio suo* and also had Mistivoi send *filium suum* into Italy (ca. 981). The Dietrich who interrupted Mistivoi's suit was the one mentioned *supra*, p. 82. The story belongs in the years 973-83. Cf. Uhlirz, *Otto II und Otto III*, I, 176 n. 3; Hirsch, *op. cit.*, I, 478-86.

and courted the Saxons, a perfidious and avaricious race, suffer this deservedly. Swear, now, to us that you will give them up and we will stand by you." And he swore to them.

Therefore, after Duke Bernhard had for apparent reasons taken up arms against the Caesar, the Slavs embraced the opportunity to collect an army and wasted first the whole of Nordalbingia with fire and sword. Then, roving about the rest of Slavia, they burned all the churches and destroyed them even to the ground. They murdered the priests and the other ministers of the churches with diverse tortures and left not a vestige of Christianity beyond the Elbe. At Hamburg, then and later, many clerics and citizens were led off into captivity and many more were put to death through hatred of Christianity. The old men of the Slavs<sup>8</sup> who remember all the deeds of the barbarians tell how Oldenburg had been a city most populous with Christians. There sixty priests (the rest had been slaughtered like cattle) were kept as objects of derision. The oldest of these, the provost of the place, was named Oddar. He and others were martyred in this manner. After the skin of their heads had been cut in the form of a cross, the brain of each was laid bare with an iron. With hands tied behind their backs, the confessors of God were then dragged through one Slavic town after another until they died. After having been thus made "a spectacle . . . to angels and to men,"<sup>9</sup> they breathed forth their victorious spirits in the middle of the course.<sup>8</sup> Many deeds of this kind, which for lack of written records are now regarded as fables, are remembered as having been done at this time in the several provinces of the Slavs and Nordalbingians. In fine, there were so many martyrs in Slavia that they can hardly be enumerated in a book.

All the Slavs who dwelt between the Elbe and the Oder and who had practiced the Christian religion for seventy years and more, that is, during the whole time of the reigns of the Ottos,

<sup>8</sup> Adam says that the king of the Danes, Svein Estridsson, and those who remembered all the deeds of the barbarians had told him. Cf. von Breda, *op. cit.*, p. 18.

<sup>9</sup> I Cor. 4: 9.

<sup>8</sup> Cf. II Tim. 4: 7.

in this manner cut themselves off from the body of Christ and of the Church with which they had before been united. Oh, truly the judgments of God over men are hidden: "Therefore hath He mercy on whom He will . . . and whom He will, He hardeneth."<sup>9</sup> Marveling at His omnipotence, we see those who were the first to believe falling back into paganism; those, however, who seemed to be the very last, converted to Christ. But He, "the just judge, strong and patient,"<sup>10</sup> who of old wiped out in the sight of Israel the seven tribes of Canaan, and kept only the strangers in whom He tried Israel—He, I say, willed now to harden a small part of the heathen through whom He might confound our perfidy. These things were done in the last days of Archbishop Libentius, the elder,<sup>11</sup> under Duke Bernhard, the son of Benno, who grievously oppressed the Slavic people. Dietrich, the margrave of the Slavs, who was as avaricious and as cruel as the one mentioned,<sup>12</sup> was driven from his post and from all his inheritance, and he ended his life as a prebendary at Magdeburg with the bad death he deserved. Mistivoi, the chieftain of the Slavs, was toward the end of his time brought to repentance and converted to God. Since he would not give up Christianity, he was driven from his fatherland and fled to the Bardi with whom he lived as a believer to an old age.<sup>13</sup>

## 17. BISHOP UNWAN

When Ezico died in Oldenburg, Volkward<sup>1</sup> succeeded, and after him came Reginbert. The first of these bishops, Volkward,

<sup>9</sup> Rom. 9: 18.

<sup>10</sup> Ps. 7: 12 (Douay version).

<sup>11</sup> Lievizo I (988-1013).

<sup>12</sup> Schmeidler and others suggest that there was a second Dietrich, for the one mentioned earlier in this chapter had died in 985. The "one mentioned," *commemorato*, may refer to the Saxon duke, but Helmold must have had in mind the former Dietrich. Obviously Helmold is here pointing out how the several wicked ones of his story got their just due. Cf. Schmeidler (ed.), *Adam*, p. 104 n. 1.

<sup>13</sup> The Bardi may have lived in the Bardengau, the *vicus* of which was Bardowiek near Lüneburg. They were probably Lombards whose ancestors had preferred not to migrate farther. Zeus, *Die Deutschen und die Nachbarstämme*, p. 110.

<sup>1</sup> Volkward was consecrated by Lievizo I after 988 and was driven from his see before 992. Reginbert was consecrated in 992 but stayed at Mecklenburg because he could not hold his see. Helmold draws from *Adam*, ii, 45-49 (43-47), for this chapter.

was driven from Slavia in the time of the persecution and went off to Norway. After he had there won many to the Lord he returned with joy to Bremen. In the metropolitan church at Hamburg, Libentius, a man distinguished for his sanctity, succeeded the metropolitan Adaldag who was the first to consecrate bishops for Oldenburg. In the time of Libentius the Slavs lapsed from the faith. After him came Unwan,<sup>2</sup> scion of a most distinguished family, rich and generous besides, beloved by all men but above all benevolently disposed toward the clergy. When at that time Duke Bernhard and his confederates rebelled against the Caesar Henry and oppressed and disturbed all the churches of Saxony, especially those that would not violate their oaths of fidelity to his imperial majesty, Archbishop Unwan is said by his magnanimity to have broken the man's impetuosity so that, through the wisdom and liberality of the bishop, that duke was forced in the end to be friendly in all respects to the church of which he was previously the adversary. By the counsel of the prelate, too, the rebellious prince was at length prevailed upon to make submission as a suppliant to the Caesar Henry at Hausberge.<sup>3</sup> Soon, also through the favor of Unwan, he subjected the Slavs to tribute and returned peace to the Nordalbingians and to their mother, the church at Hamburg. To restore the latter, the metropolitan is said to have built a new city and church after they had been destroyed by the Slavs.<sup>4</sup> At that time he selected

<sup>2</sup> On his mother's side Unwan was a member of the rich and ancient Immedinger family which traced its line back to the Saxon hero Widukind. He had served Henry II as chaplain and received the archiepiscopal see from him in 1013. By his diplomacy Unwan postponed the day of the loss by Hamburg-Bremen of its Scandinavian suffragans, for Count the Great (1014-35) sought to control the Church in his dominions by importing his priests and even a bishop from England over which he held sway. As the text states Unwan was an indefatigable builder of churches at Bremen, Hamburg, and throughout his diocese. He contributed much to the rebuilding of Hamburg which did not until his time recover from the catastrophe of 983. He died in 1029. Cf. Uslar-Gleichen, *Das Geschlecht Wittekindt des Grossen und die Immedinger*, pp. 78 199; Hauck, *Kirchengeschichte Deutschlands*, III, 637 199.

<sup>3</sup> The Annals of Quedlinburg, av. 1020, have it through the mediation of the empress Cunigunda. Both probably facilitated the making of the peace at Hausberge, February, 1020. Hirsch, *Heinrich II*, III, 117.

<sup>4</sup> After 1020, not immediately after the rebellion of 1011-13, as Adam states-

three brethren from each one of his communities of men<sup>5</sup> so that there would be twelve who would live at Hamburg according to canonical regulation and who would convert the people from the error of idolatry. On Reginbert's death Unwan consecrated for Slavia Bernhard,<sup>6</sup> a prudent man, whom he selected from the brethren of the church of Hamburg, and who had much success in preaching among the Slavic people.

## 18. BISHOP BERNHARD

Because<sup>7</sup> he desired to rebuild the ruins of the see at Oldenburg, Bernhard, a man of great piety, began to inquire about the possessions and the revenues which Otto the Great by his foundations had assigned to his episcopal prerogative. Since on the destruction of the church at Oldenburg the original institutions and the gifts of the great princes had become null and had reverted to the possession of the Slavs, the said bishop complained in the presence of Duke Bernhard that the Wagiri and the Abodrites and other Slavic peoples refused to pay the stipends due him. On this account the chiefs of the Winuli were called to a conference. When they were asked why they withheld the lawful tithes from the bishop, they began to allege in excuse that they were burdened with manifold exactions; that it would be better for them to leave the land than to involve themselves in the payment of heavier taxes. Since it was evident that he could not restore the ecclesiastical rights as they had existed in the time of Otto the Great, the duke begged (and with difficulty obtained) the payment of two pennies as an episcopal tax from every household whatsoever, poor or rich, throughout the whole land of the Abodrites. There were restored to the bishop, besides, the well known residences of Bosau and

<sup>5</sup> Bremen, Bücken, Ramesloh, and Repeshold. Hauck, *op. cit.*, III, 638 n. 7.

<sup>6</sup> Adam calls him Benno and thinks he had belonged to the cathedral chapter at Hamburg. This chapter had passed out of existence in 983 and was not revived until 1020. Thietmar says he was a canon at Magdeburg. In the ten years of his pontificate (1014-23) he could accomplish little owing to the Slavic disturbances in his diocese. Cf. Thiet., vii, 14 (vi, 46); viii, 3 (vii, 4); ix, 6 (viii, 4); Hirsch, *op. cit.*, II, 406 n. 1; chap. 18, *infra*.

<sup>7</sup> Cf. chap. 12 n. 1, *supra*.

Nezenna and other holdings in the land of the Wagiri to be worked again. But the properties which were in the more remote parts of Slavia and which according to ancient records had once belonged to the bishopric of Oldenburg, that is Dassow, Murize, and Cuscin<sup>2</sup> with their appurtenances, Bishop Bernhard could not at all obtain through the duke, although he frequently tried to have them restored. A while later the most pious Caesar Henry, to try the dispositions of the Slavs, was pleased to hold a diet in the stronghold of Werben which is on the Elbe.<sup>3</sup> There came into the presence of the Caesar all the chiefs of the Winuli and they solemnly declared that they would hold themselves in peace and in obedient subjection to the Empire. When the bishop of Oldenburg, in the presence of the Caesar, there renewed his old complaint about the holdings of his church, the princes of the Slavs were asked about the possessions belonging to the bishop. They acknowledged that the towns<sup>4</sup> he had mentioned, with their suburbs, ought to belong to the church and to the bishop. All the Abodrites, Kicini, Polabi, Wagiri, and the other Slavic peoples who were included within the boundaries of the church of Oldenburg, furthermore, promised that they would pay the whole tax which Otto the Great had appointed in lieu of a tithe for the income of the churches. Their pledge was, however, wholly insincere and false, for the moment the Caesar had dissolved the diet and addressed himself to other matters, they failed to heed their promises. Then, too, Bernhard, the duke of the Saxons, a man vigorous at arms but wholly infected with avarice, loaded the Slavs of the vicinity—whom he had reduced either by means of wars or treaties—with such burdensome taxes that they were neither mindful of

<sup>2</sup> It is probable that Dassow or Derithsewe was in Mecklenburg-Schwerin; that Murize or Morize was near Malchow between the Plauer and Müritz See; and that the Cuzin of Helmold was probably the Cuscin which later was known as Neukloster. Schmeidler (ed.), *Helmold*, p. 37 nn. 4-6; von Breska, *Untersuchungen über die Nachrichten Helmolds*, pp. 22-23.

<sup>3</sup> The diet was held September, 1021. Cf. Hirsch, *Heinrich II*, III, 186-90.

<sup>4</sup> *Urbes*, but by *urbs* Helmold may mean *castrum*, a fort or fortified town, and even the country belonging to an *urbs* or *castrum*. Suburbs (*suburbia*) were no doubt the hamlets often attached to the nucleus-villages. Cf. *Cambridge Medieval History*, II, 446.

God nor in any way friendly toward the priests. Since it was clear that the princes of the world not only failed to aid the administration of his office but even effectively hindered it and since he was weary with profitless labor, for he could not find a place where his foot might rest, the confessor of Christ, Bernhard, went to the most saintly Bernward, bishop of Hildesheim, made known to him his straits and sought consolation in his tribulations. As the latter was a very kind man he received Bernhard as his guest, tendered the weary one the services of humanity, and supplied him with the necessities of life from the revenues of his own church until, going forth and taking up the work of his mission again, he should find a safe place in which to tarry. At that time the said Bishop Bernward, obviously at very great expense, built a large church in honor of Saint Michael the Archangel, on property which had come to him by hereditary right, and brought together there a numerous body of monks for the service of God. When the basilica was completed according to his desires an immense multitude assembled on the feast day set for the dedication.<sup>5</sup> As our Bishop Bernhard was then blessing the left side of the church he was pressed and exhausted by the people. After a few days his ailments became worse and he died.<sup>6</sup> He received an honorable sepulcher in the northern chapel of this church. Meinher, who received the blessing from the second Libentius, succeeded Bernhard.<sup>7</sup> After him came Abelinus,<sup>8</sup> who was consecrated by Archbishop Alebrand.<sup>9</sup>

<sup>5</sup> September 29, 1022. Thangmar, *Vita Bernwardi*, chap. 49; *Ann. Hildesh.*, an. 1022.

<sup>6</sup> Bishop Bernhard died August 13, 1023, nearly a year after the dedication ceremonies and after Bernward's death. *Ann. Hildesh.*, an. 1023. Bernhard's epitaph reads, *graviter qui pressus*, and Helmold in telling of the episode writes, *a populo compressus*. Lüntzel, *Geschichte der Diözese und Stadt Hildesheim* (Hildesheim, 1858), I, 181 n. 3, conjectures that Helmold must have seen Bernhard's epitaph in Hildesheim.

<sup>7</sup> Adam and Helmold do not mention Bishop Reinhold of Oldenburg who died in 1032. He may have come from Hildesheim and is known to have attended synods at Mainz and Seligenstadt, 1026-28. Little more is known about Meinher than that he was consecrated by Lievizo II. Cf. *Ann. Hildesh.*, an. 1023; Adam, ii, 64 (62); Bresslau, "Zur Chronologie der ältesten Bischöfe von Aldenburg," *Forschungen zur brandenb. und preussisch. Geschichte*, N. F. I (1888), 405.

<sup>8</sup> Abhelin-Stephan (1035-49). Cf. Bresslau, *op. cit.*, N. F. I (1888), 406.

<sup>9</sup> Surnamed Bezelin, archbishop of Hamburg (1035-43). Cf. Adam, ii, 72 (70).



## 19. THE PERSECUTION OF GOTTSCHALK

In those days there was a firm peace in Slavia because Conrad who succeeded the pious Henry in the Empire wore down the Winithi in successive wars. Nevertheless, the Christian religion and the service of the house of God made little headway, since it was hindered by the avarice of the duke and of the Saxons, who in their rapacity let nothing remain either for the churches or for the priests. The chiefs of the Slavs were Anadrag and Gneus, and a third Udo,<sup>1</sup> a bad Christian. On this account and also because of his cruelty he was suddenly stabbed by a Saxon deserter. His son named Gottschalk was being instructed in the learned disciplines at Lüneburg.<sup>2</sup> When he heard of his father's death he rejected the faith along with his studies and, crossing the river,<sup>3</sup> came to the tribe of the Winithi. Having brought together a multitude of robbers, he smote, out of vengeance for his father, the whole land of the Nordalbingians.<sup>4</sup> Such slaughter did he perpetrate on the Christian people that his cruelty exceeded all measure. Nothing in the land of the Holzatians and of the Sturmarians and of those who are called Ditmarshians escaped his hands, except those well-known fortified places, Itzehoe and Bökelburg.<sup>5</sup> Thither certain armed men had betaken themselves with their women and children and the goods that had escaped pillage. One day, however, as the said chieftain coursed like a robber through field and thicket and saw what had at one time been a country teeming with men and churches reduced to a waste solitude, he shuddered at the work of his own savagery and "it grieved him at his heart."<sup>6</sup> He deliberated how at length to stay his hands from their nefarious

<sup>1</sup> Udo who was murdered about 1031 is called Pribigneu by Saxo Grammaticus (*MGH. SS. XXIX, 65*). He was the son of the Mistivoi who destroyed Hamburg. *Vide chap. 16, supra*. Of Anadrag and Gneus nothing is known.

<sup>2</sup> In St. Michael's monastery.

<sup>3</sup> The Elbe.

<sup>4</sup> To this point Helmold derives his text from Adam, ii, 66 (64), 71 (69); schol. 46 (47).

<sup>5</sup> Itzehoe (Echecho) is Essefeld on the Stör River north of the Elbe; Bökelburg (Bokeldeburg) is in Schleswig.

<sup>6</sup> Gen. 6: 6.

undertakings. He therefore presently withdrew from his associates and, going out as if into ambush, unexpectedly came upon a Saxon who was a Christian. And when the latter fled from the armed man as he approached from a distance, Gottschalk raised his voice and exhorted him to stop, swore even that he would do him no harm. When the timid man took courage and paused, Gottschalk began to inquire of him who he was and what news he had. "I am," said he, "a poor man born in Holzatia. Daily we get sinister reports that that prince of the Slavs, Gottschalk, is bringing many evils upon our people and country and that he longs to slake his cruel thirst with our blood. It were time, indeed, that God, the Vindicator, should avenge our injuries."

Gottschalk answered him:

You seriously arraign that man, the prince of the Slavs. Yet he has, in very truth, brought many afflictions upon your land and people. A splendid avenger of his father's murder is he. But I am the man about whom we are now speaking and I have come to talk with you. I am sorry that I have done God and the worshipers of Christ so much wrong and I earnestly desire to return to the favor of those on whom I am beginning to realize I have unjustly inflicted such enormities. Heed, then, my words and go back to your people. Tell them to send trustworthy men to a designated place that they may secretly treat with me about an alliance and a covenant of peace. This done, I shall deliver into their hands that whole band of robbers with whom I am engaged more from necessity than from choice.

And with these words he set for him the place and the time.

When the man came to the stronghold in which the Saxon survivors were staying in great trepidation, he made known to the elders the saying that was hid and urged them by all means to send men to the place fixed for the conference. But they, thinking it a trick rife with guile, did not heed him.<sup>7</sup>

And so some days later that prince was captured by the duke and was thrown into chains, as if he had been a robber chieftain.<sup>8</sup> The duke, however, reckoned that a man so brave and warlike would be useful to him. He entered into an alliance with

<sup>7</sup> This story is doubted. Bresslau, *Konrad II*, II, 92.

<sup>8</sup> The reference is to Gottschalk and to Duke Bernhard II of Saxony.

Gottschalk and permitted him to depart honorably laden with gifts. On being dismissed, the prince went to the king of the Danes, Cnut, and remained with him many days and years, winning for himself glory by his valor in various warlike deeds in Normandy and in England.<sup>9</sup> Wherefore, also, was he honored with the hand of the king's daughter.<sup>10</sup>

#### 20. THE FAITH OF GOTTSCHALK

After the death of King Cnut, Gottschalk went back to the land of his fathers.<sup>1</sup> Finding that his heritage had been seized by certain usurpers, he determined to fight and, since victory was his, he got back his possessions in their entirety with the principate. He at once directed his mind to winning glory and honor for himself before the Lord and strove to rouse the Slavic peoples, who still lived forgetful of the Christian religion which they had held of old, that they might receive the grace of faith and take thought for the well being of the Church. And the work of God so prospered in his hands that a countless multitude of pagans thronged to receive the grace of baptism. Throughout the whole country of the Wagiri and even in that of the Polabi and Abodrites<sup>2</sup> the churches which had been demolished of old were rebuilt. The call went out into all the lands for priests and ministers of the Word, who were to instruct the untutored pagans in the teachings of the faith. The faithful, therefore, rejoiced over the increase of the new plantation and

<sup>9</sup> Gottschalk proceeded in 1029 not to Normandy, but to the Scandinavian countries. With the exception of this reference to Gottschalk's favor with Cnut the Great Helmold draws this last paragraph from Adam, ii, 66 (64). Cf. Bresslau, *op. cit.*, II, 93.

<sup>10</sup> Sigrid or Siritha, the daughter not of Cnut the Great but of Svein Estridsson, king of Denmark (1047-74). Hauck (*Kirchengeschichte Deutschlands*, III, 655 n. 3) thinks she was the daughter of Magnus, king of Denmark. On the date of Svein's death *vide* Schneider, *Hamburg-Bremen und nordost Europa*, pp. 288-303.

<sup>1</sup> Cnut died November 1035, but Gottschalk did not return to Slavia apparently until 1043. Wigger, *Mecklenb. Annalen*, pp. 71-72. Helmold puts this chapter together, but with changes, from Adam, ii, 79 (75); iii, 19-21 (18-20); schol. 70 (72). Schirren makes use of Helmold's narrative in this chapter to arraign his veracity in *Beiträge zur Kritik älterer holsteinischer Geschichtsquellen*, pp. 110 sqq., but *vide* von Breska, *Untersuchungen über die Nachrichten Helmolds*, p. 14.

<sup>2</sup> Since the Polabi or Polabingi were one of the divisions of the Abodrites, Helmold might have written Polabingian Abodrites.

it came to pass that his territories abounded in churches, and the churches in priests. Now the Kicini and the Circipani and all the tribes who lived along the Peene River also received the grace of faith. This is that Peene River at the mouth of which is located the city of Demmin. Thither the limits of the diocese of Oldenburg at one time extended.

All the Slavic peoples who pertained to the cure of Oldenburg devoutly kept the Christian faith all the time that Gottschalk lived. This very devout man is said to have been inflamed with such zeal for the divine religion that he himself often made discourse in church in exhortation of the people, because he wished to make clearer in the Slavic language matters which were abstrusely preached by the bishops and the priests.<sup>2</sup> Surely in all Slavia there has never arisen anyone mightier or anyone so fervent in the Christian religion. If a longer life had been granted him, he would have disposed all the pagans to embrace Christianity, since he converted nearly a third of those who had under his grandfather, Mistivoi, relapsed into paganism. Then were also founded in several cities communities of holy men who lived according to canonical rule; also communities of monks and of nuns, as those who saw the several houses in Lübeck, Oldenburg, Ratzeburg, Lenzen, and in other cities bear witness. In Mecklenburg, which is the foremost city of the Abodrites, there are said in fact to have been three communities of those who served God.

#### 21. THE WAR OF THE THOLENZI

In those days<sup>1</sup> a great uproar occurred in the eastern country of the Slavs who fell upon each other in civil war. There are of those called Lutici, or Wilzi, four peoples, of whom we know

<sup>2</sup>The *mistica* of Adam refers not to the use of German in the sermons delivered before Slavs, for the missionaries usually preached in Slavic, but to the use of allegory which could not have satisfied a man of such practical disposition as Gottschalk. Cf. Hauck, *Kirchengeschichte Deutschlands*, III, 656 n. 4.

<sup>1</sup>About 1057. Cf. Hauck, *Kirchengeschichte Deutschlands*, III, 657 n. 3; Wigger, *Mecklenb. Annalen*, pp. 82-83. The greater part of this chapter is put together, with changes, from Adam, ii, 71 (69); iii, 22 (21), 23 (22); schol. 16 (17).

the Kicini and Circipani lived beyond the Peene,<sup>2</sup> the Redarii and Tholenzi on this side of the Peene.<sup>3</sup> Among these peoples there arose mighty contention over leadership and power. The Redarii and Tholenzi desired to rule because of the high antiquity of their stronghold and the great reputation of the fane in which there is exhibited an image of Redigast. They claimed for themselves special preferment in respect of nobility because, on account of the oracle and the annual offerings of sacrifices, they were frequently visited by all the Slavic people. The Circipani and Kicini on their part refused to do them service; indeed, they were determined to defend their freedom by arms. As the dissension gradually waxed, a war at length broke out in which the Redarii and the Tholenzi were vanquished in very fiercely fought battles.<sup>4</sup> The war was renewed a second time and a third time, and again the same ones were overcome by the selfsame visitors. Many thousands of men were killed on both sides. The Circipani and Kicini on whom necessity had imposed the war were the victors. The Redarii and Tholenzi who were fighting for glory, stung to the quick by the shame of their defeat, summoned to their aid the most powerful king of the Danes<sup>5</sup> and Bernhard, the duke of the Saxons, as well as Gottschalk, the prince of the Abodrites; each and every one of these with their armies. For six weeks<sup>6</sup> they maintained this great multitude from their own resources. The war against the Circipani and Kicini then grew fiercer and, overwhelmed by so great a multitude, they did not have the strength to resist. Thus there was cut down a very great number of them and very many were led into captivity. At last they bought peace for fifteen thousand marks, and the princes divided the money among

<sup>2</sup> The Ostpeene. Cf. Wigger, *op. cit.*, pp. 117-20.

<sup>3</sup> Helmold uses *citra* for *ultra* in locating the Kicini and Circipani; hence reverses the positions of the peoples. They are correctly located by Adam and in chap. 2, *supra*.

<sup>4</sup> Adam states that the Kicini aided the Tholenzi and Redarii. Helmold's alignment seems the more correct one. Wigger, "Ueber die neueste Kritik des Helmolds," *Jahrbücher und Jahresberichte des Vereins für mecklenb. Geschichte*, XLII (1877), 43.

<sup>5</sup> Svein Estridsson.

<sup>6</sup> Adam has it seven weeks.

themselves. Of Christianity there was no mention, and they did not give glory to God who had awarded them the victory in battle. From this fact may be discerned the insatiable greed of the Saxons who, though they surpass in arms and in the art of war the other peoples who are contiguous to the barbarians, are ever more intent upon increasing the tribute than upon winning souls for the Lord. Through the perseverance of the priests Christianity would long ago have grown in the esteem of Slavia if the avarice of the Saxons had not stood in the way. Therefore, let commendation and unbounded praise be heaped upon the most worthy Gottschalk, who, sprung from the barbarian peoples, restored to his race the gift of faith, the grace of belief through the abounding fervor of his love; let the Saxon chiefs be censured, who, sprung from Christian forefathers and reared in the bosom of Holy Mother Church, are found ever sterile and empty in the work of God.

## 22. THE REBELLION OF THE SLAVS

In the course of the years in which by the mercy of God and the virtue of that most religious man, Gottschalk, the state of the Church and the priestly service flourished becomingly in Slavia, the church of Oldenburg on the death of Abelinus was divided into three bishoprics.<sup>1</sup> This division, indeed, was by no means effected by an imperial order but was clearly ordained as an invention of the great Adalbert, archbishop of Hamburg.<sup>2</sup> For he was an ambitious man and very influential in the realm, since he had the most powerful Caesar Henry, the son of Conrad, as well as Pope Leo, well disposed and agreeable to his wishes in all matters.<sup>3</sup> He exercised the authority of an archbishop and functioned as papal legate in all the northern kingdoms, to wit, Denmark, Sweden, and Norway. Not content

<sup>1</sup> Abelin-Stephan died in 1049 or later. Helmold makes many additions to the matter he draws from Adam for this chapter, iii, 21 (20), 32-34 (31-33), 43 (42), 50 (49), 59 (58); schol. 79 (80), 80 (81).

<sup>2</sup> Adalbert (1043-72). *Vide* *Introd.*, pp. 15-18.

<sup>3</sup> The references are to Henry III (1039-56), Conrad II (1024-39), and Leo IX (1049-54).

with these distinctions, he desired to attain to patriarchal dignity and, consequently, he wished to erect twelve bishoprics within the limits of his diocese in keeping with this rank.<sup>4</sup> Of this design it is more than idle to speak for the reason that it appeared to judicious men as something absurd and witless. There gathered at his court, too, many priests and religious, and also many bishops who had been driven from their sees, and they partook of his table. Wishing to unburden himself of these men, he sent them out among the heathen, giving definite sees to some, indefinite sees to others. Thus, he put Ezzo<sup>5</sup> in the place of Abelinus in Oldenburg, appointed to Ratzeburg a certain Aristo who had come from Jerusalem,<sup>6</sup> and assigned John to Mecklenburg. This John, who had out of his love for roving come from Ireland to Saxony, was kindly received by the archbishop (as were all) and was not long after sent into Slavia to Gottschalk. In the days he was with Gottschalk he is said to have baptized many thousands of pagans.<sup>7</sup>

There was a well established peace in the whole kingdom because the most valiant Caesar Henry held the Hungarians, Bohemians, Slavs, and all the border kingdoms in control by his powerful hand. But when he was taken on high his son Henry,

<sup>4</sup> According to the Pseudo-Isidorian decretals a primate (patriarch) should have at least twelve suffragans. Elsewhere the number is also given as ten or eleven. Hinschius (ed.), *Decretales Pseudo-Isidorianae et capitula Angilramni*, pp. 73, 121, 724. Dehio (*Geschichte des Erzbistums Hamburg-Bremen*, I, 204 n. 1) refers Adalbert's plan here noted to the years 1069-72.

<sup>5</sup> Bresslau identifies him as Ehrenfried. "Zur Chronologie der ältesten Bischöfe von Aldenburg," *Forschungen zur brandenb. und preussisch. Geschichte*, N. F. I (1888), 406. He was consecrated after 1043 but could not have assumed the see until after 1049; he died in 1082.

<sup>6</sup> He was consecrated between 1062 and 1066 and was probably a Greek. A document of the year 1062 refers to a bishop *in cujus parochia supradictum [Ratzeburg] situm est*, but does not speak of the city as a bishopric. Stumpf, *Die Reichskanzler*, no. 2,607; Lappenberg (ed.), *Hamburg. Urkundenbuch*, no. 90.

<sup>7</sup> John could more legitimately come to Adalbert's court than some others because the archbishop's jurisdiction extended over the islands in the ocean north of Ireland, a region appropriately of interest to Irish missionaries. He came to Hamburg about 1043 and Adalbert, toward the end of that decade or early in the next, sent him on a mission to Iceland and the northern islands. He appears as Jon Irski in northern sources. Beazley's identification as John Scot Erigena (*Dawn of Modern Geography*, II, 517) is confusing. Cf. Maurer, *Bekehrung des norwegischen Stammes*, II, 584-85.

a boy of eight years, succeeded to the scepter.<sup>8</sup> At once diverse disturbances broke out in the realm for the reason that the princes, who were inclined to be contentious, disdained the infancy of the king. Each one rose against his neighbor and many "evils were multiplied in the earth,"<sup>9</sup> robberies, fires, and murders. Not a long time after died the duke of the Saxons, Bernhard, who for forty years had energetically administered the affairs of the Slavs and of the Saxons.<sup>10</sup> His sons, Ordulph and Hermann, divided the inheritance between them. Now Ordulph received the duchy to govern, although he departed far from his father's good fortune in respect of valor and the knowledge of warfare. In fine, scarcely five years had passed after his father's death when the Slavs, who had at once prepared to rebel, first of all put Gottschalk to death.<sup>11</sup> Indeed, for the fidelity he had displayed toward God and the princes, this forever memorable man was slain by the barbarians whom he was himself trying to convert to the faith. "For the iniquity of the Amorites is not yet full,"<sup>12</sup> nor had the time to favor<sup>13</sup> them come. "For it must needs be that offences come,"<sup>14</sup> "that they which are approved may be made manifest."<sup>15</sup> This second Maccabee suffered on the seventh Ides of June in the city of Leontium (also known as Lenzen) with the priest Eppo, who was immolated on the altar, and with many others, both lay and cleric, who underwent diverse tortures for the sake of Christ. The monk Ansver, and with him others, was stoned at Ratzeburg. Their passion took place on the Ides of July. When he went to his passion, the same Ansver is said to have implored the pagans to stone first his associates who, he feared, would

<sup>8</sup> Henry IV was six years old, born November 11, 1050; Henry III died October 5, 1056. The *Annalen S. Disibodi*, which Helmold may have followed from memory, have the same error. Cf. *Cambridge Medieval History*, III, 295, 299.

<sup>9</sup> I Macc. 1: 9. Cf. *Annal. Saxo.*, an. 1056.

<sup>10</sup> Bernhard died June 29, 1059; therefore, he had ruled for nearly fifty years. Bernhard I had died in 1011. Ordulph was duke from 1059 to 1072.

<sup>11</sup> June 7, 1066; therefore, seven, not five, years after Bernhard's death.

<sup>12</sup> Gen. 15: 16.

<sup>13</sup> Ps. 102: 13.

<sup>14</sup> Matt. 18: 7.

<sup>15</sup> I Cor. 11: 19.



fail. When these had been crowned as martyrs he joyfully bent his knee as had Stephen.<sup>16</sup>

### 23. THE PASSION OF SAINT JOHN, THE BISHOP

The aged Bishop John was taken with other Christians in Magnopolis (that is, Mecklenburg) and held for a triumph. And because he confessed Christ he was beaten with rods and then was led in mockery through one city of the Slavs after another. Since he could not be turned from the profession of Christ his hands and feet were lopped off and his body was thrown into the road. His head, however, the barbarians cut off, fixed on a spear, and offered to their god Redigast in token of their victory. These things were done in the chief city of the Slavs, Rethra, on the fourth Ides of November.<sup>17</sup>

### 24. THE FIRST DEFECTION OF THE SLAVS FROM THE FAITH

With other women, the daughter of the king of the Danes was sent naked out of Mecklenburg, the city of the Abodrites; for, as was said above, she had been the wife of the prince Gottschalk<sup>1</sup> who by her had a son, Henry. By another woman was born Butue: the two were born to the great destruction of the Slavs.<sup>2</sup> When the Slavs had achieved victory they ravaged the whole of the region of Hamburg with fire and sword. Nearly all of the Sturmarians and Holzatians were either killed or led into captivity. The stronghold of Hamburg was razed to the ground and even crosses were mutilated by the pagans in derision of our Savior. At that same time Schleswig, which is also called Haddeby, a city of the Transalbingians situated on

<sup>16</sup> Cf. Acts 7: 59, 60; Wigger, *Mecklenb. Annalen*, pp. 85-86.

<sup>17</sup> November 10, 1066. This chapter is taken wholly from Adam, iii, 51 (50).

<sup>1</sup> Cf. chap. 19 n. 10, *supra*. This was, of course, not the first general revolt or defection of the Slavs. Cf. Thompson, *Feudal Germany*, chap. xii, *passim*.

<sup>2</sup> All but the last two sentences of this chapter are taken from Adam, iii, 51 (50); schol. 81 (82). Butue was killed by the Slavs at Plön, August 8, 1074 or 1075. Cf. chap. 26, *infra*. Henry fled to Denmark in 1066 or later and did not return until about 1093. For a critical discussion *vide* Meyer von Knonau, *Heinrich IV*, II, 854-56; von Breake, *Untersuchungen über die Nachrichten Helmholds*, p. 40.

the frontier of the Danish kingdom and exceedingly rich and very populous, was utterly demolished by a surprise raid of the barbarians. There was fulfilled for us the prophecy which runs, "O God, the heathen are come into Thine inheritance; Thy holy temple have they defiled,"<sup>3</sup> and the other sayings which prophetically bewail the destruction of the city of Jerusalem. The perpetrator of this destruction is said to have been Blusso who was married to a sister of Gottschalk and who, on returning home, was himself murdered. And so all the Slavs who were sworn to a general conspiracy lapsed again into paganism after they had killed those who persisted in the faith. In vain did Duke Ordulph fight the Slavs time and again during the twelve years that he survived his father.<sup>4</sup> Never could he obtain a victory, and because he was so many times beaten by the pagans his own men even derided him. This insurrection in the Slavic country took place in the year of the incarnation of the Lord 1066, in the eighth year<sup>5</sup> of the reign of the fourth Henry. And the see of Oldenburg was vacant for eighty-four years.<sup>6</sup>

25. CRUTO<sup>1</sup>

After the death of Gottschalk, that good man and worshiper of God, the principate passed by hereditary succession to his son, Butue. However, those who had murdered his father were afraid that the son might become the avenger of his father's death and they stirred up a tumult among the people. They said: "This man shall not rule over us, but Cruto, the son of Grin. For how will the slaying of Gottschalk have helped us in our efforts to secure liberty by force of arms if this fellow inherits the principate? He will oppress us more than his father did. In

<sup>3</sup> Ps. 79: 1.

<sup>4</sup> He died March 28, 1072. Meyer von Knonau, *op. cit.*, II, 148.

<sup>5</sup> In the ninth or tenth year.

<sup>6</sup> Until Hartwig I of Hamburg restored the see and consecrated Vicelin (1149) as its bishop. *Vide chaps. 42 sqq., infra.*

<sup>1</sup> For a critical discussion of the events narrated in this and the following chapter *vide von Breska, Untersuchungen über die Nachrichten Helmholtz, pp. 31-41; Meyer von Knonau, Heinrich IV, II, 854-56.*

the service of the Saxon people he will involve the country in new tribulations."

Forthwith they banded together in conspiracy and placed Cruto in the principate to the exclusion of the sons of Gottschalk, to whom, of right, dominion belonged. The younger of these sons, named Henry, fled to the Danes because he had sprung from the royal family of the Danes. The elder, Butue, went to the Bardi and sought help from the Saxon princes to whom his father had always been faithfully devoted. The princes, indeed, showed their appreciation of his father's beneficence by undertaking a war in Butue's behalf, and after many fatiguing campaigns they restored him to his place. Butue's position, nevertheless, was always insecure, nor was he able to strengthen it because, having been born of a Christian father and being a friend of the princes he was regarded by his people as a betrayer of their liberty. For after that victory as a consequence of which, on the slaying of Gottschalk, the country of the Nordalbingians was first crushed, with armed hands the Slavs threw off the yoke of servitude and endeavored to defend their freedom with such obstinacy of spirit that they preferred to die rather than to resume the name of Christian or to pay tribute to the princes of the Saxons. In fact the unhappy greed of the Saxons brought this disgrace upon them. Still in full possession of their vigor and puffed up by their repeated victories, they did not recognize that the battle is of the Lord and that victory is from Him. Nay, rather they burdened the Slavic tribes, whom they had subjected either by wars or by treaties, with the imposition of such heavy taxes that they were from bitter necessity driven to resist the divine laws and the service of the princes. Ordulph, the Saxon duke, paid the penalty for these misdeeds. Abandoned by God, he could not after his father's death obtain a victory over the Slavs. Hence it was, also, that Gottschalk's sons who had placed their hope in the duke trusted in a staff of reed, yea, a broken one.

When Ordulph died his son, Magnus, born of a daughter of

the Danish king, succeeded to the duchy.<sup>2</sup> Straightway, in the very beginning of his principate, he directed his mind and strength to overthrowing the Slavic rebels. In this resolution Butue, the son of Gottschalk, quickened him. But the Slavs began to put up a united resistance under the leadership of Cruto, the son of Grin, who bore deadly hatred toward the Christian name and the sovereignty of the princes. First of all they drove Butue from the country and demolished the strongholds in which he had refuge. Therefore, when he found himself exiled from his principality he fled to Duke Magnus, who happened then to be staying in Lüneburg, and addressed him thus:

Your excellency knows, greatest of men, how my father, Gottschalk, ever faithfully administered the Slavic land to the honor of God and that of your forebear and overlooked nothing that rightfully pertained to the service of God and fidelity toward the princes. In emulating my father's sobriety I have also with all faith and devotion observed the commands of the princes, exposing myself to countless perils in order to preserve for myself, indeed, the empty title of a dignity, but for you, its fruits. Of the nature of the reward that was meted out to my father and to me no one is ignorant, since he of his life and I of my country have been robbed by our enemies—enemies, I say, not only ours, but also yours. If, therefore, you would preserve your honor and the welfare of your people, you must have resort to force of arms. In fine, our fortune is in a most critical state, and there must be haste that the enemy may not by farther advances also afflict the land of the Nordalbingians.

On hearing these words the duke replied:

I cannot at this moment take the field myself for the reason that I am held back by great hindrances, but I will give you the Bardi, Sturmarians, Holzatians, and Ditmarians with whose help you may for the present be able to withstand the attacks of the enemy. I also will, if it be necessary, follow as soon as possible.

His nuptials<sup>3</sup> for the moment detained the duke.

<sup>2</sup> Ordulph died March 28, 1072. Magnus's mother was Wulfhild, the sister of King Magnus of Denmark (1042-47). Adam, ii, 79 (75).

<sup>3</sup> With Sophia, the daughter of Béla I, king of Hungary. The wedding must have taken place before June 14, 1071, when Henry IV took Magnus prisoner and detained him two years. Chap. 27, *infra*. Butue, however, could not have died before August 8, 1074 or 1075, as has been clearly shown by the studies of von Breska. *Op. cit.*, pp. 39-40.

Therefore, taking the most valiant of the Bardi, Butue crossed the Elbe and hurried forward into the land of the Wagiri. The duke's messengers also sped through the whole country of the Nordalbingians and urged the people to go out and give aid to Butue who was being assailed by the enemy. But he went ahead with more than six hundred armed men; and when he came to the stronghold Plön, contrary to his expectations, he found the city open and empty of men. And when he entered the place a German woman, whom he found there, said to him: "Take what your hands may find and make speed to depart because it is through trickery that this stronghold has been left open and devoid of defenders. For when the Slavs hear of your entry they will return on the morrow with a very large army and besiege this city."

But he did not heed the words of his informer and stayed in the stronghold over night. Now this stronghold, as can today be seen, is surrounded on all sides by a very deep lake, and an exceedingly long bridge affords access to those who frequent the place. When the next day dawned, behold, a countless host of Slavs hemmed in the city for a siege, as had been foretold the evening before. The precaution had also been taken that there should not be found on all that island a boat which would afford the besieged a means of escape. Butue and his associates, therefore, endured the siege with great hunger. But when they learned of this misfortune, the bravest of the Sturmarians, of the Holzatians, and of the Ditmarshians hastened to raise the siege of the stronghold. When they came to the brook called the Schwale,\* which divides the Saxons from the Slavs, they sent ahead a man versed in the Slavic tongue to find out what the Slavs were doing and how they were pressing the siege of the stronghold. The man so dispatched by his companions came upon the army of the Slavs, which covered the whole face of the plain, and found them preparing various machines service-

\* The Schwale flows into the Stör below Neumünster. Cf. Wigger, *Mecklenb. Annalen*, p. 100 n. 7; Bahr, *Studien zur nordalb. Geschichte*, pp. 1-9.

able for the investment. He addressed them with these words: What are you doing, men, besieging a stronghold and men who are friends of the princes and of the Saxons? This undertaking of yours will surely not bring you good fortune. You are commanded by the duke and the other princes to give up the siege as quickly as possible. If you do not do so you will shortly feel their vengeance.

And when they anxiously asked where the duke was, he answered that he was very close at hand with a countless multitude of armed men. Cruto, the prince of the Slavs, therefore took the scout aside and questioned him more particularly about the reality of the situation. The latter said to him: "What price will you pay me if I divulge to you what you seek to know and make it possible for you to do as you will with this city and with those who are in it?"

And Cruto agreed with him for twenty marks. As soon as the bargain was completed the traitor said to Cruto and his associates: "That duke whom you dread has not yet crossed the Elbe because he is being detained by serious hindrances. Only the Sturmarians, Holzatians, and Ditmarshians have come out in small numbers. These men, however, I shall with one word easily seduce and cause them to return to their homes."

When he had spoken these words he crossed the bridge and addressed Butue and his companions: "Consult your safety and that of the men who are with you, for this time the Saxons in whom you were placing your trust will not come out to help you." Full of consternation, Butue replied: "Alas, wretched me, why am I abandoned by my friends? Will the most excellent Saxons thus desert me, suppliant and needy of their help in trouble? Badly deluded have I been who, relying always in good faith upon the Saxons, am now in the extremity of need dashed to the ground." The traitor said to him: "Dissension has come among the people and, quarreling among themselves, every man has returned unto his own house. Therefore, you must take other counsel."

After he had confused the business in this manner the scout

returned to his own people. And when the Saxons who were marching along asked how matters stood, he answered: "I came to the stronghold to which you sent me and there is, thank God, no danger there and no fear of a siege. Nay, rather, I saw Butue and those who are with him happy and nothing perturbed."

And in this manner he stayed the army from relieving those besieged in the stronghold. This man became the means of the destruction of Butue and his companions. For the besieged, deceived by the guile of the traitor, forthwith abandoned hope of escape and began to inquire of the enemy if they would accept anything for sparing their lives. The latter replied to them: "Gold and silver we shall not take from you. We shall grant only life and limb, as you ask, if you will come out and surrender your arms to us."

When he heard these words Butue said to his companions:

Hard terms, men, are proposed to us, that we go out and resign our arms. I know, indeed, that hunger is urgently pressing us to surrender, but if we should go out unarmed according to the condition proposed to us we should nevertheless have to incur danger. For I have very often experienced how changeable, how uncertain is the faith of the Slavs. It seems to me, therefore, that for the welfare of all it is more prudent for us to save our lives by yet delaying, hard though that is, and to await whether God will not perchance send us helpers from some direction.

But his companions objected and said:

We admit, indeed, that the condition which is offered us by the enemy is ambiguous and dreadful. Still it is not to be spurned because there is no other way out of the present danger. For what will delay profit when there is no one to raise the siege? Hunger, moreover, brings on a more horrible death than the sword, and it is better to have life ended quickly than to be tortured for a long time.

#### 26. THE DEATH OF BUTUE

When Butue saw that his associates had made up their minds to go out, he ordered more elegant raiment to be brought to him in which he clad himself and went out with them. They crossed the bridge two by two and gave up their arms. In this

manner they were led into the presence of Cruto. Now when they had all been presented, a woman who was influential in the stronghold charged Cruto and the other Slavs: "Destroy the men who have delivered themselves to you and do not spare them, for they have perpetrated great outrages on your wives whom you left in the city with them, and take away your reproach."<sup>1</sup>

When Cruto and those about him heard these words they leaped at once upon their prisoners and slew that whole multitude with the edge of the sword. And on that day was killed Butue and likewise all the flower of the Bardi before the stronghold Plön. Cruto prevailed and the work prospered in his hands and he obtained dominion in all the land of the Slavs. The strength of the Saxons was sapped and they served Cruto under tribute; namely, the whole land of the Nordalbingians, which is divided among three peoples—the Holzatians, the Sturmarians, and the Ditmarshians. In all the time of Cruto all these bore the most harsh yoke of servitude. The land was filled with robbers who murdered and kidnapped the people of God. They greedily devoured the Saxon race. In those days more than six hundred families rose up from the Holzatian people and, crossing the river,<sup>2</sup> went afar off seeking for themselves suitable seats in which they might escape the violence of the persecution. And they came to the Harz Mountains and there they have remained, they and their sons and their descendants, even to the present day.<sup>3</sup>

## 27. THE BUILDING OF THE HARZBURG

No wonder, then, that in the midst of a crooked and perverse nation, in a land of waste howling wilderness, calamitous events

<sup>1</sup> For the influence of women on the affairs of the Slavs *vide* Krek, *Slavische Literaturgeschichte*, p. 361 n. 2. Cf. Isa. 4: 1.

<sup>2</sup> The Elbe.

<sup>3</sup> Probably they settled at what is now Elbingerode, for that name which does not appear before the twelfth century suggests that it owes its origin to a people from the Elbe River. It has been suggested also that Helmold was of this stock. Cf. Thompson, *Feudal Germany*, pp. 407 n. 2; 418 n. 3.



should have taken place—that in those days, indeed, the storms of war should have surged through the whole kingdom. For the government of the realm, which had been not a little weakened during the minority of King Henry, met with no less serious dangers when he attained to manhood. The moment he became a man<sup>1</sup> and, having put aside his tutor, became master of himself, he began to proceed harshly against the whole Saxon race. Finally, he took the duchy of Bavaria away from Otto<sup>2</sup> because he was a Saxon and gave it to Welpo.<sup>3</sup> Thereupon, for the oppression of all Saxony Henry erected on the heights of the Harz a very strong castle which is called the Harzburg. Angered on this account, the Saxon princes united and leveled to the ground the stronghold which had been set for their subjection.<sup>4</sup> And the hearts of the Saxons were hardened against the king. Their princes were Wicelo of Magdeburg, Bucca of Halberstadt, Duke Otto, Duke Magnus, the Margrave Udo, and many other nobles.<sup>5</sup> To confound their audacity the king came quickly with an army, attended by Rudolph, the duke of the

<sup>1</sup> Adalbert, archbishop of Hamburg-Bremen, who had been Henry's tutor, caused him to be declared of age in 1065.

<sup>2</sup> Otto of Nordheim who had received the duchy from Agnes of Poitou, widow of Henry III, in 1061 during the minority of Henry IV. Since Otto of Nordheim was of the royal Saxon stock and very friendly with the Billung duke Magnus, Henry IV had reason to question his loyalty and consequently took Bavaria from him in 1070. For the causes of the Saxon rebellion and the details of its course *vide* Thompson, *Federal Germany*, chap. v; Meyer von Knonau, *Heinrich IV*, II, 857-69. Helmold in this chapter follows the *Annales S. Disibodi* which Schmeidler thinks he may have read and followed from memory. Cf. Schmeidler (ed.), *Helmold*, p. xviii; Regel, *Helmold und seine Quellen*, pp. 23-26.

<sup>3</sup> Or Guelph I (1070-1101), the first of a new line of Guelphs, who put aside his wife Ethelinda, the daughter of Otto of Nordheim, to marry the rich Judith of Flanders, widow of the English earl, Tostig, whom William the Conqueror had exiled from England. By Judith he had Guelph II, his successor in the dukedom of Bavaria (1101-20).

<sup>4</sup> This was not done until March, 1074, after the conference at Gerstungen between the Saxon leaders and the king, February 2, 1074, and then not by the princes, but by the peasantry of the neighborhood who regarded the castle as a Bastille. Cf. Lambert of Hersfeld, *Annales*, an. 1074; Bruno, *De bello Saxonico*, chap. 33; Meyer von Knonau, *op. cit.*, II, 331-38, 870-73.

<sup>5</sup> Werner (or Wernher or Werinhar) was the brother of Archbishop Anno of Köln, one of Henry's most implacable enemies, and the nephew of Bucca or Burchard II, bishop of Halberstadt (1059-88). He was archbishop of Magdeburg, 1063-78. Udo was count of Stade since 1056 and margrave of the Saxon Nordmark. Thompson gives the alignment of the Saxon leaders against the king, *op. cit.*, p. 206.

Swabians, and many princes of the realm. The Saxons also did not delay but rushed manfully into the war, and the armies came together by the River Unstrut. As a battle was imminent both sides agreed after holding a parley that a two-day truce be declared, in the hope that the dispute might be peaceably settled. Happy over the truce the Saxons at once laid aside their arms and scattered over the length and breadth of the field, setting up their camp and caring for their physical needs. About the ninth hour of the day the king's scouts, seeing the Saxons off their guard and dispersed over the face of the plain suspecting no evil, hastened to tell the king that the Saxons were preparing themselves for battle. And so the army of the king was roused and, crossing the ford, it fell upon the peaceful and unarmed men. There fell that day many thousands of Saxons.\*

The Saxons were, however, still bent on war in defense of their liberty. Therefore the duke of the Swabians, an upright man and a lover of peace, who consulted first the royal honor and then the welfare of the Saxons, prevailed on the latter that their princes, Wicelo of Magdeburg, Bucca of Halberstadt, Duke Otto, Duke Magnus, and the Margrave Udo, should deliver themselves into the power of the king, but on condition that they neither suffer captivity nor sustain any bodily injury. But the moment the Saxons were seduced by these counsels and put themselves in the royal power, the king disregarded his pledged faith and ordered them placed in close confinement; and Duke Rudolph was grieved because he could not fulfill his promises.†

#### 28. THE PUBLIC PENANCE OF KING HENRY

A few days later the Saxon princes were released from captivity, contrary to the wish of the king. They returned to their

\*The *Annales Palidenses*, an. 1068, mentions a truce made at Negilsteden which Henry IV broke, as is here described. The battle on the Unstrut was fought near Langensalza and Homburg (June 9, 1075). Meyer von Knonau, *op. cit.*, II, 495-505, 874-84.

†The Saxon surrender did not take place until the end of October, 1075, near Speyer. Udo was not among those who surrendered. Meyer von Knonau, *op. cit.*, II, 533-34 and n. 110.

own homes but from that time on never trusted the promises of the king.<sup>1</sup> The princes of the Saxons also sent an account of what had been happening to the Apostolic See, complaining to the most reverend pope Gregory that the king contemned the divine law and deprived the churches of God of all liberty of canonical election by appointing their bishops and forcibly seating the bishops whom he chose; moreover, that after the manner of the Nicolaitans<sup>2</sup> he had made a public prostitute of his wife, subjecting her by force to the lust of other men, and that he had done many other things which seemed improper and hard to understand. Much moved by zeal for justice, the pope consequently sent legates to summon the king to a hearing by the Apostolic See. After he had disregarded a second call and a third call, the king finally accepted the advice of his intimates, who feared that he might rightfully be deposed from the kingship, and went to Rome,<sup>3</sup> where he yielded himself to the pope's judgment upon the crimes of which he stood justly accused. Therefore, he received injunctions not to depart from Rome for a whole year, not to mount a horse, but in mean attire to make the round of the thresholds of the churches, through prayer and fasting bringing forth fruit meet for repentance. And the king was content humbly to abide by this sentence.

Now when the cardinals and those who were of the Curia saw that the mighty were beginning to tremble in fear of the Apostolic See and that those stooped who bear up the world, they suggested to the pope that he transfer the kingdom to another man, saying that it is not meet that one convicted of public crimes should rule. When the pope accordingly inquired who

<sup>1</sup> As a matter of fact Henry IV announced a policy of reconciliation at the diet held at Goslar, Christmas, 1075. Thompson (*Feudal Germany*, pp. 214-16) is of the opinion that his policy might ultimately have been successful if the Saxons had not been drawn into the Investiture contest which immediately followed. Helmold's account of this contest in this and the following chapters departs far from fact. On the attitude of the Saxon historians and their reliability *vide* Meyer von Knonau, *Heinrich IV*, IV, 541-46.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. Rev. 2: 6, 15.

<sup>3</sup> Correctly to Canossa, January 25-28, 1077. Henry IV had been excommunicated and suspended from the kingship the year before. The papal injunctions given by Helmold are a fabrication.

in Germany was worthy of so high a dignity, Rudolph, the duke of the Swabians, was indicated because he was, indeed, an upright man, a lover of peace and most favorably disposed toward the work of the priesthood and of the churches. To him the lord pope sent a golden crown inscribed with this verse:

The Rock gave Rome to Peter, the Pope gives you the Crown.<sup>4</sup>

And he instructed the archbishops of Mainz and Köln<sup>5</sup> and the other bishops and princes to assist Rudolph's cause and to establish him in the kingship. As many, therefore, as received the word of the lord pope elected Rudolph king, and the Saxons and Swabians joined his party. The other princes and the cities along the Rhine and all the Franconian people did not accept him because they had pledged themselves to Henry and would not break their oath. Henry in the meantime tarried at Rome, obedient to his injunctions and without knowledge of the evil that was being done him.

29. [THE MISERABLE DEATH OF RUDOLPH,  
DUKE OF SWABIA]

But there rose up a certain man, the bishop of Strassburg, a very good friend of King Henry, and he went with all speed to Rome.<sup>1</sup> After searching some time for the king, the bishop found him tarrying among the memorials to the martyrs. Very happy at his coming the king began to ask about the state of the kingdom and whether everything was peaceful. The bishop confided to him that a new prince had been chosen and that it was necessary for him to return as quickly as possible to Germany in order to fortify the spirits of his friends and to check the endeavors of his enemies. And when the king objected that he

<sup>4</sup> *Petra*, "the Rock," refers to Christ. Cf. Matt. 16: 18. This verse is cited also by Otto of Freising, *Gesta Friderici I imperatoris*, I, 7, and in Siebert of Gembloux, *Chronographia*, an. 1077. Meyer von Knonau, *op. cit.*, III, 630-31, 638.

<sup>5</sup> Respectively Siegfried (1060-84) and Hidolph (1076-78). For the alignment of the factions in the struggle after Rudolph's election at Forchheim in March, 1077, *vide* Thompson, *op. cit.*, pp. 224-27.

<sup>1</sup> Werner II (1065-77). Cf. Hauck, *Kirchengeschichte Deutschlands*, III, 738-39, 772-73. The story is a fabrication. The title of this chapter was supplied by Schorkel.

could by no means leave without the permission of the Apostolic See, he [the bishop] replied: "Know for certain that all this wicked conspiring emanates from the fount of Roman perfidy; indeed, if you wish to escape captivity you must secretly leave the City." During the night the king went out, left Italy and, when he had made sure of his affairs in Lombardy<sup>2</sup> temporarily, came into Germany. All the Rhenish cities and all who favored his cause rejoiced at the unhoped-for arrival of the prince. He collected a great army to fight Rudolph, and that most renowned Duke Godfrey<sup>3</sup> who afterwards freed Jerusalem and many of the mighty ones were with him. The armies of the Saxons and the Swabians, however, were with Rudolph. When the kings fought each other the party of Rudolph was defeated and the Saxons and the Swabians were overthrown.<sup>4</sup> Rudolph then fled to Merseburg, wounded in his right hand. When he was near death he said to his friends:

Do you see the wound on my right hand? With that hand I swore to the lord Henry that I would not do him an injury and would not plot against his glory. But the command of the pope and the petition of the bishops seduced me to this, that I violated my oath and usurped an honor that was not due me. What our end is you see, since I have received this mortal wound in the hand with which I violated my oath. Let them who have incited us to this, therefore, see how they have led us, that perchance they have brought us to the very brink of eternal damnation.

And with these words he ended his last day in great anguish.<sup>5</sup>

<sup>2</sup> Italy is regularly distinguished from Lombardy by Helmold. Cf. chaps. 80, 82, *infra*.

<sup>3</sup> Helmold is in error: Godfrey of Boulogne (Bouillon) was the nephew and heir of Godfrey II *Gibboisus*, duke of Lower Lorraine, who, though he had married Matilda of Tuscany, the staunch friend of Gregory VII, remained in his own duchy and supported Henry IV. Godfrey II, however, had been murdered in 1076 and the crusading hero did not come into possession of his inheritance until 1089. Von Sybel, *Geschichte des ersten Kreuzzuges*, 2d ed. (Leipzig, 1881), p. 214.

<sup>4</sup> The decisive engagement took place on the Elster and Grune Rivers, October 15, 1080. Cf. Thompson, *Feudal Germany*, p. 227; Meyer von Knonau, *Heinrich IV*, III, 337-39.

<sup>5</sup> He was found on the battlefield severely wounded in the abdomen and his right hand cut off. He died that same evening. Eckkehard of Aura, in his *Chronicon universale*, an. 1080, puts much the same words into the mouth of Rudolph. Meyer von Knonau, *op. cit.*, III, 339.

30. [HOW THE EMPEROR HENRY DROVE  
THE POPE FROM ROME]

After that King Henry, puffed up by his good fortune, brought together a great council of bishops' and there had Pope Gregory condemned as a traitor to the realm and as a disturber of the peace of the Church. Then he assembled a great military force and went over into Italy and seized Rome, the mother of the Empire.<sup>2</sup> After many of the citizens had been killed there, he put Gregory to flight and, since he had subjected the City and the Senate to his wishes, he had Wibert, the bishop of the see of Ravenna, raised to the papacy. From him Henry received the benediction, and the Roman populace hailed him as emperor and Augustus. But this acclaim became a great snare in Israel. From that day, indeed, schisms arose in the Church of God such as had not been since ancient days. Those, in truth, who seemed to be more perfect and pillars in the house of God adhered to Gregory; others who were influenced either by the fear or the favor of the Caesar followed Wibert, who is also called Clemens. And this schism lasted twenty-five years. For Desiderius succeeded Gregory when he died. After him came Urban, then Paschal. Every one of these condemned the emperor and his pope with the sentence of excommunication, while they stayed with the kings of France, of Sicily, and of Spain, who manifestly supported the Catholic party.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>2</sup>This synod, composed of Henry's German and Italian adherents, was held at Brixen, June 25, 1080, after Gregory VII had again excommunicated the king, March 7, 1080. It elected the anti-pope Wibert, who had been imperial chancellor for Italy (1057-63) and archbishop of Ravenna since 1073. He took the name Clement III, not Clemens. Hauck, *Kirchengeschichte Deutschlands*, III, 821 and note 3; Meyer von Knonau, *Heinrich IV*, III, 252, 286-96. The title of this chapter was supplied by Schorkel.

<sup>3</sup>The events narrated in the last chapter occurred between the holding of the Synod of Brixen and this Italian expedition. Henry crossed the Alps in March, 1081, and in May was before the gates of Rome. Not until March, 1084, could he get possession of the city. Gregory VII was again deposed and Wibert enthroned, Palm Sunday, March 24, 1084. The following Sunday, Easter, Henry IV was crowned emperor. Meyer von Knonau, *op. cit.*, III, 353, 391, 529-34.

<sup>4</sup>Gregory died at Salerno, May 25, 1085. Desiderius, abbot of Monte Cassino, took the name Victor III, but shrank from the honors and troubles of the papal office and died (September 16, 1087) before he could be enthroned. His successors were Urban II (1087-99) and Paschal II (1099-1118). The schism was virtually ended by the death of the anti-pope Clement III, September 1100, for his successors proved negligible entities.

After the Saxons had recuperated from their reverses, they also set up for themselves as king a certain Hermann, surnamed Cluflloch,<sup>4</sup> and renewed the war against the Caesar Henry. But when the new prince of the Saxons, after he had won two victories, was triumphantly entering a certain stronghold, it happened by a wonderful judgment of God that the portal was wrenched from its hinges and the king with very many others was crushed.<sup>5</sup> The rebellion of the Saxons, thus again frustrated, collapsed and they did not any more dare to elect a new king or to bear arms against the Caesar Henry, for they saw that with the approval and concession of the divine will dominion had been conserved for him.

### 31. THE LETTER OF PETER THE MONK

An event worth relating and one that should be remembered by posterity occurred in the last days of the elder Henry. A certain Peter, by birth a Spaniard, by profession a monk, entered the confines of the Roman Empire and sent forth the voice of his preaching over the whole kingdom, exhorting the people to go to Jerusalem to liberate the Holy City which was held by the barbarians. He produced a letter which he affirmed had been brought down from heaven, wherein it was written that the times of the nations are fulfilled and that the City must be liberated which was trodden down by the heathen. Then the mighty ones of all countries—bishops, dukes, counts, knightly men as well as common men, abbots, monks—took the road to Jerusalem under the leadership of the most valiant Godfrey<sup>1</sup> and with reliance

<sup>4</sup> Hermann of Salm, of Lorraine, brother of Count Conrad of Luxemburg and nephew of Hermann, count-palatine of the Rhine, was elected by a faction early in August, 1081. *Ann. Palid.*, an. 1082; Meyer von Knonau, *op. cit.*, III, 417.

<sup>5</sup> He died probably as the result of a quarrel, September 28, 1088. Cf. Helmold's account of his death with that in the *Vita Henrici IV imperatoris*, chap. 4; of Abimelech in Judges 9: 50-53. Meyer von Knonau, *op. cit.*, IV, 226 and note 50.

<sup>1</sup> Helmold clearly wanders from the truth again in this chapter. Much of this misinformation came from his possible use of the *Annales Rosenfeldenses*, an. 1096, from which many other annalists culled their data about the First Crusade. Peter of Amiens, the Hermit, came with his motley army from France into Germany by way of Trier and Köln (March-April, 1096) and preached as he moved along toward the Danube. The Germans were hardly represented at the Council of Clermont where Urban II made

on the help of divine grace regained Nicaea, Antioch, and many cities that were held by the barbarians. Thence they went on and liberated the Holy City from the barbarians. And from that time the divine praises were increasingly sung there and God was adored by the peoples of the earth in the place where His feet had stood.

### 32. THE HUMILIATION OF THE EMPEROR HENRY

After that time when Wibert, who was also called Clemens, died, the schism was healed. Then the whole Church returned to Paschal, and there was "one fold and one shepherd."<sup>1</sup> As soon as Paschal was firmly established in his see, he commanded that the emperor be excommunicated by all the bishops and ministers of the Catholic Church, and this sentence was given greater effect by the declaration of the princes assembled in a general diet that the diadem was to be taken from Henry and given to his son of the same name.<sup>2</sup> On the petition of his father this son had been for some time designated for the principate.<sup>3</sup>

The archbishops of Mainz and Köln and the bishop of Worms<sup>4</sup> came, therefore, as messengers from the princes to the

his great appeal for a crusade (November 26, 1095). The knightly crusaders under Godfrey of Boulogne (Bouillon) attracted some German nobles and ecclesiastics on their way through Germany to the headwaters of the Danube in August, 1096. Meyer von Knonau, *Heinrich IV*, IV, 457-58, 486-90, 520-21.

<sup>1</sup> John 10: 16. Even Henry of Herford who drew on this and the following chapter for his chronicle (*an.* 1104) noted that Helmold had written *vulgariter et misillogice*.

<sup>2</sup> Paschal II renewed the excommunications of Henry IV by Gregory VII and Urban II, April 3, 1102. Henry V secretly left his father's *entourage* at Fritalaz, December 12, 1104, to join the adherents of Paschal II. Henry IV was obliged to abdicate at a diet adjourned from Mainz to Ingelheim, December 31, 1105. Meyer von Knonau, *Heinrich IV*, V, 203-5, 211, 263-70.

<sup>3</sup> Since May, 1098. Henry IV's son Conrad was passed over in favor of the seventeen-year-old Henry, because Conrad had allied himself with his father's enemies. Henry IV tried to make sure of Henry's fidelity by exacting from him a comprehensive oath, which he summarized in a letter to Hugh of Cluny in 1106. "[Heinricus V] qui in ipsa electione tua nobis juravit Moguntiae vitam et salutem personae nostrae, et quod de regno et omni honore nostro et de omnibus quae habebamus vel habituri eramus nullo modo se intrmitteret me vivente contra voluntatem et praecipium nostrum." Meyer von Knonau, *op. cit.*, V, 27, n. 9, citing d'Archéry, *Spicilegium* (2d ed.), III, 441.

<sup>4</sup> Ruthard (1089-1109) and Frederick I (1100-31) were then in office in Mainz and Köln, respectively. The bishop of Worms cannot be identified with certainty. The story which follows may refer to what Helmold had heard about the seizure of the royal insignia at Hammerstein. Meyer von Knonau, *op. cit.*, V, 265 n. 78; 267 n. 81.



king, who then happened to be staying on the royal estate at Ingelheim, and they delivered to him the order from the mouth of the princes: "Deliver to us the crown, the ring, the purple, and whatever else belongs to the imperial investiture that they may be transferred to your son."

When the king asked for what fault he was humiliated, they replied:

Why do you inquire about that which you already well know? Recall how for many long years the universal Church suffered on your account from the very great misfortune of schism, how you sold the bishoprics, the abbacies, indeed, all the offices of the Church. In the appointment of bishops there has been no opportunity for lawful election but only the consideration of money. For these and for other reasons the apostolic authority has decreed, with the unanimous approval of the princes, that you be deprived not only of the kingdom but also of communion with the Church.

To this the king made answer:

You say that we sold spiritual offices for money. You, of course, have the power to accuse us of such a crime. But tell us now, O Mainz, we abjure you by the name of the eternal God, tell us what we exacted or received when we placed you over Mainz. You also, Köln, we call you to witness by your faith, what did you give us for the see over which you preside through our munificence?

When they confessed that no money had either been offered or received in consideration of their appointment, the king remarked further:

Glory be to God that we have at least in this regard been found faithful. These certainly are the two most outstanding positions, and they could have brought our exchequer much gain. Now as for the lord of Worms, neither you nor he is ignorant of how he was raised up by us, to what he was advanced, whether we were actuated by piety or lucre with respect to him. You, indeed, return thanks befitting our favors! Be not, I beseech you, partners of those who have raised their hands against their lord and king and who have violated their faith and sacred oaths. Behold, we are now failing and there is little of the way left us, for we are spent with age and effort. Bide a while and do not end our glory in confusion. If, however, you say that we must yield utterly and that that is your

fixed intention, let a truce be declared, let a diet be ordered. If the diet adjudges the crown to our son we shall resign it with our own hands. We desire, then, a general hearing in the diet.

When they strove against him and said that they would courageously accomplish the business on account of which they had been sent, the king left them for a little while to consult with his faithful. When he saw also that the legates had come accompanied by soldiery and that there was no room for resisting, he had his regalia made ready and brought to him. Arrayed in these and seated on his throne he addressed the legates:

These signs of imperial dignity the goodness of the eternal King and the concordant election of the princes have vouchsafed me. And God, who by His grace has raised me to this height, is able<sup>9</sup> to keep for me what He has granted and to stay your hands from the business you have begun. For it behooves us, destitute as we are of soldiery and of arms, to rely the more earnestly on divine aid. So far, indeed, we have always stood diligently on our guard when involved in foreign wars, overcoming through divine favor every thrust and attack, partly by wit, partly by valor in battle. But this domestic evil, as we had not suspected it, so we took no precautions against it. For who would have believed that such impiety should arise in Christendom, that the oaths of fealty sworn to the prince should be broken, that son should be raised up against father; finally, that no gratitude should be shown for favors, no reverence for character. Imperial majesty is wont at least to observe, even toward enemies, such consideration that the remedies of citation and of truce be not denied the banned or condemned, warning before striking, inviting to favor before condemning by sentence. But contrary to right we are denied a citation and a hearing, and the reason why we are choked is that we may not be heard. Who would have supposed that such disaffection were possible on the part of the most trusted of friends, most particularly, indeed, on the part of bishops? We denounce you, therefore, to the Lord, the Maker of the world, that the fear of Him may restrain you whom loyalty does not check. But if you respect neither God nor your own reputation, behold, we are ready, we cannot refute violence, we must endure the attack which we are not in a position to oppose.

The bishops then began to be uncertain what to do, for the

Cf. II Cor. 9: 8.

undertaking of great things is always hard. The archbishop of Mainz at length addressed his associates:

How long do we tremble, comrades? Is it not our office to consecrate the king, to invest him when he is consecrated? That, indeed, which may be given in virtue of a decree of the princes, may not that be taken away by their authority? He was worthy when we invested him. Why should we not divest him when he is unworthy?

And they straightway proceeded to deed. They stepped up to the king and snatched the crown from his head; they lifted him from his seat; they stripped him utterly of the purple and of the other attirement which belongs to the sacred vesture. Covered with confusion the king then said to them:

Let God look upon and judge how unfairly you do with me. I am expiating, indeed, the sins of my youth, receiving from the Lord measure for measure, ignominy and confusion such as no one of the kings who were before us is known to have suffered. Still you are not therefore free from sin, you who have lifted your hands against your lord and have belied the oath which you swore. Let God see and punish you, God, I say, the avenging Lord. May you not stand up or grow or your honor flourish, and may your portion be with him who betrayed Christ the Lord.

But they stopped their ears and went to his son, offering him the imperial regalia and establishing him in the realm.\*

33. [THE RISING OF THE SON AGAINST  
THE FATHER]<sup>1</sup>

So the son rose against his father and expelled him from the kingdom. Fleeing from the face of his own son, the father came to the duchy of Limburg in his haste to escape the hands of those who were seeking his life. Now there was in that region a noble prince whom the Caesar, when he was yet master of his own kingdom, had deprived of the duchy of Limburg to give

\*The imperial regalia were delivered to Henry V at Mainz, January 5, 1106. Meyer von Knonau, *op. cit.*, V, 279-80 and n. 1.

<sup>1</sup> Codex 2 does not distinguish the following paragraphs as a chapter. Schorkel offers the title, *Electio filii contra patrem*.

it to another.<sup>2</sup> It happened that this prince was hunting near the road by which the Caesar, accompanied by nine men, came. He knew that the Caesar was fleeing from the face of his son, for he had already heard something about what had occurred. He spurred on his horse and, with his knights, rapidly pursued the king. Seeing the prince and taking him for an enemy, the Caesar began to fear for his life and cried out in a loud voice pleading for mercy. The prince [on recognizing the king] said: "My lord, you ill deserve mercy of me to whom when a suppliant you at one time denied all consideration, depriving me of my duchy."

"That is," answered the Caesar, "what I am now expiating, because my son has risen against me, and I have been deprived of my every honor."

As the prince beheld the forlorn king he was moved with compassion. He said to the Caesar:

Although, indeed, you used your power ill against me, God nevertheless knows that I am moved with much compassion for you. For a very great wrong has been done you by those, in particular, to whom you have always been kind and benevolent. How now do matters appear to you? Is there not left you among the princes one [who will aid you]?

And when the Caesar said he did not know, because he had not yet tried, the knight replied:

God is still able to restore your honor because you have been dealt with unjustly. Do, then, what I advise. Go up into that stronghold and take care of your fatigued body. We shall send into the country and into the towns to see if we can find help anywhere. Peradventure justice has not altogether decayed from among the children of men.

Without delay he sent everywhere around for knights and he collected nearly eight hundred men at arms. And he took the Caesar and led on toward the great city of Köln. The inhabitants of Köln, indeed, received him. When his son heard of this he came with a great army and besieged Köln. But as the siege grew

<sup>2</sup>The reference is to Henry, count of Limburg, east of Liège, on whom Henry IV made war in 1101 for his violation of the rights of Prüm and of other ecclesiastical foundations. Later, however, the emperor made Henry duke of Lower Lorraine and as such he gave the emperor valuable aid in 1106. Meyer von Knonau, *Heinrich IV*, V, 115-17, 290, 310.

furious the Caesar, fearing for the city, slipped out by night and fled to Liége.<sup>3</sup> And there came to him there all the staunch men and those whose hearts compassion had touched. On seeing the numbers of his supporters he determined to fight. When his son pursued him with a great force he went out to meet him at the River Meuse. And the king asked a boon of the princes and all the strength of his army, saying: "If almighty God this day helps us in battle and we are the victors in the conflict, for my sake keep my son and do not slay him." Then they engaged in battle and the father prevailed and drove his son across a bridge where many were killed by the sword; more were drowned in the waters. The fighting was again resumed and the elder Caesar was defeated, surrounded, and taken captive.<sup>4</sup>

What abuse and what insults that magnificent man suffered in those days is as hard to relate as it is sad to hear. Friends flouted him; enemies jeered him no less. Finally, as they say,<sup>5</sup> a certain poor but learned man got up before all and said to him: "O thou that art waxen old in wickedness, now thy sins which thou hast committed aforetime are come to light; for thou hast pronounced false judgment, and hast condemned the innocent, and hast let the guilty go free."<sup>6</sup>

When they that stood by became indignant—men, namely, who were gifted with sense—the Caesar quieted them, saying: "Be not angry with him, I pray. 'Behold, my son, which came forth of my bowels, seeketh my life: how much more' may this stranger do it? Let him curse because it is the will of God."<sup>7</sup> There was in that place also the bishop of Speyer, whom the Caesar had at one time loved very much.<sup>8</sup> For he had built at

<sup>3</sup> Henry IV went to Liége from Köln after April 16, 1106, and his son did not besiege the city until July. Henry of Limburg actively aided the citizens in their preparation for the siege. Meyer von Knonau, *op. cit.*, V, 301-2.

<sup>4</sup> The battle was fought at Visé, March 22, 1106. Henry IV, moreover, was not captured. *Ibid.*, V, 298, 359-62.

<sup>5</sup> "Sächsische Weltchronik," *Deutsche Chroniken*, II, 187.

<sup>6</sup> *Sus.* 52, 53 (*Dan.* 13: 52-53).

<sup>7</sup> *II Sam.* 16: 11.

<sup>8</sup> Helmold confuses Bishop John, who had been the emperor's friend, with Gebhard, who was active in Henry V's cause. Bishop John had died October 26, 1104. Helmold

Speyer a mighty temple for the Mother of God and had besides fittingly enhanced the city and the episcopal residence. The Caesar spoke, therefore, to his friend, the bishop of Speyer: "Behold I am stripped of my kingdom; I am bereft of hope. For me nothing is more salutary than to renounce knighthood. Give me, then, a prebend at Speyer that I may serve my Lady, the Mother of God, to whom I have always been devoted, for I know letters and can still attend at choir."

But the bishop said to him: "By the Mother of God, I may not do for you what you ask."

Then the Caesar, sighing and weeping, said to those who stood about: "O have pity upon me, have pity upon me, O ye my friends; for the hand of God hath touched me."

The Caesar died at that time in Liége and for five years his body remained unburied in a deserted chapel.<sup>10</sup> With such severity did the lord pope and his other adversaries take vengeance on him that they would not allow him, even dead, to be buried. O great are the judgments of God which were fulfilled upon so mighty a man! It is to be hoped, however, that that fire of tribulation purged away the dross in him, took away the rust; for as often as we are judged in the present life "we are chastened of the Lord, that we should not be condemned with the world."<sup>11</sup> He, moreover, had been very good to the churches, to them, of course, that he well knew were loyal to him. On the other hand he was hostile toward the Roman pontiff, Gregory, and toward other plotters against his dignity, even as they prosecuted him with hostility. Grave necessity, as many say, drove him to this course. For who will with equanimity bear even the slightest

rightly praises Henry IV for his benefactions to Speyer; the cathedral he rebuilt (1080-1100) is one of the remarkable architectural masterpieces of the age. Meyer von Knonau, *op. cit.*, V, 206; Dehio und Bezold, *Die kirchliche Baukunst des Abendlandes* (Stuttgart, 1884-92), I, 463 297.

<sup>10</sup> Job 19: 21.

<sup>11</sup> Henry IV died August 7, 1106, but for five years he remained unburied not in a deserted, but in an unconsecrated, chapel at Speyer. Meyer von Knonau, *op. cit.*, V, 314; VI, 7-10.

<sup>12</sup> I Cor. 11: 32.

aspersion upon his honor? We read also that many have sinned; but they were relieved by recourse to penance. Certainly David, sinning and repenting, remained a king and prophet. King Henry, however, lying at the feet of the apostles, praying and doing penance, was gratuitously undone. In the era of Grace he did not find what the former had obtained in the unfeeling era of the Law. But let them who know and dare judge of these matters. This one thing may be noted: the Roman See is to this very day atoning for that deed; for from that time on as many of that royal lineage as came to rule tried in every way to abase the churches, that they might not regain the power of rising up against the kings and of inflicting what they had inflicted on their fathers.

The younger Henry ruled in the place of his father and there was concord between the realm and the priesthood, but not for long; for he, too, prospered during only part of his life because he was, like his father, in the toils of the Apostolic See. Of these matters there will be discussion in the proper place. I have of necessity anticipated the disturbances within the Empire and the several wars of the Saxons, because they gave the Slavs by far the most important occasion to rebel. But now I must return to the history of the Slavs from which I have too long digressed.

#### 34. THE DEATH OF CRUTO

And it happened that after Cruto, the prince of the Slavs and the persecutor of the Christian name, was spent with age, Henry, the son of Gottschalk, left Denmark<sup>1</sup> and returned into the land of his fathers. As Cruto barred him from every approach, he collected from the Danes, as well as from the Slavs, a number of ships with which he attacked Oldenburg and all the Slavic country along the sea and took from them prodigious spoil. And

<sup>1</sup>In this chapter the narrative is resumed where it was dropped in chapter 26 and appears to be based on the same sources. Schirren (*Beiträge zur Kritik älterer holsteinischer Geschichtsquellen*, pp. 144 sqq.) rejects all Helmold writes about Henry, but *vide* von Breska, *Untersuchungen über die Nachrichten Helmolds*, pp. 41 sqq.; Wigger, "Ueber die neueste Kritik des Helmold," *Jahrbücher und Jahresberichte des Vereins für mecklenb. Geschichte*, XLII (1877), 44 sqq.

when he had done this a second and a third time, there came upon all the Slavic peoples that inhabited the islands and the seacoast a great fear—so great that Cruto himself, contrary to expectation, entered into peace negotiations with Henry, granted him admission, and gave him convenient estates on which to dwell. In this, nevertheless, Cruto was without honest intentions, for he longed by guile to undo the young man, strong and valorous, whom he could not crush by force. To this end from time to time at carefully arranged feasts, he tried Henry's disposition, seeking for a favorable opportunity to ensnare him. But the latter lacked neither advice nor wit in guarding himself; for the lady Slavina,<sup>2</sup> Cruto's wife, very often forewarned him by informing him of traps. At length, embittered toward her spouse who was now rather old, she aspired if possible to marry Henry. To consummate this scheme, at the instigation of this woman Henry invited Cruto to a feast. As the latter, drunk and reeling with many a potation, left the hall in which they were drinking, a certain Dane struck him with a battle-ax and with one blow cut off his head; and Henry took Slavina for his wife and obtained the principate and the land. He took possession of the strongholds which Cruto had held before and wreaked vengeance on his enemies.

Henry went also to Duke Magnus, because he was a relative of his and stood high in his favor, and made an oath of fidelity and subjection to him.<sup>3</sup> He also called together the Nordalbingian peoples, whom Cruto had sorely worn down, and entered with them into a very firm pact which was not to be shaken by the storms of war. And the Holzatians were glad, and the Sturmarians and the other Saxons along the Slavic border, because their mighty enemy, who had delivered them over to death and captivity and extermination, had fallen and in his place there had arisen a new prince who took pleasure in the welfare of

<sup>2</sup> Slavina's existence is questioned by Schirren (*op. cit.*, pp. 157-58) but von Breska (*op. cit.*, p. 51) produces collateral evidence that she had lived and probably was the daughter of a Slavic chief Svantibor.

<sup>3</sup> They were very distantly related. Cf. Schmeidler (ed.), *Helmold*, p. 67 n. 2.



Israel. They served Henry loyally, hastening with him into the various dangers of the wars, ready either to live or die valiantly with him.

But when all the Slavic peoples, those, namely, who lived to the east and to the south, heard that there had arisen among them a prince who said that they must obey the Christian laws and pay tribute to the princes, they were extremely indignant. And since all were of the same mind and will they agreed to fight against Henry, and they put in his place one who persistently opposed the followers of Christ. When word was brought to Henry that an army of Slavs had gone forth to destroy him, he at once sent messengers to call Duke Magnus and the most valiant of the Bardi, Holzatians, Sturmarians, and Ditmarsians, all of whom responded with ready mind and willing heart. They advanced into the land of the Polabi to a plain which is called Schmielau<sup>4</sup> where the hostile army had spread over the breadth of the land. Now when Magnus saw that the host of the Slavs was great and ready at arms, he was afraid to fight. The battle was put off from morning until night while emissaries went back and forth trying to avert hostilities by compromises. And the duke was also waiting for the auxiliary knights who, he was hoping, would come up. About sunset, behold, a scout of the duke announced that a body of armed men was approaching from afar. At sight of these the duke rejoiced and the spirits of the Saxons revived. Raising their battle cry, they rushed into the fray. The line of the Slavs was broken and in the confusion of their flight they were killed by the edge of the sword.<sup>5</sup> That victory of the Saxons became celebrated and is worthy of record because the Lord stood by those who believed in Him and shut up a multitude in the hands of a few. Those whose fathers were present tell how the splendor of the setting sun so fiercely dazzled the eyes of the opposing Slavs in the conflict that they could see nothing for the light. Thus, to His enemies the

<sup>4</sup> Near Ratzeburg.

<sup>5</sup> This victory seems to be the one recorded by the Annals of Hildesheim under the year 1093. Cf. Meyer von Knonau, *Heinrich IV*, IV, 416 n. 46.

omnipotent God made a mighty obstacle of a very little thing.

From that day on, all the nations of the eastern Slavs served Henry under tribute, and he became most famous among the Slavic peoples, nobly illustrious in matters pertaining to virtue and the blessings of peace. He admonished the Slavic people that a man should cultivate his fields and do useful and appropriate work; he exterminated from the earth robbers and vagabonds. Then the Nordalbingian people came out of the strongholds in which they were keeping themselves shut up for fear of the wars. And they returned, each one to his own village or holding, and they rebuilt houses and churches long in ruins because of the storms of the wars. There was, however, in all Slavia not a church or a priest except only in the stronghold which is now called Old Lübeck because Henry very often sojourned there with his family.\*

### 35. THE DEATH OF COUNT GOTTFRIED

After these occurrences Magnus, the duke of Saxony, died, and the Caesar gave the duchy to Count Lothar<sup>1</sup> because Magnus did not have a son but daughters only. One of these named Eilica married Count Otto<sup>2</sup> and bore him the Margrave Albert, surnamed the Bear. The other daughter, named Wulfhild, was married to Catulo, the duke of Bavaria.<sup>3</sup> She bore him Henry the Lion. But Lothar received the duchy of Saxony and governed both the Slavs and the Saxons with moderation.

\* The site of Old Lübeck is disputed, but was probably at the confluence of the Schwartau and the Trave. Cf. Adam, schol. 12 (13), 96 (95); Ohnesorge, "Einleitung in die lübeckische Geschichte. Teil I: Name, Lage und Alter von Altlübeck und Lübeck," *Zeitschrift des Vereins für lübeckische Geschichte und Altertumskunde*, X (1908), 1-254, *passim*. The church constructed by Henry is noted in a charter of Conrad II, January 5, 1139. Stumpf, *Reichskavaler*, no. 3,384. Hauck (*Kirchengeschichte Deutschlands*, IV, 619 n. 2) considers this charter spurious and doubts that Henry was a Christian, a position with which Schmeidler is inclined to disagree. Schmeidler (ed.), *Helmold*, p. 84 n. 2.

<sup>1</sup> Magnus died August 23, 1106. Lothar of Supplinburg became king of Germany in 1125.

<sup>2</sup> Otto of Ballenstedt.

<sup>3</sup> Henry the Black, younger son of Guelph, who succeeded Otto of Nordheim. Cf. chap. 27 n. 3, *supra*. Henry the Lion (born 1129) was the grandson, not the son, of Henry the Black and Wulfhild.

In those days<sup>4</sup> it happened that Slavic robbers came into Sturmaria and carried off from the neighborhood of the city of Hamburg cattle for booty, and kidnapped men. But Gottfried, the count of that country, rose up at "the voice of the cry"<sup>5</sup> with some of the citizens of Hamburg and pursued the robbers. As he perceived that there were many of them he halted for a while until reënforcements came to him. Just then a peasant, whose wife and children had been dragged off captives, ran up and loudly upbraided the count: "Why do you waver, most cowardly of men? You have a woman's, not a man's heart. If you were to see your wife and children led off as mine were, you surely would not loiter. Up then, hasten, free the captives, if in the future you wish to be respected in the land." Stirred by these words, the count went off in quick pursuit of the enemy. But they had laid an ambush for him in their rear and when the count with his few men passed by, the ambuscade rose up from their places, struck down the count and with him about twenty men, and the enemy went on their way with the booty which they had seized. Countrymen who likewise were in pursuit came upon the slain count, but they did not find his head because the Slavs had cut it off and taken it with them. It was later ransomed at a high price and placed in a sepulcher in his fatherland.<sup>6</sup>

### 36. THE SLAUGHTER OF THE RUGIANI

Duke Lothar gave the vacant county to a noble man, Adolph of Schaumburg. And there was peace between Adolph, the count, and Henry, the prince of the Slavs. But one day<sup>1</sup> while Henry was staying in the stronghold of Lübeck, behold, there

<sup>4</sup> In 1110. *Ann. Hildesh., Cont. Patherbrun., an. 1110.*

<sup>5</sup> Jer. 8: 19; 25: 36.

<sup>6</sup> This engagement occurred probably before August 15, 1110. Cf. Meyer von Knonau, *Heinrich IV*, VI, 122 n. 19.

<sup>1</sup> In chapters 36-38 no event save only the death of the Slavic chief Henry (March 22, 1127) can be dated with certainty. Schmeidler prefers in the main to follow Giesebrecht (*Wendische Geschichten*, II, 192 199., 201 n. 1) and, therefore, refers the events recorded in chap. 36 to the year 1111?, in chap. 37 to the year 1112?, but in chap. 38 to the winters of 1113-1114? and 1114?. The question marks are Schmeidler's. Cf. Meyer von Knonau, *Heinrich IV*, VI, 279 n. 17, 297 n. 19.

suddenly appeared a host of Rugiani, or Rani, who sailed up the River Trave and surrounded the stronghold with their ships. Now the Rani, who are called Runi by others, are a fierce people who dwell in the heart of the sea. They are given beyond measure to idolatry. They maintain a primacy over every Slavic tribe and have a king and a very celebrated fane. Wherefore, too, on account of the special veneration paid this fane, they hold the first claim to respect. Although they impose their yoke on many, they themselves are subject to no one's yoke, since they are hard to reach by reason of the nature of their situation. The people whom they subjugate by arms they make tributary to their fane. The reverence they have for their flamen is greater than that which they have for their king.<sup>2</sup> They send their army to whatever place the lots direct. On winning a victory they put the gold and silver into the treasury of their god and divide the remainder of the booty among themselves. Moved, therefore, by their passion for dominion, they came to Lübeck with a view to possessing themselves of all the country of the Wagiri and of the Nordalbingians. When Henry saw himself confronted by the misfortune of an unlooked-for siege he said to the leader of his soldiery:

We must look to our safety and that of the men who are with us. It seems necessary to me that I go out to bring together help and so, if possible, relieve the stronghold of investment. Be, then, a courageous man and inspire with courage the warriors who are in this stronghold. Hold the city for me until the fourth day; then, if I am alive, I shall appear on yonder mountain.

During the night he made his escape with two men, came into the land of the Holzatians, and told them of the danger that was threatening. They at once gathered together and hurried with him to battle, and they came near the stronghold which was being besieged by the enemy. Then Henry put his allies under cover and warned them to be quiet that the enemy might not hear the voice of the multitude or the neighing of the horses.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. chap. 6, *supra* and chaps. 52, 108, *infra*.

After that he withdrew from his associates and, accompanied by only one servant, went to the place that he had designated, whence he could be seen from the stronghold. The commander of the stronghold, knowing his figure well, pointed him out to his friends who had been dismayed in spirit, for a report had reached them that Henry had been captured by the enemy the night on which he had left. When Henry had made a reconnaissance of the peril of his people and the tenseness of the siege, he returned to his associates and by a secret march led the army over a road along the sea to the mouth of the Trave and went down the way by which the horsemen of the Slavs would have to descend. When the Rani saw the multitude coming down by the sea road they thought it was their horsemen and they left their ships to meet them with joy and acclaim. But the Saxons, with their voices raised in prayer and hymns, sprang upon the enemy of a sudden and drove them, in terror at the unexpected attack, back to their ships. And that day a great slaughter took place in the army of the Rani, and many fell slain before the stronghold of Lübeck, nor was the number of those who were drowned in the waters less than that of those slain by the sword. The victors made, then, a great barrow in which they cast the bodies of the dead and, in commemoration of the triumph, this barrow has been called Raniberg even to this day.<sup>3</sup> The Lord God was that day magnified at the hands of the Christians and it was ordained that the day of the Kalends of August be celebrated every year in token and in memory of the fact that the Lord had struck down the Rani in the sight of His people. And the people of the Rani served Henry under tribute in the same manner as the Wagiri, Polabi, Abodrites, Kicini, Circipani, Lutici, Pomeranians, and all the Slavic tribes who live between the Elbe and the Baltic Sea and in the expanse stretching to the land of the Poles. Over all these Henry ruled; and he was called king in all the provinces of the Nordalbingian Slavs.<sup>4</sup>

<sup>3</sup> There is still a mound called the Ranenberg near Dänischburg in the vicinity of Lübeck.

<sup>4</sup> ". . . Heinricus vocatusque est rex in omni Slavorum (et) Nordalbingorum provincia."

## 37. THE VICTORY OF MISTUE

At one time<sup>1</sup> when the Brizani and Stoderani, those, namely, who inhabit Havelberg and Brandenburg, were making ready to rebel, Henry deemed it necessary to take up arms against them for fear that the defiance of two peoples would bear a litter of rebellions in the whole east. He went out, therefore, with his very faithful Nordalbingian warriors and, going with great peril through the country of the Slavs, came to Havelberg to which he laid siege. And he ordered all the Abodrite folk to go to the siege of the stronghold, and the investment wore into days and months. In the meantime Henry's son Mistue was informed that there was nearby a folk rich in all kinds of wealth and that its people were peaceful and suspicious of no disturbance. These Slavs were called Lini or Linoges.<sup>2</sup> And he took with him two hundred Saxons and three hundred Slavs, all picked men, and without consulting his father went on a two-day march through thick forests and the hazards of streams and of a very big marsh. Bursting upon the care-free and unsuspecting people, he took from them much spoil and made captive many of their men; and he went off heavily laden. But while they were making their way in hasty retreat through the more difficult parts of the marsh, behold, the inhabitants of the neighboring places came together and at once rushed forth to battle, purposing to liberate the captives. When those who were with Mistue saw that they were beset on all sides by an immense multitude of

Codex 2 inserts the *et* which, however, Schmeidler rejects. Von Breska (*Untersuchungen über die Nachrichten Helmolds*, pp. 52-55) thinks that Helmold in this chapter follows in the main a source originating in Old Lübeck and different from that underlying chap. 34. This local source would have been likely to exaggerate Henry's importance and, therefore, called him king of the Slavs *and* of the Nordalbingians, who were Saxons. "Nordalbingian Slavs" is the more probable reading. Cf., for example, "Slavs of Oldenburg," chap. 100, *infra*.

<sup>1</sup> Possibly the year 1112. Cf. chap. 36 n. 1, *supra*. Von Breska (*Untersuchungen über die Nachrichten Helmolds*, pp. 55-57) thinks this may refer to the expedition of the year 1100 when Udo, count of Stade, took Brandenburg; or it may be connected with Duke Lothar's Slavic war of 1121. Cf. *Annal. Saxo*, *ann.* 1100, 1121; Jaffé, *Lothar*, p. 17.

<sup>2</sup> The Linguones. Helmold may have got his information about the Mistue episode from a source based on the account of a participant. Von Breska, *op. cit.*, p. 56. The Linguones are discussed in chap. 2 n. 15.

enemies and that a way would have to be opened by them with the sword, they exhorted one another and with the exertion of all their strength annihilated the whole multitude of those who withstood them at the edge of the sword. They also led the enemy chief captive and came to Henry and the army, which was engaged in the siege, the bearers of victory and very great riches. A few days later the Brizani and the other rebels sued for peace and gave the hostages which Henry demanded. When the rebels had in this wise been put down Henry returned to his own country and the Nordalbingian people also went back to their homes.

### 38. THE EXPEDITION OF THE SLAVS INTO THE LAND OF THE RUGIANI

After that it happened that one of Henry's sons, named Woldemar, was killed by the Rugiani. The father, excited as much by grief as by anger at this, determined to seek retaliation. He sent messengers into all the Slavic lands to bring together auxiliaries, and all who assembled were alike willing and of the same mind that they should obey the king's commands and make war on the Rani. And they were "many, as the sand which is by the sea."<sup>1</sup> Not content with these forces, Henry sent for the Saxons to come, those, namely, who were of Holzatia and Sturmaria, and he reminded them of their personal friendship. They followed him with all their heart to the number of about sixteen hundred men.<sup>2</sup> After crossing the River Trave they proceeded through the very extensive territories of the Polabi and of those who are called Abodrites, until they came to the Peene River. Having passed over this stream they directed their march to the stronghold which is called Wolgast but which among the better-bred is known as Julia Augusta from its founder, Julius

<sup>1</sup> I Kings 4: 20.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. chap. 36 n. 1, *supra*. Schmeidler (*Helmold*, pp. 74 n. 4, 77 n. 2) cites the sources and critical literature for assigning, not with certainty, the two expeditions referred to in this chapter to the years 1113-14 and 1114. Von Breska (*Untersuchungen über die Nachrichten Helmolds*, pp. 64-65) argues with force for the years 1123-24 and 1124 respectively. He also shows that Helmold drew his information from a Nordalbingian source founded on the report of a participant.

Caesar.<sup>3</sup> There they found Henry awaiting them. And they pitched camp not far from the sea and passed the night.

When morning came Henry called the people together in assembly and addressed them:

Great gratitude is due you, men, who to demonstrate your good will and indomitable fidelity have come from afar to give us assistance against a most savage enemy. Very often, indeed, have I tasted your manliness<sup>4</sup> and experienced your fidelity, which in diverse perils has, as is worthy of note, yielded me much gain and you glory. But nothing shines out so much as this demonstration of loyalty which I shall always hold in mind and of which I shall with all my power always strive to be worthy. I desire, however, to make known to you that the Rani against whom we are now proceeding sent messengers to me in the course of the night, seeking to procure peace for two hundred marks. I would make no decision in respect of this proposition without your advice. If you decide to accept, I shall accept; if you decide to refuse, I shall refuse.

To this speech the Saxons responded:

Although we are few in number, O prince, we have in our longing for honor and for excellence looked upon glory as the greatest gain. You say, then, that the Rani who slew your son may by our counsel be received back into favor for two hundred marks? Satisfaction, indeed, worthy of your great name! Far be from us such ignominy that we should ever assent to this proposition. We did not leave our wives, our children, in fine, our fathers' estates, to incur the mockery of the enemy and the everlasting reproach of our children. Nay, rather go on as you began, cross the sea, use the bridge which the good Artisan has fashioned for you, attack the enemy. You will see that a glorious death is our greatest reward.

Stirred by these exhortations, the prince moved his camp from that place and advanced to the sea. Now that arm of the sea, which is very narrow and which one can see across, was on account of the severity of the winter at that time a sheet of the thickest ice. After they had made their way through woods and thickets of reeds they came at once upon the sea. There,

<sup>3</sup> Julius Caesar was said to have founded Wollin, not Wolgast, or Wologost, which is near Wollin.

<sup>4</sup> Cf. II Macc. 13: 18.



behold, hosts of Slavs from every province had spread over the face of the sea, set off in companies and batallions, awaiting the command of the king. That, indeed, was an exceedingly great army. While, then, all stood on guard and in order in their several ranks, the leaders came forward alone to salute the king and the foreign army and, with countenances cast down, showed their respect. Returning their salute and addressing them, Henry began to inquire about the way and who should be the first in the advance. But as each of the leaders eagerly presented himself, the Saxons spoke up: "We discern that it is our right to be the first of those who advance into battle, the last of those who return. A rule handed down from our fathers and observed to the present day we think should by no means even in this place be disregarded." And the king favored them for, though the number of the Slavs was great, Henry nevertheless did not trust himself to them because he knew them all. The Saxons, then, lifted up their standards and went to the fore, and the Slavic troops followed in their order. After they had tramped the whole day long over the ice and through the deep snow they appeared finally, about the ninth hour, in the land of the Rugiani. At once the villages along the shore were set on fire. Henry then said to his associates: "Who of us will go to spy out where the army of the Rani is? It seems to me as if I were seeing a multitude coming up to us from a distance."

A Saxon scout who was at once dispatched with a number of Slavs returned in a moment and announced that the enemy was at hand. And Henry said to his associates:

Remember, men, whence you have come and where you stand. Lo, the table is set to which we must go with equanimity; nor can we avoid partaking of its delicacies. Behold, we are surrounded on all sides by the sea: enemies before us, enemies behind us,<sup>5</sup> and refuge by flight has passed from us. Be strengthened, therefore, in the Lord God on high, and be valiant warriors, because one of two things is left—either to conquer or to die valiantly.

<sup>5</sup> Probably the Slavs whom Helmold says, *supra*, Henry did not trust. Von Brezka, *op. cit.*, p. 60.

Henry then drew up his battle line, placing himself in the front rank with the flower of the Saxons. When the Rugiani noted the man's impetuosity they were greatly afraid and sent their flamen to arrange a peace with him. He offered first four hundred, then eight hundred marks. But when the army murmured in indignation and they pressed forward to join battle, he fell at the feet of the prince and said: "Let not our lord be angry with his servants. Behold, the land is in thy hand, do to it as it pleaseth thee. We are all in thy hand; whatever thou dost impose we will bear."

They, therefore, bought peace for forty-four hundred marks. On receiving their hostages [Henry] went back into his own land and dismissed his army, every one to his own place. Then he sent messengers into the land of the Rugiani to receive the money which they had promised. Now among the Rugiani there is no coined money, nor is it customary to use coins in reckoning things, but you will get whatever you wish to buy in their market for bands of linen. The gold and silver which they chance to get by their pillaging and their kidnapping of men or in any other way they either devote to ornaments for their wives or put into the treasury of their god. Henry, therefore, provided them with a scale of ponderous weight for the weighing. And when they had exhausted the public treasury and whatever gold or silver they had in private possession, they had paid hardly half, being, I suspect, deceived by the scale. Angered at their not having entirely fulfilled their promises, Henry made ready a second expedition into the land of the Rugiani. When the next winter again made the sea traversable he in company with Duke Lothar invaded the land of the Rugiani with a large army of Slavs and of Saxons. But they had stayed there scarcely three nights when the cold began to moderate and the ice to melt. Thus it happened that they returned without having accomplished their ends and barely escaped the perils of the sea. The Saxons no longer thought of invading the land of the Rani because Henry

\* Cf. Gen. 31:35; 16:6.

survived but a short time and by his death<sup>7</sup> put an end to the quarrel.

### 39. THE MASSACRE OF THE ROMANS

About this time, too, the Caesar Henry had a serious war with Duke Lothar and the Saxons.<sup>1</sup> Now when the younger Henry obtained the sole governance of the Empire on the deposition, or rather on the death, of his father, he saw that the whole land was quiet before him and he had all the princes pledge themselves by oath to an Italian expedition because he desired according to custom to secure the fullness of the imperial honor at the hands of the supreme pontiff.<sup>2</sup>

After crossing the Alps he proceeded to Rome with an immense multitude of armed men. When the lord pope Paschal heard of his arrival he rejoiced not a little and sent into the country round about, summoning a numerous clergy, that he might with the more distinction receive the king who was coming in great pomp. The latter was received with great rejoicing on the part of the clergy and of the City. When, however, they came to the consecration, the lord pope demanded of him oaths that he would be whole-hearted in the observance of the Catholic faith, ready in his reverence for the Apostolic See, and solicitous in the defense of the churches.<sup>3</sup> But the proud king would not swear, contending that the emperor to whom all were bound to render solemn oaths ought to make oath to no one. There arose,

<sup>7</sup> March 22, 1127. Bernhardi, *Lothar*, p. 390 n. 11.

<sup>1</sup> Helmold returns to this war in the following chapter, where it is correctly represented as partly a consequence of Henry's relations with the papacy. In chapters 39-41 there are striking resemblances to the text of Ekkehard's *Chronicon universale*, but Helmold's use of this work has not been conclusively proved. Völkel, *Die Slavenchronik Helmolds*, pp. 26-28; Regel, *Helmold und seine Quellen*, p. 23.

<sup>2</sup> Pledgings occurred at Regensburg in January and at Utrecht in April, 1110. Henry V crossed the Alps the following August and reached Rome, February 11, 1111. For a critical discussion of the sources for this expedition *vide* Meyer von Knonau, *Heinrich IV*, VI, 369-90.

<sup>3</sup> Negotiations between the emperor and the pope had long been in progress and reached the crisis noted by Helmold, February 12, 1111. The disturbances which followed lasted (but not continuously) until Henry withdrew from Rome with his prisoners during the night, February 15-16. Meyer von Knonau, *op. cit.*, VI, 139-63.

therefore, contention between the lord pope and the king, and the act of consecration was interrupted. The armed host of the king at once fell into a savage fury, they laid hands on the clergy and, like wolves raging in a sheepfold, despoiled them of their sacred vestments.

On hearing of what had happened the Romans rushed forward to withstand them, because they saw that the clergy were being outraged; and such a conflict arose in the house of the Blessed Peter as had been unheard of for years long gone. The king's army, however, prevailed and they discomfited the Romans with very great destruction. There was no distinction made between cleric and layman. The sword devoured all. There every strong man fought until his hand grew stiff with the sword. The house of holiness was filled with the dead and dying. Rivers of blood streamed forth from the heaps of the dead so that the flood of the Tiber ran crimson. But why do I tarry thereby? The lord pope and others who survived the massacre were led into captivity. One might see cardinals dragged away naked, with cords bound about their necks, with hands tied behind their backs, and enormous troops of citizens being led away in chains.

When, therefore, on leaving Rome they had come to the first stopping-place, certain bishops and religious approached the lord pope and said to him: "Our hearts ache much, most holy pontiff, for the great crime which has been perpetrated on you and your clergy and the citizens of your City. But these misfortunes, exacted by our sins, were unforeseen rather than deliberate. Heed us, then, and conciliate our lord that he will be well disposed toward you, and finish in him the work of your benediction." The pope answered them: "What do you say, dear brethren? Do you propose that we consecrate this iniquitous man, this bloody and deceitful man? He has well purified his hands for the receiving of the consecration who has drenched the altars of God with the blood of priests and filled the house of holiness with the corpses of the slain. Far be this word from me that I

consent to his consecration who has rendered himself accursed." And when they advised him to take heed to his own safety and that of those who were in captivity by placating the king, he answered with great frankness: "I do not fear your lord, the king. Let him kill the body if he will; there is no more that he can do. He has, indeed, prospered much in his slaughtering of citizens and of priests, but I tell you of a truth that for the rest he shall not achieve victory nor see peace in his days nor shall he beget a son who shall sit upon his throne."

When these words were reported to the king he broke out in great wrath and ordered all the captives to be beheaded in the presence of the lord pope that he might thereby be dismayed. But the pope earnestly exhorted them to die manfully for the sake of justice, promising them the crown of everlasting life that fadeth not away. One and all, however, they prostrated themselves at his feet and begged for the sparing of their lives. Then the most blessed pontiff, suffused with tears, called the Searcher of hearts to witness that he would rather die than yield, if the mercy to be meted out to all by the law of Christ did not stay the king. He did, nevertheless, what necessity demanded and promised to consecrate the king that the captives might be freed.<sup>4</sup> When they had returned into the City, the lord pope and the cardinals did for the king according to his will, with extorted complaisance indeed, and they granted him a privilege, making concessions beyond all that his soul had desired.<sup>5</sup>

#### 40. THE BATTLE OF WELFESHOLZ

After the emperor had thus forcibly procured his consecration and returned to his German territories, a synod of one hundred and twenty fathers was convened in the city of Rome at which the lord pope was sharply taken to task for having raised to

<sup>4</sup> An agreement was reached at Ponte Mammolo near Rome, April 11, 1111, and Henry was crowned emperor April 13. Henry left for Germany immediately after the ceremonies. Helmold's picture of the threatened massacre is, of course, much too lurid. Meyer von Knonau, *op. cit.*, VI, 169-75.

<sup>5</sup> The *privilegium* was issued April 12, 1111. *Bullarium Romanum*, II, 262-63.

imperial eminence a sacrilegious king, one who had taken the supreme pontiff captive, had dragged off the cardinals, had shed the blood of the clergy and of the citizens; for having, moreover, confirmed this most unworthy of all men by special privilege in the right of episcopal investiture, which his predecessors for the sake of ecclesiastical right had defended even unto death and exile. The pope began to allege in excuse that he had been under critical necessity and that he had prevented extreme dangers at very slight cost; that he could not otherwise have checked the slaughter of the people and the burning of the City. He had sinned, indeed, but at the persuasion of others; he would make amends for this fault according to the dictates of the holy council. As this apology met with acceptance, the ardor of his accusers cooled and the synod decreed that because the privilege had been extorted it was to be called not a concession, but a perversion of the law;<sup>1</sup> so they ordained that it was to be rescinded under anathema. Besides, they decreed that the emperor himself was to be banned from the portals of Holy Church.

This news ran quickly through the whole world and all whom the craving for innovations drew on whenever a chance to rebel presented itself set about their devices. Foremost among these was the renowned Adalbert, bishop of Mainz.<sup>2</sup> With him very many associated themselves, especially, however, the Saxon princes who were seditious partly because of exigency, partly because of ancient rebellious traditions. Indeed, besides the new war for which they were then making ready, they had in the past nine times come into conflict with the very intrepid elder Henry. But why do I tarry thereby? When the emperor perceived that all Saxony was on the point of deserting him and

<sup>1</sup> *Non privilegium immo pravilegium*. This play on words was not original with Helmsold. The synod met in the Lateran, March 18-23, 1112. Mansi, *Concilia*, XXI, 67 299; Meyer von Knonau, *Heinrich IV*, VI, 231 299.

<sup>2</sup> Archbishop Adalbert I (1109-37), chancellor and long the intimate of Henry V, was ambitious and came to look upon the episcopate not as representing an official class of the Empire, but a class independent of the crown. To secure this end he joined the Gregorian party in Germany and was, therefore, naturally a leader in the Saxon rebellion. Hauck, *Kirchengeschichte Deutschlands*, III, 889-901; *Cambridge Medieval History*, V, 156 299.

that the virus of intrigue was diffusing more widely, he first of all took into custody the author of the rebellion, the bishop of Mainz.<sup>3</sup> Then he overran all Saxony and wrought very great havoc in the country, delivering its princes either to death, or at least into captivity. Thereupon those of the Saxon princes who had survived, namely, Duke Lothar, Reinhard, the bishop of Halberstadt, Frederick, the count of Arnsberg,<sup>4</sup> and many nobles, combined and encountered the emperor at a place called Welfesholz, as he was again invading Saxony with an army. They led their forces against the host of the king despite their inferiority in numbers; for they fought three against five. This battle, the most celebrated of our age, was fought on the Kalends of February;<sup>5</sup> in it the Saxons proved superior and they overcame the strength of the king. There fell in that battle Hoier,<sup>6</sup> the leader of the king's soldiery, himself born in Saxony and destined for the ducal title of Saxony if matters had taken a favorable turn. Although the Saxons then were elated in spirit over the victory, they knew well that the Caesar's wrath would hardly let so great a defeat go unpunished. They therefore strengthened their cause by frequent conferences; they settled by means of covenants the disputes which existed within the province; they drew bands of auxiliaries from elsewhere; lastly, in order that the confederates might not break their agreements, all pledged their arms in defense of the fatherland.

What shall I say of the archbishop of Mainz who more than all others raged against the emperor? When, through the efforts of his burghers who had besieged the Caesar in Mainz, he was released from imprisonment and restored to his see<sup>7</sup> he showed,

<sup>3</sup> December 12, 1112. Meyer von Knonau, *op. cit.*, VI, 263.

<sup>4</sup> Duke Lothar was one of the principals in the conflict as the heir of the Saxon-Billung quarrel with the South German, Swabian dynasty. Both Reinhard, bishop of Halberstadt (1107-23), and Frederick of Arnsberg stood high in the emperor's favor until 1112, when they became partisans of the archbishop of Mainz. Meyer von Knonau, *op. cit.*, VI, 39, 53, 144, 179, 257-58, 298.

<sup>5</sup> Correctly, third day before the Ides, February 11, 1115. Welfesholz is between Hofstedt and Biderstedt, near the Elbe in what was then southeastern Saxony. Meyer von Knonau, *op. cit.*, VI, 323-32.

<sup>6</sup> Count of Mansfield, who had long been active in Henry's cause against the Saxons.

<sup>7</sup> In November, 1115. Meyer von Knonau, *op. cit.*, VI, 337-39.

not so much by the meager appearance of his body as by the bitterness of his vengeance, how many times he had suffered death in captivity. Since he also acted as legate of the Apostolic See, he laid the sentence of excommunication upon the Caesar in numerous councils of bishops and of others endowed with judicial authority. Exasperated by these machinations, the Caesar crossed into Lombardy with his wife Matilda, the daughter of the king of England.<sup>8</sup> And he sent legates to the lord pope Paschal to pray that he be relieved from the sentence of excommunication. The pope, however, put his case off for consideration by a holy council after he had appointed a proper truce for the king and had for the interim released him from the ban of excommunication.<sup>9</sup>

In the meantime Paschal died. In his place the Caesar put a certain Burdinus after rejecting Gelasius who had been canonically elected. And again there was a schism in the Church of God. Gelasius, however, escaped by flight and remained in the kingdom of the French until the day of his death.<sup>10</sup>

To recount in detail the tumults of that time would make a long story indeed; nor is this the time for such a recital.<sup>11</sup> I am pressed to return to the history of the Slavs from which I have too long digressed. Always encumbered with domestic concerns, as is evident, the imperial Henrys certainly retarded their conversion not a little. But whoever would know more about their deeds and about the ending of this schism may read the fifth book of the history of Master Ekkehard, which

<sup>8</sup> Henry I (1100-35).

<sup>9</sup> A Lateran synod held in March, 1116, had again questioned Paschal II's settlement with Henry V in 1111 and relations with the emperor generally since that time; moreover, Henry was again solemnly excommunicated. Meyer von Knonau, *op. cit.*, VI, 350 *seq.*

<sup>10</sup> Paschal II died January 21, 1118, while Henry was in Lombardy. The archdeacon John of Gaeta, who had always opposed the emperor, was hastily elected pope, January 24. He took the name Gelasius II, but was not consecrated. Henry hurried to Rome in February and tried to open negotiations with Gelasius II. Gelasius would not negotiate; hence Henry set up Mauritius, or Burdinus, archbishop of Braga in Spain, as anti-pope. Gelasius did not flee to France until October and died at Cluny, January 29, 1119. Irnerius of Bologna, the celebrated jurist, appeared as a consultant in the proceedings in Italy. Meyer von Knonau, *op. cit.*, VII, 56 *seq.*, 106.

<sup>11</sup> Helbold fails to notice the settlement of the Investiture question by a Concordat at Worms, 1122.



he dedicates to the younger Henry and in which he sets forth the king's good deeds with the fullest praise, but he has either kept silent about his evil deeds altogether or put the best possible interpretation upon them.

Still I do not think that I should pass over the fact that in those days there flourished a man notable for his sanctity, Bishop Otto of Bamberg. On the invitation and likewise with the aid of Boleslav, the duke of the Poles, he undertook a mission pleasing to God among the Slavic people who are called Pomeranians and who live between the Oder and Poland.<sup>12</sup> To these barbarians he preached the Word of God and since God was "working with" him "and confirming the word with signs following,"<sup>13</sup> he converted to the Lord all that tribe together with their prince, Vratislav. And the divine praises have continued to bear fruit there even to the present day.

#### 41. THE ELECTION OF LOTHAR

After these events Henry the Caesar died at Utrecht in the year 1126 of the Incarnate Word, and Lothar, the duke of the Saxons, succeeded to the throne of the realm. Now the Franconians, indignant that a Saxon had been elevated to the throne, tried to raise up another as king, namely Conrad, a cousin of the Caesar Henry.<sup>1</sup> But the party which was with Lothar prevailed

<sup>12</sup> Otto possessed diplomatic and organizing ability which he developed in the chancery of Henry IV and in the execution of various commissions, such as the building of the cathedral at Speyer (1097). Under Henry V Otto was so neutral in the several disputes that he was censured. He devoted his energies to the development of Bamberg. Boleslav III, the Wrymouthed (1102-39), determined to Christianize Pomerania after he had conquered the country (1119-20), but it must be noted that Vratislav had been baptized at Merseburg when he was a young man and many other prominent Pomeranians had already been converted. Boleslav turned to Otto only after he found his own resources for the mission inadequate and Otto undertook the enterprise only after he had made sure of the approbation of everyone concerned in Rome and Germany. A year after Boleslav opened negotiations (1123), Otto set out, although past sixty years in age. Otto's careful conduct in Pomerania to his death in 1139 contributed much to the movement to push the conversion of the Elbe Slavs. Thompson, *Feudal Germany*, *op. cit.*, pp. 426 sqq.; Hauck, *Kirchengeschichte Deutschlands*, III, 901, 904, 920; IV, 586 sqq.

<sup>13</sup> Mark 16: 20.

<sup>1</sup> Henry V died without an heir, May 23, 1125, and indirectly designated Frederick, duke of Swabia and nearest of kin, as his successor. Archbishop Adalbert of Mainz and the

and he went to Rome where he was raised to the headship of the Empire by the hand of Pope Innocent.<sup>2</sup> Through his mediation, too, Conrad was even brought to the point of delivering himself into the power of Luder, also called Lothar, who from being his enemy became his best friend.<sup>3</sup> In the days of the emperor Lothar a new light began to rise, not merely in the land of Saxony, but in the whole realm—the times were tranquil, there was an abundance of things, peace ruled between the throne and the priesthood. The Slavic peoples also walked in the way of peace because Henry, the ruler of the Slavs, held Count Adolph and the neighboring Nordalbingian peoples in the bonds of all good will. In those days there was neither church nor priest among all the people of the Lutici, Abodrites, and Wagiri,<sup>4</sup> except only in the stronghold of Lübeck because Henry made his home there. At this time there arose a certain priest named Vicelin who came to the king of the Slavs at Lübeck and asked permission to preach the Word of God within the limits of his jurisdiction. Many, indeed, are still alive who know who this man was and what the greatness of his fame. That this knowledge may not be hidden from posterity I think an account of him should be introduced into this narrative because he was given for the salvation of this people, to make straight a highway for our God in the midst of a crooked and perverse generation.

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clerical party, however, secured the election of Lothar of Supplinburg, duke of Saxony. A dispute over what were crown, and what Salian family, lands precipitated hostilities and the setting up (December 18, 1127) as counter-king of Conrad, a younger brother of Frederick and duke in eastern Franconia since 1116, who on Lothar's death (1138) succeeded to the throne. Bernhardt, *Lothar*, pp. 4-5, 138-39.

<sup>2</sup> Innocent II (1130-43) who on the death of Honorius II in 1130 had been elected pope by one Roman faction and Anacletus II (1130-38) by another. Lothar declared for Innocent II who crowned him emperor, June 4, 1133. *Ibid.*, pp. 299-300, 335, 474-76.

<sup>3</sup> Innocent II, who desired Lothar's aid in Italy against Anacletus II, pressed for peace in Germany through Richenza, Lothar's consort. Frederick of Swabia yielded, March 18, 1135, but Conrad not until September 29. *Ibid.*, pp. 561-62, 578.

<sup>4</sup> Helmold carries this idea over from chapter 34, *supra*, but moves forward about twenty-five years in the course of his narrative. The *Annales Pegavienses*, an. 1115, *MGH. SS. XVI*, 252, read, "a Christian was rarely found beyond the Elbe in those times." Cf. Hauck, *Kirchengeschichte Deutschlands*, IV, 619 and n. 9.

Vicelin was born in the diocese of Minden on an imperial estate called Hameln which is situated on the banks of the Weser. He came of parents distinguished rather for the uprightness of their ways than for the nobility of their blood and breeding. He was instructed in the rudiments of letters by the canons of that place. Still he was neglected until he was nearly at the age of manhood. Because he was bereft of his parents he spent the years of his adolescence, as is usual at that age, in levity and indolence. When at length he had forfeited his father's home, he went to lodge in a castle called Everstein,<sup>1</sup> situated not far off. There a noble lady, the mother of Count Conrad, took pity on the friendless youth. For some time she detained and tenderly cherished him, so much so that the priest of the castle observed this and in envy sought occasion to drive him from the stronghold. One day, therefore, in the presence of many witnesses he asked Vicelin what he had read while at school. When the latter said that he had read the *Achilleis* of Statius the priest followed up his question with, "What is the theme of Statius?" When Vicelin said that he did not know, the priest turned to the bystanders with the immoderately biting words: "Alas," said he, "I thought that this young man, coming fresh from his studies, amounted to something, but I have been deceived in my opinion. This fellow is utterly of no account." Because, however, it has been written, "The words of the wise are as goads, and as nails deeply fastened in,"<sup>2</sup> the diffident youth was deeply affected by the utterance of such scorn. He hastened at once from the castle, departing without even bidding farewell, overflowing with so many tears and suffering such pricks of shame as one can scarcely imagine. I have heard him say many times that divine mercy had been mindful of him for the remark of that priest. He went, there-

<sup>1</sup> On a hill called the Burgberg on the right bank of the Weser near Holzminden. For the family vide Spilcker, *Geschichte der Grafen von Everstein*, Arolsen, 1833.

<sup>2</sup> Eccles. 12: 11 (Douay version).

fore, to Paderborn where the study of letters then flourished under a noble master, Hartmann.<sup>3</sup> At his table and in his home Vicelin found a place, and for several years studied with such ardor and, indeed, with such earnestness as can not easily be described. For frequently,

As one who wrestles labored he in mind,  
By the arts subduing his untamed will.<sup>4</sup>

Neither games nor feasts distracted him from the task he had begun, but he would be either reading or composing or at least copying. Besides, he was most diligent in his attention to the choir because he felt that regarding God's service as a sweet and pious duty is one of the first fruits of a thriving religious life. When, however, the distinguished master saw his disciple and household companion overtaxing his strength he frequently said to him:

O Vicelin,  
Headlong you go. Your studies moderate.  
There is a morrow yet when of the much  
That's left you may full many things discern.

Nothing moved by these words, the latter said:

But see, too tardily, I think, to books  
My hands I've turned. It seemly is for me  
To haste while time and youth do still permit.

The Lord, moreover, gave to this man understanding and a docile spirit so that he outstripped his companions and became in a short time the master's coadjutor in the conduct of the school. He ruled his associates with diligence, giving instruction as much by his example as by his teaching. Meanwhile, also, when he was free to pray he implored the intercession of all the saints, especially that of Saint Nicholas to whose service he had in particular committed himself. And it happened one time

<sup>3</sup> His name appears in a local source, dated 1123, as a junior canon. Schmeidler (ed.), *Helmold*, p. 85 n. 1.

<sup>4</sup> Helmold here and elsewhere fell into dactyls, but only the more complete lines are printed as verse by Schmeidler.

that he assembled his companions in the oratory of Saint Brigid<sup>8</sup> to celebrate the natal day of this saint. When the offices of vespers and matins had been solemnly finished some of them heard angelic voices singing the responsory after the manner of clerks, "Blessed Nicholas now his triumph won." Vicelin was overwhelmed with joy at this miracle and from this joy his devotion gathered strength.

#### 43. THE DEATH OF LUDOLPH THE PRIEST

Further, the distinguished character of his uncle Ludolph, the priest of Fuhlen,<sup>1</sup> gave Vicelin noble incentive to virtue and inspiration for the divine service. A man of sanctity and a great confessor, this priest was visited by the people of the region who confessed their sins and longed by penance to ward off the wrath to come. To him Vicelin also was attracted. He often went, begging for the wiping out of his sins through confession, and he observed in the priest a simplicity of nature, a sinlessness of life, above all an abundance of charity and a manner of living undisturbed by frivolity. Now when this venerable priest, feeble indeed with age, but strong in the vigor of the spirit, fell ill of a mortal sickness, he sent for whatever priests and religious could be summoned. After the extreme unction had been administered he complained that his most dearly beloved friends Rotholph,<sup>2</sup> a canon of Hildesheim, and Vicelin were not present. His prayer was scarcely uttered when each came in unexpectedly, and they found the man beloved of God awaiting with great resignation the hour of his demise. He still recognized them and received them with thanksgiving. His last night he spent communing with God in prayer. As day was dawning he bade a deacon read the Lord's passion to him. After

<sup>8</sup>The Irish saint, Brigid (451 or 452-525). There is evidence of the presence of at least one Irish monk in Paderborn. Fuhrmann, *Irish Medieval Monasteries on the Continent* (Washington, 1927), p. 82.

<sup>1</sup>On the Weser in the Rinteln district.

<sup>2</sup>A Rotholph is mentioned in several documents of the bishops of Hildesheim between 1125 and 1146. Helmold mentions him again in chapter 46 and perhaps in chapter 63, *infra*, Schmeidler (ed.), *Helmold*, p. 87 n. 1.

listening to it attentively he turned suddenly to the deacon and said: "Bring me quickly the holy viaticum for the hour of my departure is at hand." Partaking at once of the life-giving mysteries, he said to those standing about: "Behold, they come who are to lead me away; behold, the messengers of my Lord are come; lift me from my bed." Since they were mystified by his words, he said: "Why do you tremble, men? Do you not see that the messengers of my Lord are all here?"

And forthwith that soul was liberated from the flesh. When at daylight, therefore, many assembled for the burial of the great man, dispute arose over his sepulture. On the one hand the people wished him to be interred in the church; on the other hand, his friends wished him to be interred in the graveyard as he himself had directed. In the meantime the saving host<sup>2</sup> was offered up for his soul, while a certain Theodoric, who is still alive, lay asleep, overcome by drowsiness from his vigils at the deathbed. And he saw a man of reverend mien standing by him and saying: "How long do you sleep? Rise and have the priest interred where his people have determined." Through the good will of God, therefore, the desire of the people prevailed. And they buried him within the walls of the church which he had for many years faithfully served.

#### 44. THE PROVOST THIETMAR

After the death of his uncle, Vicelin stayed in the church of Paderborn until he was called to Bremen to be placed as master in charge of the school there.<sup>3</sup> He was a very fit man for the conduct of a school, to look after the choir, to train youth in the way of uprightness. In fine, he made the scholars, whom it had hitherto been usual to direct arbitrarily, faithful in their studies and dutiful in the service of God and in attendance at

<sup>2</sup>The Mass, in other words.

<sup>3</sup>This statement about Vicelin's position in Bremen is supported by a document of Frederick, archbishop of Hamburg-Bremen (1105-23). Between 1118 and 1123 Vicelin sent relics and manuscripts to the abbot Hamuko of Paderborn. Schmeidler (ed.), *Helmsold*, p. 88 n. 1.

choir. On this account the bishop Frederick and others whom either high position or reputation made prominent in the church esteemed him. To those only did he appear odious whose habit it had been to drink in the taverns, to go about the houses and streets, and to indulge in frivolities—to the neglect of the service of God and clerical discipline. They began to fear that their villainies would be exposed by him. Hence they were wont frequently to assail him with reproachful and very derogatory remarks. But there was nothing in his behavior which was at variance with perfection or which gave color to the comments of his detractors, except that in correcting the youths he did not spare the rod. Since for this reason, too, very many of his students left him, he was charged with cruelty. However, as many of those of stronger character as endured the yoke of his discipline were very richly rewarded; for as they advanced in the majesty of knowledge and wisdom, so did they also in the grace of worthiness and of honors.

There was at this time under Vicelin's discipline a youth of excellent parts named Thietmar,<sup>2</sup> whose most worthy mother had had a vision in the night in which she was to be delivered of so notable an offspring—it was as if she had received into her lap a golden cross studded with gems. This was very clearly a glorious sign that the future child was to be distinguished by the splendor of its sanctity. After the son was born, therefore, the mother, not forgetful of the prophecy, dedicated him to the service of God and had him instructed in sacred letters. He was at first neglected because learning had declined at Bremen until luckily the master Vicelin came to take charge of the school. Committed to his care the boy Thietmar became his disciple and household companion.

#### 45. [VICELIN'S DEPARTURE INTO GAUL]

After very many years had passed, when Vicelin saw how his disciples had advanced both in proficiency and in numbers, he

<sup>2</sup> A Thietmar appears in the Bremen records, 1139-42. He seems to have been provost in the monastery at Högersdorf, or Cuzelina, although Helmold never speaks of him in connection with this post. Schmeidler (ed.), *Helmold*, p. 87 n. 3.

thought of going to France for the purpose of pursuing the higher studies, and he prayed God to establish his thoughts in this matter. While he was turning this idea over in his mind, Adalbert, provost of the major church,<sup>1</sup> came to him one day and said: "Why do you conceal from your friend and kinsman what is on your heart?" And when Vicelin anxiously sought for an explanation, the provost replied:

I know you have in mind making a journey to France and you do not wish anyone to be cognizant of it. Know, then, that your way has been directed by the Lord. For one night in my sleep it seemed to me as if I were standing before the altar of the Lord and praying earnestly to God. Then the image of the blessed Mother of God, which happened to stand on the altar, addressed me, "Go and tell the man who lies at the door that he is at liberty to go where he pleases." I obeyed her behest and on going to the door found you prostrate in prayer. I declared to you just as I had been instructed. You heard and were glad. Now, therefore, that you have received permission, go where you desire.

Thus encouraged by the consolation of divine approval, Vicelin gave up the school, not, however, without the regret of the bishop and of the officers of the church who were loath to lose the services of such a man. He took with him the most worthy youth Thietmar, went into France and attended the lectures of the venerable masters Ralph and Anselm,<sup>2</sup> who at that time were distinguished in the interpretation of Holy Writ. By them, also, was he esteemed for his most fervent desire to study and for the commendable excellence of his life. He avoided altogether empty subtleties and battles of words, which do not edify but rather subvert, and attempted only that which

<sup>1</sup> An Adalbert is mentioned as provost of the major church at Bremen in 1142, but when Vicelin went to France in 1122 or 1123, Adalbert may not have been provost. For the critical literature *vide* Schmeidler (ed.), *Helmsold*, p. 89 n. 3. The title of this chapter was supplied by Schorkel.

<sup>2</sup> They were brothers teaching at Laon. Anselm, commonly known as Anselm of Laon, or Doctor Scholasticus, had been trained at Bec by St. Anselm of Canterbury, and was associated at Paris with William of Champeaux after 1076. Later Anselm moved to Laon where Abelard, then teaching philosophy at Paris, came to him for theological studies. Anselm died in 1117 but his name continued to be associated with that of his brother in the further conduct of the school. *Vita Norberti*, chap. 9; Otto of Freising, *Gesta Friderici I imperatoris*, i, 52. Vicelin probably attended the school in the years 1123-26.



makes for sobriety of mind and the building up of character. In fine, as he received the seed of the Word of God, he so waxed in strength that he even then determined for the sake of God to enter upon the way of a more austere life, namely, to give up the eating of meat, to wear a hairy garment next to his body, to apply himself entirely to the divine worship. For he was still an acolyte, having held back from the higher grades for fear of the deceits of his age. Now that maturer years and the long practice of continence had imparted firmness to his manhood, he decided, after having passed three years in study, to return to his fatherland and to be advanced to holy orders. At this time his beloved disciple Thietmar happened to be taken sick. And because he feared that he was in danger of death, Thietmar wept, as Hezekiah did, with much weeping,<sup>3</sup> asking for a lengthening of life through the merits of his master, which were pleasing to God. As he prayed he was, to God be glory, relieved of his illness. After that, they returned to their fatherland and parted from each other. The venerable Thietmar was invested as a canon of the church of Bremen. But the master Vicelin, destined by the ordinance of God for another task, declined the proffered post.<sup>4</sup>

#### 46. THE ARRIVAL OF VICELIN IN SLAVIA

The year in which Vicelin returned from France he went to the most reverend Norbert, bishop of Magdeburg,<sup>1</sup> to enjoy

<sup>3</sup> Cf. II Kings 20: 3; Isa. 38: 3.

<sup>4</sup> Helmold apparently did not know that Vicelin had been as *scholasticus* a canon at Bremen. Cf. Lappenberg (ed.), *Hamburg. Urkundenbuch*, I, no. 162; Regel, *Helmold und seine Quellen*, pp. 44-45.

<sup>1</sup> Norbert had founded a congregation of clerics, the Premonstratensians or Norbertines, at Prémontré near Laon in 1120, two or three years before Vicelin came to Laon to study. Seven students of Anselm's school were among Norbert's first disciples. Vicelin may not have met Norbert at Laon, for the latter traveled extensively in the interests of his community. Certainly Vicelin's access to Norbert was through these connections made easier when the latter became archbishop of Magdeburg, July 18, 1126. Vicelin's missionary instincts may have guarded him against staying with Norbert in Magdeburg for the reforming zeal of the prelate involved him in difficulties which continued to his death in 1134. Hirsckorn's proof that Vicelin did not join the Premonstratensians has not been disputed. *Die Slavenchronik Helmolds*, p. 42 sqq.

his company and he made himself worthy to be raised to priestly rank. Aglow with a most fervent desire to be at once assigned to some station or to be set at any work in which he might be of service to the Church, he heard about the fair fame of Henry, the prince of the Slavs, and how favorably disposed he was toward furthering the service of the house of God among the vanquished barbarian tribes. Since he was confident that he was called by Heaven to the work of the Gospel, Vicelin went to the venerable Adalbero, archbishop of Hamburg, who happened to be staying in Bremen, to reveal to him the purpose of his heart. Not a little delighted, Adalbero approved of his purpose and commissioned him [to preach] the Word of God among the Slavic folk<sup>2</sup> and in his name to extirpate idolatry. Vicelin immediately began the journey into the land of the Slavs, accompanied by the worthy priests, Rotholph of Hildesheim and Ludolph, a canon of Verden,<sup>3</sup> who had devoted themselves to the work of this ministry. And they went together to seek Prince Henry in the city of Lübeck and asked that permission be given them to preach the name of the Lord. In the presence of his people without hesitation he raised these most worthy men to great honors and gave them the church at Lübeck that they might live in a secure abode with him and carry on the work of God. When these matters had been duly settled they returned to Saxony to arrange their private affairs and to prepare themselves for their journey into Slavia. But great sadness suddenly smote their hearts for the news that Henry, the king of the Slavs, had departed the present life spread rapidly. Thus their pious resolves were for a while delayed. For the sons of Henry, Zuentepolch as well as Cnut, who succeeded to his dominion, were so much troubled by domestic wars that they lost the

<sup>2</sup> Adalbero held the see from 1123 to 1148. By this time the successors of Adalbert had lost their hold upon the Scandinavian countries and, therefore, began to take an interest in the Slavic mission field. Helmold's statement about Adalbero's commissioning of Vicelin for this work is confirmed by a document of 1141 printed in the *Zeitschrift der Gesellschaft für schlesw.-holst.-lauenb. Geschichte*, VIII (1878), 307; Bernhardi, *Lothar*, p. 389 n. 10.

<sup>3</sup> For Rotholph *vide* chap. 43 n. 2, *supra*. Ludolph may be the same person who is often mentioned *infra* in connection with Faldera and Cuzelina.

peaceful times and the tribute of the lands which their father had procured by the vigor of his arms.

#### 47. THE REPENTANCE OF THE NORDALBINGIANS

About that time the lord archbishop Adalbero crossed the Elbe to visit Hamburg and the province of the Nordalbingians and came into the city of Meldorf<sup>1</sup> with the venerable priest Vicelin in his suite. Now there are three Nordalbingian peoples—the Sturmarians, the Holzatians, and the Ditmarshians—not differing much either in customs or in speech, holding to the laws of the Saxons and to the name of Christian, although on account of being in the neighborhood of barbarians they are in the habit of perpetrating thefts and robberies. They are sedulous in their regard for hospitality. For to steal and to be liberal is a boast among the Holzatians. He, indeed, who does not know how to make away with plunder is stupid and inglorious. While, then, the bishop tarried in Meldorf, there came to him citizens from Faldera,<sup>2</sup> asking that a priest be assigned to them. Now the district of Faldera is on that border of Holzatia which touches the Slavs. The bishop forthwith turned to the priest Vicelin and said: "If it is your purpose to work in Slavia, go with these men and take charge of their church, because it is situated on the borders of both provinces and you will have a home wherein to stay as you go into and out of Slavia." When Vicelin replied that he would follow his advice, the bishop said to the men from Faldera: "Do you wish a wise and able priest?" On their saying that that was what they by all means both wished and sought for, he took Vicelin by the hand and committed him to Marchrad,<sup>3</sup> an influential man, and to the other men from Faldera, with the injunction that they have proper regard for his character.

<sup>1</sup> Meldorf is in the Ditmarsh region. This visitation probably took place in 1127.

<sup>2</sup> Helmold speaks of the *Gau* of Faldera as a place which is also called Wippenthorp, but which is later known as Neumünster from the monastery established there by Vicelin.

<sup>3</sup> Marchrad ranked immediately below the count in Holstein, styling himself *signifer provincie* in several documents of this time. In 1162 he appears at Bornhöved in *Wagria-Haupt, Nachrichten über Wiselin*, p. 45.

When they had come to the place to which he had been appointed,<sup>4</sup> Vicelin observed the appearance of the locality and the fields, frightful as a wasted and unproductive heath. It was also a boorish and uncultivated folk, having nothing of religion saving only the name of Christianity; for there existed among them the manifold error of groves and springs and other superstitions. In beginning, then, to live "in the midst of a crooked and perverse nation" and "in a desert land, and in the waste howling wilderness"<sup>5</sup> Vicelin commended himself the more entirely to the divine protection, [the more] he was destitute of human solace. The Lord, however, gave him grace and favor in the sight of that folk, for as soon as he began to preach the glory of God and the happiness of the life to come and the resurrection of the body, the boorish people was by a great miracle deeply moved at the novelty of the teaching it had not understood, and the darkness of sin was dispelled by the brightness of the illuminating grace of God. In truth, we would not be believed if we were to say how great a multitude of people had recourse in those days to the cure of penance. And the voice of Vicelin's preaching resounded in all the country of the Nordalbingians. He began with pious solicitude to visit the neighboring churches, proffering the people wholesome admonitions, setting right the erring, reconciling the discordant, rooting up, besides, groves and all sacrilegious rites. As his sanctity became widely known there came to him many of both clerical and lay estate. Among the first and foremost of these were the venerable priests Ludolph, Eppo, Luthmund, and Volkward,<sup>6</sup> and very many others of whom some are fallen asleep and some still survive.

<sup>4</sup> There was a chapel built of wood at Faldera according to the *Chronicon Holmstiae*, chap. 13, *MGH.*, SS. XXI, 260, and legends about Vicelin which Schirren printed in "Alte und neue Quellen zur Geschichte Vicelins aus den Papieren der Bollandisten," *Zeitschrift der Gesellschaft für schlesw.-holst.-laueb. Geschichte*, VIII (1878), 302.

<sup>5</sup> Phil. 2: 15; Deut. 32: 10.

<sup>6</sup> Eppo was a Frisian who was prior, later provost, of Neumünster and who is often mentioned *infra*. He died in 1163. Luthmund was sent to Segeberg by Vicelin in 1136. Later he appears as provost of the monastery at Zeven near Stade. Volkward came from Flanders and was almoner at Cuzelina at the time of Vicelin's death in 1154. Cf. chap. 78, *infra*. Schmeidler (ed.), *Helmold*, pp. 93 n. 7, 94 nn. 1, 2.

These men, then, banded together by sacred vows and determined to adopt the celibate life, to endure in prayer and fasting, to be diligent in works of piety, to visit the sick, to succor the needy, to be solicitous for their own and for their neighbors' salvation. However, solicitous above all about the conversion of the Slavs, they prayed God to open the door of faith as soon as possible. God for a long time put off their petitions "for the iniquity of the Amorites is not yet full" nor had the "time to favor" them come.<sup>7</sup>

## 48. ZUENTEPOLCH

The domestic strife provoked by the sons of Henry brought new hardships upon the Nordalbingian peoples. In his desire to be sole ruler Zuentepolch, the elder, inflicted upon his brother Cnut many wrongs; he besieged him finally with the help of the Holzatians in the stronghold of Plön. Cnut did not let his confederates hurl darts upon the besiegers and, mounting the ramparts, addressed the whole army:

Hear my words, I pray, excellent men who have come from Holzatia. For what reason, I ask, have you risen up against your friend? Am I not Zuentepolch's brother, sprung from the same father, Henry, and of right coheir to the paternal dominion? Why, therefore, does my brother try to drive me from my father's heritage? Do not, I pray, be troubled without cause against me, but return to judgment and intercede for me with my brother that he yield the portion that is rightfully due me.

The hearts of the besiegers softened as they heard these words and they determined that the man's demands for what was right be heard. They pressed the matter and reconciled the discordant brothers: the province was divided between them. But when Cnut was slain not long after in the stronghold of Lütjenburg, Zuentepolch obtained sole dominion. Summoning Count Adolph<sup>1</sup> with the Holzatians and Sturmarians, he made an expedition into the country of the Abodrites and besieged a strong-

<sup>7</sup> Gen. 15: 16; Ps. 102: 13.

<sup>1</sup> Adolph of Schaumburg whom Lothar made count of Holstein on the death of Count Gottfried. Cf. chap. 35, *supra*.

hold called Werla.<sup>2</sup> On mastering it he proceeded farther to the stronghold of the Kicinians<sup>3</sup> and besieged it for five weeks. When at length this fortress was overpowered and hostages were given, Zuentepolch returned to Lübeck. The Nordalbingians also went back to their seats.

When the priest Vicelin saw that the prince of the Slavs was favorably disposed toward the followers of Christ, he went to him and set before him anew the undertaking which he had proposed to his father. On gaining the favor of the prince, Vicelin sent the venerable priests, Ludolph and Volkward, into the stronghold Lübeck to look after the salvation of the people. They were kindly received by the merchants of whom no small colony had gathered there because of the probity and piety of Prince Henry. The priests dwelt in a church situated on a hill which is opposite the city and across the river.<sup>4</sup> Not long thereafter, behold, the Rugiani attacked the city when it was devoid of ships, and they demolished the town with its fortress. As the barbarians broke in one door of the church, the illustrious priests slipped out by another and saved themselves by taking refuge in the neighboring woods and then fled back to the haven of Faldera. Zuentepolch was killed a short time thereafter through the guile of a certain very rich Holzatian, Daso. There remained a son of Zuentepolch named Zuinike, but he, too, was killed at Artlenburg, a stronghold of the Transalbingians.<sup>5</sup> And the line of Henry in the principate of the Slavs failed, for his sons and his sons' sons were dead. That prince, by what sign informed I know not, had predicted that his stock would very soon become extinct.

<sup>2</sup> Wurle, or Werle, situated where the village of Wyck is today, between Schwaan and Bützow.

<sup>3</sup> Kessin near Rostock.

<sup>4</sup> The Trave River. This church was not within the fortress (*castrum*). *Vide* chaps. 34-41, 46, *supra*; Schmeidler (ed.), *Helmold*, p. 95 n. 2.

<sup>5</sup> Zuinike was killed by Siegfried, count of Artlenburg, about 1129. Albert of Stade, *an.*, 1144. Zuinike may be a diminutive form of Svein. According to the *Annales Ryenses*, *an.* 1205, Artlenburg was not situated on the right bank of the Elbe; hence, the Transalbingians of the Helmold narrative were the Nordalbingians, on the left side of the Elbe. Cf. chap. 8, *supra* and chap. 56, *infra*, but note the effect of Helmold's following Adam of Bremen in chap. 24, *supra*. Schmeidler (ed.), *Helmold*, p. 96 n. 1.

The principate of the Slavs was thereupon transferred to the most noble prince Cnut, the son of Eric, king of the Danes.<sup>1</sup> When the most mighty king Eric vowed to go on a crusade to Jerusalem<sup>2</sup> he commended the kingdom, together with his son Cnut, to his brother Nicholas.<sup>3</sup> Eric had Nicholas take an oath that, should he not come back, the kingdom would be turned over to his son Cnut as soon as the latter attained his majority. When death overtook the king on returning from Jerusalem, Nicholas, though born of a concubine, secured the kingdom of the Danes, for Cnut was still a boy. Nicholas also had a son named Magnus. Now these two scions were royally and magnificently brought up for the confusion of war in the future and for the ruin of many Danes. But when Cnut came of age he went to the emperor Lothar<sup>4</sup> because he feared that he could easily be overpowered by the craft of his uncle, and he tarried with the emperor many days and years, being accorded all the honor that became his royal station. On returning then to his fatherland he was graciously received by his uncle and invested with the ducal power over all Denmark.<sup>5</sup> And the peaceable man began to make the country safe, driving the vagabonds out of the land. Especially favorable, however, was he to the people of Schleswig. Now it happened that robbers were caught in the heath that lies between the Schlei and the Eider, and they were

<sup>1</sup> Cnut Laward, the minor son of Eric I Ejegod (1095-1103).

<sup>2</sup> Eric's was one of several crusading expeditions which moved eastward between the so-called First and Second Crusades. Eric stopped in Constantinople, shipped thence to Cyprus where he died June 10, 1103. His queen, Bothildis, went on to Jerusalem where she, too, died and received burial. Bernhardt, *Lothar*, p. 392 n. 15.

<sup>3</sup> Nicholas, or Niels (1104-34), however, was chosen only after an older son of Eric who had been named regent had to be set aside because of the excessive severity of his rule. *Ibid.*, p. 392.

<sup>4</sup> Lothar did not succeed to the German kingship until 1125 and was not crowned emperor until 1133.

<sup>5</sup> Helmold corrects himself when he confines Cnut's rule to Schleswig which he began to govern about 1115. There is much confusion in the sources as to Cnut's official position and title. *Ibid.*, p. 394 n. 21; Reich, "Knud Laward, Herzog von Schleswig," *Jahrbücher für die Landeskunde der Herzogtümer Schleswig, Holstein und Lauenburg*, X (1868), 238-41.

brought into the presence of Cnut. When he had condemned them to the noose, one of them who longed to save his life cried out that he was Cnut's kinsman and had sprung from the royal family of the Danes. Cnut said to him: "It is not proper to use a kinsman of ours after the manner of ordinary men; it becomes us to accord him distinction." And he directed that this robber be solemnly hanged on a mast.\*

In the meantime it occurred to Cnut that the royal principate of the Slavs was vacant since Henry was dead and his sons were done away with. He went, therefore, to the emperor Lothar and with much money bought the kingdom of the Abodrites, that is to say all the power with which Henry had been invested. And the emperor placed a crown upon his head in token of his being king of the Abodrites and received him in vassalage.<sup>7</sup> After that Cnut went over into the land of the Wagiri and took possession of a mountain, which is from antiquity called Alberg,<sup>8</sup> and there he built little houses with a view to erecting a castle in the place. He also took to himself every valiant man in the country of the Holzatians and made with them incursions into the territory of the Slavs, killing or overthrowing all who opposed him. And he led into captivity Pribislav, a cousin of Henry, and Niclot, an elder of the land of the Abodrites. Then he placed them in custody in Schleswig and bound them with fetters of iron until, ransomed with money and hostages, they should know what is demanded of subjects. Very often, too, when he came into the land of the Wagiri he availed himself of the hospitality of Faldera and showed his friendship toward Vicelin and all who dwelt there, promising them valuable possessions if the Lord directed his affairs in Slavia. On coming to Lübeck he caused the church which Henry had built to be dedicated with the assistance of the venerable priest Ludolph

\* This was in reality a more disgraceful mode of hanging. Bernhardt, *Lothar*, p. 395 n. 26.

<sup>7</sup> Probably in 1128. *Ibid.*, pp. 395-96 and n. 28.

<sup>8</sup> *Vide* chap. 14 n. 4, *supra*.



and others who had been appointed to this place from Faldera.<sup>9</sup>

Count Adolph died in those days, leaving two sons. The elder of these, Harthung, a warlike man, was to receive the countship. The younger son, Adolph, had been dedicated to the study of letters. It came to pass, however, that the emperor Lothar invaded Bohemia with a great force. When Harthung was killed, together with many nobles,<sup>10</sup> Adolph received the countship of the land of the Nordalbingians. He was a wise man and very well versed both in divine and in secular matters. Besides speaking the Latin and German languages fluently, he was not less practiced in the Slavic tongue.<sup>11</sup>

## 50. NICHOLAS

About this time it happened that Cnut, the king of the Abodrites, went to Schleswig to hold a diet with his uncle Nicholas. When the people had come to the conference and the older king, clothed in royal robes, had seated himself on the throne, Cnut sat down opposite him, likewise wearing a crown, that of the kingdom of the Abodrites, and attended by a line of followers. But when his uncle, the king, saw his nephew in royal attire and that he neither stood up before him nor gave him the customary kiss, he pretended not to notice the slight and went over to greet him with a kiss. The latter met him half way and conducted himself throughout as the equal of his uncle both in rank and in dignity. This behavior drew on Cnut deadly hatred. For Magnus, the son of Nicholas, who was present with his mother at this spectacle, burned with an incredible rage when she<sup>1</sup> said to him: "Do you see how your cousin has assumed the scepter and now reigns? Consider him, therefore, a public

<sup>9</sup> Probably in 1128. Bernhardi, *op. cit.*, p. 397 and n. 32.

<sup>10</sup> February 18, 1126; hence some four years before his father's death, which Schmeidler, p. 98, places on November 13, 1130. Helmold by no means exaggerates the extent of the failure of Lothar's first military expedition. *Ibid.*, pp. 75-77 and n. 37.

<sup>11</sup> The career of Adolph II, of the Schaumburg line of the counts of Holstein, whose development of the land and of the neighboring Wend country fully deserves the notice Helmold gives him in the subsequent chapters of this chronicle, may be traced in detail in Thompson, *Feudal Germany*, *passim*.

<sup>1</sup> His mother was Margaret. She, however, does not appear in such a rôle as this in the

enemy who has not scrupled to arrogate to himself the royal title though your father is still alive. If you let this go on unnoticed very long and do not kill him, you may be sure that he will deprive you both of life and of the kingdom."

Urged on by these words Magnus began to evolve insidious plans to kill Cnut. When King Nicholas became aware of these designs he called together all the princes of the realm and took pains to bring the estranged youths together.<sup>2</sup> As their dissension, then, turned toward peace, both parties swore to a pact. But this agreement, which was considered fast by Cnut, was besmirched with guile by Magnus. As soon as he had with feigned constancy sounded Cnut's disposition and thought it free of every suspicion of evil, Magnus asked Cnut to meet him in a private conference. Cnut's wife advised him not to go because she feared he would be ensnared; she was at the same time also troubled over what she had seen in a dream the night before. Nevertheless the trustful man could not be detained.<sup>3</sup> He went as he had agreed to the place of the conference, accompanied by only four men. Magnus was there with the same number of men and with an embrace kissed his cousin, whereupon they sat down to transact their business. Without delay an ambuscade rose up out of its hiding place and, striking down Cnut, killed him and dismembered his body, passionately thirsting to satisfy its ferocity even on his corpse. And from that day tumults and domestic wars were multiplied in Denmark. Of these some mention must be

northern sources. From these sources, quoted at length by Bernhardt (*Lothar*, pp. 398-99 and notes), it is known that Nicholas already feared lest the reputation which Cnut was acquiring through his vigorous administration of Schleswig would endanger his own son's accession to the Danish throne.

<sup>2</sup> Magnus had brought charges against Cnut that he had assumed the kingly title and introduced innovations in Schleswig, but these charges Cnut refuted at the court held by King Nicholas at Roeskilde shortly before Christmas, 1130. The king was not unaware of Magnus's plot but refused to take an active part in it. Bernhardt, *op. cit.*, pp. 398-99.

<sup>3</sup> Cnut's wife, Ingeborg, was not with him, but a relative named Cecelia, who seems to have suspected the plot, warned him. The messenger, too, whom Magnus sent to Cnut to apprise him of his arrival and guide him to the place of conference, suspected evil and tried to arouse him to a sense of danger by singing songs about treacherous murders as they walked along. The deed was done early in the morning of January 7, 1131, in a wood near Harslædt. *Ibid.*, pp. 401-4.

made in the following record, for the reason that they affected the country of the Nordalbingians very much. On hearing the bad news, the emperor Lothar and his consort, Richenza, were not a little saddened because there had fallen a man most intimately attached by friendship to the Empire. With a formidable army Lothar came to that well-known wall, the Dinewerch,<sup>4</sup> near the stronghold of Schleswig for the purpose of avenging the calamitous death of that excellent man, Cnut. Magnus had taken up a position opposite him with an immense army of Danes to defend his country. But because he was terrified by the valor of the German knighthood he purchased immunity from the Caesar with an immense sum of gold and vassalage.<sup>5</sup>

## 51. ERIC

Therefore, when Eric, Cnut's brother born of a concubine, saw that the Caesar's wrath was cooled, he began to arm in order to avenge his brother's blood. Hastening over land and sea, he brought together a multitude of Danes who execrated the impious death of Cnut. He assumed the title of king and attacked Magnus in battle after battle, but he was overcome and put to flight. Hence, Eric was also called Hasenvoth, that is, hare-foot, because of these continual fleeings. Expelled at length from Denmark, he took refuge in the city of Schleswig. The inhabitants, mindful of the favors which Cnut had bestowed on them, received him and were ready for his sake to suffer death and destruction. Thereupon, Nicholas and his son Magnus ordered all the Danish people to war on Schleswig, and the siege became endless. When the lake which adjoins the city was frozen over and was therefore traversable, they stormed

<sup>4</sup> Charles the Great had put up a defensive barrier and the Danes imitated him. Godfrey, king of Jutland in Charles' time, so fortified himself, and after him also Thyria, Gorm the Old's queen, and Waldemar I (1157-82). Cf. Einhard, *Annales*, an. 808; *Ann. Ryenses*, an. 1163; Saxo Grammaticus, *MGH. SS. XXIX*, 62 and n. 1.

<sup>5</sup> Lothar with six thousand men moved to the Danish frontier in the summer of 1131. Nicholas and Magnus were willing to negotiate; Lothar also did not care to become too deeply involved in Danish affairs and to hold in the north forces he needed for the Italian expedition he had in mind. An agreement was, therefore, quickly reached. Bernhardt, *op. cit.*, pp. 406-7.

the city by land and by sea. Then the people of Schleswig sent messengers to Count Adolph, offering him a hundred marks if he would come with the Nordalbingian people to the assistance of the city. But Magnus offered just as much if he should hold back from the war. Uncertain what to do, the count consulted the elders of the province. They advised that he ought to go to the assistance of the city for the reason that they often got merchandise from it. When Count Adolph, therefore, had assembled an army, he crossed the Eider River,<sup>1</sup> but it seemed to him that he should wait a little until the whole army could come together and that he should then proceed with considered caution into the enemy country. But the populace, eager for booty, could not be held back. They went forward with such speed that when the first came to the Dyavel woods,<sup>2</sup> the last had hardly reached the Eider River.

As soon as Magnus heard of the count's approach, he picked from his force a thousand mail-clad men and advanced to meet the army which had come from Holzatia and joined battle with them. The count was put to flight and the Nordalbingian people were dealt a very great blow. However, the count and as many as had escaped from the battle retreated across the Eider to safety. After he had thus achieved victory, Magnus returned to the siege, but his efforts were in vain because he became master neither of the city nor of the enemy. With the passing of winter the siege also fell off, and Eric slipped away to the coastal region of Scania,<sup>3</sup> complaining everywhere about the death of his innocent brother and about his own misfortunes. On hearing that Eric was in the field, Magnus at the approach of summer<sup>4</sup> led an expedition of innumerable ships against Scania. Although attended by only a small number of the inhabitants, Eric took up a position opposite him. The Scanians

<sup>1</sup> Cf. Saxo Grammaticus, *MGH. SS. XXIX*, 81.

<sup>2</sup> The modern village of Jagel in the Kropper Halde, about three (German) miles from the Eider, was formerly called Dyavel.

<sup>3</sup> In southern Sweden.

<sup>4</sup> Not the summer following the siege of Schleswig. The naval expedition sailed in 1134 and the battle took place in Fotwig Bay not far from Lund and Malmö.

alone withstood all the Danes. As Magnus was pressing his forces into conflict on the holy day of Pentecost, the reverend bishops said to him: "Render the God of heaven glory and hallow this great feast. Rest today. You may fight tomorrow." But he scorned their admonitions and proceeded to battle. Eric also "brought forth his host and met him with a mighty power."<sup>2</sup> That day Magnus fell and the whole force of the Danes was defeated and utterly destroyed by the men of Scania. By this victory Eric was made famous and a new name was invented for him: he was called Eric Emun, that is, the Memorable. Nicholas, the elder king, now escaped by ship and came to Schleswig where he was struck down by the men of the city for the favor of the victor.

Thus, the Lord avenged the blood of Cnut slain by Magnus, the violator of the oath he had sworn. Eric then ruled in Denmark and had by a concubine, Thunna, a son named Svein. Cnut also had a son, the noble Waldemar, and Magnus, too, had begotten a son Cnut. This royal progeny was left the Danish people that they might be exercised by them, so they would not lose their skill in war and sometime become effeminate. Only for their civil wars are the Danes distinguished.

#### 52. THE RITES OF THE SLAVS

After the death of Cnut, surnamed Laward, the king of the Abodrites, there succeeded to his place Pribislav and Niclot. They divided the principate into two parts so that one governed the country of the Wagiri and the Polabi, the other, that of the Abodrites. These two men were truculent beasts, intensely hostile to the Christians. In those days a variety of idolatrous cults and superstitious aberrations grew strong again throughout all Slavia.<sup>3</sup>

Besides the groves and the household gods in which the

<sup>2</sup> I Macc. 11: 15. Pentecost, 1134, occurred on June 4. Cf. *Ann. Ryenses*, an. 1135; Bernhardt, *Leithar*, p. 543.

<sup>3</sup> Cf. chaps. 1, 6, *supra* and chaps. 84, 108, *infra*.

country and towns abound, the first and foremost deities are Prove, the god of the land of Oldenburg; Siva, the goddess of the Polabi; Redigast, the god of the land of the Abodrites. To these gods are dedicated priests, sacrificial libations, and a variety of religious rites. When the priest declares, according to the decision of the lot, what solemnities are to be celebrated in honor of the gods, the men, women, and children come together and offer to their deities sacrifices of oxen and sheep, often, also, of Christians with whose blood they say their gods are delighted. After the victim is felled the priest drinks of its blood in order to render himself more potent in the receiving of oracles. For it is the opinion of many that demons are very easily conjured with blood. After the sacrifices have been consummated according to custom, the populace turns to feasting and entertainment.

The Slavs, too, have a strange delusion. At their feasts and carousals they pass about a bowl over which they utter words, I should not say of consecration but of execration, in the name of the gods—of the good one, as well as of the bad one—professing that all propitious fortune is arranged by the good god, adverse, by the bad god. Hence, also, in their language they call the bad god Diabol, or Zcerneboch, that is, the black god. Among the multiform divinities of the Slavs, however, Svantowit, the god of the land of the Rugiani, stands out as the most distinguished: he is so much more effective in his oracular responses that out of regard for him they think of the others as demigods. On this account they also are accustomed every year to select by lot a Christian whom they sacrifice in his especial honor. To his shrine are sent fixed sums from all the provinces of the Slavs toward defraying the cost of sacrifices. The people are, moreover, actuated by an extraordinary regard for the service of the fane, for they neither lightly indulge in oaths nor suffer the vicinity of the temple to be desecrated even in the face of an enemy. Besides, there has been inborn in the Slavic race a cruelty that knows no satiety,

a restlessness that harries the countries lying about them by land and sea. It is hard to tell how many kinds of death they have inflicted on the followers of Christ. They have even torn out the bowels of some and wound them about a stake and have affixed others to crosses in ridicule of the sign of our redemption. It is said that they crucify their most infamous criminals. Those, too, whom they hold for ransom they afflict with such tortures and fetter so tightly that one who does not know their ways would hardly believe.

### 53. THE BUILDING OF SEGEBERG

Since the illustrious Caesar Lothar and his very worthy consort Richenza were most devoutly solicitous for the divine service, the priest of Christ, Vicelin, went to him while he was tarrying at Bardowick<sup>1</sup> and suggested to him that he should provide for the Slavic race some means of salvation in keeping with the power that had been bestowed on him by Heaven. Vicelin, moreover, made known to him that there is in the province of Wagria a mountain adapted for the erection of a royal castle for the protection of the land. Cnut, the king of the Abodrites, had once occupied this mountain,<sup>2</sup> but the soldiery he had stationed upon it were taken captive by robbers let in by night through the treachery of the older Adolph who feared that if Cnut should grow stronger he himself could with ease be oppressed. The emperor attended to the prudent counsel of the priest and sent competent men to determine the fitness of the mountain. On being assured by the reports of the messengers, he crossed the river<sup>3</sup> and went into the land of the Slavs to the place

<sup>1</sup> In 1131 when Lothar marched against the Danes. *Vide* chap. 50, *supra*; Bernhardi, *Lothar*, p. 405 n. 57. Bahr's chronology of the events noted in this chapter, however, seems very plausible: Vicelin, worried no doubt by the fear that the Slavs would use (perhaps did use) the situation in Denmark to rebel and so to interrupt his labors, pointed out to Lothar, or to his representatives, the suitability of Segeberg for fortification. Vicelin's missionary work would gain if it were centered near such a stronghold as the emperor might erect. Further, Bahr thinks that Lothar may have come in 1134 to see what had been accomplished at Segeberg and, finally, in 1137 provided for the maintenance of the new ecclesiastical establishment. *Studien zur nordalb. Geschichte*, pp. 48-51. Schmeidler (*Helmsold*, p. 103 n. 5) is of the opinion that these events belong to the years 1134-36.

<sup>2</sup> Chap. 49, *supra*.

<sup>3</sup> The Elbe.

appointed. He ordered all the Nordalbingian people to come together for the building of the castle. In obedience to the emperor, the princes of the Slavs also were present, taking part in the business,<sup>4</sup> but with great sadness, for they discerned that the structure was being erected for their oppression. One prince of the Slavs, therefore, said to another:

Do you see this strong and commanding structure? Behold, I foretell to you that this castle will prove a yoke for the whole land; for going out hence, they will first break upon Plön and afterward Oldenburg and Lübeck; then they will cross the River Trave and subdue Ratzeburg and all the land of the Polabi. And the country of the Abodrites will not escape their hands.

The other answered him: "Who has prepared this misfortune for us, and who has betrayed this mountain to the king?" The prince replied to him: "Do you see that baldheaded manikin standing by the king? He has brought all this evil upon us."

The castle was finished and secured with a numerous soldiery and called Segeberg. In charge of the castle the Caesar put Hermann, one of his henchmen. Not content with these arrangements, he ordered the establishment of a new church at the foot of the mountain and set aside, for the maintenance of divine worship and for the support of the brethren to be congregated there, six or more villages,<sup>5</sup> confirming the grant by charters according to usage. Furthermore, he committed the stewardship of that basilica to the lord Vicelin, that he might be the more disposed to push forward the erection of dwellings and bring together clerics.<sup>6</sup> He also made a like arrangement about the church of Lübeck, warning Pribislav, if he would hold his favor, to be with all diligence mindful of the priest there, or whomsoever acted in his stead. His purpose was, as he himself publicly declared, to subject the whole Slavic race to the divine religion and to make a great bishop of the minister of Christ.

<sup>4</sup> Cf. Ps. 107: 23.

<sup>5</sup> The names of these villages are given in the *Versus de vita Vicelini*, vv. 126-127. Schmeidler (ed.), *Helmold*, pp. 105 n. 1, 229 n. 6. Only one of them, "Hageristorpp," called in Slavic Cuzelina, becomes important in Helmold's narrative.

<sup>6</sup> *Personis coadunandis*.



## 54. THE DEATH OF THE EMPEROR LOTHAR

When he had thus gone through with these matters and had ordered the affairs both of the Slavs and of the Saxons, the emperor gave the duchy of Saxony to his son-in-law, Henry, the duke of Bavaria, whom he also associated with himself in making ready for a second expedition into Italy.<sup>1</sup> In the meantime the lord Vicelin, the accomplished manager of the mission entrusted to him, drew to the work of the ministry persons ready in the Gospel. Of these he stationed the venerable priests Ludolph,<sup>2</sup> Hermann,<sup>3</sup> and Bruno<sup>4</sup> at Lübeck and directed Luthmund<sup>5</sup> and others to live in Segeberg. The seed plot of the new plantation in Slavia was thus sown through the mercy of God and the virtue of the Caesar Lothar. But trials are not lacking for those who undertake the service of God; so, too, the fathers of the new church met with very great losses. The good emperor, whose zeal for the conversion of the heathens had been proved, after he had made himself master of Rome and of Italy and had also driven Roger of Sicily out of Apulia, was overtaken by an untimely death as he was preparing to return.\*

At this news all the princes of the Empire were thrown into confusion. The power of the Saxons, made illustrious by so great a ruler, also appeared to have completely waned; and in Slavia the ecclesiastical establishment tottered. For as soon as the body of the dead Caesar was brought into Saxony, and entombed

<sup>1</sup> Henry the Proud, son of Henry the Black, duke of Bavaria, had married (May 29, 1127) Lothar's only child, Gertrude. Henry the Proud had inherited the duchy of Bavaria on his father's death (December, 1126) and Lothar had granted him Saxony shortly before leaving for Italy in August, 1136. Bernhardt, *Lothar*, p. 604 n. 34.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. chaps. 47, 48, *supra*.

<sup>3</sup> Hermann later succeeded Eppo in charge of Neumünster. Cf. chap. 94, *infra*.

<sup>4</sup> Bruno appears later (1152-54) as priest at Bosau, Neumünster, and at Oldenburg whither he was sent by Bishop Gerold. Chaps. 73, 75, 84, 94, 109, *infra*.

<sup>5</sup> Cf. chap. 47, *supra*.

\* For an account of Lothar's second Italian expedition *vide Cambridge Medieval History*, V, 366-67. Lothar hastened out of Italy to die on his native Saxon soil, but the passage of the Alps overtaxed him, old and ill, and he died (December 4, 1137) at Breitenwang in Tyrol near the Bavarian boundary, but within his son-in-law's jurisdiction. Bernhardt, *op. cit.*, pp. 785-86.

at Königslutter,<sup>7</sup> strife arose between Henry, the son-in-law of the king, and the margrave Albert,<sup>8</sup> who were rivals for the ducal power in Saxony. When King Conrad was raised to the throne of the realm, he tried to establish Albert in the duchy, asserting that it is not right that any prince should hold two duchies. Henry claimed for himself the two duchies, Bavaria and Saxony. Therefore these two princes, the sons of two sisters, carried on their civil war, and all Saxony was in turmoil.<sup>9</sup> Albert, indeed, quickly seized the stronghold Lüneburg together with the cities Bardowiek and Bremen and made himself master of western Saxony. The territory of the Nordalbingians was also added to his possessions. In consequence, Count Adolph was driven from his province because he would not break the oaths he had sworn the empress, Richenza, and her son-in-law. By the favor of Albert, Henry of Badwide<sup>10</sup> was invested with his county, strongholds, and feudal rights. He also received the castle of Segeberg in keeping, for Hermann had died and the others whom the Caesar had stationed there had been driven out.

#### 55. THE PERSECUTION OF PRIBISLAV

While these disturbances were breaking out everywhere in Saxony, Pribislav of Lübeck<sup>1</sup> with the band of robbers that he had brought together seized the opportunity utterly to destroy the suburb of Segeberg and all the surrounding hamlets in which the Saxons dwelt. The new oratory and the recently constructed monastery were then consumed by fire, and Volker, a brother

<sup>7</sup> December 31, 1137, in the monastery of Königslutter near the Aller River in the diocese of Halberstadt.

<sup>8</sup> Albert the Bear (1106?-70) was the son of Count Otto of Ballenstedt and Eilica, the daughter of Duke Magnus Billung of Saxony who died in 1106. Cf. chap. 35, *supra*. Helmold notices here the events of the year 1138.

<sup>9</sup> For an account of these wars *vide* Bernhardi, *Konrad III*, pp. 59-100.

<sup>10</sup> Henry of Badwide (identified with the present village of Bode in the duchy of Lüneburg) probably was not of noble origin and very likely owed his prominence to being related, naturally or through marriage, to Hermann whom Lothar had put in command of Segeberg. Cf. chap. 53, *supra*. Henry of Badwide later appears as count of Ratzeburg. Cf. chaps. 77, 84, 92, *infra*; Bernhardi, *op. cit.*, p. 61 n. 24.

<sup>1</sup> Cf. chap. 49, *supra*.

of great simplicity, was pierced through by the sword. The other brethren, who escaped, fled for refuge to the haven of Faldera. The priest Ludolph, however, and those who lived with him at Lübeck were not dispersed in this devastation because they lived in the stronghold and under the protection of Pribislav. Nevertheless, they were in a difficult position at a difficult time and in full dread of death. Besides being in want and daily in danger for their lives they were forced to see the chains and the various kinds of torture inflicted on the worshipers of Christ, whom the robber band was wont to capture here and there. Not long afterward<sup>2</sup> a certain Race, of the seed of Cruto, thinking that he would find his enemy Pribislav at Lübeck, came with a fleet of ships. For the two kindred of Cruto and of Henry were in contention over the principate. Since, however, Pribislav still happened to be absent, Race and his men demolished the fortress and its environs. The priests saved themselves by hiding in the reeds until they found refuge at Faldera.

The venerable priest Vicelin and the other preachers of the Word were, therefore, filled with grievous sadness because the new plantation languished in its very beginnings. But they stayed in the church at Faldera, constantly intent upon their prayers and fasting. With what austerity, indeed, with what temperance of food and every perfection of conduct this group at Faldera was particularly distinguished can not be adequately stated. The Lord, therefore, gave them the grace of healing in the measure He had promised—to cure the sick and to drive out demons. What shall I say about those who had been seized by a devil? The house was so full of the obsessed who had been brought from far and wide that the brethren could not rest for their crying out that the presence of the saintly men kindled their fires.<sup>3</sup> But who came there and was not freed by the grace of God? In those days it happened that a certain virgin named Ymme was vexed by a demon and she was brought to Vicelin, the priest. When the latter plied the demon with questions,

<sup>2</sup> Midsummer 1138, probably.

<sup>3</sup> Cf. *Chron. Holmstiae*, an. 1137.

why he, the author of corruption, presumed to defile an incorrupt vessel, he answered in a distinct voice, "Because she has thrice offended me." "How," asked Vicelin, "has she offended you?" "Because," the demon replied, "she has hindered my business. For twice did I send thieves to break into a house, but she, sitting by the hearth, frightened them away with her cries. Now also, as I was about to perform a task in Denmark for our prince, I met her on the way, and in revenge for having been a third time thwarted, I entered into her." But when the man of God heaped upon him the words of conjuration, the demon said: "Why do you drive me out who am ready to depart of my own accord? Now I shall go off to a nearby village to visit my fellows who are lurking there. This commission, indeed, I received before I set out for Denmark." "What," asked Vicelin, "is your name? And who are your confederates and with whom do they dwell?" "I," replied he, "am called Rufinus. Furthermore, the comrades about whom you inquire are two: one is with Rothest, the other with a certain woman of the same town. I shall visit them today. Tomorrow before the church bell sounds the first hour I shall return hither to bid adieu, and only then shall I proceed to Denmark."

When the demon had spoken these words he went out; and the virgin was freed from the sufferings of her vexation. Then the priest ordered her to be refreshed and brought back to the church on the morrow before the hour of prime. When her parents brought her to the church the next morning, the first hour began to strike before they stepped on the threshold, and the virgin began to be troubled. Nevertheless, the diligence of the good pastor did not cease until the spirit departed, overcome by the prevailing might of God. Events, moreover, proved that which the demon had foretold about Rothest, for he strangled himself with a noose soon after he was violently seized with the malignant spirit. In Denmark, also, so serious a disturbance broke out after Eric was slain<sup>4</sup> that it could be plainly seen that

<sup>4</sup>September 18, 1137. Bernhardi, *Konrad III*, p. 298 n. 7.

a great demon had come there to afflict that people. For who does not know that wars and storms, plagues and other misfortunes of mankind are brought about by the machinations of demons?

#### 56. THE DEATH OF DUKE HENRY

As in Denmark so also in Saxony there raged the manifold storms of war; to wit, intestine conflicts between the great princes, Henry the Lion<sup>1</sup> and Albert, who were contending for the duchy of Saxony. Above all, however, the Slavic fury, raging as if the leashes were broken because of the preoccupation of the Saxons, disturbed the land of the Holzatians so much that the country of Faldera was reduced almost to a solitude by the murders and the plundering of villages that took place every day. In this time of distress and tribulation the priest Vicelin exhorted the people to place their trust [in God], to recite the litanies in fasting and attrition of heart because evil days were upon them.

Now Henry, who governed the county, a man strenuous at arms and impatient of inactivity, secretly brought together an army of Holzatians and Sturmarians and invaded Slavia in the winter.<sup>2</sup> Attacking those who were next to hand and who were like thorns piercing the eyes of the Saxons,<sup>3</sup> he made a great slaughter of them in all the territory, to wit, of Plön, Lütjenburg, Oldenburg, and the whole of the country which begins at the River Schwale and is encompassed by the Baltic Sea and the River Trave. In one incursion with plunder and fire they wasted all that region except the cities which were fortified with walls and bars and required the more onerous exertion of a siege. The following summer the Holzatians, spurring one another on, went up to the stronghold Plön, even without the count. With the help of Divine Providence and contrary to their expectation they took this fortress, which was stronger than the others, and put the Slavs who were in it to the sword. That year

<sup>1</sup> Correctly, Henry the Proud. Cf. chaps. 35 n. 3; 54 n. 1, *supra*.

<sup>2</sup> 1138-39.

<sup>3</sup> Cf. Josh. 23: 13.

they waged a very successful war and in frequent incursions devastated the country of the Slavs. They did to the Slavs what the Slavs had set themselves to do to them: all their land was reduced to a wilderness.

The Holzatians regarded this Transalbian war<sup>4</sup> of the Saxons as a fortunate event in that it had given them opportunity to avenge themselves on the Slavs without interference from anyone.<sup>5</sup> The princes were accustomed to watch over the Slavs for the purpose of increasing their incomes. After Henry, the son-in-law of King Lothar, had with the assistance of his mother-in-law, the empress Richenza, obtained the duchy and driven Albert, his nephew, out of Saxony, Count Adolph returned into his county.<sup>6</sup> When Henry of Badwide saw that he could not hold out, he set fire to the fortress of Segeberg and to the very strong citadel of Hamburg which the mother of Count Adolph had built of masonry that it might strengthen the city against the attacks of the barbarians. The cathedral there and every noble structure which the elder Adolph had built, Henry also destroyed as he was meditating flight. Henry the Lion then began to arm against Conrad, the king, and led an army against him into Thuringia to a place which is called Kreuzburg.<sup>7</sup> However, as the war was protracted by a truce, the duke returned into Saxony and died not many days thereafter. His son Henry the Lion, who was still a little boy,<sup>8</sup> received the duchy. At this time Lady Gertrude, the boy's mother, gave the province of Wagria to Henry of Badwide for a sum of money. She wished to make trouble for Count Adolph because she disliked him. But as the same lady afterwards married Henry,<sup>9</sup> the brother of King Conrad, and withdrew from the affairs of the duchy, Count Adolph went to the boy duke and his councillors to plead his case for the province

<sup>4</sup> Cf. chap. 48 n. 5, *supra*.

<sup>5</sup> Namely, none of the Christian princes.

<sup>6</sup> Cf. Bernhardi, *Konrad III*, pp. 79-80.

<sup>7</sup> On the Werra River. Cf. *Ann. Magdeb.*, an. 1139; Bernhardi, *op. cit.*, pp. 111-16.

<sup>8</sup> Henry the Proud, again mistakenly called Henry the Lion, died October 20, 1139. Henry the Lion was then ten years old.

<sup>9</sup> Henry Jasomirgott, margrave of Austria, in May, 1142. Bernhardi, *op. cit.*, p. 279.

of Wagria. He prevailed, both because of the greater justice of his cause and his greater abundance of money. The dissensions which existed between Adolph and Henry were, therefore, thus composed: Adolph got possession of Segeberg and the whole province of the Wagiri; Henry received in compensation Ratzeburg and the land of the Polabi.<sup>10</sup>

#### 57. THE BUILDING OF THE CITY OF LUEBECK

Matters having been arranged in this manner, Adolph began to rebuild<sup>1</sup> the fortress at Segeberg and girded it with a wall. As the land was without inhabitants, he sent messengers into all parts, namely, to Flanders and Holland, to Utrecht, Westphalia, and Frisia, proclaiming that whosoever were in straits for lack of fields should come with their families and receive a very good land,—a spacious land, rich in crops, abounding in fish and flesh and exceeding good pasturage. To the Holzatians and Sturmarians he said:

Have you not subjugated the land of the Slavs and bought it with the blood of your brothers and fathers? Why, then, are you the last to enter into possession of it? Be the first to go over into a delectable land and inhabit it and partake of its delights, for the best of it is due you who have wrested it from the hands of the enemy.

An innumerable multitude of different peoples rose up at this call and they came with their families and their goods into the land of Wagria to Count Adolph that they might possess the country which he had promised them.<sup>2</sup> First of all the Holzatians received abodes in the safest places to the west in the region of Segeberg<sup>3</sup> along the River Trave, also the Bornhöved open and everything extending from the River Schwale as far as Agrimesov<sup>4</sup> and the Plöner-See. The West-

<sup>10</sup> In 1143, after Gertrude had died (April 18, 1142). Bernhardt doubts that Gertrude withdrew from Saxon affairs after her marriage. *Op. cit.*, p. 318 n. 17.

<sup>1</sup> 1143.

<sup>2</sup> On these migrations *vide* Thompson, *Feudal Germany*, especially chap. xv.

<sup>3</sup> A village called Holstendorf between Eutin and Ahrensboeck today recalls this settlement.

<sup>4</sup> Today Grimmelsberg near Tensebeck, east of Bornhöved. The Schwentine plain is near Bornhöved. Cf. Adam, ii, 18 (15b).

phalians settled in the region of Dargune,<sup>5</sup> the Hollanders around Eutin, and the Frisians around Süssel.<sup>6</sup> The country about Plön, however, was still uninhabited. Oldenburg and Lütjenburg and the rest of the lands bordering on the sea he gave to the Slavs to live in, and they became tributary to him.

Count Adolph came later to a place called Bucu and found there the wall of an abandoned fortress which Cruto, the tyrant of God, had built, and a very large island, encircled by two rivers. The Trave flows by on one side, the Wakenitz on the other. Each of these streams has swampy and pathless banks. On the side, however, on which the land road runs there is a little hill surmounted by the wall of the fort. When, therefore, the circumspect man saw the advantages of the site and beheld the noble harbor, he began to build there a city. He called it Lübeck, because it was not far from the old port and city which Prince Henry had at one time constructed. He sent messengers to Niclot, prince of the Abodrites, to make friends with him, and by means of gifts drew to himself all men of consequence, to the end that they would all strive to accommodate themselves to him and to bring peace upon his land. Thus the deserted places of the land of Wagria began to be occupied and the number of its inhabitants was multiplied. Vicelin, the priest, too, on the invitation as well as with the assistance of the count, got back the properties about the fortress of Segeberg which the emperor Lothar had in times past given him for the construction of a monastery and for the support of servants of God.

58. [THE TRANSLATION OF THE MONASTERY  
OF SEGEBERG TO CUZELINA]<sup>1</sup>

On account of the annoyances of the market and the hurly-burly of the fortress it seemed that the monastery would be

<sup>5</sup> Today Dargune cannot be located, but it probably was near Ahrensboeck in Wagria. Cf. Schröder und Biernatzki, *Topographie der Herzogtümer Holstein und Lauenburg*, I, 6; Ohnesorge, "Ausbreitung und Ende der Slawen zwischen Nieder-Elbe und Oder," *Zeitschrift des Vereins für lübeckische Geschichte und Altertumskunde*, XII (1910), 164.

<sup>6</sup> Cf. Gloy, *Der Gang der Germanisation in Ostholstein*, pp. 17-199.

<sup>1</sup> This chapter is not separated from the preceding in the Copenhagen and Lübeck library codices (1, 2). Schorkel supplied the title.



more suitably established in the next town,<sup>2</sup> which in Slavic is called Cuzelina; in German, Högersdorf.<sup>3</sup> Vicelin sent the venerable priest Volkward thither with skilled men to see to the erection of an oratory and monastery workshops. Furthermore, a public church for the use of the parish was built at the foot of the mountain.<sup>4</sup> In those days the most excellent man Thietmar, at one time a pupil of the lord Vicelin and the comrade of his studies in France, gave up his prebend and deanship at Bremen and joined the community of Faldera.<sup>5</sup> He was a contemner of this world, a follower of voluntary poverty, and in spiritual conversation a man of the highest perfection. His sanctity, which is above all to be extolled, was based on such utter humility and such active charity, that he appeared an angel among men, knowing how to have compassion on each one's weaknesses, one "in all points tempted."<sup>6</sup> He was sent presently with other brethren to Högersdorf, which is also called Cuzelina, where he was a great solace to the men of the late migration. The lord Vicelin, the sagacious keeper of the new church which had been entrusted to him, also sought with all zeal to build churches in convenient places<sup>7</sup> and from Faldera to provide them with priests as well as with all the necessities of the altar.

#### 59. THE BLESSED BERNARD, ABBOT OF CLAIRVAUX

In those days there took place events which were strange and which amazed the whole world. For while the most holy pope Eugenius<sup>1</sup> was in authority and the third Conrad was at the helm of the state, there flourished Bernard, the abbot of Clairvaux, whose name had been made so famous by reports

<sup>2</sup> I.e., *villa*, village.

<sup>3</sup> Chap. 53 n. 5, *supra*.

<sup>4</sup> For details about this church and its structure *vide* Rauch, *Die Kirche am Segeberg*.

<sup>5</sup> In 1142 it would seem from chap. 73, *infra*, but the order of Helmold's narrative calls for 1143.

<sup>6</sup> Heb. 4: 15.

<sup>7</sup> Cf. Schmaltz, "Die Begründung und Entwicklung der kirchlichen Organisation Mecklenburgs im Mittelalter," *Jahrbücher des Vereins für mecklenb. Geschichte und Altertumskunde*, LXXII (1907), 85-276.

<sup>1</sup> Eugenius III (1145-53).

of miracles that crowds of people flocked to him from everywhere out of their desire to witness the wonders that were done through him. Bernard also came into Germany and appeared at the celebrated diet at Frankfort<sup>2</sup> where King Conrad then chanced to have come in festive mood with his whole retinue of princes. As the holy man, very zealously intent upon curing the sick in the name of the Lord, stood in the church in the presence of the king and of the highest princes, on account of the great throng of people one could not be sure what anyone suffered or who happened to get relief. Our Count Adolph was there,<sup>3</sup> desirous of getting from the divine operation a truer knowledge of the man's virtue. In the meantime there was presented to Bernard a boy, blind and lame, of whose infirmity there could be no doubt. The highly sagacious count began, then, to watch carefully to see if perhaps he could not in this boy get proof of the man's sanctity. As if divinely informed to provide a cure for his incredulity, the man of God [ordered] the boy to be brought before him. This was contrary to his way, for others he only blessed. When the boy was presented Bernard took him by the hands and by slowly rubbing the eyes restored his sight. Then Bernard set straight his twisted knees and bade him run to the steps to give manifest proof of having been healed both as to his sight and step. The holy man began, by what divine order instructed I do not know, to exhort the princes and the other faithful folk to set out for Jerusalem to conquer the barbarous nations of the East and to reduce them to Christian rule, saying that the time was at hand in which the fullness of the Gentiles should come in and so all Israel would be saved.<sup>4</sup>

<sup>2</sup> Helmold confuses events. Bernard was at Frankfort in November, 1146, where a diet was in progress, but met Conrad only in private conference. Conrad declined to take the cross. Bernard, however, did not give up his design and appeared at the diet which had been appointed to meet Christmas time at Speyer. Christmas day Bernard preached the crusade to Conrad without effect. On the 27th he besought the king again in a conference from which the king escaped by saying that he would make a decision the next day. After Mass that day, however, Bernard preached the sermon which caused Conrad to consent to go on the crusade. Bernhardt, *Konrad III*, pp. 526-31; Giesebrecht, *Deutsche Kaiserzeit*, IV, 252, 474-75; *Cambridge Medieval History*, V, 353.

<sup>3</sup> At a meeting in March, 1147, also held at Frankfort. Bernhardt, *op. cit.*, p. 546 n. 24.

<sup>4</sup> Cf. Rom. 11: 25-26.

At the word of the preacher an incredibly great mass of people devoted itself forthwith to this very course; among them the first and foremost were King Conrad, Duke Frederick of Swabia, who afterwards was king, Duke Guelph,<sup>5</sup> along with bishops and princes, an army of the noble and the common and the vulgar, exceeding estimation in number. What should I say of the army of the Germans when Louis, the king of the Parisians,<sup>6</sup> and the whole fighting strength of the Franks also sustained the same cause? Such an army has not been known to have assembled in our times nor been heard of since the world began; an exceeding great army, I say. They were signed with the sign of the cross on their garments and arms. The initiators of the expedition, however, deemed it advisable to design one part of the army for the eastern regions, another for Spain, and a third against the Slavs who live hard by us.

## 60. KINGS CONRAD AND LOUIS

The first army, which also was the largest, then set out by a land route with Conrad, the king of Germany, and Louis, the king of France, and the foremost princes of the two realms.<sup>1</sup> They went through the kingdom of Hungary until they came near the confines of Greece. And they sent legates to the king of Greece<sup>2</sup> that he grant them transit and market rights because they desired to go across his territory. Although filled with misgiving the king nevertheless issued a decree in their favor if they would come peaceably. They sent back word to him that they intended no disturbances because they had voluntarily

<sup>5</sup> Duke, often called "Count," Guelph, was the third son of Henry the Black, duke of Bavaria, and Wulfhild (Billung) and inherited the family possessions in Swabia. He took the cross in his castle at Peiting, Christmas day, 1146. Giesebrecht, *op. cit.*, IV, 22-23, 257.

<sup>6</sup> Louis VII (1137-80).

<sup>1</sup> Conrad made final arrangements at a diet held in Nürnberg, April 24, 1147. Louis VII left St. Denis June 12. Giesebrecht, *Deutsche Kaiserzeit*, IV, 261.

<sup>2</sup> Manuel I Comnenus (1143-80). The Byzantine emperor had good reason to be alarmed, for the expedition was accompanied by a multitude such as had marched eastward under Peter the Hermit. The Hungarians had complained about its plunderings (but they were hostile to the Germans) and much trouble had arisen when the host passed through the Balkans. Bernhardt, *Konrad III*, pp. 597-599.

undertaken a crusade to extend the bounds of peace. According to their desire, therefore, the king of Greece afforded them the right to cross his territories and to buy freely what the markets had to sell wherever they should pitch their camps. Many portents, presaging misfortunes to come, were in those days also seen in the army. The most extraordinary of these signs occurred one evening as a very dense fog enshrouded the camp. When it lifted, all the tent coverings and everything that had been in the open appeared besprinkled with blood as if that cloud had rained blood. On beholding this the king and the rest of the princes concluded that they had been called unto the most trying labors and the dangers of death. They were not mistaken in their conjectures. Not long after they came into a mountainous region in which they found an exceedingly pleasant valley with meadow land and a flowing stream.<sup>3</sup> There they set up their camp on the sloping mountain side. But the draught animals together with the two-yoke and four-yoke wagons which carried the provisions and baggage of the knights, also a large number of cattle that were kept for slaughter, were quartered in the middle of the valley to be near the stream of water and convenient to pasturage. As night came on a crash of thunder and the noise of a storm were heard over the mountain top. Then, behold, at midnight, whether through a cloud-burst or some other happening I do not know, the torrent swelled, broke out, and in a moment washed away and swept into the sea whatever men and beasts were in the lower parts of the valley. This, then, was the first misfortune of the army which the knights of that crusade sustained. The others, those who had survived, resumed the march they had begun and on crossing Greece came to the royal city of Constantinople.<sup>4</sup> After the army had rested there for some days they came to the bight of the sea which is commonly called the Arm of Saint George.<sup>5</sup> There the king of

<sup>3</sup> The valley of the Melas and Atyras near Chōrobacchi (September 7-8, 1147). Bernhardt, *op. cit.*, pp. 612 *sqq.*

<sup>4</sup> The German crusaders reached Constantinople, September 10.

<sup>5</sup> The name applies to the Hellespont as well as to the Bosphorus where the crossing

Greece had ships made ready for them to take the army across and had stationed scribes who were to report to him the number of the warriors. When he had perused their report he sighed deeply and said: "Wherefore, O Lord God, hast Thou led these many people from their homes? Verily they need Thy strong arm that they may again see the pleasant land, I say, the land of their birth."

Louis, the king of France, crossed the sea and directed his march against Jerusalem, but he lost his entire army in fighting the barbarians.<sup>6</sup> What shall I say of the king of Germany and of those who were with him? Led into a very great desert through the treachery of a legate of the king of Greece who ought to have conducted them into the territory of the Persians, they all perished of hunger and thirst.<sup>7</sup> So far did they waste away from hunger and thirst that they voluntarily proffered their necks to the barbarians who assailed them. The king and the stronger ones who escaped death fled back into Greece.<sup>8</sup> Oh, the judgments of the Most High! So great was the disaster of the army and so inexpressible the misery that those who took part bemoan it with tears to this very day.

#### 61. THE STORMING OF LISBON

The second army, a naval force, brought together from Köln and other cities along the Rhine, besides cities on the banks of the River Weser, sailed the vast expanses of the ocean<sup>1</sup>

seems to have been made. Nine hundred thousand were reported to have crossed, but the figure is an exaggeration as modern critical scholarship has shown. Bernhardt, *op. cit.*, pp. 620 n. 68; 622 n. 69.

<sup>6</sup>The French expedition had followed the overland route to Constantinople which the Germans had taken and made its way to Antioch by a road following the sea coast. At Antioch Louis took ship with a part of his force, March, 1148. Giesebrecht, *op. cit.*, IV, 274 199.

<sup>7</sup>That Stephan, the Byzantine guide, led the Germans to destruction, as Helmold and others state, cannot be proved. Bernhardt, *op. cit.*, p. 630 n. 12.

<sup>8</sup>The Germans were routed at Dorylaeum (October 26, 1147) and fled back to the French at Laodicea. Conrad, however, did not give up the struggle until he was repulsed at Damascus in July, 1148. He returned to Germany, May, 1149, by way of Italy. *Ibid.*, pp. 654-84, 750 199.

<sup>1</sup>The North Sea. Cf. chap. 1 n. 2, *supra*.

until they came to Britain. After refitting there for some days, the fleet (not a little augmented by Angles and Britons) set sail for Spain.<sup>2</sup> They landed at Portugal, the noblest city of Galatia, to worship at the shrine of Saint James.<sup>3</sup> Happy at the coming of the crusaders, the king of Galatia<sup>4</sup> asked that if they had gone out to fight for God they help him against Lisbon whose people were harassing the Christian frontiers. Acceding to his request, they went to Lisbon with a large fleet. The king also came up by a land route with a strong army. The city was besieged by land and by sea and much time was spent in its investment. When at last they took the city<sup>5</sup> and routed the barbarians, the king of Galatia asked the crusaders to give him the unoccupied city. As allies they had first divided the booty among them. So was established there a colony of Christians which subsists even to the present day. Of all the works which the crusading army did, this alone proved successful.<sup>6</sup>

## 62. NICLOT

The third army of crusaders was directed against the Slavic peoples, the Abodrites and the Lutici, namely, on our frontier, in order to avenge the death and destruction which they had inflicted upon the worshippers of Christ, especially upon the Danes. The leaders of this expedition were Adalbero of Hamburg<sup>1</sup> and all the bishops of Saxony, besides the young duke

<sup>2</sup> The Germans left Köln, April 17, 1147, and met at Dartmouth in Devon, May 19. On the 23d they sailed with Englishmen, Normans, Scots, and Bretons in 164 ships. Their strength was estimated at 13,000 men. Bernhardi, *Konrad III*, pp. 579-80.

<sup>3</sup> A storm scattered the armada, and about fifty ships reassembled in the harbor of Gijón in the Asturias, May 30. There they waited for the other ships and then slowly made their way along the coast to Tambre whence they went a short distance inland to Santiago de Compostela to celebrate Pentecost, June 8. Not until June 16 did they reach Oporto which Helmold calls Portugal. *Ibid.*, p. 580.

<sup>4</sup> Afonso I (1129-85).

<sup>5</sup> The fleet anchored before Lisbon June 28, and the allied forces took possession of the city October 24. *Ibid.*, pp. 582, 588.

<sup>6</sup> The crusaders who did not settle in Lisbon embarked for the Holy Land February 1, 1148, but, as Helmold writes, accomplished nothing. *Ibid.*, p. 590.

<sup>1</sup> Adalbero, or Adalbert II, archbishop of Hamburg, was, however, not the papal legate for this Crusade. This office was conferred on Anselm, bishop of Havelberg, by Pope Eugenius III. Hauck, *Kirchengeschichte Deutschlands*, IV, 629. Cf. *Cambridge Medieval History*, V, 354-56.

Henry,<sup>2</sup> Conrad, duke of Zähringen, Albert, margrave of Salzwedel,<sup>3</sup> and Conrad of Wettin. When Niclot<sup>4</sup> heard that an army was shortly to be assembled to destroy him, he called together all his people and began to build the fortress Dobin<sup>5</sup> to serve his folk as a refuge in time of need. He also sent messengers to Count Adolph, reminding him of the pact which they had made,<sup>6</sup> at the same time asking that he be accorded an opportunity of conferring with him and of sharing his counsel. When the count refused, pointing out that this would be incautious on his part since it would give offense to the princes, Niclot charged him through messengers, saying:

I had resolved, indeed, to be your eye and your ear in the land of the Slavs, which you have begun to inhabit, that you might not suffer any annoyance from the Slavs who once possessed the Wagrian territory and who contend that they have been unjustly deprived of the inheritance of their fathers. Why, then, do you deny your friend in time of need? Does not trial prove a friend? Thus far I have stayed the hands of the Slavs from troubling you; now, at length, I will withdraw my hand and leave you to your own devices, because you have scorned your friend, have been unmindful of the pact, and have turned your face from me in the time of need.

And the count's messengers said to Niclot: "An exigency, of which you know, at this time prevents our lord from speaking with you. Preserve, then, still your fidelity and your engagement with our lord, that you may forewarn him if you see hostilities secretly brewing against him among the Slavs." This Niclot promised.

The count said, therefore, to the inhabitants of his land:

<sup>2</sup> Henry the Lion. Henry later (1148?) married Clementia, the daughter of Count Conrad of Zähringen, powerful both in his native Swabia and in Burgundy. Bernhardt, *Konrad III*, p. 798 n. 24.

<sup>3</sup> Albert the Bear.

<sup>4</sup> Cf. chap. 52, *supra*.

<sup>5</sup> Its situation in the narrows between the Schweriner See and the water called "Die Dope," on Adolph's eastern frontier, would enable Niclot to protect his territories from attack by sea by way of Wismar, from any attack by way of Wagria, and also, as Helmold states, afford his people a place of refuge. Bernhardt, *op. cit.*, p. 566 n. 8. Sieniawski analyzes Niclot's problems and how he tried to solve them. "Ueber den Obotritenfürst Niklot," *Jahresbericht über das königliche Gymnasium zu Düsseldorf für 1880-81*.

<sup>6</sup> Cf. chap. 57, *supra*.

"Take care of your stock and of your goods that they may not perchance be seized by thieves or by robbers. It will be my concern to provide in case of public danger that you may not be overtaken by any unexpected incursion of an army." The wise man thought, indeed, that by his craft he had forestalled unexpected hostile onsets. Things, however, happened otherwise.

## 63. THE BURNING OF THE SHIPS

When he perceived that it was not possible to prevent the starting of the expedition which had been vowed, Niclot secretly prepared a naval force, crossed the sea and put in his fleet at the mouth of the Trave, to strike the whole province of Wagria before the army of the Saxons poured over his own bounds. In the evening he dispatched a messenger to Segeberg, because he had promised the count that he would forewarn him, but the deputation was more than in vain because the count was away and there was not time for anyone to gather an army. Therefore, at sunrise of the day on which the holy martyrdom of Saints John and Paul<sup>1</sup> was to be celebrated, the naval force of the Slavs went through the mouth of the Trave. Then citizens of the city of Lübeck, who heard the murmur of the host, cried out to the men of the city: "We have heard the noise of a very great clamoring, as if it were the din of a multitude coming up and we do not know what it is." And they sent to the city and to the market place to tell them of the danger that threatened. But the populace, [drunk] with many a potation, could be drawn neither from their beds nor from the ships until, surrounded by the enemy, they lost their ships, which were heavily laden with merchandise, through the fire flung on them. That day were slain there three hundred or more men. Rotholph, the priest and monk,<sup>2</sup> was cut off by the barbarians as he was fleeing to the stronghold, and he was covered with a thousand wounds. Moreover, those who were in the stronghold suffered for two

<sup>1</sup> June 26, 1147. John and Paul were martyrs at Rome under Julian the Apostate.

<sup>2</sup> This may be Rotholph, canon of Hildesheim, mentioned in chaps. 43 and 46, *supra*.



days a most terrible siege. Two troops of horsemen, also, ranged through all the land of the Wagiri and destroyed whatever they found in the suburb of Segeberg. The region, too, which is called Dargune<sup>3</sup> and all the country below the Trave that had been settled by the Westphalians, Hollanders, and other foreign peoples was consumed by the devouring flames. They put to death the brave men who presumed to attempt armed resistance and led their wives and children into captivity. They spared, however, the men of Holzatia, who lived beyond the Trave to the west of the Segeberg district, and stopped at the fields of the town of Cuzelina and did not undertake to go farther. The Slavs, moreover, did not devastate the villages on the Schwentine plain which were spread out from the River Schwale to the River Agrimesov and the Plöner-See,<sup>4</sup> nor did they touch any of the property of the men dwelling there. A saying, at this time common in the mouths of all, was that certain of the Holzatians had brought about this calamitous destruction out of hatred for the strangers whom the count had gathered from afar to inhabit the land. Hence, the Holzatians alone were found to be unaffected by the general disaster. The city of Eutin, thanks to the strength of its location, was also saved.

## 64. GERLAV, THE PRIEST

I shall tell of an event worth remembering by posterity. After the Slavs had despoiled at will the land of the Wagiri they came at last to the region of Süssel to destroy the colony of Frisians there, which numbered according to computations four hundred or more men. But when the Slavs came up hardly a hundred were in the little fort because the others had returned to their fatherland for the purpose of setting in order the belongings they had left there. After what was outside had been set on fire those who were within the fortification were subjected to the trials of a severe siege; all day they were vigorously attacked by three thousand Slavs. While the latter were fully

<sup>3</sup> *Vide* chap. 57 n. 5, *supra*.

<sup>4</sup> *Vide* chap. 57 nn. 4, 5, *supra*.

confident of victory, the former were warding off the last hour by prolonging the conflict. When the Slavs saw that they would not gain a bloodless victory, they promised the Frisians life and inviolability of limb if they would come out of the fortress and give up their arms. Some of the besieged, therefore, in the expectation of life began to press for a surrender. But a most steadfast priest charged them:

What is it, O men, that you wish to do? Do you suppose that by surrendering you will ransom your lives or that the barbarians will keep their word? You err, men, my compatriots. Yours is a foolish supposition. Know you not that of every kind of newcomer, no people is more detested by the Slavs than the Frisians? Truly, our savor is abhorrent to them. Why, then, throw away your lives, of your own accord hasten to destruction? I abjure you by the Lord, the Maker of the world, to Whom "there is no restraint . . . to save . . . by few,"<sup>1</sup> that you try your strength yet a little while and join battle with the enemy. For so long as this wall surrounds us, we are masters of our arms and of our weapons; life is for us founded in hope, but nothing is left us unarmed other than ignominious death. Rather, plunge into their vitals your swords, which of their own accord they bespeak for themselves, and be avengers of your blood. Let them taste your valor. Let them not go back with a bloodless victory.

And as he spoke these words he showed them his plucky spirit. He threw open the portals and with only one man hurled back the enemy wedge, slaying a prodigious number of Slavs with his own hand. He did not slacken in the fight even after one eye had been stricken out and he had been wounded in the abdomen; he displayed divine strength both of soul and of body. Those most noted sons of Sarvia,<sup>2</sup> or the Maccabees, did not fight more valiantly of old than the priest Gerlav and the handful of men in the stronghold Süssel. They held the fort from the hands of those that spoiled them. On hearing of their deeds, the count gathered together an army to fight the Slavs and to drive them out of his land. When rumor of what he was doing reached the

<sup>1</sup> I Sam. 14: 6.

<sup>2</sup> Or Zeruah, David's sister and mother of Joab, Abishai, and Asahel. II Sam. 2: 18; I Chron. 2: 16.

Slavs, they returned to their ships and departed, burdened with captives and the diverse goods which they had plundered in the land of the Wagiri.

## 65. THE SIEGE OF DEMMIN

In the meantime the news spread through all Saxony and Westphalia that the Slavs had broken forth and had been the first to engage in war. All that army, signed with the sign of the cross, hastened to descend upon the land of the Slavs and to punish their iniquity.<sup>1</sup> They divided the army and invested two fortresses, Dobin and Demmin, and they "made many engines of war against" them.<sup>2</sup> There came also an army of Danes, and it joined those who were investing Dobin, and the siege waxed. One day, however, those who were shut up noticed that the army of the Danes acted dilatorily—for they are pugnacious at home, unwarlike abroad.<sup>3</sup> Making a sudden sally, they slew many of the Danes and laid them as a thickness for the ground.<sup>4</sup> The Danes, also, could not be aided on account of intervening water.<sup>5</sup> Moved to anger thereat, the army pressed the siege more obstinately. The vassals of our duke and of the margrave Albert, however, said to one another: "Is not the land we are devastating our land, and the people we are fighting our people? Why are we, then, found to be our own enemies and the destroyers of our own incomes? Does not this loss fall back on our lords?"

From that day, then, uncertainty of purpose began to seize the army and repeated truces to lighten the investment. As often as the Slavs were beaten in an engagement, the army was held back from pursuing the fugitives and from seizing the stronghold. Finally, when our men were weary, an agreement was made to the effect that the Slavs were to embrace Christianity<sup>6</sup> and to release the Danes whom they held in captivity. Many of them, therefore, falsely received baptism, and they released

<sup>1</sup> Reference is here made to that part of the crusading army which had been designed to war upon the Slavs. Cf. chap. 59, *supra*.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. chaps. 51, *supra*, 85, *infra*.

<sup>3</sup> Cf. *Auct. Gemblac.*, an. 1148.

<sup>4</sup> I Macc. 11: 20.

<sup>5</sup> Cf. Ps. 140: 7 (Douay version).

<sup>6</sup> Cf. *Ann. Palid.*, an. 1147.

from captivity all the Danes that were old or not serviceable, retaining the others whom more robust years fitted for work. Thus, that grand expedition broke up with slight gain. The Slavs immediately afterward became worse: they neither respected their baptism nor kept their hands from ravaging the Danes.

## 66. THE FAMINE

Our count now repaired the broken friendships and made peace with Niclot and with the other eastern Slavs. Nevertheless, he did not wholly trust them because they had violated the previous pacts and had visited his land with very great destruction. He began to console his people, borne down by the devastation wrought by the enemy, and to exhort them not to yield to adverse fortunes, acquainting them with the fact that as marchmen<sup>1</sup> they must have stern patience and be ready to shed their blood freely. He was zealous also in the ransoming of captives.

What shall I say of the priest of Christ, Vicelin? In that calamitous time in which barbaric madness had afflicted many and a lack of grain had brought on a famine, he especially enjoined all who were in Cuzelina and in Faldera to be mindful of the poor. To this work the man of God, Thietmar, was incomparably well adapted. A faithful and prudent minister, he distributed and gave to the poor. He was everywhere charitable, everywhere bountiful. What I say in his praise is too little.<sup>2</sup> Truly, the priest's heart, filled with mercy, gave forth a fragrance of the sweetest odor. Before the monastery gates there lay crowds of needy persons, awaiting alms from the man of God. It seemed as if the monastery would be reduced to want through his generosity. The portals of the storehouses were, therefore, shut by the procurators that the community might not be subject to detriment. What was the man of God to do? He could not endure the cries of the poor, nor was there anything

<sup>1</sup> Inhabitants of a march or mark, territory on a frontier.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. Adam, ii, 69 (67).

at hand to give them. The compassionate man began, therefore, to be more prying and to go about the barns craftily to seek an entrance. When he found one, however well concealed, he did as a thief does, giving daily to the poor as occasion offered. We were told by most trustworthy persons that Divine Providence in those days replenished the emptied granaries. The deeds of Elijah and likewise of Elisha<sup>3</sup> confirm this fact, for there is no doubt that there still live men who, as they emulate the virtues of these prophets, also rival their miracles.

#### 67. THE DEATH OF ETHELER

For a little while the Wagrian land was granted a respite from the misfortunes it had suffered. But, behold, new wars started in the north that added grief to sorrow, wound to wound. When Eric, whose by-name was Emun, was killed,<sup>1</sup> there remained three royal scions: namely, Svein, the son of that Eric; Waldemar, the son of Cnut; Cnut, the son of Magnus. Since they were still infants, a certain Eric, also called Spac,<sup>2</sup> was by the decision of the Danes placed over them as guardian to protect the realm along with the royal offspring. He was a man of peace and placidly governed the kingdom entrusted to him, but he resisted too little the fury of the Slavs. For at this time their depredations became unusually severe. As Eric realized that the day of his death was approaching, he called together the three royal youths and after consultation with the magnates appointed Svein to the kingship and bade Waldemar and Cnut be satisfied with their paternal inheritance. After he had in such wise ordered affairs he died.<sup>3</sup> Without delay Cnut, the son of Magnus, violated the settlement of his guardian, tried to seize the kingdom and stirred up a great war against Svein. Waldemar

<sup>1</sup> Cf. I Kings, 17: 11-16; II Kings, 4: 1-7.

<sup>2</sup> In 1137. Cf. chaps. 51, 55, *supra*.

<sup>3</sup> He was the nephew of Eric Ejegod, is often called "Lamb," and ruled from 1137 to 1146. Cf. *Vita altera Kanuti ducis. Transl. lectio 5*; Saxo Grammaticus, *MGH. SS. XXIX.* 18, 86; Hirsekorn, *Die Slavenchronik Helmolds*, p. 56 n. 3.

<sup>4</sup> August 27, 1146. Cf. Bernhardi, *Konrad III.*, p. 571 n. 20.

took the part of Svein. All Denmark was moved, and there were seen in the northern heavens great signs having the appearance, as it were, of fiery torches glowing a red suggestive of human blood. The portents were not false. For who does not know of the carnage wrought in that war?

Each of the kings then endeavored to draw to himself our count, and they sent messengers with gifts, presenting many and promising greater ones. The count was pleased with Cnut, and after they had held a conference Cnut did him homage. Svein was enraged at this act. He came over into the land of Wagria with an army and set fire to Oldenburg and devastated all the country along the sea. Departing thence, he set fire to the suburb of Segeberg and the voracious flames consumed everything in the vicinity. Now the author of this evil doing was a certain Etheler,<sup>4</sup> a native of the Ditmarsh. Sustained by the wealth of the Danes, he associated with himself every spirited man in Holzatia. On becoming the king's general, he planned to drive the count from the province and add his land to the kingdom of the Danes.<sup>5</sup> When this design became known to the count, he went to the duke to receive his protection. He could not safely stay in Holzatia because the number of Etheler's men,<sup>6</sup> who were lying in wait for his life, had increased. Whoever desired to become one of Etheler's men, came to receive a cloak, a shield, or a horse as gift and, corrupted by presents of this kind, all the land was filled with seditious persons. The duke accordingly instructed all the Holzatian and Sturmarian people that wheresoever men adhering to Etheler were to be found,

<sup>4</sup> The Ditmarsh had been part of the domain of Rudolph, margrave of Stade. The district, however, was determined to be free and secured this freedom when Rudolph was murdered (March 15, 1144). The rising young Henry the Lion determined to annex the Ditmarsh. He could cloak his cupidity with his duty as advocate of the archbishopric of Hamburg-Bremen in order to force the district to recognize its ecclesiastical obligations. Etheler, who had been prominent in the movement for independence, could expect short shrift from Henry the Lion and therefore naturally turned to the Danes who also sought to expand. Bernhardt, *op. cit.*, p. 716 and n. 7. Cf. Saxo Grammaticus, *MGH. SS. XXIX*, 88; Lappenberg (ed.), *Hamburg. Urkundenbuch*, I, no. 188. Helmold's story about Etheler's activities is more to be relied upon than that of Saxo Grammaticus.

<sup>5</sup> 1148-50.

<sup>6</sup> "Homines," men, in the feudal sense.

they were either to renounce their allegiance or to leave the province. And so it was done. All the people swore to stand at the bidding of the duke and to hearken to his count. In that day the manhood of Holzatia joined him, after all the seditious ones had either been brought back into favor or been driven from the province. The count, therefore, sent<sup>7</sup> messengers to Cnut, urging him to come as quickly as possible with an army to overpower Svein. And he himself met Cnut with four thousand armed men near Schleswig; but they encamped a long way from each other. Svein meanwhile tarried in the city of Schleswig with no very small force of warriors. When Etheler, the leader of Svein's army, saw that his danger was doubled and that a large army was come to besiege them, he went off with guile to Cnut and, after having bribed the leaders of his army, seduced the youthful Cnut to return into his own country without the knowledge of Count Adolph and to dismiss his army, everyone to his own place. He also prearranged a truce in which he pledged himself to restore peace to the Danes without war. When these matters had been settled according to his desire, Etheler returned to Schleswig to fight with the count on the morrow and to smite him suddenly.

That evening one of the count's intimates was in Schleswig and when he noticed the preparations that were secretly under way, he hastily crossed the lake and, coming into the camp, said to the count: "You are being deceived, O count, you are being deceived and undone. For Cnut and his army, in whose aid you have come, have gone back into their country and you are here alone. Behold, Etheler is coming at dawn to attack you." Astounded at this incredible perfidy, the count said to his men: "Since we are in the middle of a heath<sup>8</sup> and our horses are suffering from hunger, it is advisable that we go hence and seek a fit place for a camp."

The army, therefore, understood that the count's mind was

<sup>7</sup> In 1149 according to Bernhardt, *op. cit.*, p. 825; in 1150 according to the editors of Saxo Grammaticus, *MGH. SS. XXIX*, 88.

<sup>8</sup> The Kropper Haide.

troubled by an adverse report. They moved their camp from the place which is called Cuningis-Ho<sup>9</sup> and directed their march to the Eider. They hastened along, however, with such speed that when the count reached the Eider scarcely four hundred of the four thousand armed men were with him. To them the count spoke in exhortation: "Although a fatuous fright has made our brothers and friends flee without knowing why, it still seems to me worth our while to make a stand here in order to guard our country until the scouts reconnoiter and give us more definite information as to what our enemy is about." He forthwith dispatched scouts to discover the truth, but they were seized in Schleswig and thrown into chains. Etheler then said to the king, his master: "Now we must make haste and go with the army because it will be an easy matter for us to capture that count, now that he has been deserted. When he has been disposed of, we shall invade his land and do to it as we please." And they departed with a strong force. Now the count was irritated because the scouts had not returned according to his appointment and he sent out other scouts who, on getting sight of the enemy, quickly reported to him. Although inwardly worried because of the small number of his men, his valorous instinct made him elect to fight and he said to his companions:

Behold, O comrades, the time has come in which we are to find out who is an intrepid and ever valorous man, who has the will to push forward in the face of destruction. Too often have I been scornfully reproached by our people as having a woman's heart and being apt in flight, as warding off the hardships of warfare with the tongue rather than with the hand. So I did, but not imprudently, whenever wars could be avoided without bloodshed. However, now that a dreadful danger requires the use of my hands, you may see if I have, as you say, the courage of a woman. Nay, rather, if God permits, you shall see that there is in me the heart of a man. I shall, however, feel easier if your will is in accord with mine, if you stand with me, a sworn band, in the defense of the fatherland. For in this place both the shame of flight and the most certain destruction of our fatherland demand recourse to battle.

\*The place cannot be identified.



When the count had finished this discourse, his associates rejoiced and bound themselves with a mighty oath to stand firmly for their own safety and that of their country. The count then ordered the bridge to be broken down and he placed guards at the places where the river was fordable. But a scout came who said that the enemy had made the crossing near the village which is called Schülpe.<sup>10</sup> After praying to God, the count therefore hastened to attack those who had crossed, before the whole army could come over. At the first shock of battle the count was unhorsed, but two knights were by his side to protect him, and they set him upon his horse again. The battle waxed furious and the advantage shifted from one side to the other until one of the count's party cried out to strike hard at the knees of the horses on which the enemy sat. So it happened that as the horses fell their harnessed riders also fell down and were dispatched by the swords of our men. Etheler perished; the other nobles were either killed or captured. When the king and those with him saw this from the other bank of the river, he took to flight and returned to Schleswig. The count also retired, made famous by his victory, having distinguished captives whose ransom lightened for a while his debts.

Thereafter he took extraordinary care of his land. For as often as there was the sound of any movement on the part either of the Danes or of the Slavs he at once concentrated an army at a strategic place—at Travemünde or on the Eider. And the masses of the Holzatians, Sturmarians, and marchmen obeyed his orders. Now, in ordinary usage the people, whencesoever collected, who inhabit a march are called "marchmen." In the land of the Slavs there are a great many marches of which our province of Wagria is not the least, possessing men brave and practiced in warfare with both the Danes and the Slavs. Over all these the count exercised his proper authority. He executed judgment among his people, settling disputes and ransoming the oppressed from the hands of those that were stronger. He

<sup>10</sup> Scullebi on the Eider in the parish of Jevenstedt, Schleswig.

was especially well disposed toward the clergy whom he suffered no one to injure either in word or in deed.<sup>11</sup> Moreover, he put much effort into subduing the rebellious Holzatians, for, being a free and stiff-necked folk, a boorish and untamed people, they refused to bear the yoke of peace. But the superior wit of the man overcame them and he dealt wisely with them. With many blandishments he lured these untamed wild asses, so to speak, until they submitted to the bridle. Let him who will, see the altered mien of this folk, of those, namely,

Who once their savage countenances with masks  
Were wont to hide and snares for plunder lay,

and who were accustomed to purloin what they could not rob—let him see, I say, how these people have changed their ways and stepped into the path of peace. Is not this the change wrought by “the right hand of the most High?”<sup>12</sup> The count was later reconciled with Svein, the king of the Danes. For the latter, favored with repeated victories, cast Cnut from the land<sup>13</sup> and forced him to live in exile among the Saxons with the most renowned archbishop Hartwig<sup>14</sup> who, born of an illustrious family, administered a great inheritance.

#### 68. DUKE HENRY

In those days our young duke married the lady Clementia, the daughter of Duke Conrad of Zähringen,<sup>1</sup> and began to rule over the whole country of the Slavs, his power gradually waxing stronger and stronger. Whenever the Slavs were troublesome he brought his martial hand down upon them and they gave him for their lives, as well as for their fatherland, whatever he chose to ask. However, in the several expeditions which the

<sup>11</sup> Cf. Adam, ii, 69 (67).

<sup>12</sup> Ps. 77: 10.

<sup>13</sup> 1150.

<sup>14</sup> Adalbero had died August 25, 1148. Hartwig I held the episcopal see until his death, October 12, 1168. On Hartwig *vide* chap. 102, *infra*; Hauck, *Kirchengeschichte Deutschlands*, IV, 638-43; Bernhardt, *op. cit.*, *passim*; Dehio, *Hartwig von Stade*.

<sup>1</sup> 1148? Cf. chap. 62 n. 2, *supra*.

young man has so far undertaken into Slavia no mention has been made of Christianity, but only of money. The Slavs still perform sacrifices to their demons and not to God, and they continue to make piratical incursions into the land of the Danes.

#### 69. ARCHBISHOP HARTWIG

When the lord Hartwig, archbishop of Hamburg, saw that there was peace in Slavia, he determined to reestablish the episcopal sees which barbarian fury had in times past destroyed in Slavia; namely, Oldenburg, Ratzeburg, and Mecklenburg. Of these the great Otto had founded the first, Oldenburg, subjecting to it the Polabi and Abodrites from the confines of the Holzatians as far as the Peene River and the city of Demmin; and he made Marco the first bishop in Oldenburg. After him the second was Egward; the third, Wago; the fourth, Ezico; the fifth, Volkward; the sixth, Reginbert; the seventh, Bernhard; the eighth, Meinher; the ninth, Abelinus; the tenth, Ezzo. In his time there arose in the church at Hamburg the great Adalbert who, of the foreign bishops whom he had at his board, appointed John bishop in Mecklenburg, and Aristo, in Ratzeburg. In this manner the see of Oldenburg was divided into three bishoprics. However, after God on account of the sins of men had permitted Christianity to be wiped out in Slavia, these sees were vacant for four and eighty years, until the times of Archbishop Hartwig. And he, distinguished by a double principate by reason of the nobility of his family, endeavored with great zeal to regain as suffragans the bishops of all Denmark, Norway, and Sweden, whom the records of antiquity mention as having once belonged to the church of Hamburg. But when with obsequiousness and diverse presents he effected nothing with the Pope and the Caesar, he proceeded to revive the bishoprics of Slavia which had in olden times been destroyed, in order that he might not be altogether without suffragans. Accordingly, he summoned the venerable priest Vicelin and consecrated him

bishop of the see of Oldenburg,<sup>1</sup> although he was advanced in age and had been thirty years<sup>2</sup> in the land of the Holzatians. Moreover, he ordained the lord Emmehard for Mecklenburg. Both were consecrated at Harsefeld<sup>3</sup> and sent into the land of want and hunger where was Satan's seat and the hold of every foul spirit.

These things were done without consulting the duke and our count. Hence it came about that the friendship which existed between the lord Vicelin and our count was thereafter disturbed; for the latter had before revered Vicelin as a father. The count took all the tithes of that year, which should have fallen to the new bishop, and he left of them none remaining. Then the bishop went to the duke to ask for pardon, and the duke received him with honor and with reverence, saying to him:

You deserved, indeed, O bishop, that I should neither greet nor receive you, for having taken that title of yours without consulting me. For I ought to have directed that matter, most particularly in [this] land which my fathers, through the favor of God, obtained by force of arms and passed on to me as an hereditary possession. But because your sanctity has long been known to me and our ancestors have from the beginning also esteemed you as faithful, I have decided to overlook this offense and to concur with full good will in your promotion, on one condition; namely, that you be willing to accept at my hands episcopal investiture. For in this manner can your affairs make progress.

This proposition seemed hard to the bishop because it was contrary to custom. For the investiture of bishops belonged alone to imperial majesty. But one of the duke's henchmen, Henry of With,<sup>4</sup> an influential and knightly man and a friend of the bishop, said to him:

Do what is of advantage to you. Draw near to our lord and do his will so that churches may be built in Slavia and the service of the house of

<sup>1</sup> September 25, 1149. In chap. 78, *infra*, Helmold's calculations would make the date October 10, 1149, but *vide* the evidence printed by Schirren, *Zeitschrift der Gesellschaft für schlesw.-holst.-lauemb. Geschichte*, VIII (1878), 309-311.

<sup>2</sup> Correctly from 1126 to 1149, some 22 or 23 years. Jaffé, *Lothar*, pp. 232-33.

<sup>3</sup> Rossevelde, i.e., monastery Harsefeld near Stade.

<sup>4</sup> Frequently mentioned in charters as a *ministerialis* of Henry the Lion.

God be made straight in your hands. Otherwise your labors will be frustrated, for neither the Caesar nor the archbishop can help your cause if my lord opposes it; for God gave him all this land. What considerable thing, indeed, does my lord demand of you that is either unlawful or disgraceful to you? Nay, rather it is an easy matter, and conducive to great profit that my master should take a twig and put it into your hands as a sign of investiture, and that you should be for the future an intimate of the duke, having honor among the folk whose conversion you are entering upon.

The bishop asked, then, to be given time to think over this advice. After peacefully taking leave he went to Bardowiek where, taken by a mortal illness, he stayed for some days. He was there seized with a paralysis from which he suffered to the end of his life. When his illness was stayed a little, he was taken in a vehicle to Faldera and much time went by during which his infirmity took him from his ecclesiastical work. His illness had taken on greater seriousness because of the burden of his age. When, however, God vouchsafed him strength, he journeyed to Bremen to consult the archbishop and the clergy about the condition which the duke had imposed on him. And they all, of one and the same opinion, began to gainsay it:

We know, indeed, O venerable bishop, that your holiness very well understands what is expedient for you in this matter. But because you have come to get our advice we shall state briefly our opinion. In this matter it is proper first to consider that the investiture of bishops is accorded the imperial dignity only, which is alone exalted and after God preëminent among the children of men. This honor the emperors did not acquire without a multiplicity of offerings. The worthiest of them have not taken it lightly that they are called the lords of the bishops, but have paid for this failing with the amplest treasures of the realm. More abundantly enriched, more becomingly honored by these gifts, the Church does not consider it mean to have yielded a little to subjection nor blush to bow to one through whom she can rule over many. For where is the duke or margrave, where in the realm a prince, be he ever so great, who does not offer his hands to the bishops, and if refused, does not in season and out of season press himself? They vie with one another in their eagerness to become vassals of the Church and participants in her benefices. Will you, then, do away with this glory and violate rights

ordained by great authorities? Will you give your hands to this duke that by this precedent those who have been lords of the princes may come to be the servants of the princes? It does not become your age, ripe with honor and dignity, that through you abuses should rise in the house of the Lord. Far from you this proposition! What if the prince's ire does pursue you in more unbridled fashion, is it not better to suffer the loss of wealth than of honor? Let them take away the tithes if they will; let them bar you from entering your diocese if they please. That adversity will be tolerable. You are assured of the house at Faldera, in which you can in the meantime live securely and "quietly wait for the salvation" of God.<sup>5</sup>

With these and like arguments they dissuaded Vicelin from complying with the duke's wish. This decision obviously put manifold hindrances in the way of the new plantation. For as often as our bishop went to the duke to discuss with him the affairs of the church, the latter declared himself ready for everything which its advantage demanded, provided he were first shown the honor due; otherwise the former would vainly strive against the stream of the river. The humble bishop could readily have consented to humor the duke's desire for worldly honor for the sake of the church's advantage, if the archbishop and the others at Bremen had not stood in the way. These men, vainglorious and wallowing in the riches of a mature church, imagined that their dignity would be compromised by this act; nor did they care so much about results as about the number of suffragan sees. And this was particularly evident from the fact that the archbishop did our bishop many injuries in respect of the possessions of the church at Faldera, cutting off and dividing them, nor letting our bishop remain undisturbed in the place which he himself had appointed. Thus, one saw the man, formerly of great repute, in possession of freedom and master of himself, as it were shackled and made suppliant to every man after accepting the episcopal title. For the man of his peace<sup>6</sup> in whom he trusted turned him from the path of wisdom and of peace that forsooth he might not be devoted to those through whom the fructification of the Church could come about.

<sup>5</sup> Lam. 3: 26.

<sup>6</sup> The archbishop. Cf. Ps. 41: 9.

Vicelin did, therefore, what circumstances permitted: he visited the churches of his diocese, giving the congregations wholesome admonitions, affording them in accordance with the duties of his office spiritual things, though he himself did not reap their temporal things.<sup>7</sup> The count, indeed, appropriated the rights to the tithes. There was dedicated at that time an oratory at Cuzelina, which is called Högersdorf; and the church at Bornhöved was then also dedicated. The bishop, moreover, came to the new city which is called Lübeck to comfort those staying there, and dedicated an altar to the lord God. Going thence, he visited Oldenburg, where there had once been an episcopal see, and the barbarian inhabitants of that country, whose god was Prove, received him. The name of the flamen who presided over their superstition was Mike. The prince of that land was called Rochel, who was of the seed of Cruto, an eminent idolater and pirate. The bishop of God began, therefore, to declare to the barbarians the way of truth, which is Christ, exhorting them to give up their idols and hasten to the washing of regeneration. But few of the Slavs joined the faith because their sickness was very sore, and the hearts of the princes were not inclined to bridle the hearts of the rebels. The bishop, however, gave woodcutters money for the erection of a sanctuary, and a building was started near the wall of the old stronghold, where all the countryside was accustomed to assemble for market on the Lord's day.

## 70. COUNT ADOLPH

At that time the duke gathered an army to go into Bavaria and reclaim the duchy which his stepfather Henry, King Conrad's brother, had held. Our lord, the bishop, therefore, came to him at Lüneburg asking, as was ever his wont,<sup>1</sup> for the preferment of his bishopric. The duke said to him: "I will do what

<sup>7</sup> Cf. I Cor. 9: 11.

<sup>1</sup> Vicelin approached the duke again toward the end of the year 1150 after adhering to his metropolitan's advice for over a year. Bernhardi, *Konrad III*, p. 832.

you urge if you will have regard for us." And the bishop replied to him: "I am ready to acknowledge myself as one of your vassals for the sake of Him who humbled Himself for us, not to mention you, to whom God has given so great eminence among princes by reason both of birth and of power." After he had spoken these words he did what necessity demanded and by the token of the staff received the bishopric from the duke's hands. The duke, now better disposed, said:

Because we see that you are obedient to our will, we also ought to show the reverence due your holiness and in the future to give more favorable consideration to your petitions. But as we are now on the point of setting out on our march and the settlement of your cause requires more extended time, we give you meanwhile the village of Bosau, for which you asked, with its appurtenance, Dulzaniza, that you may build yourself a house in the midst of your land and may wait our return. For then, with the help of God, we shall more carefully attend to the settlement of your affairs.

When he asked Count Adolph to give assent to this donation, the count replied to him:

As my lord is moved to piety, it becomes us to concur in his will and to support him according to our power. The property, therefore, which my lord has granted the bishop, I also grant. I, moreover, concede a moiety of the tithes for the use of the bishop, not as a matter of obligation, but out of regard for you because the episcopal affairs have not yet been settled.

The duke then committed the custody of the land of the Slavs and of the Nordalbingians to our count and after he had settled his affairs in Saxony set out with his knights to reclaim the duchy of Bavaria.<sup>2</sup> The duchess, the lady Clementia, however, remained at Lüneburg, and the count was most distinguished in the house of the duke and very dutiful in waiting upon the duchess, and a father in counsel. The princes of the Slavs on this account respected him, but especially did the kings of the Danes who, oppressed by intestine warfare, vied in coming before him with gifts. Cnut, who after his flight lived an exile

<sup>2</sup> January, 1151. Cf. Bernhardt, *op. cit.*, p. 865 n. 3.



with the archbishop, returned to Denmark with an army of mercenaries raised in Saxony, and nearly all those who inhabited Jutland joined him. On hearing of this invasion Svein collected a naval force, crossed the sea, and came to the city of Viborg, where the kings fought.<sup>3</sup> The army of the Saxons was defeated and utterly destroyed. Cnut escaped by flight and came into Saxony. After a little while he went again into Denmark, and the Frisians who inhabit Jutland<sup>4</sup> received him. Svein came, fought with him and compelled him, completely vanquished, to flee to the Saxons. Our count befriended him on his frequent journeys through the territories of the Holzatians, affording him safe-conduct and the other offices of humanity. Svein reigned in Denmark with exceeding tyranny, favored always with splendid victories. He was less able to cope with the fury of the Slavs because of this entanglement in domestic wars. Still it is said that at one time he defeated them in Zeeland with very great slaughter.<sup>5</sup>

## 71. NICLOT

While the duke was away Niclot, the prince of the land of the Abodrites, came to the lady Clementia, the duchess, at Lüneburg and in her presence and in the presence of the duke's friends complained that the Kicini and Circipani were little by little becoming insubordinate and resisting the payment of the customary tributes. Count Adolph and the Holzatian and Sturmarian people were ordered to give aid to Niclot and to put down the contumacious rebellion. So the count went with two thousand and more picked men. Niclot also brought together an army of Abodrites and together they invaded the country of the Kicini and Circipani; and they went through the enemy land, destroying everything with fire and sword. They also demolished a very celebrated fane with its idols and all its superstitious rites.<sup>1</sup> When the natives saw that they did not have the strength

<sup>3</sup> Viborg in Jutland. Cf. *Ann. Ryenses*, an. 1151; Bernhardi, *op. cit.*, p. 897 n. 29.

<sup>4</sup> In what was known as Frisia Minor. Cf. Saxo Grammaticus, *MGH. SS. XXIX*, 45, 90.

<sup>5</sup> In 1153? Cf. *ibid.*, XXIX, 93.

<sup>1</sup> That of Redigast in the country of the Redarii. Cf. chap. 21, *supra*.

to resist, they ransomed themselves for an immense sum of money and also paid the arrears of taxes in excess measure. Then Niclot, overjoyed by the victory, returned most ample thanks to the count and accompanied him on the way back to the boundaries of his territory, giving his army most careful attention. From that day the friendship between the count and Niclot was firm, and at Lübeck or Travemünde they held frequent conferences relative to the betterment of their respective lands.

There was peace in the land of the Wagiri, and by the grace of God the new plantation gradually made progress. The market at Lübeck also developed day by day, and the ships of its merchants multiplied. The lord bishop Vicelin began to live on an island called Bosau,<sup>2</sup> and he dwelt under a beech-tree until huts were erected in which they could stay. He began, moreover, to build there a church in the name of the Lord and in commemoration of Saint Peter, the prince of the Apostles. The household furniture and the implements needed for the cultivation of the fields, the bishop provided from Cuzelina and from Faldera. But the beginnings of the bishopric were very slight because the count, an excellent man in other respects, was only moderately benevolent toward the bishop.

## 72. KING CONRAD

While these things were going on in the province of the Slavs, our duke lingered in Swabia ineffectively threatening his step-father<sup>1</sup> with war. [For] the latter was aided by his brother, the king, who declared that it was not right for any of the princes to have two duchies. When the margrave Albert and very many of the other princes heard that our duke was not at all successful and that he was, as it were, hemmed in by his enemies, they sent word to the king to bring an army into Saxony with all speed to besiege Brunswick and to overpower the duke's friends.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>2</sup>The village called Bosau was on an island in the Plöner-See.

<sup>1</sup>Henry Jasomirgott, margrave of Austria, and since 1142 duke of Bavaria. Cf. chap. 56 n. 9, *supra*.

<sup>2</sup>The time tentatively suggested for the king's coming into Saxony was the last week in November, 1151. Cf. Bernhardt, *Konrad III*, pp. 903-907.

The king, therefore, placed guards throughout all Swabia that the duke might not chance to escape, and he himself left for Goslar<sup>3</sup> to take Brunswick and all the duke's strongholds. But the holy feast of Christmas was at hand. As the duke understood the king's evil design and that his retreat from Swabia was cut off, he caused announcement to be made to all his friends, both free and ministerial, that they were to convene in a certain stronghold in order to celebrate the solemn day with him. This notice he had spread far and wide and cried into the ears of the common people. But he took to himself three of his most faithful men, changed his garments one evening, and, slipping out of the stronghold, set out on his way by night, passing directly through his enemies' ambuscades, and appeared at length on the fifth day at Brunswick. His friends, who had hitherto been overcome with sadness, recovered unhopèd-for confidence. The king's camp was near Brunswick in a place called Heiningen.<sup>4</sup> A scout came, then, to tell the king that the duke had appeared at Brunswick. After investigating this report more thoroughly, the king dissembled his advance and went back to Goslar. The plans which he had so carefully worked out were made naught. The duke guarded himself from being caught in the snares laid by the princes against his life and held the duchy of Saxony, becoming increasingly strong day by day. The duchy of Bavaria, however, he could not get during all the time that King Conrad lived.

When the king died not long after, his nephew, Frederick,<sup>5</sup> succeeded him on the throne. For King Conrad had several brothers of whom the principal ones were Henry,<sup>6</sup> duke of Bavaria, and Frederick, duke of Swabia, whose son, of the same name, was placed on the throne. Frederick, the first king of

<sup>3</sup> Conrad left Würzburg after November 23, 1151, and so might have reached Goslar in the early days of December. Eberhardi, *Konrad III*, pp. 902-3 and notes.

<sup>4</sup> On the Ocker River about three (German) miles south of Brunswick in Hanover.

<sup>5</sup> Frederick I, Barbarossa, was the son of Conrad's brother, Frederick, duke of Swabia. Cf. *Cambridge Medieval History*, V, 382.

<sup>6</sup> Henry Jasomirgott, son of Leopold, margrave of Austria, who was the second husband of Agnes, Henry IV's daughter. Henry the Lion was, therefore, a stepbrother of Conrad.

this name, began to rule in the year of the Incarnate Word 1151.<sup>7</sup> His throne was raised above the throne of the kings that had been before him many days; and he grew in wisdom and in fortitude above all the inhabitants of the land. His mother was an aunt of our duke on his father's side.<sup>8</sup>

### 73. THE PASSING AWAY OF THE PROVOST THIETMAR

About this time Count Hermann, a mighty man of great wealth, was murdered<sup>1</sup> in the stronghold Winzenburg, and contention arose between our duke and the margrave Albert over his castles and his property. To quiet them the king called a diet to meet at Merseburg, a city of Saxony,<sup>2</sup> and ordered the princes formally to attend. He also dispatched an embassy, summoning the warring kings of the Danes that he might by just arbitration decide among them. Cnut, who, as was stated above, had been driven a third time from Denmark, then came to our duke, asking that he be deemed worthy to obtain his safe-conduct and aid at the diet. The archbishop, in turn, escorted King Svein and had the lord bishop Vicelin among the many religious and distinguished men in his retinue. That celebrated diet was held at Merseburg.<sup>3</sup> There the princes of the Danes were reconciled. Svein was crowned king; the others were made subject to him in vassalage.<sup>4</sup> The dissension which existed between the duke and the margrave, however, could not be allayed, because the proud princes held in slight esteem the admonitions of a king still so young. Concerned not for the advantage of the Church, but

<sup>7</sup> Frederick was elected March 4 and was crowned March 9, 1151, according to the Gregorian calendar, 1152. Conrad had died February 15, 1151/1152. Bernhardt, *op. cit.*, p. 925.

<sup>8</sup> Barbarossa's mother, Judith, was the daughter of Henry the Black and the sister of Henry the Proud, Henry the Lion's father.

<sup>1</sup> Hermann II, count of Winzenburg, was murdered in the night of January 29-30, 1152. Cf. Bernhardt, *Konrad III*, pp. 921-22 and notes.

<sup>2</sup> *Marsipolim*, after Mars. Cf. Thiet., i, 2, on the Roman origin of Merseburg. The word is Slavic, signifying town in the woods.

<sup>3</sup> May 18, 1152.

<sup>4</sup> Cf. Simonsfeld, *Friedrich I*, I, 84 299.

breathing hatred for the duke, the archbishop also urged Bishop Vicelin to obtain investiture at the hands of the king. Vicelin did not consent, however, because he was certain that the duke's ire would not be appeasable; for in this country only the authority of the duke is heeded.

When the diet was adjourned Bishop Vicelin returned to his diocese and found that the most holy man Thietmar had been taken from the present life. This naturally made the bishop very sad. For Thietmar was a very kindly man who always held everyone's respect; in his time there had seemed to be no one like him. I should, then, tell briefly and summarily the facts of his life.<sup>5</sup> Revealed to his holy mother before conception, he was dedicated to the ministry of the altar from his very cradle. He was committed to a good master and continued the best scholar under his discipline right into the years of his manhood. As his pupil in Bremen and his companion in France, he bore the yoke of his master in patience according to the saying of Jeremiah, "It is good for a man that he bear the yoke in his youth."<sup>6</sup> When the lord Vicelin departed into Slavia after returning [from France], Thietmar, deprived, as it were, of his preceptor, was left to himself. How, then, he conducted the schools at Bremen, how he behaved in the diaconate, they of Bremen may tell. It suffices here to recall that on his departure, Bremen complained that the light of its church was taken away. When, therefore, on account of his desire for a better life he was transferred to Faldera, he gave the lord Vicelin great happiness by his presence. The countenances of all who were detained in that corner of "the waste howling wilderness"<sup>7</sup> also changed on the coming of so notable a guest. When after some years God extended the bounds of the Church, Thietmar was sent to Cuzelina, which also is called Högersdorf, and he was a great solace to the inhabitants of the new settlement. To the aid of captives and of those who had been despoiled he came with

<sup>5</sup> On Thietmar *vide* chaps. 44, 45, 58, *supra*.

<sup>6</sup> Lam. 3: 27.

<sup>7</sup> Deut. 32: 10.

such compassion that the largess of his giving seemed to exceed the resources of a house which was still undeveloped. While he was praying or reading his ears were ever alert, listening for a needy one to come knocking at the door and begging. Count Adolph stood in fear of him because he reprov'd him for his faults and did not spare him for his delinquencies. The venerable priest was much occupied in softening by emollient treatment the hardness of heart which the count evidenced toward the bishop, but the deep-seated distemper defied every remedy. Nevertheless, the count heeded him and yielded in much, for he knew that Thietmar was a just and holy man.

When he had spent ten years in this land Thietmar was taken sick, while, in truth, the bishop was away and occupied in Merseburg. As the brethren stood about his bed, attempting to renew in the sick man the hope of recovering his health, he objected strongly, saying:

Do not, dear brethren, again promise me a lengthening of the present life. Do not with words of this kind harass my soul, striving homeward from its weary pilgrimage. Behold the ten years are passed in which I have been praying that my life be spent subject to the vows of this profession. And I have been heard; now at length it is time to pray for rest from my labors. And I trust in God's wonted goodness that my prayer will not be in vain.

The agonies of his frame now increased, but the vigor of the inner man did not lessen as the body failed. In him was fulfilled the saying of Solomon, "love is strong as death"; floods and winds cannot quench it.\*

In him, dying, lived charity which in his spent body renewed its gifts; to his brethren affording consolation in sorrow, counsel in doubt, edification in manners; on the hearts of his friends indelibly impressing the last words of his farewell. But not unmindful of his very beloved father, Vicelin, he prayed fervently that his way be directed by God, many times declaring his gratitude that through Vicelin the way of salvation and the hope of

\* Song of Sol. 8: 6, 7.

the kingdom had been opened to him. With brotherly solicitude there also came to the sick man Eppo, the prior of the church of Faldera, and Bruno, the priest, and after confession they administered to him the office of the holy unction. When he had reverently received this and had further fortified himself by partaking of the vivifying body of the Lord, he persevered in his thanksgiving. In prayer he then watched through the night in which occurs the vigil of Pentecost, the sixteenth Kalends of June.<sup>9</sup> With supplication he called on the angels, he implored the intercession of all the saints, and as his soul was departing, his tongue still moved in prayer and praise. Oh, most worthy priest, O soul most pleasing to God! Fortunate would I call it in its course, but more fortunate in reaching its goal. After a very short period of travail it merited everlasting glory with God, holy and affectionate remembrance among men.

#### 74. HIS BURIAL

Brother Luthbert, who had exchanged the knighthood of this world for the service of God and who, with the servant of God Thietmar, took care of the poor who were in the hospice, had been wont long before to predict the passing of this venerable priest. Visiting Faldera one time, he was more than usually sad and even tearful of countenance. When he was asked the reason for his sadness, he replied that he did right to grieve who was shortly to be deprived of the presence of a most loving father. Furthermore, he acknowledged that he had been divinely informed of these things, not while he slept, but while he was awake. The sudden death of the priest occurred very soon after this prophecy. The brethren, too, whom deep affection for Thietmar had driven to tears, again took heart, became hopeful, and were consoled in spirit as they remembered the prophecy. When, however, Thietmar's death was announced in Faldera, they at once sent messengers to bring over the body because he himself had very earnestly requested this as he was dying.

<sup>9</sup> May 17, 1152.

Nevertheless, the venerable brethren, Theodoric,<sup>1</sup> Ludolph, Luthbert,<sup>2</sup> and others who lived there could in no wise be persuaded. They declared that they would all rather die than be deprived of such distinguished remains, which would prove both an honor and a solace to the newly instituted church of Wagria. When the faithful, then, had come together from Segeberg and from the neighboring villages, the saintly body was committed to the earth with much lamentation on the part of the poor who grieved over his having forsaken them. Magnified be God in his saints. He made this man unto Himself a worthy priest and called him to a happy consummation. To you, also, O fathers of the republic of Lübeck,<sup>3</sup> will blessings come more abundantly from the Lord if you worthily honor such a man and set him in the front rank of those who have worked to raise your church from its ruins to new heights.

## 75. THE SICKNESS OF BISHOP VICELIN

Bishop Vicelin returned from the diet of Merseburg after the death of the noble priest Thietmar. His efforts had been in vain because of the unfruitfulness of the princes, for the lord archbishop and the duke, in whose hands lay the supreme direction of affairs in this country, shackled by hatred and envy, could bring forth no fruits pleasing to God. They quarreled with each other over whose was the land or to whom belonged the authority for setting up bishops, and were scrupulously careful that one of them should not yield to the other. Not even Count Adolph, although good in many respects, had been entirely well disposed toward episcopal concerns. Deep sorrowing over the death of the lord Thietmar was for our bishop an added misfortune. Had he still been alive everything oppressive would have seemed more tolerable. Day after day, therefore, the bishop was afflicted with weariness of spirit. He looked for some one to take pity, but there was none.

<sup>1</sup> Probably the Theodoric mentioned in chap. 43, *supra*.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. chap. 46 n. 3, *supra*. This is the only reference to Luthbert.

<sup>3</sup> *Patres Lubicanae rei publicae*. *Patres* here is probably used for *consules*, officers of the city (republic) of Lübeck.



A few days after he had returned from the diet, Vicelin came to Bosau where he had begun to build a house and a church, and he preached the word of salvation to the people who had assembled there. The surrounding villages were already coming little by little to be inhabited by followers of Christ, but with great fear on account of the attacks of robbers, for the stronghold Plön had not yet been rebuilt.<sup>1</sup> When, therefore, he had finished celebrating the sacred mysteries and offering the supreme sacrifice to God, the bishop bowed down to the ground before the altar of the Lord, beseeching the most mighty God that He increase His service in this place as well as in the length and breadth of Slavia. In his exhortatory discourses to the men of the migration<sup>2</sup> he many times foretold that the worship of the house of God would shortly be exalted in Slavia. He urged them not to lose heart, but to have stern patience in the hope of better things. He bade farewell, then, to the venerable priest Bruno and to the others whom he had put in charge of that place and, strengthening their hands in the Lord, returned to Faldera. Seven days later he was stricken there by the rod of God and so afflicted with paralysis that a hand and a foot—in fact, his whole right side—were numbed and, what was most pitiable of all, he was deprived of the use of his tongue. All who saw him were shocked at the sight—a man of incomparable eloquence, a great teacher abounding in the gift of holy exhortation and in the defense of the truth, suddenly robbed of the use of speech and of limb and maimed in all his members. How confused, then, were the opinions of people, how rash the judgments of many nominal clerics, I dislike to recall, much less to express in words. They said God had forsaken him, and they did not consider the scriptural saying, "Happy is the man whom God correcteth."<sup>3</sup> Inextinguishable, however, was the grief with which sorrowed all those who were at Faldera and at Cuzelina, those, especially, who had first come with him into these regions and who had

<sup>1</sup> It had been destroyed in 1139. Cf. chap. 56, *supra*.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. chap. 58, *supra*.

<sup>3</sup> Job 5: 17.

grown old with him under the burden of the day and heat. Medical attention was given the sick man. It was inefficacious, nevertheless; Heaven, forsooth, provided better things for him and nearer to salvation. For "to depart, and to be with Christ . . . is far better." He spent two years and a half<sup>5</sup> in his sick bed, stayed from either sitting up or lying down. With most willing care, however, the brethren attended him, proffering him aid to meet the needs of the body and carrying him into the church. For he would never be absent from the solemnities of the Mass or Holy Communion, unless his ailment, happening to be too severe, prevented. With such sighs and inner crying of heart did he pray to God that those who looked upon him controlled their tears with difficulty. At that time the venerable Eppo, prior of the place, a man of great merit in Christ, directed the house. The lord Ludolph—he, I mean, who had at one time endured many labors at Lübeck for the sake of the Gospel of Christ<sup>6</sup>—ruled over Cuzelina and the churches which were in Wagria. To him the bishop had intrusted the provostship of Cuzelina while he was still well.

76. [THE MARKET AT LUEBECK]<sup>1</sup>

One day the duke addressed the count:

We were told some time ago that our city, Bardowiek, is suffering a great diminution of citizens on account of the market at Lübeck, because all the merchants are removing thither. Those who are at Lüneburg also complain that our saltworks are being ruined on account of the saltworks you have started at Oldesloe. We ask you, therefore, to give us a moiety of your city of Lübeck and of the saltworks that we may more easily put up with the desolation of our city. Otherwise we shall direct that in the future no trading be done at Lübeck. It is insufferable for us to allow the inheritance of our fathers to be desolated to another's advantage.

When the count refused, regarding a bargain of this kind as inconsiderate of himself, the duke ordered that for the future

<sup>5</sup> Phil. 1: 23.

<sup>6</sup> Cf. chap. 55, *supra*.

<sup>8</sup> He became ill, therefore, in June, 1152.

<sup>1</sup> Schorkel supplied the title; it is wanting in the Copenhagen and Lübeck codices (1, 2).

there should not be a market at Lübeck, and no buying or selling of anything save only what was classed as food stuffs. He commanded the merchandise to be brought to Bardowiek for the rehabilitation of his city. At the same time he also caused the salt springs which were at Oldesloe to be stopped up. This command gave offense to our count and to the Wagrian country and proved a hindrance to its progress.

## 77. BISHOP EVERMOD

This fact, it seems, is not to be passed over that, as God enlarged the bounds of the Church, the lord Evermod, provost of Magdeburg, was appointed bishop of Ratzeburg<sup>1</sup> and Henry, the count of the Polabi,<sup>2</sup> gave him an island near the stronghold to dwell on. In addition, the count resigned three hundred hides to be bestowed by the duke in endowment of the bishopric. He also assigned to the bishop the tithes of the land, of which, however, he took back a moiety in benefice and became the bishop's vassal. From this arrangement were excluded the three hundred hides which, with all that belonged to them, were the bishop's in respect of both their products and their tithes. The lord Ludolph, provost of Cuzelina, was at hand when these matters were arranged, and he said to the count in the presence of our Count Adolph: "Because the count of the land of the Polabi begins to favor his bishop, it is proper that our count should on his part not do less. Even greater things are to be expected of him inasmuch as he is a lettered man and has a knowledge of the things that are pleasing to God." Then our count, doing as the count of the Polabi had done, gave up three hundred hides of his benefice, and these lands were presented at the hands of the duke as an endowment of the episcopal see of Oldenburg.

<sup>1</sup> Before December 12, 1154. Whether Archbishop Hartwig secured his appointment or not is disputed. Cf. Dehio, *Hartwich von Stade*, Exkursus 4; Hauck, *Kirchengeschichte Deutschlands*, IV, 642 n. 3; Simonsfeld, *Friedrich I*, I, 723. Evermod was bishop from 1154 to 1178.

<sup>2</sup> Henry of Badwide, who was count of the Nordalbingians and Polabi. Cf. chap. 54 n. 10, *supra*.

## 78. THE PASSING AWAY OF VICELIN

After this, our duke journeyed into Italy with the king for his coronation as emperor. While the duke was away Bishop Vicelin's illness grew worse, and his last day came. He died on the second Ides of December<sup>1</sup> in the year of the Incarnate Word 1154. He had occupied the bishopric five years and nine weeks.<sup>2</sup> His body was entombed in the church at Faldera in the presence of the lord bishop of Ratzeburg who celebrated the Mass. The memory of the good father was very assiduously cultivated both at Faldera and at Cuzelina, and the procurators were given directions as to what was each day to be given in alms for the benefit of his soul. At Cuzelina, however, a certain priest named Volkward<sup>3</sup> had charge of the table. He had come to Faldera in the beginning with the lord Vicelin and was assiduous in business matters. Since he was more than necessarily frugal, he neglected to dispense the alms appointed for the soul of the good shepherd. Hence the venerable bishop, clad in priestly garb, appeared to a certain woman living in the district of Segeberg and said to her: "Go and tell the priest Volkward that he deals undutifully with me by withholding what the devotion of the brethren has determined for me for the benefit of my soul." The woman said to him: "Who, O Lord, has given you life and speech? Has not the report spread far and wide that you were for many days, even for years, bereft of speech and that you finally also died? How is this now?"

Comforting her with his kindly bearing, he said: "It is as you say, but I have now recovered those faculties in more perfect form. Tell the priest I mentioned, therefore, that he quickly make good what he has taken from me; nay more, add this, that he say nine Masses for me."

And with these words he disappeared. When these facts were related to the priest, he went to Faldera to get advice about this injunction. On being questioned he confessed his fault in accord

<sup>1</sup> December 12.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. chaps. 47 n. 6, 48, 58, *supra*.

<sup>3</sup> Eleven weeks. Cf. chap. 69 n. 1, *supra*.

with the statement of the man of God and he promised betterment. As for the nine Masses which the priest was to celebrate for the bishop, we devised various interpretations, but the truth remained concealed. The issue of the matter, however, soon revealed its hidden import. As that priest survived the bishop by nine weeks,<sup>4</sup> it was evident that by "Masses," weeks had been signified.

79. HOW VICELIN GAVE SIGHT TO A  
BLIND WOMAN<sup>1</sup>

Piety also persuades one to call to remembrance the fact that the celebrated man Eppo,<sup>2</sup> who because of the holiness of his life was very intimate with the bishop, sorrowed inconsolably over his separation from the departed father. As this mourning went on many days, the bishop whom I have often mentioned appeared to a certain chaste and simple virgin in her sleep and said: "Tell our brother, Eppo, that he is to stop weeping, because I am well and am saddened with his lamentations; for, behold, I bear his tears on my garments." As he said this he showed her his vestment of dazzling white all moistened with tears.

What shall I say about one well known to us whose name I suppress? For I am of the opinion that since he still lives<sup>3</sup> and dwells at Faldera he desires not to be known. This man heard the bishop say in a vision, not thirty days after his death, that a resting place had been given him beside the most famous Bernard of Clairvaux. When this man said to the bishop, "Would that you were at rest," the latter replied: "I am by God's grace. Although you, indeed, believe me dead, yet I live and have ever since lived."

The pious reader will be truly pleased and not wearied by the telling of but one more occurrence which the testimony of

<sup>4</sup> He died about the middle of February, 1155.

<sup>1</sup> Schmeidler follows the Copenhagen, Bordesholm, and Lübeck codices (1, 12, 2) in making a new chapter of what follows; hence, the chapter numbering of Lappenberg in the *MGH. SS.* folio edition of Helmold and of Laurent-Wattenbach in the *Geschichtschreiber der deutschen Vorzeit* will hereafter be indicated in parentheses.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. chap. 47 n. 6, *supra*.

<sup>3</sup> Since Eppo died apparently on May 1, 1163, this chapter must have been written later.

many proves was done unto the praise of God and in commendation of our bishop. There was in the parish of Faldera, in a village called Harrie,<sup>4</sup> a certain matron named Adelburga whom the bishop held in very high esteem for the simplicity of her life. When she later lost her sight, the venerable father used to console her often, exhorting her to bear with patience the Father's rod of correction and not to faint at tribulations, promising her, furthermore, that her eyes were laid aside for her in heaven. Barely a year had passed after the death of the bishop when this woman saw him, in a nocturnal vision, standing at her side, and heard him inquiring with solicitude about the state of her health. She answered him: "What health is mine who am in darkness and see not light? Where, I beg you, my lord, are your comfortings? You used to say that my eyes were laid aside in heaven. But I drag myself along with this affliction and the blindness endures interminably."

"Be not distrustful," he said, "of the grace of our God." And directly he put forth his right hand and pressed the adorable sign of the cross on her eyes and blessed her. Now when day broke, the woman, awakening, discerned that through the beneficence of God the darkness of blindness had been dispelled with the darkness of night. Then leaping from her bed, the woman fell prone upon the ground, crying out in thanksgiving. She turned away her guide and directed her own steps to the church, giving all her acquaintances and friends a beautiful spectacle of her enlightening. Afterwards she made with her own hands a pall to cover the bishop's sepulcher, in testimony and in token of her restored vision.

"Many other signs truly did" God through this man that are praiseworthy and deserving of mention, but they "are not written in this book."<sup>5</sup>

Rejoice, then, Faldera, distinguished by  
A noble prelate. Save his bones within  
Thy crypt and keep his virtues in thy heart.

<sup>4</sup> Gross- und Klein Harrie, northeast of Neumünster.

<sup>5</sup> John 20: 30.

You, also, who sit at the high table<sup>o</sup> of the church of Lübeck, follow after this man—a man, I say, whom I set before you in plain speech; assuredly in this case plain, because true. For you cannot entirely ignore him who in your new city first set up a stone “for a pillar, and poured oil upon the top of it.”<sup>7</sup>

80 (79). GEROLD, BISHOP OF OLDENBURG

After the death of Bishop Vicelin the brethren of Faldera withdrew from subjection to the bishopric of Oldenburg<sup>1</sup> out of aversion for its work and elected for themselves as provost the lord Eppo, a holy man. The choice of a bishop, however, was reserved for the lord duke. Now there was at that time a certain priest named Gerold, born a Swabian of parents not of the lowest estate. He was chaplain to the duke and was so well versed in the knowledge of the Sacred Scriptures that no one in Saxony appeared to be his equal; a great spirit in an insignificant body. He was master of the school in Brunswick and a canon of that city and, because of the continence of his life, an intimate of the prince. For, besides the pureness of heart known to God, he was regarded as most chaste of body. Gerold contemplated assuming the monastic habit in a place called Riddagshausen,<sup>2</sup> under the obedience of the abbot Conrad, whose brother he was in blood and love. He stayed at the duke's court more in body than in spirit. When, therefore, the news became general that Bishop Vicelin had died, the lady duchess<sup>3</sup> said to the priest Gerold: “If you have resolved to serve God by austerity of life, take upon yourself useful and meritorious work. Go into Slavia and stay by the work in which Bishop Vicelin labored. By so doing you will benefit both yourself and others. Every good deed is the better if carried through for the common good.” The lady

<sup>o</sup>The *architriclinium*, which was the table, usually raised, at which the abbot or bishop sat with the leading monks or clerics and distinguished guests.

<sup>7</sup> Gen. 28: 18.

<sup>1</sup> Helmold is mistaken in this matter. Neumünster had not been made subject to Vicelin as bishop of Oldenburg. Neumünster, moreover, lay outside the limits of the diocese of Oldenburg. Hauck, *Kirchengeschichte Deutschlands*, IV, 643 and n. 8.

<sup>2</sup> A Cistercian monastery founded in 1145 near Brunswick.

<sup>3</sup> Clementia.

accordingly summoned by letter Ludolph, provost of Cuzelina, and with him sent the priest she recommended into the land of Wagria to be elected to the bishopric. Unanimous election on the part of the clergy and congregations approved the prince's proposal. The bishop who was to consecrate the bishop-elect then happened to be away.<sup>4</sup> For, since he was unfriendly to the duke from the very beginning, he was at that very time lying in wait to bruise his heel, the more because the duke was engrossed with the Italian expedition; and the bishop's strongholds, Stade, Bremervorde, Harburg, and Freiburg,<sup>5</sup> were fortified against him.

In those days<sup>6</sup> the princes of eastern Saxony and some of Bavaria agreed upon a conference for the purpose of forming a conspiracy, as it was said, and the archbishop, who had been invited, met them in the Bohemian woodland.<sup>7</sup> As he was hastening back, he was forbidden by the duke's officers to return to his diocese and he remained shut out nearly a whole year<sup>8</sup> in eastern Saxony. Therefore, our bishop-elect rose up to seek him in Saxony, and he found whom he sought in Merseburg, preparing to give the bishopric of Oldenburg to another. The archbishop had, indeed, decided to reward with this honor a provost in those parts who deserved well of him, making much of certain great but more than hollow riches of this bishopric. When he heard, therefore, of the lord Gerold's coming, he was much worried and contemplated invalidating the election on the pretense that a young church which was still lacking in clerics, as it were, could neither elect nor decide upon any matter without his leave. But our people argued that the act of election was valid, which the proposal of the prince, the unanimity of the clergy, and the fitness of the elect had confirmed. Then the archbishop said: "This is neither the time nor the place for the discussion of such things;

<sup>4</sup> Archbishop Hartwig of Hamburg-Bremen.

<sup>5</sup> September-October, 1154.

<sup>6</sup> A forest on the borders of Bohemia and Bavaria, perhaps the Böhmerwald. Cf. Schneidler (ed.), *Helmold*, p. 150 n. 4.

<sup>7</sup> 1154-55.

<sup>8</sup> In Hanover.



when I return the chapter at Bremen will set this case right."

Therefore, since the bishop-elect saw that the archbishop was against him, he sent back the provost Ludolph and those who had come with him into Wagria. He, however, girded himself and set out for Swabia to inform the duke by personal messenger of his situation. The duke sent back word to him to come as quickly as possible to Lombardy, as though he were to proceed with him to Rome. When he was leaving Swabia in obedience to these orders he was assaulted by robbers, despoiled of his traveling money, and severely wounded in the forehead by a sword. These misfortunes did not deter the man of ardent soul from continuing the journey which he had begun and, when he came to Tortona, where was the king's camp, he was kindly received by the duke and by his friends. At that time the king and all the princes attacked Tortona, and they besieged the city for many days. When at last the city was captured,<sup>9</sup> the king caused its walls to be thrown down and leveled to the ground. When the army advanced thence, the duke made our bishop go with him into Italy<sup>10</sup> that he might present him to the lord pope.<sup>11</sup>

The Romans then sent<sup>12</sup> legates to the camp to tell the king that the senate and all the citizens of the City were ready to receive him with triumphal pomp, if, on his part, he conducted himself in the manner of an emperor. When he asked about the manner in which he ought to conduct himself, they answered:

It beseems a king who comes to Rome for the purpose of being raised to the imperial dignity to come in a fitting way, that is, in a golden chariot, clad in purple, leading before his chariots the tyrants whom he has conquered in war, and bearing the riches of their people. He ought, besides, to honor the City which is the capital of the world and the mother of the Empire and to give to the senate what has been determined by edicts, namely, fifteen thousand pounds of silver, that by this payment he may benevolently dispose the senate to grant him triumphal honor, and that the authority of the senate may confirm him Caesar whom the election of the princes of the realm has created king.

<sup>9</sup> April 18, 1155, after a siege of two months.

<sup>10</sup> Cf. chap. 29 n. 2, *supra*.

<sup>11</sup> Hadrian IV (1154-59).

<sup>12</sup> June, 1155. Cf. *Cambridge Medieval History*, V, 416 sqq.

Smiling, the king then said: "Your promise is flattering, but its price is high. You, men of Rome, make large demands upon our emptied treasury. I think, too, that you seek a quarrel with us by imposing what is not to be imposed. You will act more advisedly if, by giving up these demands, you try our friendship rather than our arms." But they insisted the more pertinaciously, saying that the rights of the City were in no wise to be violated and that the usages of the senate were to be observed; otherwise, the portals of the City would have to be shut against him when he came.<sup>13</sup>

### 81 (80). THE CONSECRATION OF THE EMPEROR FREDERICK

When he had heard the legates' speeches the king sent a delegation of the highest and most distinguished men to bring the lord pope Hadrian to his camp in order to take counsel with him.<sup>1</sup> The Romans had also troubled the pope in many ways. When, therefore, he came into the camp, the king hurried to meet him and held the stirrup for him while he dismounted from his horse and led him by the hand into the tent. After there was silence the lord bishop of Bamberg spoke for the king and for his princes:<sup>2</sup>

We receive now the honor of your holiness' presence, apostolic pontiff, as joyfully as we have long eagerly desired it, and we give thanks to God, the dispenser of all good things, who has led us out from our homes and brought us into this place and made us worthy of your most blessed visitation. We wish to make known to you, venerable father, that all this congregation, assembled from the ends of the earth in honor of the realm, has brought its prince to your holiness to be raised to the acme

<sup>13</sup> Helmold's account of Frederick's first Italian expedition appears to be based on what Gerold told him. Although the chronicler exaggerates the story, his narrative seems more trustworthy than that of Otto of Freising, *Gesta Frid.*, ii, 29. Helmold, however, errs in recording these negotiations as having taken place before Frederick's dealings with the pope. Cf. Simonsfeld, *Friedrich I*, I, 324-329.

<sup>1</sup> In Campo Grasso near Sutri, June 8, 1155. For the meeting of Hadrian and Frederick vide Giesebrecht, *Deutsche Kaiserzeit*, V, 58-59; Simonsfeld, *Friedrich I*, I, 330, 677-87.

<sup>2</sup> Eberhard II, bishop of Bamberg (1146-72). Eberhard spoke, but that he said what Helmold here records may be doubted. Wagner, *Eberhard II, Bischof von Bamberg*. Halle, 1876.

of the imperial dignity. He is a man conspicuous for the nobility of his family, provided with prudence of mind, happy in his victories, distinguished, besides, in those things that pertain to God, an observer of sound faith, a lover of peace and of truth, a worshiper of Holy Church; above all, in truth, of the Holy Roman Church, which he loves as a mother, neglectful of nothing that the tradition of his ancestors enjoins as being due the honor of God and of the prince of the Apostles. The humility which he has but now displayed confirms these claims, for on your coming he received you gallantly and, holding your most holy stirrup, did what was right. It therefore remains, lord father, for you also to perform that which pertains to you in his regard, so that that which is lacking in him of the fullness of the imperial dignity may by God's grace be supplied through your service.

To this speech the lord pope replied: "You speak merely words, brother. You say that your prince has shown blessed Peter becoming reverence? Blessed Peter seems more to have been dishonored. When, in fine, he should have held the right stirrup, he held the left."

When this point had been made known to the king by an interpreter, he said humbly: "Tell him that it was a defect not of devotion but of knowledge. For I have not given much attention to the holding of stirrups; indeed, as I remember, he is the first to whom I have shown such a courtesy."

The lord pope answered him: "If through ignorance he has been neglectful of what was trifling, how, do you think, he is going to deal with what is highly important?"

A little angered, the king then said:

I should like to be better informed about the origin of this custom—is it a matter of good will or of duty? If of good will, the lord pope has nothing to complain about if we were uncertain of a civility which rests on volition, not on right. But if you say that this deference is due the prince of the Apostles as an obligation of primal institution, what is the difference between the right stirrup and the left so long as deference is observed and the prince is bowed at the feet of the supreme pontiff?

For a long time, then, they disputed sharply. In the end they separated without the kiss of peace. Those who are looked upon

as the pillars of the realm were, however, fearful that with matters in this pass their efforts might prove vain; after much persuasion they prevailed on the king's heart to ask the lord pope back to his camp. When he came again<sup>3</sup> the king received him with all courtesy. Now that everyone was delighted and joyous over the meeting, the lord pope said: "There is still left something for your prince to do. For Saint Peter let him recover Apulia, of which William of Sicily has taken forcible possession.<sup>4</sup> When he has accomplished this task he may come to us to be crowned." The princes answered:

We have been in camp a long time, and our means are giving out, and you talk of recovering Apulia for you and only then of coming to the consecration. These are hard terms and beyond our strength. Nay, rather let the business of the consecration be finished that our return home may be in prospect and that we may catch our breath a little from the fatigue. Later we shall return [better] prepared to carry out what now remains to be done.

By the direction, therefore, of God under Whom they stoop that bear up the world the pope yielded and assented to the request of the princes. When they had come to agreement they sat in council as to how they should effect an entry into the City and guard against the artifices of the Romans.

At this time our duke went to the lord pope and requested of him the consecration of the bishop-elect of Oldenburg. The pope mildly objected, saying that he would gladly do what was asked if it could be done without giving offense to the metropolitan. For the lord of Hamburg had got the ear of the pope through letters, asking him to hold back from this consecration because it would bring dishonor upon him.

When, therefore, they came near the City under cover of night, the king secretly sent nine hundred mailed men to Saint Peter's cathedral<sup>5</sup> along with the lord pope's legates, who, carrying the orders for the guards, admitted the knights to the

<sup>3</sup> June 10.

<sup>4</sup> William I. Again Helmold is in error. Cf. Simonsfeld, *op. cit.*, I, 357 n. 247.

<sup>5</sup> June 17-18.

cathedral and citadel by a rear door. The king came at day-break with all his army. Going ahead with a number of cardinals, the lord pope received him at the steps. They then entered the cathedral of Saint Peter and proceeded to the act of consecration. Knighthood in armor, however, stood about the temple and the house, watching the king until the mysteries were finished. After the ceremony of conferring upon him the august dignity was ended, the emperor went beyond the walls of the City and, much wearied, the knight refreshed himself with food. While he was taking breakfast, the people of the Lateran section made a sally across the Tiber and stormed first of all the duke's camp, which abutted the walls. With loud cries the army rushed out of the camp to resist them, and there was sore strife that day. Our duke fought valiantly there at the head of his forces.<sup>6</sup> The Romans were conquered and suffered a great downfall. After the victory was won the name of the duke was magnified above all who were in the army. Desirous, therefore, of honoring him, the lord pope sent him gifts and instructed his legate as follows: "Tell him that tomorrow, if the Lord wills it, I shall consecrate his bishop-elect." And the duke rejoiced at the promise. When morning came, then, the lord pope made a public feast and consecrated for us a bishop with great glory.<sup>7</sup>

#### 82 (81). THE HANGING OF THE VERONESE

After the Romans were again brought into the pope's favor, the Caesar's forces turned about for their homeward march and, leaving Italy, came into Lombardy. When they had traveled through Lombardy they came to Verona where the Caesar and his army fell into grave danger.<sup>1</sup> There is a stipulation that the Veronese throw a bridge of boats over the river which is called Adige for the emperor on his departure from Lombardy. The

<sup>6</sup> Simonsfeld, *op. cit.*, I, 689-98, critically examines the sources about this conflict and they confirm Helmold's assertion about the part taken by Henry the Lion.

<sup>7</sup> June 19.

<sup>1</sup> September, 1155. For a detailed critical account of this episode *vide* Simonsfeld, *Friedrich I*, I, 376-80, 699-708. Cf. Helmold's use of the terms "Italy," "Lombardy," chap. 29 n. 2, *supra*.

current of this river, impetuous like a torrent, is passable by no one. After the army had crossed, the bridge was at once swept away by the violence of the stream. Hastening forward, the army came to a pass to which the name Clusa is given, where the road runs between cliffs touching the sky and becomes so narrow that it hardly affords passage for two abreast.<sup>2</sup> Now the Veronese had occupied the mountain top and by throwing missiles let no one pass. Then they asked the emperor what he would give for his safety and that of his men. Encompassed thus on all sides by river and mountains, the Caesar, extraordinary to relate, was seized with utter bewilderment. He entered his tent and prayed, barefooted, before the vivifying wood of the Lord's cross. Forthwith, inspired by God, he came upon a plan. He caused the Veronese who were with him to be summoned and said to them: "Show me a secret path that leads to the top of the mountain; otherwise I shall order your eyes dug out."<sup>3</sup> In great fear they betrayed to him hidden ascents of the mountain. At once the bravest of the knights ascended by them and fell upon the enemy from the rear. They took the Veronese nobles that were routed in the battle and led them into the Caesar's presence. He caused them to be hanged; and, with its hindrance thus removed, the army proceeded on its way.

83 (82). THE RECONCILIATION OF BISHOPS  
HARTWIG AND GEROLD

After these events, with the permission of the duke, our bishop journeyed into Swabia where he was received with veneration by his friends and detained for some days. He set out for Saxony; thence he crossed the Elbe and came into Wagria to take up the work to which he had been assigned. When at

<sup>2</sup>The Adige flows through two narrows, the southern above Volargne and the northern below Ceraino. The Veronese, under a certain Alberic and twelve knights, besides a miscellaneous lot—in all about five hundred men—had let the German van go through unmolested but blocked Frederick and the main part of the army after they passed the Ceraino narrows.

<sup>3</sup>Frederick had sent them to Alberic to negotiate the passage but the terms were impossible of acceptance. The secret way was a second thought.

length he entered his bishopric, he did not find means to support him for even one month. The house at Faldera, indeed, after the death of Bishop Vicelin of blessed memory had transferred itself to the church at Hamburg, with a view at once to its advantage and to its quiet. The provost Ludolph and the brethren at Högersdorf thought it enough for them to afford the bishop hospitality as he came and went. Only the house at Bosau, quite destitute and undeveloped, paid episcopal dues. When he had visited and addressed the children of his church, the bishop came back to the Elbe for the purpose of conferring with the archbishop near Stade. When out of abhorrence of his elevation the archbishop put him off for a long time and made access to himself difficult, our bishop said to the abbot of Riddagshausen and to the others who had come with him: "Why are we staying here, brethren? Let us see the man face to face." And without ado he went in to the prelate and received the kiss without a word of greeting. Our bishop addressed him:

Do you not speak to me? How have I sinned that I do not deserve to be greeted? Let us appoint, if it please you, arbiters to decide between us. I came, as you know, to Merseburg. I asked for your benediction, but you refused it. Necessity then compelled me to go to Rome to implore from the Apostolic See what you denied me. I have, therefore, more just reason to be angry than you who imposed on me the burdensome necessity of this journey.

The archbishop replied: "What so inevitable cause impelled you to Rome, to undergo the fatigue and expenses of the journey? Was it because, being in a distant country, I put off your request until I was in the presence of our church?" "You put it off, indeed, to weaken our cause," answered our bishop, "for, to confess the truth, you openly said it. But to God be glory Who perfected us in His service by setting us indeed a toilsome but pleasing goal."

The archbishop then said: "The Apostolic See has in your consecration—a matter that rightfully pertains to us—made use

<sup>1</sup> Cf. chap. 80 n. 1, *supra*.

of its authority which, to be sure, we cannot oppose. But it has in turn provided a remedy for this wrong in designating for us by letter that your subordination to our authority has in no wise been diminished by this action." Our bishop responded: "I know, indeed I do not deny that it is as you say, and on this very account I have come to show my obedience in the matters that are proper to you, to allay discord and restore 'conditions of peace.'" I deem it just, also, that you provide us, who declare our subjection, the bases of sustenance. For those who strive deserve support." After this discussion they mutually established friendship, promising one another aid in case of necessity.

Departing thence, our bishop Gerold went to Bremen to meet the duke. For the latter, offended by the Frisians, who are called Rustri, came to Bremen on the Kalends of November<sup>3</sup> and caused as many of them as had come to the market to be apprehended and their goods to be seized. When, therefore, the duke asked our bishop how he had been received by the archbishop, the bishop spoke good of him and endeavored to moderate the duke's disposition toward the archbishop. For the ingrained enmity, which had long existed between them, at this time reached the point of violence because the archbishop had violated his oath by not going on the Italian expedition and was guilty of lese majesty. Hence, also, a legate of the emperor came to Bremen and seized all the episcopal manors and attached whatever he found for the imperial treasury. The same was done to Ulrich, the bishop of Halberstadt. Our bishop then accompanied the duke on his return to Brunswick and spent with him the feast of the Lord's nativity.

When this feast was over the bishop returned to Wagria, taking with him his brother, the abbot of Riddagshausen, and went to Oldenburg to solemnize the feast of the Epiphany<sup>4</sup> in the cathedral city. The city was entirely deserted, having neither walls nor an inhabitant, only a little chapel which Vicelin of saintly memory had erected there. In the bitterest cold, amid

<sup>3</sup> Luke 14: 32.

<sup>4</sup> November 1, 1155. Cf. Adam, schol. 3.

<sup>5</sup> January 6, 1156.



piles of snow, we went through the Mass there. Besides Pribislav and a few others, not a Slav attended. After the sacred mysteries were finished, Pribislav asked us to come to his house which was in a remoter town. He received us with much gladness and prepared a sumptuous repast for us. Twenty dishes of food loaded the table set before us. There I learned from experience what before I knew by report, that no people is more distinguished in its regard for hospitality than the Slavs. For in respect of the entertainment of guests they are all, as if of one mind, eager that it be not necessary for any one to ask for hospitality. Whatever they obtain by farming, fishing, or hunting they bestow with whole-hearted generosity, considering the one who is most liberal as the most manful. The longing for this display impels many of them to theft and robbery. In any case these vices are venial with them; for they are covered by the cloak of hospitality. According to the laws of the Slavs, what you have stolen by night you must on the morrow divide with your guests.<sup>5</sup> But if anyone—and this is very rare—is caught denying a stranger hospitality, it is lawful to burn his house and property. They all, likewise, vow and declare that he who does not fear to deny a stranger bread is shameful, vile, and to be abominated by all.

#### 84 (83). THE CONVERSION OF PRIBISLAV

After staying that night<sup>1</sup> and the following day and night with the ruler, we crossed into farther Slavia to be the guests of an influential man, Thessemar, who had invited us. It happened that on our journey we came into a forest, which is the only one in that country, for it all stretches out in a plain. Among very old trees we saw there the sacred oaks which had been consecrated to the god of that land, Prove. There was a courtyard about them and a fence very carefully constructed of wood and

<sup>5</sup>That the Slavs did not have a well developed conception of property rights is clear also from their language. Cf. interesting observations on this point by Krek in his *Slawische Literaturgeschichte*, pp. 165-66.

<sup>1</sup>January 6-7, 1156.

having two gates. For, besides the household gods and the idols with which each village abounded, that place was the sanctuary of the whole land for which a flamen and feast days and a variety of sacrificial rites had been appointed. On the second week day the people of the land were wont to assemble there for holding court with the ruler and with the flamen. Entrance to this courtyard was forbidden to all, except only to the priest and to those wishing to make sacrifices, or to those in danger of death, because they were never to be denied asylum. For the Slavs show such reverence for their holy things that they do not allow the neighborhood of a fane to be defiled by blood even in time of war. They admit oaths with the greatest reluctance; for among the Slavs to swear is, as it were, to foreswear oneself, because of the avenging wrath of the gods. The Slavs have many forms of idol worship, for they are not all agreed upon the same superstitious customs. Some display in the temples fantastically formed images, as, for example, the idol at Plön, the name of which is Pogada;<sup>2</sup> other deities live in the woods and groves, like Prove, the god of Oldenburg; of these no effigies are fashioned. They also carve out many deities with two, three, or more heads. But they do not deny that there is among the multiform god-heads to whom they attribute plains and woods, sorrows and joys, one god in the heavens ruling over the others. They hold that he, the all powerful one, looks only after heavenly matters; that the others, discharging the duties assigned to them in obedience to him, proceeded from his blood; and that one excels another in the measure that he is nearer to this god of gods.

When we came<sup>3</sup> to that wood and place of profanation, the bishop exhorted us to proceed energetically to the destruction of the grove. Leaping from his horse, he himself with his staff broke in pieces the decorated fronts of the gates and, entering the courtyard, we heaped up all the hedging of the enclosure about

<sup>2</sup> Helmold incorrectly transliterates "Pogada" as "Podaga." Zeuss, *Die Deutschen und die Nachbarstämme*, pp. 39-40. In this chapter he also repeats what appears in chap. 52, *supra*.

<sup>3</sup> January 8, 1156.

those sacred trees and made a pyre of the heap of wood by setting fire to it, not, however, without fear that perchance we might be overwhelmed in a tumult of the inhabitants.<sup>4</sup> But we were protected by heaven. After this we betook ourselves to the lodge where Thessemar received us with great pomp. Still the cups of the Slavs were neither sweet nor pleasing to us because we saw the shackles and the diverse kinds of instruments of torture which they were wont to use on the Christians brought here from Denmark. We saw there priests of the Lord, emaciated by their long detention in captivity, whom the bishop could not help either by force or by prayer.

The following Lord's day<sup>5</sup> all the people of the land convened in the market place at Lübeck and the lord bishop came and exhorted the assemblage to give up their idols and worship the one God who is in heaven, to receive the grace of baptism and renounce their evil works; namely, the plundering and killing of Christians. And when he had finished speaking to the congregation Pribislav, with the consent of the others, said:

Your words, O venerable prelate, are the words of God and are meet for our salvation. But how shall we, ensnared by so many evils, enter upon this way? In order that you may understand our affliction, hear patiently my words, because the people whom you see are your people, and it is proper for us to make known to you our need. Then it will be reasonable for you to pity us. Your princes rage against us with such severity that, because of the taxes and most burdensome services, death is better for us than life. Behold, this year we, the inhabitants of this tiny place, have paid the duke in all a thousand marks, so many hundred besides to the count, and yet we are not through but every day we are outdone and oppressed even to the point of exhaustion. How, therefore, shall we, for whom flight is a matter of daily consideration, be free to build churches for this new religion and to receive baptism? Were there but a place to which we could flee! On crossing the Trave, behold, like ruin is there; on coming to the Peene River, it is not less there. What

<sup>4</sup> The Distelmeier codex reads, "ne forte tumultu incolarum (lapidibus) obrueremur." Schmeidler does not think well of the addition, "lapidibus." The idea of stoning has been omitted from this translation.

<sup>5</sup> Probably January 15, but *vide* Simonsfeld, *Friedrich I*, I, 485, who holds to January 8.

remains, therefore, but to leave the land and take to the sea and live with the waves? Or what fault is it of ours, if, driven from our fatherland, we have troubled the sea and got our livelihood by plunder of the Danes or the merchants who fare the sea? Will not this be the fault of the princes who are hounding us?

To these words the lord bishop replied:

That our princes have hitherto used your people ill is not to be wondered at, for they do not think that they do much wrong to those who are worshippers of idols and to those who are without God. Nay, rather return to the Christian worship and subject yourselves to your Creator before Whom they stoop who bear up the world. Do not the Saxons and the other peoples who bear the Christian name live in tranquillity, content with what is legitimately theirs? Indeed, as you alone differ from the religion of all, so you are subject to the plundering of all.

And Pribislav said: "If it please the lord duke and you that we have the same mode of worship as the count, let the rights of the Saxons in respect of property and taxes be extended to us and we shall willingly be Christians, build churches, and pay our tithes."

Gerold, our bishop, after this went to the duke for the provincial conference which had been proclaimed to meet in Artlenburg, and the rulers of the Slavs who were called came there at the time of the assembly. Then, on the persuasion of the bishop, the duke addressed the Slavs regarding Christianity. Niclot, the ruler of the Abodrites, said to him: "Let the god, who is in heaven, be your God; you be our god, and 'it sufficeth us.'<sup>6</sup> You honor Him; in turn we shall honor you."<sup>7</sup> And the duke reproved him for the blasphemous speech. Nothing more, however, was at this time done in furtherance of the bishopric and of the Church, because our duke, lately returned from Italy, was entirely absorbed with gain. For the chest was void and empty. The bishop then accompanied the duke to Brunswick on his

<sup>6</sup> John 14: 8.

<sup>7</sup> Hauck, *Kirchengeschichte Deutschlands*, IV, 644 and n. 3, would interpret as, "Möge er den Gott im Himmel verehren; die Wenden wären schon zufrieden, wenn nur er sie behandelte wie Gott" the words of Niclot: "Sic Deus, qui in celis est, deus tuus, esto tuus deus, et sufficit nobis. Excole tu illum, porro nos te excolemus."

return and remained with him a long time. He said to the duke then: "Behold, now I have continued at your court a whole year and so have been a burden to you. Coming into Wagria, however, I have not wherewithal to eat. Why, then, did you impose on me the burden of this title and office? I was much better off before than I am now."

Roused by these words, the duke summoned Count Adolph and held with him a reckoning about the three hundred hides which had been given in endowment of the bishopric. Then the count placed the bishop in possession of Eutin and Gummale,<sup>8</sup> with their appurtenances. Moreover, he added two villages, Hutzfeld and Wöbs,<sup>9</sup> to the estate which is called Bosau. In Oldenburg also he gave him a very convenient property next to the market place. And the count said: "Let the lord bishop go into Wagria and let him have the property appraised by consulting with competent men; whatever is lacking of the three hundred hides I shall supply; whatever is over will be mine." The bishop, therefore, went to view the property and, after holding an inquisition with the settlers, discovered that it comprised hardly a hundred hides. The count for this purpose had had the land measured by a short and to us unknown line; besides, he measured with the line<sup>10</sup> swamps and woodlands, and he made the number of fields very great. When, therefore, the matter was referred to the duke, the latter gave judgment in favor of the bishop, that measurement was to be made according to the custom of this land, and that swamps and the denser woods were not to be measured. Although much effort was expended to obtain this property, neither the duke nor the bishop has been able to secure it to this very day.

The possessions which I have mentioned above Bishop Gerold, daily instant with the princes in season and out of season, secured<sup>11</sup> that the spark of the episcopal title might be rekindled

<sup>8</sup> Also spelled Gamale, near Eutin. Cf. Schröder und Biernatzki, *Topographie der Herzogtümer Holstein und Lauenburg*, I, 401.

<sup>9</sup> Both villages were near Bosau.

<sup>10</sup> *Funiculo*. Cf. II Sam. 8: 2; Amos 7: 17.

<sup>11</sup> 1156-57.

in Wagria. He built the city and market place of Eutin and erected a house there for himself. But because the only community of clerics in the bishopric of Oldenburg was the one at Cuzelina, also called Högersdorf, with the approval of the duke he had this community move over to Segeberg, to the site of the first foundation,<sup>22</sup> so that on solemn occasions, when the bishop had to appear before the people, he might have a retinue of clerics. Although, on account of the confusion of the market place, this translation seemed objectionable to Ludolph, the provost, and to the brethren they yielded nevertheless to the decision of their superiors whom they had no reason to withstand. The bishop built a house there. Setting out thence he went to the archbishop, to whom he paid many courtesies in the hope that he might secure the return of the monastery at Faldera which, as it is known, his predecessor had founded and possessed. But the archbishop was more disposed to seek the advantage of his own church and led on the man with wily declarations, making promises, causing delays, and redeeming the time. He did, however, order the most reverend man Eppo, the provost, not to withhold entirely his hand from the support of this new church, but to help the bishop as well with clerics as with other means of assistance.

On this account our bishop summoned from Faldera the priest Bruno<sup>23</sup>—for he had left Slavia when Vicelin died—and sent him to Oldenburg to provide for the salvation of that people. The latter was indubitably moved by divine inspiration for his task; for at night in a vision he saw a chrisal in his hands from the cover of which a fresh green sapling grew and, gathering strength, waxed into a stout tree. And in very truth it turned out as he thought. For as soon as he came to Oldenburg he entered with great zeal upon God's work and called the Slavic people to the grace of regeneration, cutting down groves and doing away with sacrilegious rites. Because the stronghold and

<sup>22</sup> Moved thence to Högersdorf in 1143. Cf. chap. 58, *supra*.

<sup>23</sup> He had been at Bosau, 1152-54. Cf. chap. 75, *supra*.

the city, where there had once been an episcopal church and see, were deserted, the bishop prevailed on the count to settle a colony of Saxons there; he did this also that the priest might have the solace of a people whose language and customs he knew. They proved in fact not a mediocre support to the new church. Indeed, a very creditable church was erected in Oldenburg,<sup>14</sup> richly fitted out with books and bells and other furnishings. The service of the house of God was thus reestablished "in the midst of a crooked and perverse nation"<sup>15</sup> about ninety years after the destruction of the earlier church, which took place when the pious prince Gottschalk was killed.<sup>16</sup> The church was dedicated by Bishop Gerold in honor of Saint John the Baptist, in the presence of the noble Count Adolph and his most pious wife, the lady Matilda, both of whom assisted with much devotion. The count also bade the Slavic people transfer their dead for burial in the churchyard and on feast days assemble in the church to hear the Word of God. To these people also, Bruno, the priest of God, amply ministered the Word of God in conformity with the mission entrusted to him, delivering sermons composed in Slavic speech which he at proper times preached to the people. The Slavs were for the future forbidden to swear by trees, springs, and stones, and they were to bring to the priest those accused of crimes to be tried by iron or plowshares. In those days the Slavs crucified a certain Dane. When Bruno, the priest, reported this doing to the count, the latter called them to account and punished them with a fine. He banned this kind of punishment from the land.

When he saw, therefore, that a good foundation had been laid in Oldenburg, Bishop Gerold suggested to the count that a church be set up in the district which is called Süssel. And they sent thither from the house of Faldera the priest, Deilaw, whose spirit thirsted for labors and dangers in the preaching of the Gospel. And he came, as he had been sent, into a den of

<sup>14</sup> According to Saxo Grammaticus, *MGH. SS. XXIX*, 141, this church was built outside the walls.

<sup>15</sup> Phil. 2: 15.

<sup>16</sup> In 1066. Cf. chaps. 22, 24, *supra*.

thieves among the Slavs who live by the Kremper Au. Now this was a lurking place familiar to pirates, and the priest of God dwelt among them, serving the Lord "in hunger, and in thirst, and in nakedness."<sup>17</sup> After these things had thus been accomplished, it seemed fitting to build up the church in Lütjenburg and Ratekau;<sup>18</sup> and the bishop and the count went to those places and marked out the sites on which churches were to be built. The work of God thus increased in the land of Wagria and the count and the bishop coöperated one with the other. About this time the count rebuilt the stronghold at Plön<sup>19</sup> and made there a city and market place. The Slavs who lived in the villages round about withdrew and Saxons came and dwelt there; and the Slavs little by little failed in the land.

In the land of the Polabi churches also multiplied through the perseverance of the lord bishop Evermod and of Count Henry of Ratzeburg. Nevertheless, they were still not able to keep the Slavs from plundering. To this day, indeed, they cross the sea and despoil the land of the Danes; they have not yet departed from the sins of their fathers.

#### 85 (84). THE DEATH OF CNUT

Of a truth the Danes, ever agitated by domestic strife, had no strength for foreign wars. For Svein, the king of the Danes, established in the kingdom both by the fortunate results of his victories and by the authority of the Caesar,<sup>1</sup> cruelly oppressed his people, on which account his last days were through the vengeance of God ended with an unhappy death. Therefore, when Cnut, his rival, saw that the people were murmuring against Svein, he called Waldemar, who was Svein's cousin<sup>2</sup> and accessory. With him he formed an alliance and gave him

<sup>17</sup> Deut. 28: 48.

<sup>18</sup> Near Lübeck.

<sup>19</sup> Destroyed in 1139. Cf. chaps. 56, 75, *supra*.

<sup>1</sup> Frederick I in 1152. *Vide* chap. 73, *supra*. Saxo Grammaticus, *MGH. SS. XXIX*, 95, parallels this chapter; for a critical account of the events here recorded *vide* Simonsfeld, *Friedrich I*, I, 280-84, 490-91, 551-56; *Cambridge Medieval History*, V, 386-87.

<sup>2</sup> Cnut Laward's son.



his sister<sup>3</sup> in marriage. When he was thus sure of Waldemar's aid, he renewed his evil designs against Svein. And then, while King Svein was in Zeeland, Cnut and Waldemar unexpectedly advanced upon him with an army to do battle. As everyone had deserted him because of his cruelty, Svein fled to sea with his wife<sup>4</sup> and family and shipped over to Oldenburg because he had not the power of resistance. On learning of his flight, Count Adolph greatly feared the outcome—namely, that a most powerful man, whose bridle was in the jaws of all the people<sup>5</sup> of the northern nations, should suddenly have been thrown down. The count showed Svein every courtesy when he desired to pass through his land, and Svein went into Saxony to his father-in-law, Conrad, the margrave of Wettin, and stayed there nearly two years.

At that time our duke Henry went to the diet at Ratisbon to be invested with the duchy of Bavaria.<sup>6</sup> The Caesar Frederick, indeed, took this same duchy from his uncle<sup>7</sup> and gave it back to our duke because he had plainly seen that the duke was faithful in the Italian expedition and in other affairs of the realm. A new title was created for him, Henry the Lion, duke of Bavaria and Saxony.

When these matters had been settled according to his desire, the princes of Saxony<sup>8</sup> addressed the duke as he was returning from the diet, saying that he should help Svein and restore him to his kingdom. Svein also promised the duke an immense sum of money. Therefore, after raising a very large army our duke led Svein back into Denmark in the winter-time.<sup>9</sup> The cities of Schleswig and Ribe were forthwith opened to him. Nevertheless, beyond that they could not succeed in their business.

<sup>3</sup> Sophia, his half sister. The alliance was formed in 1154.

<sup>4</sup> Adela, daughter of Conrad of Wettin. Cf. chap. 62, *supra*.

<sup>5</sup> Cf. Isa. 30: 28.

<sup>6</sup> September 17, 1156.

<sup>7</sup> Henry Jasomirgott, who had been enfeoffed with Austria which was made a duchy at this diet.

<sup>8</sup> Especially Hartwig, archbishop of Hamburg-Bremen, who thought of regaining his control over the Danish church, lost since 1104. Simonsfeld, *op. cit.*, I, 490 197.

<sup>9</sup> 1156-57.

Although Svein had very often boasted to the duke that the Danes would of their own accord receive him if he came with an army, it by no means turned out as he thought. In all the land of the Danes there was not a man who would receive him or meet him. When, therefore, Svein perceived that fortune did not favor him and that everyone shrank from him, he said to the duke: "Our endeavor is vain; it is better for us to go back. For of what avail is it to have devastated the land and despoiled the innocent? Though we would fight the enemy, there is no chance because they are fleeing from us and are going over into the outer parts of the sea."

When they had taken hostages from the two cities, they left Denmark.<sup>10</sup> Then Svein, adopting another course and plan, decided to go over to the Slavs. After abiding with the count at Lübeck, he went over to Niclot, the prince of the Abodrites. The duke ordered the Slavs in Oldenburg and in the land of the Abodrites to help Svein. On receiving a few ships, he came unmolested to Laaland<sup>11</sup> and found that the inhabitants rejoiced over his coming because they had from the beginning been faithful to him. Thence he crossed into Fünen and won it to himself. Proceeding from that place to the rest of the lesser islands, he attached very many to himself by gifts and promises, but he was on his guard against treachery and kept himself in the strongholds. On receiving knowledge of these doings, Cnut and Waldemar came up with an army to fight Svein and to cast him out of the country. But the latter had established himself in Laaland, prepared to resist and helped at the same time also by the strength of his situation. Through the mediation of the lord Elias, bishop of Ribe, and of princes on each side, discord was changed to peace and the kingdom was divided into three parts. Jutland was given to Waldemar; Zeeland, to Cnut; Scania, which is esteemed as superior in men and arms, to Svein. The other, lesser islands they assigned to one or to the other accord-

<sup>10</sup> Cf. Simonsfeld, *op. cit.*, I, 551.

<sup>11</sup> The Danish island north of Fehmern Island.

ing to convenience. That the agreements might not be broken they solemnly swore to them. After this Cnut and Waldemar made a great feast in Zeeland, in the city which is called Roeskilde. They invited their relative, Svein, in order to give him honor and recreation and consolation for all the misfortunes which they had brought upon him in the days of enmity and warfare. But the latter, with the ferocity born in him, began to cast about for a likely opportunity to ensnare the kings while he sat at the feast and saw them enjoying themselves and devoid of every suspicion. On the third day of the feast,<sup>12</sup> after the shadows of night had fallen, Svein's men brought in swords at a nod from their chief, leaped upon the unsuspecting kings, and quickly pierced Cnut through. But as an assassin was aiming a blow at the head of Waldemar, the latter made a great leap, struck out the light and with the help of God escaped in the darkness, suffering from only one wound. Fleeing then into Jutland, Waldemar roused all Denmark. Svein thereupon drew together an army from Zeeland and the islands of the sea and shipped over to Jutland to fight Waldemar. The latter brought forward his army and met Svein with a mighty power. The battle was fought not far from Viborg.<sup>13</sup> Svein, together with all his men, was killed that same day; and Waldemar obtained the kingdom of the Danes, becoming an arbiter and son of peace. The intestine wars with which Denmark had for many years been afflicted ceased. Waldemar also made peace with Count Adolph and honored him as the kings who preceded him had done.

#### 86 (85). THE BUILDING OF LOEWENSTADT

At that time the city of Lübeck was destroyed by fire.<sup>1</sup> The merchants and other inhabitants of the city then sent word to the duke, saying:

For a long time now the market at Lübeck has been closed by virtue

<sup>12</sup> August 9, 1157. *The Cambridge Medieval History*, V, 386, incorrectly gives this date May 7, 1157.

<sup>13</sup> October 23, 1157. Cf. *Simonsfeld, op. cit.*, I, 555 n. 109.

<sup>1</sup> In autumn, 1157.

of your command.<sup>2</sup> Until now, however, we have stayed in the city, hoping to recover the market through the good will of your favor; nor did our buildings, erected at great expense, permit us to leave. But now that our houses have been destroyed, it is idle to build again in a place in which a market may not exist. Give us, therefore, a place to build a city; a site that is acceptable to you.

The duke accordingly asked Count Adolph to concede to him the port and island of Lübeck, but this the latter would not do. Then the duke laid out a new city on the River Wakenitz,<sup>3</sup> not far from Lübeck, in the land of Ratzeburg. There he began to build and fortify a city which he called after his own name, Löwenstadt, that is, the City of the Lion. But since that site was little fitted either for a port or for fortification and could not be reached except in small ships, the duke began to reopen negotiations with Count Adolph about the island of Lübeck and the port, promising him many things if he complied with his wish. The count was at length persuaded, did what necessity demanded, and resigned the fortress and island to the duke. At his bidding the merchants at once returned with joy, and abandoning the inconveniences of Löwenstadt they started to rebuild the churches and the walls of Lübeck. The duke sent messengers to the cities and kingdoms of the north—Denmark, Sweden, Norway, Russia—offering them peace so that they should have free access to his city of Lübeck. He also ordained there a coinage and tolls and most respectable city rights. Thenceforth the business of the city prospered and the number of its inhabitants multiplied.

#### 87 (86). THE SIEGE OF MILAN

About this time the mighty Caesar Frederick summoned all the princes of Saxony to the siege of the city of Milan.<sup>1</sup> Our duke, therefore, was obliged to give special attention to the affairs of

<sup>2</sup> Since 1152. Cf. chap. 76, *supra*.

<sup>3</sup> In the vicinity of the modern Herrsburg near the junction of the Hertoghenbeke and the Wakenitz. Cf. Simonsfeld, *Friedrich I*, I, 556-57; Brehmer, "Die Lage der Löwenstadt," *Zeitschrift des Vereins für lübeckische Geschichte*, VI (1891), 393-404.

<sup>1</sup> In 1159. Cf. *Rahewini gesta Frid.*, iv, 28; *Ann. Palid.*, an. 1159.

the state. Consequently, he began to settle the disputes which existed within the duchy, wisely taking precautions that no one should raise disturbances in the absence of the princes and of the other nobles. He also sent out messengers and called Waldemar, the king of the Danes, to a conference and concluded a treaty of friendship with him. The king asked the duke to procure peace for him from the Slavs, who without intermission were devastating his kingdom, and the king covenanted with him for over a thousand marks of silver. The duke on this account commanded the Slavs, Niclot, namely, and others, to come into his presence, and he bound them by precept and oath to keep peace with the Danes as well as with the Saxons until his return.<sup>2</sup> And to ratify the engagements he commanded all the pirate ships of the Slavs to be brought to Lübeck and to be delivered to his delegate. But in their accustomed foolhardy boldness, with the Italian expedition imminent, they produced only a few ships (and these the oldest) and craftily withheld the others which were fit for war. The count, therefore, solicited Niclot through the medium of the elders of the land of Wagria, Marchrad<sup>3</sup> and Horno, and asked him of his own good will to keep inviolate faith with respect to his territory. With this request Niclot complied with becoming fidelity.

When he had in this manner settled his affairs, the duke set out for Lombardy with a thousand mailed men, as the story goes,<sup>4</sup> accompanied by Count Adolph and many nobles of Bavaria and Saxony. And they came up with the king's army which was investing the well fortified stronghold called Crema belonging to the Milanese. They tarried nearly a whole year over the siege of this fortress and they "made many engines of war" and "instruments to cast fire."<sup>5</sup> When at last the

<sup>2</sup> Helmold is strangely silent about Henry the Lion's expedition against the Slavs in 1158, in which campaign it is likely Niclot was captured. Cf. *Ann. Palid.*, an. 1158; Wigger, "Berno der erste Bischof von Schwerin und Mecklenburg," *Jahrbücher und Jahresberichte des Vereins für mecklenb. Geschichte und Altertumskunde*, XXVIII (1864), 104.

<sup>3</sup> Cf. chap. 47 n. 3, *supra*.

<sup>4</sup> May-June, 1159. Cf. *Ann. Weingart. Welfici*, ann. 1158-59.

<sup>5</sup> I Macc. 6: 51; 11: 20.

stronghold was taken,<sup>6</sup> the Caesar led his army toward Milan. The duke, however, with his leave returned to Saxony.

Now Count Adolph was asked to go to England with his relative, the lord Rainald, archbishop-elect of Köln,<sup>7</sup> on a mission of state to the king of the English. Both the clergy and the people of our land grieved because of the prolonged absence of their good protector. For the Slavs of Oldenburg and of Mecklenburg, who were their own masters by reason of the absence of the princes, broke the peace in the country of the Danes, and our land was in dread of the face of the Danish king. But our Bishop Gerold, both in person and through messengers, sought to mitigate the king's wrath and to gain time by truces until the advent of the duke and the princes. Therefore, when the duke and the count returned, a provincial diet was announced for all the marchmen, both Teuton and Slav, in a place called Barförde.<sup>8</sup> Waldemar, the king of the Danes, also came as far as Artlenburg,<sup>9</sup> and he complained to the duke of all the injuries which the Slavs had inflicted on him in violation of the public commands. The Slavs were afraid to come into the presence of the duke because they were conscious of their guilt. The duke, therefore, put them under the ban and had all his men make ready for an expedition at harvest time. Seeing that the duke's mind was bent upon evil against him, Niclot then proposed first to attack Lübeck, and he sent his sons thither for an ambushade.

At that time there lived in Lübeck a venerable priest named Ethelo. His house was near the bridge that spans the River Wakenitz toward the south. It so happened that he had had a

<sup>6</sup> January 26, 1160.

<sup>7</sup> Rainald of Dassel, being a younger son of a noble family, was destined for the Church and attracted attention as an administrator for the bishop of Hildesheim. In 1156 Frederick Barbarossa made him chancellor and for the next decade, until he died, Rainald was an able, although not often wise adviser of Frederick. Rainald took a prominent, anti-papal part in the diet of Besançon, 1157, when the meaning of the word *beneficia* in a papal letter to the emperor was the occasion of a stormy scene. Rainald was archbishop of Köln from 1159 to 1164. Ficker, *Rainald von Dassel*; Hauck, *Kirchengeschichte Deutschlands*, IV, 221-299. This mission was to Normandy where Henry II then was (1159-60).

<sup>8</sup> In the parish of Hittbergen, near Lüneburg.

<sup>9</sup> Cf. Saxo Grammaticus, *MGH. SS. XXIX*, 105.

very long ditch dug to conduct a stream of water from the river which was some distance off. In hurrying forward to take possession of the bridge the Slavic ambuscaders were impeded by the ditch and lost their way in looking for a crossing. When they who were in the priest's house saw this happening, they set up a hue and cry, and the terrified priest rushed desperately upon the warriors. The Slavic troop was already in the middle of the span and had nearly reached the portal when the priest, dispatched by God, very quickly lifted the bridge by the chain and in this manner averted the dangers which had been plotted. When the duke heard of this occurrence, he placed a guard of knights at this place.

88 (87). THE KILLING OF NICLOT

Duke Henry thereupon entered the country of the Slavs with a strong force and wasted it by fire and sword.<sup>1</sup> When Niclot beheld the might of the duke, he set fire to all his strongholds, namely, Ilow, Mecklenburg, Schwerin, and Dobin, to avoid the perils of investment. One fortress only did he save for himself, Werla, situated on the River Warnow near the land Kicine.<sup>2</sup> From it the Slavs went out day after day and reconnoitered the duke's army and struck down the unwary from ambushes. One day, as the army was staying near Mecklenburg, the sons of Niclot, Pribislav and Vratislav, went out to ravage, and they killed some men from the camp who were on a foraging party. The most valiant men of the army set out in pursuit and captured many of the Slavs whom the duke caused to be hanged. After losing their horses and their best men, the sons of Niclot came to their father. He said to them: "I thought, indeed, that I had reared men, but these fellows run away faster than women. I shall, therefore, go out myself to see if I cannot do better." And he went out with a number of picked men and lurked in ambush near the duke's army. Servants went out of the duke's camp to gather grain at that time, and they came near the

<sup>1</sup> Cf. *Ann. Palid.*, an. 1160.

<sup>2</sup> Rostock.

ambuscade. Mingled with the servants there had also gone out knights, about sixty in number, all clad in armor under their outer garments. Not observing this, Niclot charged among them on his fleetest horse in an effort to run one through. But the lance, striking through to the armor, rebounded from the futile stroke. When, then, he sought to return to his men, he was quickly surrounded and slain, without any one of his men bringing him aid. His head was recognized and brought into camp, to the wonderment of many that so great a man should have been by the dispensation of God the only one of all his company to fall.<sup>3</sup> When his sons heard of the death of their father they set fire to Werla and hid themselves in the woods; their families they transferred to ships.

After he had devastated the whole country the duke commenced the construction and fortification of Schwerin. He placed in command of its garrison a certain nobleman, Guncelin,<sup>4</sup> a warlike man. The sons of Niclot later returned to the duke's favor, and the duke gave them Werla and all that country. Moreover, he divided the land of the Abodrites and put his knights in possession of it. In the fortress Cuscin he stationed one Ludolph, advocate of Brunswick. Then he placed Ludolph of Peine at Malchow.<sup>5</sup> Schwerin and Ilinburg<sup>6</sup> he commended to Guncelin. Mecklenburg he gave to Henry, a noble of Scathen,<sup>7</sup> who brought a multitude of people from Flanders and settled them in Mecklenburg and in all its territories. As bishop in the land of the Abodrites the duke appointed the lord Bern,<sup>8</sup> who

<sup>3</sup> Cf. Saxo Grammaticus, *MGH. SS. XXIX*, 106.

<sup>4</sup> Guncelin of Hagen, one of Henry the Lion's *ministeriales*, later was made count of Schwerin. Cf. *Cambridge Medieval History*, V, 398.

<sup>5</sup> Malchow is in Mecklenburg-Schwerin. Ludolph, advocate of Brunswick, and Ludolph of Peine were *ministeriales* of Henry the Lion and their names appear frequently in charters of this time. Cf. Schmeidler (ed.), *Helmold*, p. 173 n. 2.

<sup>6</sup> Called Ilow, *supra*.

<sup>7</sup> Henry of Scathen is probably to be identified with Henry, count of Schota, mentioned in two charters of 1163. *Mecklenb. Urkundenbuch*, I, nos. 78, 82. Schmeidler (ed.), *op. cit.*, p. 173 n. 2.

<sup>8</sup> Emmehard, who became bishop of Mecklenburg in 1149 (cf. chap. 69, *supra*), died in 1155. Although Emmehard had not entered into his bishopric, missionary enterprise was represented there by the monk Bern, a member of the Cistercian community of



on the death of Emmehard presided over the church of Magnopolis which is the same as Mecklenburg. And the duke wrote down in endowment of the church of Magnopolis three hundred hides as he had previously done in the case of Ratzeburg and Oldenburg.<sup>9</sup> On his request the duke obtained from the Caesar authority to found, to bestow, and to confirm bishoprics in all the country of the Slavs which either he or his forbears had conquered by force of arms and held by right of war.<sup>10</sup> Wherefore, he summoned the lord Gerold of Oldenburg, the lord Evermod of Ratzeburg and the lord Bern of Magnopolis to receive their dignities from him and to do him homage as it was customarily done to the emperor. Although they judged it a very hard imposition, they nevertheless yielded for the sake of Him who humbled Himself for our sake and that the new church might not suffer detriment. And the duke gave them charters for their possessions and incomes and judicial rights.<sup>11</sup>

The duke also bade the Slavs who had stayed in the land of the Wagiri, the Polabi, the Abodrites, and the Kicini, pay the episcopal taxes which were paid by the Poles and the Pomeranians; that is, three measures of wheat and twelve pieces of public money for every plow. This Slavic measure is called a *curitce* in their language. The Slavic plow is worked with two oxen or as many horses.<sup>12</sup> The tithes in the land of the Slavs increased because Germans came from their lands to dwell in the spacious country, rich in grain, smiling in the fullness of pasture lands, abounding with fish and flesh and all good things.

Amelungsborn. Bern's work was supported by his monastery because Emmehard was destitute. Because of his success he was justly named Emmehard's successor and was later also called the apostle of the Abodrites. About 1160 Bern transferred his see from Mecklenburg to Schwerin because of Niclot's hostility and the presence of German settlers in that region. Bern died in 1191 (1192?). Hauck, *Kirchengeschichte Deutschlands*, IV, 643, 647-50.

<sup>9</sup> There is no documentary evidence for this grant. For the Ratzeburg and Oldenburg grants *vide* chaps. 77, 84, *supra*.

<sup>10</sup> In 1159. For the critical literature *vide* Schmeidler (ed.), *op. cit.*, p. 173 n. 7.

<sup>11</sup> Although Helmold's statements are in accord with those in the *Annales Palidenses*, ann. 1159, 1160, charters of the date 1160 are not extant. Such charters were, however, issued in 1169 (1170). For the critical literature *vide* *ibid.*, p. 174 n. 2.

<sup>12</sup> Cf. chaps. 12, 14, *supra*.

At that time Albert, the margrave whose by-name is the Bear, held eastern Slavia. By the favor of God he also prospered splendidly in the portion of his lot;<sup>1</sup> for he brought under his sway all the country of the Brizani, the Stoderani, and the many tribes dwelling along the Havel and the Elbe, and he curbed the rebellious ones among them.<sup>2</sup> In the end, as the Slavs gradually decreased in number, he sent to Utrecht and to places lying on the Rhine, to those, moreover, who live by the ocean and suffer the violence of the sea—to wit, Hollanders, Zeelanders, Flemings—and he brought large numbers of them and had them live in the strongholds and villages of the Slavs.<sup>3</sup> The bishopric of Brandenburg, and likewise that of Havelberg, was greatly strengthened by the coming of the foreigners, because the churches multiplied and the income from the tithes grew enormously. At the same time foreigners from Holland also began to settle on the southern bank of the Elbe; the Hollanders received all the swamp and open country, the land which is called Balsamerlande and Marscinerlande,<sup>4</sup> together with very many cities and villages from the city of Salzwedel clear to the Bohemian woodland.<sup>5</sup> These lands, indeed, the Saxons are said to have occupied of old—namely in the time of the Ottos—as can be seen from the ancient levees which had been constructed in the lowlands of the Balsami along the banks of the Elbe. But afterwards, when the Slavs got the upper hand, the Saxons were killed and the land has been held by the Slavs down to our own times. Now, however, because God gave plentiful aid and victory

<sup>1</sup> Cf. Josh. 17: 14.

<sup>2</sup> 1157.

<sup>3</sup> In 1159 and 1160. Cf. Heinemann, *Albrecht der Bär*, pp. 216, 391-92 and n. 85; Rudolph, *Die niederländischen Kolonien der Altmark im XII. Jahrhundert*, pp. 31-35.

<sup>4</sup> Balsamerlande, the country of the Balsami, a Slavic people living near Stendal in the diocese of Halberstadt. The name for the region is probably derived from the Slavic, *Bjelouemja*, White Land. Marscinerlande was perhaps the region known as Wische, between Arnesburg and Werben, but Rudolph questions this identification. Zeuss (*Die Deutschen und die Nachbarstämme*, p. 661 n. 3) derives the name from *marisc*, marsh; therefore, marshland. Cf. Rudolph, *op. cit.*, pp. 45, 91.

<sup>5</sup> Cf. chap. 80 n. 7, *supra*. Wattenbach thinks Helmold's description of the flourishing state of this region is exaggerated. Cf. Laurent (tr.), *Helmold's Chronik der Slaven*, p. 208 n. 3.

to our duke and to the other princes, the Slavs have been everywhere crushed and driven out. A people strong and without number have come from the bounds of the ocean, and taken possession of the territories of the Slavs. They have built cities and churches and have grown in riches beyond all estimation.

90 (89). THE TRANSLATION OF THE  
BISHOPRIC OF OLDENBURG

The lord bishop Gerold about this time<sup>1</sup> asked the duke to move the cathedral see, which from of old had been at Oldenburg, to Lübeck because that city was more populous, better fortified, and in every respect more commodious. Since this proposition pleased the duke, they agreed on a day on which they would come to Lübeck to settle the affairs of the church and of the bishopric. The duke thereupon designated a site on which there should be built an oratory, with the title of mother church, and cloisters. In addition they established there twelve prebends for clerics living according to canonical rule; a thirteenth prebend belonged to the provost. The bishop gave for the support of the brethren certain tithes and as much of the income which Slavia furnished as was sufficient for the establishment of the prebends. Count Adolph resigned convenient villages<sup>2</sup> near Lübeck, which the duke at once presented for the use of the brethren, and assigned to each of them two marks of Lübeck coinage from the tolls, besides other things which are recorded in charters preserved in the church in Lübeck. They appointed as provost there the lord Ethelo of whom we have made laudatory mention on a previous page.<sup>3</sup>

91 (90). THE SCHISM BETWEEN ALEXANDER  
AND VICTOR

In the course of time, after the death of Pope Hadrian,<sup>1</sup> a schism arose in the Church of God between Alexander, also

<sup>1</sup> 1160.

<sup>2</sup> Lancowe, Ginin, Bussoe according to charters of 1163, 1169, 1197. Leverkus (ed.), *Urkundenbuch des Bistums Lübeck*, I, nos. 4, 5, 18. <sup>3</sup> Cf. chap. 87, *supra*.

<sup>1</sup> September 1, 1159.

called Roland, and Victor, also called Octavian. While the Caesar was besieging Milan, Victor came to him in his camp at Pavia and the Caesar recognized him.<sup>2</sup> At the council which was convened Rainald and Conrad, archbishops-elect of Köln and Mainz,<sup>3</sup> and all who were prompted either by the fear or the favor of the emperor also recognized him. The church at Jerusalem, however, and that at Antioch, besides all of France, England, Spain, Denmark, and every kingdom all over the world, recognized Alexander. Furthermore, the whole Cistercian order, in which there were very many archbishops and bishops and more than seven hundred abbots and an inestimable number of monks, had taken his side. These monks annually hold a council at Citeaux to decide on what is salutary. Their decision, hard to overcome, added very much strength to Alexander. Angered thereat, the Caesar promulgated an edict<sup>4</sup> that all monks of the Cistercian order who were in his realm were either to declare for Victor or to be expelled from the kingdom. How many fathers, how many bands of monks, therefore left their monasteries and fled to France is hard to say. By the impetuosity of the prince, too, very many bishops distinguished for their sanctity were driven from their sees in Lombardy and throughout the realm, and others were put in their places.

After five years or more had been spent in the siege the Caesar took Milan,<sup>5</sup> drove its inhabitants out of the city, destroyed all

<sup>2</sup> Roland was regularly elected by the cardinals and Octavian by acclamation, September 7, 1159. Frederick, who was then besieging Crema, not Milan, as Helmold states, observed neutrality and was advised to summon the contestants before him and let a synod settle their dispute. This synod Frederick summoned to meet January 13, 1160, but it did not convene until February 5 at Pavia. Since only Octavian appeared on February 5, Frederick's synod declared for him. Roland excommunicated the emperor and his pope and all their adherents, March 24. Hauck, *Kirchengeschichte Deutschlands*, IV, 243-54; Giesebrecht, *Deutsche Kaiserzeit*, V, 227-299.

<sup>3</sup> Conrad I of Wittelsbach was not named archbishop of Mainz until June 19, 1161, to succeed Arnold who was murdered June 24, 1160. Arnold was present at the synod of Pavia. Hauck, *op. cit.*, IV, 251, 950.

<sup>4</sup> This edict Giesebrecht (*op. cit.*, V, 474) thinks was not issued until after the diet of Würzburg which convened May 23, 1164; hence after the events which Helmold narrates, *infra*.

<sup>5</sup> Negotiations for the surrender of the city began at Lodi, February 21, 1162, but the city was not given to destruction until March 26. The siege was begun August 6, 1158. *Ibid.*, V, 159, 298-304.

its highest towers, leveled the walls of the city to the ground, and made it desolate. Then his heart was lifted up exceedingly, and all the kingdoms of the world feared his renown. And he sent to the king of France, Louis, to meet him in a conference at Saint-Jean-de-Losne, which is on the Saône River in the land of the Burgundians, for the purpose of restoring the unity of the Church.<sup>6</sup> The king of France agreed. Besides, the Caesar sent messengers to the king of Denmark, to the king of Hungary,<sup>7</sup> and to the king of Bohemia,<sup>8</sup> that they were to come on the appointed day;<sup>9</sup> furthermore, he commanded all the archbishops, bishops, and the highest princes of his realm and all the monks to be in solemn attendance. Great, therefore, were the expectations of all of this numerous assembly at which the two popes and so many kings of the world were expected to meet.<sup>10</sup> Then Waldemar, together with the bishops of Denmark, Archbishop Hartwig, Bishop Gerold, and Count Adolph with many of the nobles of Saxony, journeyed to the place appointed for the conference. Since the duke was in Bavaria, he came another way.

Now Louis, the king of France, whose advent was especially awaited, hesitated to meet the Caesar on learning that he was coming up with a large body of armed men. Out of regard for his oath, however, Louis did come to the place of the meeting on the day appointed—that is, on the feast of the beheading of John the Baptist—and showed himself on the middle of the bridge from the third until the ninth hour.<sup>11</sup> The Caesar, however, had not yet come. Interpreting this as an omen, the king of France washed his hands in the river in testimony, as it were, of his having kept his pledged word, and thence journeyed that

<sup>6</sup> Saint-Jean-de-Losne is near Dijon in the Département Côte-d'Or.

<sup>7</sup> Stephan III (1162-73) probably did not attend.

<sup>8</sup> Vladislav II (I as king, 1140-73) did not come personally but sent his representatives.

<sup>9</sup> August 29, 1162.

<sup>10</sup> Except Louis VII and the kings noted *supra* Europe's royalty did not heed Frederick's invitation. Victor was with the emperor, Alexander with Louis VII.

<sup>11</sup> The story of what happened runs otherwise and, no doubt, more correctly in Hugo Pictav., *MGH. SS. XXVI*, 147. Cf. Saxo Grammaticus, *ibid.*, XXIX, 114-15; Giesebrecht, *op. cit.*, V, 336-49; Reichel, *Die Ereignisse an der Saône im August und September, 1162*.

very evening to Dijon. When the Caesar came in the course of the night, he learned that the king of France had departed; and he dispatched distinguished persons to ask Louis to return. But the latter, congratulating himself both on having kept his word and on having escaped the hand of the Caesar, of whom he was suspicious, could by no means find the leisure. For many said that the Caesar intended to circumvent him and on this account had come armed, contrary to the tenor of the agreements. But cunning was outwitted by cunning, for the French, superior in genius,<sup>12</sup> accomplished by counsel what seemed impossible for armed strength. Exceedingly embittered, the Caesar then left the council, intent upon making war on the French. Pope Alexander grew in power and from that time prevailed in fuller measure. Duke Henry departed to Bavaria, and after having settled his affairs there he returned to Saxony.

92 (91). THE TITHES OF THE HOLZATIANS

In those days<sup>1</sup> there was peace throughout all Slavia, and the fortified places in the land of the Abodrites, of which the duke had by right of war taken possession, began to be inhabited by foreign peoples who had entered upon the land to possess it; and the governor of that country was Guncelin, a brave man and a friend of the duke. Henry, count of Ratzeburg, which is in the land of the Polabi, also brought a multitude of people from Westphalia to inhabit the land of the Polabi, and he divided among them the land by a line of distribution.<sup>2</sup> They built churches and delivered tithes of their crops unto the service of the house of God. In the time of Henry the work of God was established in the land of the Polabi, and in the time of Bernhard, his son, it was abundantly completed.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>12</sup> Cf. Thompson, *Feudal Germany*, chap. xi, on the sentiment of Europe with respect to the Germans in the Middle Ages.

<sup>1</sup> 1162.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. Ps. 78: 55.

<sup>3</sup> Henry of Ratzeburg died in 1164, according to von Brenka, "Ueber die Zeit in welcher Helmold die beiden Bücher seiner Chronik abfasste," *Forschungen zur deutschen Geschichte*, XXII (1882), 588 299. Cf. chaps. 58 and n. 7, 84, *supra*.

Still, the Holzatians who lived in the land of the Wagiri after the Slavs were expelled—devoted, indeed, in respect of the construction of churches and in their regard for hospitality—proved rebellious in respect of the tithes which by divine precept they lawfully should have paid. Now they paid six very small measures to the plow, a concession which they said had been allowed them by way of relief while they were still in the land of their nativity,<sup>4</sup> because they were in the neighborhood of barbarians, and because it was in time of war. The land from which the Holzatians had departed belongs to the diocese of Hamburg and is next to the land of Wagria. When, therefore, Bishop Gerold saw that the Polabi and the Abodrites, who were in the midst of the fiery furnace, paid their tithes according to the law, he decided to require similar payment from his own people. After consulting with Count Adolph, he sought to move the indomitable spirit of the Holzatians by written words of exhortation. To the church of Bornhöved—which is also called Zuentineveld, where lived Marchrad, the elder of the land and second in authority after the count, and other men powerful among the Holzatians—he therefore sent the following letter:

Gerold, by the grace of God bishop of the church at Lübeck, to all the citizens belonging to the church at Bornhöved, salvation and due greeting. Inasmuch as by the will of God I have been entrusted with the ecclesiastical dispensation and I exercise a divine commission toward you, I must strive to lead you from good things to better, and labor diligently to draw you away from what is detrimental to the salvation of your souls. To God, indeed, I give thanks that you give evidence of many virtues; that, for example, you are for the sake of God instant in hospitality and in other works of mercy, that you are most prompt in heeding the Word of God and solicitous about the building of churches, and that you also lead, as is pleasing to God, a chaste life according to law. The observance of all these obligations will, nevertheless, profit you nothing if you neglect the other commandments, for, as it is written,

<sup>4</sup> According to the letter of Sido, printed by Schmeidler in his edition of Helmold, pp. 236-37, this concession had been made the Holzatians by Archbishop Liemar of Hamburg-Bremen (1072-1101).

"whosoever shall . . . offend in one point, he is guilty of all." There is a precept of God: Thou shalt set aside tithes of all thy fruits for me, that it may be well with thee and thou mayest live a long time.<sup>6</sup> To this command the patriarchs gave ear; to wit, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, and all who through faith have been made sons of Abraham, by which they have attained praise and eternal reward. The apostles, also, and apostolic men have from the mouth of God enjoined the selfsame precept, and have transmitted to posterity the obligation of its observance under the ban of anathema. Therefore, since it is clear beyond the shadow of a doubt that this has been enjoined by Almighty God and confirmed by the authority of the holy fathers, there is incumbent on us the duty that through the grace of God we endeavor to supply in you what is lacking for your salvation. We therefore admonish and beseech you all in the Lord that with willing hearts, as becomes children of obedience, you acquiesce with me, to whom has been committed a paternal solicitude for you, and that you render the tithes which God has instituted and apostolic authority under ban confirmed for the propagation of the worship of God and for the furtherance of the care of the Church's poor, in order that by withholding from God what is due Him you may not commit your substance as well as your souls to eternal death. Fare you well.

On hearing these words the turbulent folk broke into tumult, and they declared that they would never submit their necks to this servile agreement through which nearly the whole race of Christian worshipers is subject to the oppression of the prelates. They added, futhermore, departing not much from the truth, that nearly all the tithes accrued to the luxury of laymen. The bishop consequently reported this answer to the duke. The latter ordered that if they would hold his favor all the Holzatians in the land of Wagria should pay the bishop tithes in full as they do in the lands of the Polabi and of the Abodrites, which had been more recently settled and were more exposed to the terrors of war.

To this command the Holzatians stubbornly made answer that they would never render tithes which their fathers had not rendered; that they preferred to set fire to their own houses

<sup>6</sup> Jas. 2: 10.

<sup>\*</sup> Cf. Gen. 14: 20; Deut. 22: 7.



and to leave the country rather than to submit to the yoke of such servitude. Besides, they considered murdering the bishop and the count and every sort of foreigner who paid the lawful tithes and fleeing into the country of the Danes after firing the land. However, the treaties which had been renewed between our duke and the king of the Danes stood in the way of undertaking these nefarious designs; it had been agreed that the one should not receive the refugees of the other. The Holzatians, on this account constrained by necessity, in the presence of the duke entered into an agreement with the bishop<sup>1</sup> to the effect that they acknowledged an increase of the tithes and paid six measures of wheat and eight of oats per hide, of the kind, I mean, that are commonly called *hemmete*.<sup>2</sup> And that they might not perchance be liable to additional services from succeeding bishops, they asked that this agreement be confirmed by the seal of the duke and of the bishop. When according to the custom of the chancery the notaries required a mark of gold, the untutored folk drew back, and the business remained incomplete. The early death of the bishop and the imminence of a dire storm of war also gave this transaction, which would have been of extraordinary advantage to the Church, a great setback.

### 93 (92). THE CAPTIVITY OF VRATISLAV

The sons of Niclot, Pribislav and Vratislav, not content with the land of the Kicini and Circipani, aspired to regain the land of the Abodrites which the duke had by right of war taken from them.<sup>1</sup> When their treachery was discovered, Guncelin of Schwerin, the prefect of the land of the Abodrites, made it known to the duke. And the latter again held them in wrath and indignation and came with a great army into the country of the Slavs in the winter time.<sup>2</sup> They had, however, established themselves

<sup>1</sup> Since Henry the Lion was in Constance until November, 1162, this conference must have taken place late in that year or early in the next.

<sup>2</sup> Today *Himpten*. The Latin is *modius*, which is a variable measure in the Middle Ages.

<sup>1</sup> Cf. chap. 88, *supra*.

<sup>2</sup> January-February, 1163.

in the city of Werla<sup>3</sup> and fortified the stronghold against a siege. The duke sent ahead Guncelin with his bravest men to begin the investment, lest perhaps the Slavs should slip away. He himself then followed as quickly as he could with the rest of the army. They besieged the fortress in which were Vratislav, the son of Niclot, and many nobles, besides a very great mixed multitude. With a number of horsemen Pribislav, the older, had gone into the fastnesses of the forest to strike down the unwary from ambuscades. The duke rejoiced exceedingly that the Slavs were obstinately awaiting him in the fortress and that he had an opportunity of getting them into his power. And he said to the younger men of the army, whom a foolish desire for combat incited to provoke the enemy to make sorties:

Why do you needlessly go up to the gates of the stronghold and endanger yourselves? Conflicts of this kind are vain and ruinous. Nay, rather stay in your tents where you cannot be struck by the shafts of the enemy and attend to the siege, that no one escape. For by the grace of God we shall endeavor to get possession of the stronghold without disorder and without bloodshed.

He at once ordered that timbers be brought from the thick woods and fashioned into engines of war such as he had seen made at Crema and Milan. He made most effective machines, one of timbers joined together for battering through walls; another, which was higher and built like a tower, he raised above the fortress to direct shafts into it and to drive off those who were standing on its ramparts. From the day on which this device was erected no one of the Slavs dared to put up his head or to appear on the ramparts. At that same time Vratislav was severely wounded by an arrow. One day, however, word was brought to the duke that Pribislav had appeared not far from the camp with a troop of horsemen. To capture him the duke sent Count Adolph with a picked body of young men who, after searching the swamps and woods the whole day, found no one because they had been deceived by their guide who favored the enemy more

<sup>3</sup> Cf. *Ann. Palid.*, an. 1163.

than our own men. Now the duke had commanded the foragers not to go out of the camp in any direction on that day lest they chance to fall into the hands of the enemy. But certain Holzatians, stiff-necked as they are, did not heed the order but went out to forage, and Pribislav, coming up and rushing upon these incautious persons, slew upwards of a hundred men. The rest escaped back to the camp. Highly enraged at this, the duke pushed the siege more vigorously. And now the bulwarks of the fortress began to rock, threatening to fall down and break to pieces from being undermined. Vratislav gave up all hope of success and, after receiving a safe-conduct, came into the camp to Count Adolph in order to secure his counsel. The count answered him:

The consultation of a physician is tardy indeed when the sick man is despaired of. The dangers that threaten now ought to have been foreseen. Who, I pray, advised you to incur the hazards of a siege? It was a piece of great folly to put your foot in the stocks in which there is no turning and no way of getting out. Nothing now remains but surrender. What short cut to deliverance there may be, lies, as I see it, only in surrender.

And Vratislav said: "Put in a word for us with the duke that we may be granted a surrender without danger to our lives and harm to our limbs."

The count then went to the duke and, addressing those on whom the decision depended, explained the matter to them. After they had acquainted themselves with the prince's will, they gave assurance that any Slav who delivered himself into the power of the duke would be spared life and limb, on this condition, however, that Pribislav also lay down his arms. Under the conduct of the most illustrious count, Vratislav and all the nobles of the Slavs then left the fortress and threw themselves at the duke's feet, each one with his sword over his head,<sup>4</sup> and the duke received them and committed them to custody. The duke also commanded that whatever Danish

<sup>4</sup> According to a custom with which Henry the Lion had become familiar in Italy. Cf. Giesebrecht, *Deutsche Kaiserzeit*, V, 299.

captives there were in the fortress should receive their freedom. A very great multitude of these came forth, invoking blessings upon the most valiant duke for their deliverance. Furthermore, he caused the stronghold and the common crowd to be guarded, and he placed over them a certain veteran, Lubemar, a brother of Niclot, to rule the land, but sensibly as becomes a subject. Vratislav, the ruler of the Slavs, the duke took with him to Brunswick and bound him with fetters of iron. The others he distributed among the prisons until they paid the uttermost farthing. By these deeds he so abased the power of the Slavs that they recognized the "lion, which is strongest among beasts, and turneth not away for any."<sup>6</sup> Pribislav, who was older and subtle of genius, was desirous, however, of helping his captive brother. He began through the medium of messengers to sound the mind of the prince and to ask for the "conditions of peace."<sup>7</sup> When the duke required hostages to insure the keeping of promises, Pribislav said: "What need has my lord of requiring hostages of his servant? Does he not hold my brother and all the nobles of Slavia in custody? Let him regard them as hostages; let him do to them as he will if we break faith with respect to the promises."

While they were discussing these matters through the exchange of messengers and Pribislav had better things in prospect, some little time passed without war and there was peace in Slavia from the month of March until the Kalends of February of the following year.<sup>7</sup> And all the duke's strongholds—namely, Malchow, Cuscin, Schwerin, Ilow, and Mecklenburg—were untouched.

## 94 (93) THE DEDICATION OF NEUMUENSTER

That same year the lord Gerold, bishop of the church of Lübeck, fell ill after the celebration of the feast of Easter<sup>1</sup> and lay on his sick bed up to the Kalends of July. He prayed God

<sup>6</sup> Prov. 30: 30.

<sup>7</sup> Luke 14: 32.

<sup>1</sup> February 1, 1164.

<sup>1</sup> March 24, 1163.

to prolong his life until he could dedicate the oratory at Lübeck, and the clergy which had recently been assembled should be on a firm basis. Without delay the help of heaven was extended a little. He went, therefore, to the duke, who then happened to have come to Stade to meet the archbishop, and conferred with him about the favorable condition of the church at Lübeck. Delighted with his report, the duke bade him return as quickly as possible to Lübeck in order to make ready whatever was requisite for the dedication. The duke also asked the archbishop to join him in performing the office. Acquiescing in this request, the archbishop undertook the journey into the land of Wagria and on the way dedicated the church at Faldera which Vicelin of saintly memory, bishop of Oldenburg, is known to have founded and administered.<sup>2</sup> The archbishop did much good for the provost and brethren dwelling there and ordered that in the future that place be called Neumünster. It had before been called Faldera or Wippenthorp.<sup>3</sup> The provost of that place was Hermann, who at one time had also endured many hardships at Lübeck when the barbarians stormed that city,<sup>4</sup> and who had been associated in the preaching of the Gospel with the lord Ludolph, provost of Segeberg, and Bruno, the priest of Oldenburg. This Hermann had thereupon succeeded in the charge of Neumünster the venerable man Eppo whose extraordinary sanctity, ever to be piously remembered by all, had received its happy consummation on the Kalends of May.<sup>5</sup> After he had officiated at the dedication of Neumünster,<sup>6</sup> as I said before, the lord archbishop went to Segeberg and there availed himself of the hospitality of Count Adolph. When he came to Lübeck, the duke and bishop received him with great pomp, and they proceeded to the work of dedication.<sup>7</sup> Each of his own heart

<sup>2</sup> In 1127. Cf. chap. 47, *supra*.

<sup>3</sup> The charter is printed in *Hamb. Urkundenbuch*, I no. 230. Cf. Hirsekorn, *Die Slavenchronik Helmolds*, pp. 55 sqq.

<sup>4</sup> In 1138. Cf. chaps. 54, 55, *supra*.

<sup>5</sup> May 1, 1163, according to Schmeidler (ed.), *Helmold*, p. 185 n. 3.

<sup>6</sup> July, 1163.

<sup>7</sup> Cf. *Ann. Palid.*, an. 1163.

willingly made offerings—Henry the duke, Gerold the bishop, and Adolph the count—and they gave estates and incomes and tithes for the support of the clergy.\* When, however, the archbishop was approached with the request that he give Neumünster to the bishop of Lübeck, he did not acquiesce. After he had carried out these ceremonies according to the rite, the archbishop returned to his own home. When he had settled his affairs in Saxony, the duke set out for Bavaria in order to quiet the restless and execute “justice for the oppressed.”†

#### 95 (94). THE PASSING OF BISHOP GEROLD

As the venerable bishop Gerold noticed in the meantime<sup>1</sup> that his ailments, from which he had for a time enjoyed respite, were again increasing, he decided to visit all the churches of his diocese without asking contributions from anyone that he might not be burdensome to any. Cherishing, also, fatherly solicitude for his children, he freely poured out wholesome admonitions, setting right the erring, giving peace to the discordant, and affording the grace of confirmation wherever it was necessary. In the name of the Lord, he also laid a prohibition on the market at Plön (which was frequented Sunday after Sunday both by Slavs and Saxons) since the Christian people attended only to the business of marketing, to the neglect of the service of the Church and the solemnities of the Mass. With determination of mind and in defiance of the sentiments of many, he destroyed this too excessive worship of mammon, admonishing under pain of anathema that no one in the future raise up its ruins. Thereafter the people came to the churches to hear the Word of God and to assist at the sacred mysteries. After he had thus gone through his entire diocese, the lord bishop came at last to Lütjenburg to console those who lived there. When he had consummated the divine mysteries, he began suddenly to be forsaken by his bodily strength as if his work were finished and, on being brought to

\*The charters of 1163 and 1164 are printed in Leverkus (ed.), *Urkundenbuch des Bistums Lübeck*, I, nos. 3-7.

†Ps. 146: 7.

<sup>1</sup> July-August, 1163.

Bosau, he lay in bed many days. Still, even to the day of his death he was never absent from the solemnities of the Mass. I confess that I do not remember having seen a man more diligent about the service of God, more attentive to the singing of the Psalms and to the matin vigils, more kind to the clergy, whom he would allow no one to offend with a word. He caused a certain lay person who had calumniated a cleric to be very severely whipped, giving others an example that "they may learn not to blaspheme."<sup>2</sup> As soon as the illness of the good pastor became known, the venerable men, Odo, dean of the church at Lübeck, and Ludolph, provost of Segeberg, came to him with brethren from each of the communities. And when, standing at the sick bed, they expressed the wish that his life be prolonged, he responded: "Why, brethren, do you ask for me what is useless? How long soever I live, death always remains. By all means let that happen now which is to come to pass some time or other. It is better to have overcome that which no one may escape." Oh, the freedom of the spirit that is not disturbed by the fear of death! In the course of the conversation, too, he referred us to a passage of the Psalm, "I was glad when they said unto me, let us go into the house of the Lord."<sup>3</sup> When we asked what distress he suffered, he declared that he felt no severe pains, but that he was much oppressed by a lack of strength alone. Now when the brethren saw that his end was close at hand, they tendered him the office of the holy unction. Fortified thus by the salutary sacrament, when the shades of night were dispelled and day was breaking, he put aside the corruptible burden of the flesh.<sup>4</sup> His body was brought to Lübeck by the clergy and the citizens and given honorable sepulture in the middle of the basilica which he himself had founded. And the see of Lübeck was vacant until the Kalends of February because the duke was away and they awaited his decision.

<sup>2</sup> I Tim. 1: 20.

<sup>3</sup> Ps. 122: 1.

<sup>4</sup> August 13, 1163.

THE CHRONICLE OF THE SLAVS  
WRITTEN BY THE VENERABLE  
PRIEST HELMOLD

THE SECOND BOOK



[HERE BEGINS THE SECOND BOOK]

96<sup>1</sup>. THE PREFACE OF THE FOLLOWING WORK

Among writers of history there are few to be found who present what has happened with absolute fidelity of description. To be sure, the different inclinations of men, springing very often from a corrupted source, can be promptly discerned on the face of the narrative itself, inasmuch as undue love or hatred, like an excess of humor welling up in the heart of a man, deflects the course of the narrative, turning it from the way of truth to the right or to the left. Many, striving for the favor of men, have cloaked themselves with a certain fictitious appearance of friendship and, because of their excessive desire for honor or for some other gain, have voiced things pleasing to men, imputing worthy deeds to the unworthy, giving praise to those to whom no praise is due, invoking a blessing on those who deserve no blessing. Others, on the contrary, urged on by hatred, have refrained too little from condemnation, seeking opportunities for calumnies and inveighing with too caustic a tongue against those whom they could not reach with the hand. They are the kind, surely, who put light for darkness and call night day. Now and then there have not been lacking among writers those who, because they might lose their property and suffer bodily harm, feared to publish the godlessness of princes. Now it is more pardonable to have kept silence about the truth through pusillanimity or stress of spirit than to have embellished a lie in the hope of empty gain. Therefore, in portraying the deeds of men, as in chiseling out the most subtle carving, there ought always to be a sincere concern that one be not led from the way

<sup>1</sup>In all the codices, except that of Lübeck (2), the chapters of this book are numbered continuously with Book I, including this preface.

of truth by favor, by hatred, or by fear. Because, indeed, the directing of the rudder of speech (so to speak) in a manner that will avoid collision with these rock-like impediments, calls for much experience, nay, even for the greatest skill, I must the more earnestly entreat divine goodness that, having through unexpected enterprise rather than through rashness guided the ship of my story out upon the deep, I may with that assistance and the direction of favorable winds merit bringing it to the shore of a proper ending. Otherwise, I shall easily be embarrassed by the fear of men because of the captiousness of factions that are growing worse and because of the depraved conduct of princes. It is, however, a source of great consolation to all who strive for the truth that, even if the truth sometimes does beget hatred in the impious, nevertheless, remaining unshaken in itself, it does not offend; as when light is unpleasant to the eyes of a sick man, it is plain that the fault is not in the light, but in the ill condition of the eyes. And, again, whoever contemplates in a mirror the countenance he was born with will not attribute to the mirror, but to his own self, what appears depraved or distorted about himself. The following little work I [dedicate], therefore, as I did the preceding one, to your favor, venerable lords and brethren,<sup>2</sup> in the hope of rendering honor to men of the present day and of contributing profit through the knowledge of facts to the men of the future. And I also hope that I shall not be without some little gain from the prayers of the great men who may read this little book. I beseech them not to deny my request for the favor of their prayers.

97 (1)<sup>1</sup>. BISHOP CONRAD

When he had arranged his affairs in Bavaria, Henry the Lion, distinguished by a dual dukeship, returned to Saxony and, having summoned the clergy of Lübeck, gave them as bishop the lord Conrad, abbot of Riddagshausen, a blood brother

<sup>1</sup> Of Lübeck.

<sup>2</sup> The number in parentheses refers to the order of chapters in the second book.

of the lord bishop Gerold.<sup>2</sup> Although this selection was contrary to the wishes of Archbishop Hartwig and of nearly all the clergy of Lübeck, the duke's will, which it was dangerous to withstand, prevailed. Bishop Conrad, who was consecrated by Archbishop Hartwig in the city of Stade, was distinguished for his knowledge of letters, eloquence, affability, and generosity, besides many other gifts with which a person of position is properly endowed. But a certain mad rashness, I shall call it, marred the man's beautiful outward character, a changeableness of mind and readiness of words which never stuck to the point but led to his contradicting himself, doing nothing advisedly, breaking his promises, loving strangers, criticizing his own. He first mistreated with great harshness the clergy whom he found in the undeveloped church, from the first who were in the church at Lübeck even unto the last who dwelt in the country. He declared that all the property of the priests was his own, regarding them not as his brethren but as his serfs. When he began proceedings against one of the brethren, he did not observe the lawful summons, nor the fitness of the time or place, nor the judgment of the chapter, but at his own pleasure either suspended from office or turned out of the church those whom he desired to oppress. On being admonished by the duke, he acted not more mildly, but turned from the duke and allied himself with the archbishop to the end that through combined forces they might the more easily overcome every one who resisted.

About the time he was promoted to the highest priestly rank, while he was still staying with the archbishop in the stronghold of Harburg, which is on the banks of the Elbe, there arose in the month of February—that is, on the fourteenth day before the Kalends of March<sup>3</sup>—a very great windstorm, a hurricane with flashes of lightning and crashes of thunder that here and there either set fire to or overturned many buildings. Moreover, such

<sup>2</sup> February, 1164. Cf. chap. 80, *supra*.

<sup>3</sup> February 17, 1164. Cf. *Ann. Palid.*, an. 1164; *Chron. regia. Colon.*, an. 1164; *Ann. Egmund.*, an. 1162.

an overflow of the sea took place as had not been heard of from the earliest times, an overflow which involved the whole coast land of Frisia, Hadeln,<sup>4</sup> and all the lowlands of the Elbe and Weser and all the rivers which descend into the ocean. Many thousands of men and beasts without number were drowned. How many rich persons, how many mighty ones, sat down at night and reveled in luxuries entirely without fear of evil; but sudden destruction came on and overthrew them in the midst of the sea.<sup>5</sup>

98 (2). [THE MASSACRE OF THE FLEMINGS]<sup>1</sup>

The same day<sup>2</sup> that the ocean coastlands were overwhelmed by this terrible calamity there occurred a great massacre in Mecklenburg, the city of the Slavs. Vratislav, the younger son of Niclot, who was held in chains at Brunswick, through messengers upbraided his brother Pribislav, as the report goes, saying:

Behold, I am held, locked in everlasting chains, and you act indifferently. Watch and endeavor, act manfully and extort by arms what you cannot obtain by peace. Do you not remember that when our father Niclot was held in custody at Lüneburg,<sup>3</sup> he could be ransomed neither by prayer nor with money? However, after we with valorous instinct seized our arms and set fire to and demolished the strongholds, was he not released?

On hearing these words, Pribislav secretly collected an army and came unexpectedly to Mecklenburg. Henry of Scathen, prefect of the castle, happened to be away at the time and the people who were in the castle were without a leader. Pribislav, therefore, went up and said to the men who were in the fortress: Great violence, O men, has been done both me and my people who have been expelled from the land of our nativity and dispossessed of the

<sup>4</sup> Along the North Sea between the mouths of the Weser and Elbe.

<sup>5</sup> Cf. Exod. 14: 27; Prov. 1: 33.

<sup>1</sup> The title is supplied by Schorkel.

<sup>2</sup> In chapter 93 Helmold states there was peace in Slavia until the Kalends, the first of February. The renewal of hostilities here takes place February 17, the day of the great storm.

<sup>3</sup> Cf. chap. 87 n. 2, *supra*.

inheritance of our fathers. You also have increased this wrong, who have invaded our confines and possessed the strongholds and villages which ought to be ours by hereditary succession. We set before you, therefore, the choice of life or death. If you are willing to throw the fortress open to us and to return the land which belongs to us, we shall lead you out in peace, with your wives and children and all your household goods. If any one of the Slavs takes anything that belongs to you, I shall restore it twofold. If, however, you are unwilling to go out, nay, if you rather obstinately choose to defend this stronghold, I swear to you that, if God favor us with victory, I shall kill you all with the edge of the sword.

In answer to these words the Flemings began to throw spears and to inflict wounds. The host of the Slavs, stronger in men and arms, thereupon broke into the fortress with a fierce attack and slew every male in it; and they left of the foreign people not one. They set fire to the fortress and led into captivity the wives and little ones of the Flemings.\*

After this the Slavs turned their faces toward the fortress Ilow to destroy it. But Guncelin, the duke's vassal and prefect of the country of the Abodrites, on hearing through scouts that the Slavs had issued forth, went forward with a few knights to Ilow to protect the fort. Now when he had destroyed Mecklenburg, Pribislav went with the bravest fighters in advance of his army to start the siege, that no one might chance to escape. And when Guncelin heard of this he said to his men: "Let us go quickly and fight with him before the rest of his army comes. For they are fatigued from the battle and the slaughter which they perpetrated today." But the men closely associated with Guncelin answered: "It is not prudent of us to go out, for as soon as we have left, the Slavs who are within this stronghold and seem to stand with us will close its gates behind us, and we shall be shut out and the stronghold will fall into the hands of the Slavs."

This advice was displeasing in the eyes of both Guncelin and

\*The *Annales Palidenses*, an. 1164, which refer to this massacre as occurring on the day of the great storm, do not mention the burning of the city.

his men. Calling together, then, all the Germans who were in the stronghold, within hearing of the Slavs who were in the fastness and about whom there was fear of treachery, he said to them:

I have been told that the Slavs who are with us within the portals of this stronghold have sworn to Pribislav to betray both us and the fortress. Hear ye, therefore, O men, compatriots, who are destined for death and extermination. The moment you notice perfidy, throw yourselves against the gates and hurl fire upon the houses of the city and burn those traitors with their wives and children. Let them die along with us, let not one of them survive, that they may not glory over our destruction.

On hearing these words the Slavs were terrified and they did not dare to carry out the plan they had devised. Now when evening came, the entire army of the Slavs arrived before the fortress of Ilow, and Pribislav addressed the Slavs who were in it:

You all know what great calamities and what oppression have come upon our people through the violent might which the duke has exerted against us. He has taken from us the inheritance of our fathers and settled foreigners in all its bounds—Flemings and Hollanders, Saxons and Westphalians, and diverse folk. This wrong my father avenged even to the point of death. My brother, also, for this very reason is in confinement, bound by eternal chains, and no one save me is left who thinks of the good of our nation or wishes to raise up its ruins. Again pluck up your courage, therefore, O men who are the remnants of the Slavic race, resume your daring spirit, and deliver to me this stronghold and the men who have taken it without right, that I may take vengeance upon them as I took vengeance upon those who had seized Mecklenburg.

And he reminded them of their promise. But, overwhelmed by fear, they denied him. Then the Slavs withdrew some distance from the fortress because night was coming on and they had to pitch camp. When, however, the Slavs noticed that Guncelin and those with him were brave and warlike men and that the fortress could not be taken without very much bloodshed, they withdrew from the siege at break of day<sup>5</sup> and returned to their

<sup>5</sup> February 18.

homes. Guncelin, therefore, like a brand plucked out of the fire, after leaving Ilow and stationing there a guard of Slavs, went over to Schwerin and the inhabitants of the stronghold were glad over his unexpected coming. They had heard the day before that he had been slain, he and his men together.

## 99 (3). BISHOP BERN

On the fifth day<sup>1</sup> after the destruction of Mecklenburg the venerable bishop Bern went with a few of the clergy of Schwerin to bury the slain, wearing about his neck the sacerdotal vestments in which it is customary to offer the holy sacrifice. On an altar erected in the midst of the slain he offered for them the saving victim to the Lord God with sorrow and dread. While he was going through with the sacrifice, Slavs rose up from ambush to slay the bishop and those who were with him. But one Reichard of Salzwedel was quickly sent by God and came up with knights. On hearing that Guncelin was being besieged in Ilow, he had proceeded to his assistance and on his way happened to come to Mecklenburg at the very time the bishop and his attendants were at the point of death. The Slavs, terrified by his arrival, fled, and the rescued bishop finished the work of piety and buried upward of seventy bodies of the slain. After that he returned to Schwerin.

Not a long time after Pribislav collected another band of Slavs and came to Malchow and Cuscin. Addressing the inhabitants of the city, he said:

I know, indeed, that you are brave men and noble and obedient to the command of the great duke, your lord. I would, therefore, advise you of what is profitable. Hand over to me the fortress which was once my father's and should now be mine according to hereditary succession, and I will have you safely conducted to the banks of the Elbe. Should anyone lay violent hand on any of the things that belong to you, I will make twofold restitution. But if you deem these very favorable terms idle, I shall be obliged again to try my fortune and to battle with you.

<sup>1</sup> February 22, 1164.

Remember what happened to the inhabitants of Mecklenburg who spurned the conditions of peace and provoked me to their destruction.

As the knights who then were the garrison of the stronghold saw that there was no chance in battle, because the enemy were many and the auxiliaries but few, they asked for safe conduct beyond the boundaries of Slavia and Pribislav took the fort.

100 (4). THE HANGING OF VRATISLAV

When Duke Henry the Lion heard how critical was the situation in Slavia, he was saddened in spirit, but in the meantime dispatched the flower of his knights to the defense of Schwerin. And he ordered Count Adolph and the elders of Holzatia to proceed to Ilow and protect the fortress. After this he assembled a great army, summoned his cousin Albert, the margrave of eastern Slavia, and all the bravest men in the whole of Saxony to his aid in order to pay back the Slavs the evil which they had done. He also brought up Waldemar, the king of the Danes, with a naval force to harass the Slavs by land and by sea.<sup>1</sup> Count Adolph met the duke near Malchow with all the Nordalbingian people. Now when the duke crossed the Elbe and reached the confines of the Slavs, he caused Vratislav, the prince of the Slavs, to be put to death by hanging near the stronghold Malchow for the reason that his brother, Pribislav, had undone him and had broken the sworn promises of peace. And the duke instructed Count Adolph by messenger:

Rise up with the Holzatians and Sturmarians and with all the people that are with you and go before the duke as far as the place called Verchen.<sup>2</sup> Guncelin, the prefect of the land of the Abodrites, Reinhold, count of the Ditmarsh, and Christian, count of Oldenburg which is in Amerland and belongs to the land of the Frisians, will do the same: they will all go with you in advance with the number of armed men that belongs to them.

Then Count Adolph proceeded with the other nobles who had been dispatched with him according to the command of the duke

<sup>1</sup> Cf. Saxo Grammaticus, *MGH. SS. XXIX*, 115 299.

<sup>2</sup> Near Demmin on the Peene River where it flows out of the Kummerower See.



and they came to the place called Verchen which is about two thousand paces distant from Demmin. There they pitched camp. The duke and the other princes delayed in the place called Malchow with the intention of following after a few days with the rest of the army and the pack horses bearing provisions that would be abundantly sufficient for the army. The whole army of the Slavs, however, established itself in the stronghold of Demmin. Their princes were Kazamir and Buggeslav,<sup>2</sup> dukes of the Pomeranians, and with them was Pribislav, the author of the rebellion. They sent messengers to the count, desiring through him to obtain terms of peace and offering three thousand marks. Again they sent other messengers through whom they promised two thousand. This proposal displeased Count Adolph and he said to his men: "How does it seem to you, wise men? Those who yesterday promised three thousand marks now offer two thousand. That is not the speech of one that talks peace, but of one bringing war."

Now the Slavs sent scouts into the camp during the night to find out how the army stood. The Slavs of Oldenburg were with Count Adolph, but they were treacherous, for through scouts they informed the enemy of whatever went on in the army. Marchrad, the elder of the land of the Holzatians, and others who understood the saying that was hid, therefore said to Count Adolph: "We have learned from thoroughly reliable reports that our enemies are making themselves ready for battle. Our men, however, behave very sluggishly; neither in the night watches nor in standing guard do they show due diligence. Hold the people to caution because the duke has confidence in you." But the count and the other nobles did not take notice and said: "Peace and safety,<sup>3</sup> for the valor of the Slavs is utterly dead." The army, then, was off its guard. However, as the duke delayed the army's provisions gave out. Servants were chosen to go to the duke's army for the purpose of bringing on provisions. When

<sup>2</sup> Sons of Vratislav of Pomerania. Cf. chap. 40, *supra*.

<sup>3</sup> Cf. I Thess. 5: 2.

at daybreak they set out on their journey,<sup>5</sup> behold, on the slope of a hill there appeared troops of Slavs with an innumerable folk, both horsemen and infantry. On seeing them the servants retraced their steps and with a strong cry awakened the sleeping army. Otherwise, all would have embraced death in their sleep. Then the illustrious and knightly men, Adolph and Reinhold, with the very few Holzatians and Ditmarshians who happened to have been aroused from sleep and had run out more quickly, engaged the enemy at the foot of the hill, destroyed the first line of the Slavs and smote them until they came deep into the marsh.<sup>6</sup> Close behind the first line came the second line of the Slavs and overwhelmed the Saxons like a mountain. In the encounter Count Adolph and Count Reinhold and the bravest fell. The Slavs took possession of the Saxon camp, and they stripped it of booty.

Now Guncelin and Christian, and with them more than three hundred knights, remained massed at one side of the battlefield, not knowing what to do. For it was a fearful thing to come into conflict with so numerous an enemy after all their comrades had either been slain or put to flight. It so happened, then, that a detachment of Slavs came to a tent in which there were many armor-bearers and several horses. The armor-bearers, valiantly withstanding the assault of the Slavs, cried to their lords who stood together nearby: "Why do you stand there, most valiant knights? Why do you not help your servants? You surely are acting most disgracefully." Aroused by the clamor of their servants, they leaped upon the enemy, and fighting as if in a blind fury they freed their aides. The knights plunged, then, most courageously upon the camp. It is hard to say how many blows they dealt and what a slaughter of men they made before they dispersed those victorious lines of Slavs and recovered the camp which had been lost. Finally, God mingled a perverse spirit with the Slavs<sup>7</sup> and they fell at the hands of the most

<sup>5</sup> July 6, 1164. Cf. Schmeidler (ed.), *Helmold*, p. 197 n. 1.

<sup>6</sup> The Kummerower See.

<sup>7</sup> Cf. Isa. 19: 14.

excellent knights. The Saxons who were in hiding places heard and came out. With renewed courage they rushed valiantly upon the enemy and smote them with very great destruction. That field was covered with heaps of dead.<sup>8</sup> The duke also came quickly<sup>9</sup> to the aid of his men. When he saw the slaughter which had been wrought among his people and that Count Adolph and the bravest were dead, he gave way to many tears. But the abundant victory and the exceeding great slaughter of Slavs, numbering up to twenty-five hundred, mitigated his grief. The duke then ordered the body of Count Adolph to be dismembered, cooked, and preserved according to the work of the apothecary, that it might be transported and buried in the tomb of his fathers. And thus was fulfilled the prophecy which he sang the day before he suffered,<sup>10</sup> repeating very frequently the verse, "Thou hast proved mine heart; thou hast visited me in the night; thou hast tried me, and shalt find nothing."<sup>11</sup>

The Slavs who had escaped the edge of the sword came to Demmin and, after setting fire to that most mighty fortress, retreated into the interior of the Pomeranian country, fleeing from the face of the duke. On the following day<sup>12</sup> the duke came with his whole army to Demmin and found the stronghold burnt. He quartered there part of his army to pull down the wall and level it with the ground and to act as a guard for the wounded who were in need of care. He himself went with the rest of the army to meet King Waldemar. With their united forces they set out to devastate the length and breadth of the land of the Pomeranians and they came to a place which is called Stolpe.<sup>13</sup> There Kazamir and Buggeslav had long before founded an abbey in memory of their father, Vratislav, who had been

<sup>8</sup> *Vide* the accounts of this battle in *Ann. Palid.*, an. 1164; *Ann. Egmond.*, an. 1164; *Saxo Grammaticus, MGH. SS. XXIX.*, 115-16; *Alb. Sted.*, an. 1164.

<sup>9</sup> The same day, presumably, but *vide infra*, "On the following day the duke came with his whole army. . . ."

<sup>10</sup> Cf. canon of the Mass.

<sup>11</sup> Ps. 17: 3.

<sup>12</sup> July 7?

<sup>13</sup> On the Peene River.

killed<sup>14</sup> and was buried in that place. He was the first of the dukes of the Pomeranians to be converted to the faith at the hands of the most saintly Otto, bishop of Bamberg. He founded the bishopric of Usedom and admitted the worship of the Christian religion into the land of the Pomeranians.<sup>15</sup> Thither, therefore, came the army of the duke; "neither was there any that resisted him."<sup>16</sup> For the Slavs, going always farther away, fled from the duke's face and did not dare to stop anywhere out of dread of his countenance.

101 (5). THE BURIAL OF COUNT ADOLPH

In those days<sup>1</sup> there came into the land of the Slavs a messenger who said to the duke: "Behold, there has come to Brunswick a legate of the king of Greece<sup>2</sup> with a great retinue to speak with you." To give him audience the duke went out of Slavia, leaving the army and giving up the advantages of a successful expedition. Otherwise, because of the recent victory and the course of favorable fortune he would have consumed completely the whole strength of the Slavs and would have dealt with the land of the Pomeranians as he had dealt with that of the Abodrites. All the land of the Abodrites and the neighboring regions which belong to the realm of the Abodrites had been wholly reduced to a solitude through unremitting warfare, particularly through this last war, by the favor of God, namely, and the strength He has always imparted to the right hand of the most pious duke. If there were any last remnants of Slavs remaining, they were on account of the want of grain and the desolation of the fields so reduced by hunger that they had to flee together to the Pomeranians and to the Danes who, showing them no mercy, sold them to the Poles, Sorbs, and Bohemians.

After leaving Slavia the duke dismissed the army, every one

<sup>14</sup> About 1134. Cf. Bernhardt, *Konrad III*, pp. 577, 715. Hauck (*Kirchengeschichte Deutschlands*, IV, 610 and n. 2) has shown that the first church built at Stolpe by the bishop of Wollin, Adalbert (consecrated 1140?), and dedicated to Vratislav could not have been founded before 1155.

<sup>15</sup> Cf. chap. 40, *supra*.

<sup>16</sup> I Macc. 14: 7.

<sup>1</sup> July, 1164.

<sup>2</sup> Manuel I Comnenus (1143-80).

to his own place. The body of Count Adolph was brought to Minden and there interred with reverent devotion. His widow Matilda, with her very young son,<sup>3</sup> now held the county. But the face of that land was changed because justice and the security of the churches appeared to be utterly weakened when their good patron was taken away. While he lived nothing seemed hard, nothing troublesome, to the clergy. He was so great in faith, in goodness, in prudence, and in counsel that he seemed to be endowed with all the virtues. As one of the warriors of the Lord, and certainly not the least in the performance of his lot, he was found useful, extirpating the superstitions of idolatry and furthering the work of the new plantation that it should fructify unto salvation. When at last he had finished the course of a good life, he attained the victor's palm and, bearing the standard in the camp of the Lord, stood even unto death for the defense of his fatherland and for fidelity toward the princes. On being advised to save his life through flight, he vehemently spurned the idea. Fighting with his hands but praying unto God with his voice, he willingly met death for the love of virtue. Stimulated by his example, Guncelin and Bernhard,<sup>4</sup> illustrious men and good vassals of the excellent duke, of whom the one governed Schwerin, the other, Ratzeburg, also worked nobly. In the portion of their lot they fought the battles of the Lord that the worship of the house of our God might be furthered among an unbelieving and idolatrous folk.

## 102 (6). THE RESTORATION OF DEMMIN

Pribislav, the author of the rebellion, became an exile from his paternal inheritance and sojourned with the dukes of the Pomeranians, Kazamir and Buggeslav, and they began to rebuild Demmin. Sallying thence frequently, Pribislav harassed through ambuscades the confines of Schwerin and Ratzeburg and took many captives, both men and beasts. Guncelin and Bernhard studied his expedients and fought him. They likewise used

<sup>3</sup> Adolph III.

<sup>4</sup> Cf. chap. 92 n. 3, *supra*.

ambuscades and always proved themselves the better men in the very frequent encounters that took place, until Pribislav, after losing his best men and horses, could no longer undertake anything. Kazamir and Buggeslav then said to him:

If it pleases you to dwell with us and to enjoy our hospitality, see that you displease not the eyes of the duke's men; otherwise we shall drive you from our territories. For you have already led us where we sustained very great misfortune and lost excellent men and strongholds. Not content with this, would you again bring on us the prince's wrath?

And Pribislav was restrained from his madness. The power of the Slavs was thus humbled and no one durst move for fear of the duke.

The duke was at peace with Waldemar, the king of the Danes, and they held a conference on the Eider or at Lübeck for the advantage of both realms.<sup>1</sup> The king gave the duke much money because his territories had been secured through him from the depredations of the Slavs. All the islands of the sea that belonged to the kingdom of the Danes began to be inhabited because piracy had fallen off, and the ships of the plunderers were broken up. The king and the duke entered into a compact that they would jointly divide the tribute of whatever nations they subjugated by land and sea.

The duke's power now increased beyond that of all who were before him and he became a prince of the princes of the earth. He trod upon the necks of rebels and broke up their strongholds; he extirpated the men who had revolted and made peace in the land; he built very strong fortresses and possessed an exceedingly great heritage. For besides the inheritance from his great progenitors, the Caesar Lothar and his wife Richenza, and from the many dukes of Bavaria and Saxony, there passed to him also the possessions of many nobles, like those of Hermann of Winzenburg,<sup>2</sup> Siegfried of Hamburg,<sup>3</sup> Otto of

<sup>1</sup> Probably in 1166. Saxo Grammaticus, *MGH. SS. XXIX*, 121, has the conference take place in 1167, but this date is very questionable. For the critical literature *vide* Schmeidler (ed.), *Helmold*, p. 201 n. 5.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. chap. 73 n. 1, *supra*.

<sup>3</sup> Count of Bomeneburg and Homburg (not Hamburg). Cf. von Uslar-Gleichen. *Geschichte der Grafen von Winzenburg*, pp. 138 *sqq.*; Algermissen, "Winzenburg. Ein

Asseburg<sup>4</sup> and others whose names have escaped me. What shall I say of the most extensive power of the archbishop Hartwig, who was descended from the ancient stock of Udo?<sup>5</sup> In his lifetime the bishop obtained, partly by hereditary right, partly by benefices, that noble stronghold Stade, with all its appurtenances, with the county on both banks<sup>6</sup> and the county of Ditmarsh.<sup>7</sup> He extended his sway into Frisia and sent an army against them, and they gave him what he asked in ransom of themselves.

103 (7). THE PRINCES' ENVY OF THE  
DUKE'S GLORY

But because glory begets envy, and because nothing in the affairs of men is permanent, all the princes of Saxony were jealous of the great glory of the man. For the latter, supplied with immense wealth, illustrious with victories and sublime in his glory through the twofold principate of Bavaria and Saxony, seemed unbearable to all in Saxony, princes as well as nobles. But fear of the Caesar restrained the hands of the princes, that they did not carry into effect the plans they were conceiving. However, after the Caesar had made preparations for his fourth expedition into Italy<sup>1</sup> and conditions offered opportunity, the old conspiracy at once came out into the open<sup>2</sup> and a strong league of all was formed against one.<sup>3</sup> First among these conspirators were Wichmann, archbishop of Magdeburg,<sup>4</sup> and Hermann,

Ueberblick über die Geschichte der Burg und des Ortes," *Alt-Hildesheim*, Heft 4 (Sept. 1922), 33-37.

<sup>4</sup>Asseburg, a castle in the duchy of Brunswick. Cf. von Uslar-Gleichen, *op. cit.*, pp. 248-299; *Mecklenb. Urkundenbuch*, I, no. 92.

<sup>5</sup>Udo II, count of Stade, is mentioned in chap. 27, *supra*. Cf. Dehio, *Hartwich von Stade*, pp. 93-104.

<sup>6</sup>On both banks of the Elbe.

<sup>7</sup>In 1145. Cf. Dehio, *Geschichte des Erzbistums Hamburg-Bremen*, II, 55.

<sup>1</sup>October, 1166.

<sup>2</sup>Toward the end of the year 1166. Cf. *Ann. Reichersperg.*, an. 1166.

<sup>3</sup>Helmold is the best authority for what follows. Cf. also *Ann. Palid.*, an. 1166; *Alb. Stad.*, ann. 1166-68; *Chron. regia Colon.*, an. 1167; *Chron. Montis Sereni*, an. 1166; *Cambridge Medieval History*, V, 401-2.

<sup>4</sup>Wichmann was bishop of Zeitz-Naumburg, 1149-54, archbishop of Magdeburg, 1152-92.

bishop of Hildesheim.<sup>5</sup> After them were these princes: Ludwig, landgrave of Thuringia; Albert, margrave of Salzwedel, and his sons;<sup>6</sup> Otto, margrave of Camburg,<sup>7</sup> and his brothers; and Adalbert, count palatine of Sommerschenburg.<sup>8</sup> These nobles aided them: Otto of Asseburg, Widukind of Dasenburg,<sup>9</sup> and Christian of Oldenburg, which is in Amerland.<sup>10</sup> Exceeding all these in his might, Rainald, archbishop of Köln and chancellor of the Empire,<sup>11</sup> plotted against the duke. Although absent and occupied in Italy, he was wholly intent upon the plan to overthrow the duke. Then the princes who were in eastern Saxony with Ludwig, the prince of the Thuringians, besieged the fortress of the duke which is called Aldeslef<sup>12</sup> and they "made many engines of war against it."<sup>13</sup> Christian, the count of Amerland, also collected an army of Frisians. He occupied Bremen and all its territories and caused great commotion in the western parts.<sup>14</sup>

When, therefore, the duke saw that wars were arising on every side, he began to fortify his cities and castles and to station garrisons of knights in strategic places. At that time the widow of Count Adolph with her son, who was still very young, administered the county comprising Holzatia, Sturmaria, and Wagria. On account of the surging storms of the wars, however, the duke gave the boy as guardian to take charge of his military affairs, Count Henry, born in Thuringia,<sup>15</sup> the boy's uncle, a man impatient of inactivity and wholly devoted to arms. Also, after advising with his trustworthy followers, the duke admitted into his favor Pribislav, the prince of the Slavs, whom, as was said

<sup>5</sup> 1161-70.

<sup>6</sup> The sons of Albert the Bear were Bernhard of Anhalt, Otto of Brandenburg, and Siegfried.

<sup>7</sup> Of Meissen, but named after Camburg on the Saale River.

<sup>8</sup> In western Brandenburg, near Neuhaldensleben and Magdeburg.

<sup>9</sup> Near the Diemel River. Cf. chap. 107, *infra*.

<sup>10</sup> Cf. chap. 100, *supra*.

<sup>11</sup> Cf. chap. 87 n. 7, *supra*.

<sup>12</sup> Neuhaldensleben. In 1167.

<sup>13</sup> I Macc. 11: 20.

<sup>14</sup> Cf. Alb. Stad., *an.* 1167.

<sup>15</sup> Apparently the Henry who signed documents as "comes de Suarzburg" or "Suartzburch," or similarly. Leverkus (ed.), *Urkundenbuch des Bistums Lübeck*, I, nos. 4, 6 199. The Henry mentioned in chap. 107, *infra*, and by Arnold of Lübeck, *Chron. Slav.*, ii, 6, may be this count of Schwarzburg. He is also known as Henry of Orlamünde.



before, he had after many battles expelled from the province. And he restored to Pribislav all the heritage of his father; namely, the land of the Abodrites, except Schwerin and its appurtenances.<sup>16</sup> Pribislav swore to the duke and his friends in pledge of his fidelity, not to be violated thereafter by the storms of war, that he would stand at his command and would watch the eyes of his friends, never giving them the slightest offense.

## 104 (8). THE SACK OF BREMEN

The duke then assembled a great army and entered eastern Saxony to fight with his enemies in the heart of their own country. They saw that he came with a strong force and feared to encounter him. And he "brought a great calamity upon" the enemy country and devastated it by fire and plunderings, and he came up through the land even to the walls of Magdeburg. Then<sup>2</sup> he turned his army into the western parts to put down the insurrection of Count Christian, and he came suddenly upon Bremen and took it. Count Christian thereupon fled into the recesses of the Frisian marshes, and the duke broke into Bremen and plundered it. Its citizens fled into the marshes because they had sinned against the duke and had pledged themselves to Christian. The duke put them under the ban until, through the mediation of the archbishop, they bought peace for a thousand or more marks of silver. A few days later Count Christian died,<sup>3</sup> and the evils stirred up by his rebellious plotting came to an end.

While this civil war was raging on all sides, Archbishop Hartwig, who had decided to avoid the confusion of the surging struggle, sat alone and at peace in Hamburg, intent upon the building of monasteries and upon other interests of his church. Then the archbishop of Köln and other princes charged him by letter to recall to mind all the distress with which the duke had afflicted him; that now at length the time was at hand in which

<sup>16</sup> In documents of 1171 and the years following Pribislav appears as prince of Mecklenburg or of Kessin. *Mecklenb. Urkundenbuch*, I, nos. 100, 101, 113.

<sup>1</sup> 1 Macc. 13: 32.

<sup>2</sup> After a truce.

<sup>3</sup> Cf. *Alb Stad.*, an. 1167.

he could with the aid of the princes regain his honorable position; that the city of Stade and the county of which he had been deprived were within his reach if he would support the cause of the princes. Archbishop Hartwig, therefore, although he had been taught by many experiences that the duke was always successful in his wars—also that the fidelity of princes was doubtful—and although he had often been deceived by promises of this kind, began to waver in mind. On the one hand, [indeed,] he was urged on by a desire to recover his position; on the other, he was deterred by the inconstancy of the princes, which he had often experienced. In the meantime he maintained the appearances of friendship, and peace rang in his words. Nevertheless, the archbishop began to strengthen his strongholds, Freiburg and Harburg, and he collected there weapons and provisions sufficient for months and years.

105 (9). THE EXPULSION OF BISHOP CONRAD

In those days<sup>1</sup> Conrad, the bishop of the church at Lübeck, stayed with the archbishop, and on him depended the whole of the archbishop's policy. And it came to the ear of the duke that the bishop was intent, not on "conditions of peace,"<sup>2</sup> but on destroying the duke, and that he had advised the archbishop to go over to the princes and to break off the friendship which he had maintained with the duke. Wishing to make certain of the information, the duke called the bishop to a conference at Artlenburg. But the latter avoided the wrath of the mighty one and went into Frisia, pretending that he was on a mission for the archbishop. When at length he returned, the duke summoned him a second time. In the company, therefore, of the lord archbishop and the lord Bern of Mecklenburg, he met the duke at Stade to hear his word. And the duke addressed him about those matters of which he had been informed; that is, how he had by evil words belittled his honor and given evil counsel against him. The bishop declared that he knew nothing

<sup>1</sup> 1167.

<sup>2</sup> Luke 14: 32.

about these things. After many words had passed between them, the duke, wishing to renew the broken friendship and to bind the once beloved bishop more firmly to him, began in a friendly manner to ask him for the homage that was due, which, it has been shown before,<sup>3</sup> had been by imperial donation granted to him in the provinces of the Slavs that he possessed by right of war according to the rule of war. The high-spirited man recoiled from the terms of this proposition, saying that the income of his church was slight, that in consideration of this he would never engage his freedom or submit to anyone's power. The duke in return declared expressly that he must either give up his position or yield to the proposals. As the bishop remained fixed in his decision, the duke ordered that entry into his diocese be denied him and all his episcopal revenues be taken away. After the duke's departure, therefore, the archbishop said to Conrad the bishop: "I think that it is not safe for you to remain with us because the duke's vassals are all about us. Look rather to our honor and to your safety. Go to the archbishop of Magdeburg<sup>4</sup> and the princes, that you may escape the hands of your enemies. After a few days I shall join you and follow you in your wanderings." He acted in accordance with the advice of the archbishop and went to the archbishop of Magdeburg, staying with him almost two years.<sup>5</sup> Thence he went into France and attended a council of the Cistercians and effected a reconciliation with Pope Alexander through the mediation of the bishop of Pavia,<sup>6</sup> one of Alexander's party who, because he had been ejected from his see, was staying at Clairvaux. The latter gave Bishop Conrad a mandate to go to Alexander in person, if that were possible, or to send a legate. After he had thus completed his business, Bishop Conrad returned to Magdeburg and found there Hartwig, the archbishop of Hamburg, for he had

<sup>3</sup> Cf. chap. 88, *supra*.

<sup>4</sup> Wichmann.

<sup>5</sup> For a much shorter time because Hartwig died October 11, 1168.

<sup>6</sup> This bishop cannot with certainty be identified. Cf. Schmeidler (ed.), *Helmold*, p. 206 n. 6.

also given up his post, and they stayed many days with the archbishop of Magdeburg.

However, the knights of Archbishop Hartwig, who were in the strongholds of Harburg and Freiburg, made frequent forays and started fires and looted in the possessions of the duke. The latter on this account dispatched a military force and seized Freiburg. He tore down its fortifications and leveled them to the ground, and he had all the episcopal revenues taken away, allowing none of them to remain. Those only who were in the fortress of Harburg held out until the archbishop returned, because the place was protected by abysmal swamps. The fierce tempest of rebellion, however, went on raging throughout all Saxony, as all the princes contended against the duke. Many knights were taken captive and mutilated, many fortresses and houses were destroyed and cities burned. And Goslar was taken by the princes. But the duke ordered the roads to be guarded that no one should bring grain to Goslar, and they were in great want.

106 (10). THE ENTHRONING OF POPE CALIXTUS<sup>1</sup>

In those days Emperor Frederick tarried in Italy and crushed the Lombard rebellions by the dread of his valor. He demolished many populous and fortified cities and harried Lombardy more than the kings that were before him for many days. He turned his face toward Rome in order to put to flight Alexander and to set up Calixtus; for Paschal had died after living but a short time. While, then, the Caesar was laying siege to Genoa,<sup>2</sup> which was of Alexander's party, he sent forward Rainald of Köln and Christian of Mainz<sup>3</sup> and ordered part of his army to lead the way to Rome. They came to Tusculum which is not far from Rome. When the Romans learned of their coming,<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Throughout this chapter Helmold names Calixtus in place of his predecessor, Paschal III. Paschal III died September 20, 1168. Both were anti-popes, the successors of Victor IV, Octavian, with whom began the schismatic opposition to Alexander III. Cf. chap. 9<sup>1</sup>, *supra*.

<sup>2</sup> Correctly, Ancona.

<sup>3</sup> Christian I, archbishop of Mainz (1165-83).

<sup>4</sup> Toward the end of May. The engagement described here took place May 29, 1167.

they came out with an immense army to fight for Alexander, and Rainald and the German knighthood went forth and fought them, a handful against a host. They overpowered the Romans, struck down about twelve thousand of them, and pursued the ones who fled even to the gates of the City. The earth was corrupted by the dead bodies of the slain, and the women of the Romans remained widows for many years because there were lacking men among the inhabitants of the City.<sup>5</sup> The very day<sup>6</sup> on which these deeds were done at Rome, the Caesar fought with the Genoese and obtained a victory which made him master of the city. With his army, then, he proceeded to Rome where he found Rainald and the force, which he had sent on in advance, rejoicing over its safety and the ruin of the Romans. He moved the army forward to capture Rome, stormed the cathedral of Saint Peter, because there was in it a guard of Romans, and commanded fire to be set at its portals to smoke the Romans from its towers. He took the temple and filled the church with the slain. Then he set Calixtus upon the throne and celebrated there the feast of Saint Peter in Chains.<sup>7</sup> When he turned his forces upon the people of the Lateran to destroy them, they gave him for their lives as well as for their city whatever he demanded. Required to apprehend Alexander, they were unable to do so because he had taken to flight during the night. And Frederick took the sons of the nobles as hostages, that in the future they would obey Calixtus with irrefragable fidelity.

Sudden destruction followed these fortunate deeds of the Caesar; for such a pestilence came all at once upon Rome that within a few days nearly all perished. In the month of August pestiferous fogs are said to arise in those parts. There died of

<sup>5</sup> Helmold counts, no doubt, both the number slain and the number captured. The pest that followed also claimed many. Cf. *Rahewini Gest. Frid.*, Appendix, an. 1167, in which nearly nine thousand are recorded to have fallen, nearly three thousand to have been captured. Cf. *Ottonis Morenæ . . . Historia Frederici I; Continuatio anonymi*, pp. 196-99.

<sup>6</sup> At about the same time. Ancona surrendered in the last days of May or early in June. Cf. *Ottonis Morenæ . . . Historia Frederici I; Continuatio anonymi*, p. 183.

<sup>7</sup> Frederick encamped before Rome July 24, 1167, and conflicts occupied the following days. Calixtus was enthroned two days before the feast, August 1. Cf. *ibid.*, pp. 202-5; Giesebrecht, *op. cit.*, V, 544-46.

this plague Rainald of Köln and Hermann of Verden,<sup>8</sup> who were the leaders of the council, besides the most noble young man, King Conrad's son, who had married the only daughter of our Duke Henry;<sup>9</sup> furthermore, many bishops, princes, and nobles perished at the same time. With what was left of the army the Caesar returned to Lombardy. While there he heard of the insurrection going on in Saxony and, dispatching an embassy,<sup>10</sup> he checked the rising tide of sedition by frequent truces until the time should pass and he should himself be free of his Italian expedition.

In the course of those days Henry, the duke of Bavaria and Saxony, sent to England legates who brought the daughter of the English king, with silver and gold and great treasures, and the duke took her to wife.<sup>11</sup> For he had been separated from his first wife, the lady Clementia, on the ground of consanguinity.<sup>12</sup> He had, however, a daughter by her, whom he gave in marriage to the son of King Conrad, who survived but a short time. As was said before, he was cut off by a premature death while on the Italian expedition.

#### 107 (11). THE CONCORD OF THE PRINCES WITH THE DUKE

Not a long interval of time had passed after these occurrences when the Lombards, perceiving that the pillars of the realm had fallen and that the strength of the army had failed, plotted together against the Caesar and purposed to kill him. Divining their guile, he secretly withdrew from Lombardy and returned

<sup>8</sup> Hermann, bishop of Verden (1148-67).

<sup>9</sup> Frederick IV of Rothenburg, younger son of Conrad III, enfeoffed with the duchy of Swabia by Frederick in 1152, had married in 1166 Gertrude, the only legitimate daughter Henry the Lion had prior to 1172. Gertrude later married Cnut VI of Denmark. Cf. chap. 110, *infra*.

<sup>10</sup> Christian I, archbishop of Mainz, and Berthold, duke of Zähringen. Cf. *Ann. Palid.*, an. 1167; Varrentrapp, *Erzbischof Christian I von Mainz*, p. 40 n. 1.

<sup>11</sup> Matilda, the oldest daughter of Henry II, was married to Henry the Lion, February 1, 1168, at Minden on the Weser. Cf. Schmeidler (ed.), *Helmold*, p. 209 n. 3.

<sup>12</sup> The divorce had been granted November 23, 1162, at Constance by the anti-pope Victor. Henry the Lion made amends by giving the neighboring monastery of Petershausen five pounds of silver. Giesebrecht, *op. cit.*, V, 347-48. On the nature of the relationship *vide* Wedekind, *Noten zur einigen Geschichtschreiber des deutschen Mittelalters*, I, 177.

to Germany.<sup>1</sup> He proclaimed a diet to meet at Bamberg<sup>2</sup> and, summoning all the princes of Saxony, he accused them of violating the peace and declared that the sedition in Saxony had given the Lombards occasion for defection. And so, after many delays the dissensions which existed between the princes and the duke yielded, as a result of much prudence and wisdom, to a convention of peace.<sup>3</sup> Everything turned out as the duke wished and, without any loss on his part, he was saved from being encompassed by the princes. The lord archbishop of Hamburg was recalled to his see, but was taken sick and died within a few days.<sup>4</sup> With his death was ended the long standing controversy over the county of Stade, and the duke held possession of it from that time on without any contradiction. Conrad, the bishop of Lübeck, was also through the Caesar's mediation allowed to return to his diocese, on condition, however, that he give up his former obstinacy and render the duke his just dues. After securing his return through the favor of the duke he was changed into another man, for from what he had suffered he learned to have compassion on his brethren and thereafter was readier in the observance of kindness. No less did he defend the clergy from circumvention by the princes and the mighty, and particularly at the hands of Henry, count of Thuringia,<sup>5</sup> who, fearing neither God nor man, coveted the property of the priests.

When, however, by the dispensation of God, all the turmoil of war gave way to the serene quiet of peace, Widukind of Dasenburg objected to the reconciliation which the princes had declared. Prompt in evil from his very youth, he had always perverted the calling of knighthood to rapine, but that he might

<sup>1</sup> May, 1168.

<sup>2</sup> Frederick issued several summonses to a diet which was to meet at Würzburg, May 5, May 19, and June 29, 1168. The Saxon princes disregarded the first two summonses but came at the third. At this diet the emperor allayed the Saxon discord. Cf. *Ann. Palid.*, an. 1168; Giesebrecht, *Deutsche Kaiserzeit*, V, 613-14. According to Albert of Stade (*an.* 1168) the Saxon quarrel was settled at Borneburg. The *Chronica regia Coloniensis* (*an.* 1168) indicate that the peace was made in a diet held at Frankfort on the Kalends of June.

<sup>3</sup> Apparently at Würzburg in July, 1168.

<sup>4</sup> October 11, 1168.

<sup>5</sup> Cf. chap. 103 n. 15, *supra*.

not be able to do the wrong which he designed the duke held him very strictly in leash. For once, on being captured and thrown into chains, he had pledged his word for the future to abstain from rapine and to wait in honest obedience on the duke's commands.<sup>6</sup> But when the storm of war came, he forgot his promise and raged against the duke worse than all the rest. After the others had been reduced to peace, the duke besieged this singularly fierce man in his castle of Dasenburg. Since the height of the mountain defied all the assaults of the besiegers and all the power of the machines, the duke called skilled men from Rammelsberg<sup>7</sup> who undertook the difficult and unheard-of task of boring into the base of the Dasenberg. By exploring the inner parts of the mountain they discovered the spring from which the defenders of the castle drew water. When they stopped it up, water failed the defenders, and Widukind was obliged to surrender himself and his fortress into the duke's power. The duke let the others<sup>8</sup> go, and they dispersed, every man to his own land.

108 (12). SVANTOWIT, THE IDOL OF  
THE RUGIANI

At that time<sup>1</sup> Waldemar, the king of the Danes, collected a great army and many ships to invade the land of the Rugiani in order to subjugate it to himself. Kazamir and Buggeslav, the princes of the Pomeranians, and Pribislav, the prince of the Abodrites, helped him because the duke had ordered the Slavs

<sup>6</sup> Apparently in 1157. Cf. Schmeidler (ed.), *Helmold*, p. 211 n. 1. Helmold no doubt entitles Widukind as of Dasenburg because in this insurrection that castle was the center of operations; he is more generally known as Widukind of Schwalenberg. Giesebrecht, *op. cit.*, V, 615.

<sup>7</sup> In the Harz near Goslar. Cf. Kretschmer, *Historische Geographie von Mitteleuropa*, p. 395; Boyce, *Mines of the Upper Harz* (Chicago, 1920), pp. 14-19.

<sup>8</sup> Widukind's garrison. Widukind seems later to have returned into the duke's favor.

<sup>1</sup> Statements differ as to the date of this expedition; it is 1168 on the basis of what Helmold says in the chapter following, but the *Annales Lundenses* record it as of the year 1167, the *Annales Magdeburgenses* as of the year 1169, the *Annales Ryenses* and the *Annales Danici Colbauenses* as of the year 1170, and the account by Saxo Grammaticus, *MGH. SS. XXIX*, 121 sqq. fits the year 1169 better than 1168. Cf. Schmeidler (ed.), *Helmold*, p. 211 n. 6.



to give aid to the king of the Danes whenever he should turn his hand to the subjugation of foreign nations. Now the work prospered in the hands of the king of the Danes, who obtained the land of the Rugiani with a strong hand, and they gave him for their ransom whatever the king imposed. He had that most ancient image of Svantowit, which was worshiped by every nation of the Slavs, brought out and ordered a rope to be fastened around its neck. Then he commanded that it be dragged through the midst of the army in the sight of the Slavs and that it be hacked to pieces and cast into fire. He destroyed the fane with all its apparatus of worship and plundered the riches of its treasury. He directed the Slavs to renounce the errors in which they had been born and to adopt the worship of the true God. He provided means for the building of churches, and there were erected twelve churches in the land of the Rugiani, and priests were appointed to take care of the people in the things which are of God. There were present on this occasion Bishops Absalon of Roeskilde and Bern of Mecklenburg. They upheld the hand of the king with all diligence, that the worship of the house of our God might be established in a crooked and perverse nation.

Jaremarus, a noble man, was at that time prince of the Rugiani. When he was informed about the worship of the true God and the Catholic faith, he came quickly to be baptized and bade all his people to be reborn with him in holy baptism. On becoming a Christian he in truth was so strong in the faith and so settled in his preaching that he seemed a second Paul, called by Christ. Acting in the capacity of an apostle, partly by assiduous preaching, partly by threats, he converted the folk, rude and savage with bestial madness, from their natural wildness to the religion of a new life.

For of the whole nation of the Slavs, which is divided into provinces and principalities, the Rugian folk alone endured even to our own times more obdurately than the rest in the darkness of infidelity, being inaccessible to all on account of the

surrounding sea.<sup>2</sup> A vague report has it that Louis, the son of Charles, had of old dedicated the land of the Rugiani to Saint Vitus in Corvey. Louis was the founder of that monastery. Preachers going out thence are said to have converted the nation of the Rugiani, or Rani, to the faith, and to have founded there an oratory in honor of Vitus, the martyr, to whose veneration the province was dedicated. Afterwards, however, when the Rani, who also are called Rugiani, under changed circumstances strayed out of the light of truth, their error became worse than the first. For the Rani began to worship as God Saint Vitus whom we confess as a servant of God, making a very great image for him, "and served the creature more than the Creator."<sup>3</sup> So strong did this superstition become among the Rani, that Svantowit, the god of the land of the Rugiani, secured a primacy among all the divinities of the Slavs, as being most illustrious in victories, most efficacious in oracular responses. Hence, too, not only the land of Wagria, but all the provinces of the Slavs, even to our own age sent tribute thither every year in acknowledgment of his being the god of gods. Among the Rugiani the king is held in slight esteem in comparison with the flamen. For the latter divines the responses and ascertains the results of the lots. He depends on the command of the lots, but the king and the people depend on his command.

Among their diverse offerings, too, the priest was accustomed at times to sacrifice a Christian, declaring that the gods were wholly pleased with the blood of such. A few years ago a great multitude of merchants happened to have come together there on account of the fish catch; for in November, when the wind blows strong, many herring are caught there and free access is afforded merchants on condition only that they pay in advance the lawful tribute to the god of the land. A certain Gottschalk, a priest of the Lord from Bardowiek, happened to be there at the time, having been invited to do the things which are of God

<sup>2</sup> Helmold here repeats matter and even expressions which he used in earlier chapters, particularly chapters 6, 36, 52, *supra*.

<sup>3</sup> Rom. 1: 25.

for the great number of people.\* This fact did not long remain hidden from the barbarian priest and, summoning the king and his people, he announced that the gods were very much angered and that there was no other way of placating them than by the blood of the priest who had presumed to offer a strange sacrifice among them. The astonished barbarian folk then called together all the merchants and asked that the priest be delivered to them, that he might be offered as a propitiatory sacrifice to their god. When the Christians objected, the Rugiani offered one hundred marks as a bribe. Since this proposition came to naught, the Rugiani turned to the use of force and threatened on the following day to declare war. As their ships were then already well laden with the catch, the merchants started that night on their voyage and, unfurling their sails to favorable winds, both they and the priest escaped the atrocious danger.

Although the hatred of the Christian name and the tinder of superstition abides more fiercely among the Rani than among the other Slavs, they are distinguished by many natural gifts. For there prevails among them an abundance of hospitality, and they show due honor to their parents. There is not a needy person or a beggar to be found in their midst at any time. As soon as infirmity or age has made any of them frail or decrepit, he is committed to the charge of his heir to be cared for with the utmost kindness. Regard for hospitality and respect for parents stand as prime virtues among the Slavs. The land of the Rugiani, furthermore, is rich in crops, fish, and game. The principal stronghold of the land is called Arkona.

109 (13). THE CHANGING OF THE BODY  
AND BLOOD

Thus in the year of the Incarnate Word 1168 was established the work of the new plantation in the land of the Rugiani, and churches were erected and distinguished by the presence of the priests. The Rugiani served the king of the Danes, paying

\*The visiting merchants.

tribute, and he took the sons of the nobles as hostages and led them off with him into his own country. These things were done while the Saxons were engaged in their civil wars. However, as soon as the Lord had restored peace the duke at once sent messengers to the king of the Danes, asking for hostages and half of the tribute which the Rani were paying because it had been agreed and established under oath<sup>1</sup> that the duke was to give aid to the king of the Danes no matter what peoples he should wish to conquer, and by partaking in the effort was to become also a sharer of the profit. When the king refused and the messengers returned without having accomplished their mission, the duke was moved to anger. He summoned the princes of the Slavs and bade them take vengeance on the Danes. They were called and they said: "Here we are." With joy they obeyed him who sent them. The bars and doors with which the sea had been closed were moved away; and it burst forth, surged, poured over, and threatened with destruction the many islands and the coastal regions of the Danes. The Slavs restored their pirate ships and seized opulent islands in the land of the Danes. They were, after their long abstinence, filled with the riches of the Danes; they grew fat, I say, thick, gross! I have heard it said that on a market day at Mecklenburg captive Danes to the number of seven hundred souls were counted, all for sale if buyers enough could be found.

Signs, moreover, had declared this great and destructive misfortune. As a certain priest in the land of the Danes, which is called Alsen, stood at the holy altar and lifted up the chalice to partake of the host, behold he saw what appeared to be flesh and blood in the chalice. When he had at length recovered from his fear he went to the bishop, not daring to consume what was of unusual appearance, and there he produced the chalice to be looked upon in an assembly of the clergy. While many declared that this had been done by Heaven to confirm the faith of the people, the bishop interpreted it in a higher sense—

<sup>1</sup> Cf. chap. 102, *supra*.

<sup>2</sup> Bar. 3: 34; Job 38: 35.

that grave tribulation threatened the Church and that the blood of Christian people would be freely shed. For as often as the blood of martyrs is poured out Christ is crucified again in his members. The words of the prophet did not fail. Fourteen days had hardly gone by when the army of the Slavs came on, seized all that land, overturned the churches, made captive the people and, in truth, with the edge of the sword slew all who resisted.

For a long time the king of the Danes, unmindful of the ruin of his folk, remained inactive. The kings of the Danes, dilatory and dissolute, always drunk between their rounds of feasting, sometimes are hardly aware of the strokes of the wounds.<sup>3</sup> At length aroused from his sleep, as it were, the king of Denmark collected an army and smote a small part of the Circipanian region.<sup>4</sup> A son of the king, named Christopher, born of a concubine, also came with a thousand mailed men, as they say, to Oldenburg, which in Danish is called Brandenhuse,<sup>5</sup> and ravaged along its coast. But they did not harm the church in which the priest Bruno ministered, and they did not in the slightest touch the priest's property.<sup>6</sup> As the Danes withdrew the Slavs followed upon their heels, making good their losses with tenfold vengeance. Now Denmark is for the most part dispersed over islands around which the sea flows. The wiles of the pirates cannot easily be guarded against for the reason that the recesses there afford the Slavs excellent hiding places; thence they sally unnoticed to attack the unwary from ambush. The Slavs are exceedingly skilled in making clandestine attacks. Hence, also, predatory habits have until this present age been so strong among them that they have always turned their hands to the fitting out of naval expeditions to the utter neglect of the advantages of agriculture. The ships are their only hope and the sum total of their wealth. They do not even take pains in the

<sup>3</sup> Cf. Isa. 30: 26.

<sup>4</sup> Perhaps 1171, as the *Knytlingsaga* seems to indicate. *MGH. SS. XXIX, 315*. Cf. Saxo Grammaticus, *ibid.*, XXIX, 142.

<sup>5</sup> Saxo Grammaticus has it *Brammescos. Ibid.*, XXIX, 140.

<sup>6</sup> Cf. chap. 84, *supra*.

construction of their houses; nay rather, they make them of plaited withes, only taking counsel of necessity against storms and rains. Whenever the tumult of battle resounds, they hide in trenches all their threshed grain, also their gold and silver and whatever is valuable; they safeguard their wives and children in strongholds, or at least in the woods. Nothing but their huts, the loss of which they regard as very slight, is exposed to the plundering of the enemy. They think nothing of the attacks of the Danes; in fact, they esteem it play to measure arms with them.<sup>7</sup> They fear only the duke who has worn down the strength of the Slavs more than all the dukes that were before him, much more than he who was called Otto.<sup>8</sup> The duke has put the bridle in their jaws<sup>9</sup> and he leads them wherever he wishes. He declares peace and they obey; he orders war and they say, "Here we are."

110 (14). THE RECONCILIATION OF THE KING  
OF THE DANES WITH THE DUKE

When he contemplated the misfortune of his people, the king of the Danes saw, at length, that peace is good, and he sent messengers to the most valiant duke, asking that he be vouchsafed opportunity for a friendly conference on the Eider.<sup>1</sup> The duke came accordingly to the place in which the king desired the conference on the feast of the Nativity of Saint John the Baptist.<sup>2</sup> The king of the Danes met him and showed himself favorably disposed to the duke's every wish. He conceded the latter a moiety of the tribute and of the hostages which the Rani had given and a like portion of the treasure from the fane; the

<sup>1</sup> Peisker, *Cambridge Medieval History*, II, 456-57, cites this passage in illustration of the viking admixture among the Baltic Slavs. This passage applies, however, not merely to the men of Rügen, the Rugiani, as Peisker implies, but particularly to the Slavs under the jurisdiction of Henry the Lion. Cf. Widukind, *Rerum gest. Sax.*, II, 20.

<sup>2</sup> Possibly Otto the Illustrious, died 912, father of Henry I, the Fowler.

<sup>3</sup> Cf. Isa. 30: 28.

<sup>4</sup> Saxo Grammaticus, *MGH. SS. XXIX*, 140, 143, speaks twice about a conference on the Eider River, but whether there were two conferences or one is still matter of dispute. Cf. Schmeidler (ed.), *Helmold*, p. 217 n. 5.

<sup>5</sup> June 24, 1171?

king devoutly complied with each and every one of the demands which the duke saw fit to exact. Friendship was renewed between them, and the Slavs were for the future restrained from making attacks upon Denmark. And the countenances of the Slavs became very sorrowful because of the agreement of the princes. The duke sent his messengers along with the king's messengers into the land of the Rani and the Rani served him, paying tribute.

The king of the Danes also asked the duke to give his daughter, the widow of Frederick, the most noble prince of Rothenburg, as wife to his son who had already been designated king.<sup>3</sup> On the advice of the great princes, the duke consented and sent his daughter into the kingdom of the Danes. Then there was great gladness among all the people of the northern nations; cheer and peace began at the same time. The icy cold of the north gave way to the mildness of the south wind; the harassing of the sea stopped and the tempestuous storms abated. Now the way was safe for those who passed between Denmark and Slavia; women and little children walked over it because hindrances were removed and robbers disappeared from the road. For all the country of the Slavs, beginning at the Eider which is the boundary of the kingdom of the Danes, and extending between the Baltic Sea and the Elbe River in a most lengthy sweep to Schwerin, a region once feared for its ambuscades and almost deserted, was now through the help of God all made, as it were, into one colony of Saxons. And cities and villages grew up there and churches were built and the number of the ministers of Christ multiplied.

Since he saw that there was no advantage in his kicking against the pricks,<sup>4</sup> Pribislav also gave up his obstinate and long-drawn-out rebelliousness and remained quiet and contented with the portion that was his lot. He built the strongholds of Mecklen-

<sup>3</sup> *Cout. VI.* Cf. chap. 106 n. 9, *supra*; *Alb. Stad., an. 1171*; *Chron. regia Colon., an. 1172.*

<sup>4</sup> *Cf. Acts 9: 5; 26: 14.*

burg, Ilow, and Rostock, and settled the Slavic people within their territories. Because Slavic robbers disquieted the Germans who lived in Schwerin and in its district, Guncelin, the prefect of the fortress, a brave man and a vassal of the duke,<sup>5</sup> ordered his men to catch and forthwith to put to death by hanging any Slavs they found roaming the byways for no evident reason. Thus the Slavs were prevented from thieving and robbery.

<sup>5</sup> Helmold nowhere gives Guncelin the title of count although he appears as such in documents after 1167. Cf. Schmeidler (ed.), *op. cit.*, 218 n. 4.



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